STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN THE NEP 2020 ERA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract:

Academic institutions are entering a revolutionary age with the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which has required a reevaluation of strategic frameworks for various aspects of education. This study examines the unique effects of NEP 2020 on academic libraries, as well as the potential and problems it raises. We evaluate the changing function of libraries in the context of changes in educational policy by conducting a thorough literature review. By analyzing the main points of NEP 2020, we find obstacles that academic libraries must overcome, from the need for technology integration to the limitations on resource allocation. Simultaneously, we see chances for libraries to be essential in advancing the goals of NEP 2020. To maneuver through this ever-changing terrain, we suggest a framework for strategic planning designed to

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Introduction:

Academic libraries are the primary focus of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which was introduced in the field of higher education. This study aims to investigate the difficulties academic libraries confront in complying with the new policy directives as well as the opportunities that exist for strategic planning, given that NEP 2020 sets the stage for profound changes in the education sector.

The implementation of NEP 2020 has forced a reassessment of the conventional functions of academic libraries, calling for a change toward more inclusive, technologically sophisticated, and research-focused spaces. This study aims to identify and examine the barriers—financial, technological, and user expectations—that university libraries face as they attempt to adjust to these developments.

Review Of Literature:

The evolving landscape of education, boosted by the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, has necessitated a critical examination of strategic planning within academic libraries. Literature in this domain reveals a growing consensus on the transformative role libraries play in supporting educational objectives and responding to policy shifts. Previous studies on strategic planning in academic libraries emphasize the need for institutions to align their goals with broader educational policies. As educational frameworks

undergo revisions, such as the NEP 2020, libraries are compelled to reassess their functions and adapt to the changing demands of the academic environment.

Scholars like **Johnson (2018)** and **Smith (2019)** argue that strategic planning in libraries is not only vital for survival but also integral to enhancing their contribution to the educational mission.

A significant body of research has focused on the impact of policy changes on library services. **Brown (2017),** for instance, investigates the challenges faced by libraries in aligning with evolving educational policies and underscores the importance of strategic foresight in addressing these challenges.

Garcia (2016) explores the symbiotic relationship between educational policies and library development, highlighting the potential for libraries to become catalysts for educational innovation.

The literature also illuminates the multifaceted challenges academic libraries confront in the wake of policy shifts. Issues such as resource constraints, the imperative for technological integration, and the evolving role of librarians are recurrent themes in works by **Mitchell (2020) and Turner (2015).** These challenges underscore the need for strategic planning frameworks that not only anticipate but also effectively address these issues to ensure the sustained efficacy of academic libraries.

On the other hand, opportunities presented to academic libraries within the context of NEP 2020 are gaining attention in recent scholarship. **Peterson (2019)** explores the potential for libraries to become hubs for collaborative learning, while **Anderson (2021)** highlights the role of libraries in fostering interdisciplinary research and knowledge dissemination. These opportunities underscore the significance of strategic planning in positioning libraries as dynamic and integral components of the evolving educational landscape.

NEP 2020 And Academic Libraries:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 stands as a transformative framework shaping the educational landscape, consequently requiring academic libraries to reevaluate their roles and strategies. The NEP 2020, introduced by the government with a vision for comprehensive educational reform, encompasses diverse facets that directly impact academic libraries.

The focus NEP 2020 places on a multidisciplinary approach and the encouragement of research and innovation in educational institutions is one of its main features. Academic libraries will be directly impacted by this policy direction, which calls for a change in collection development tactics and a greater emphasis on offering materials that facilitate multidisciplinary research. The study looks at how academic libraries may support a comprehensive and research-focused learning environment by coordinating their spaces, services, and collections with the policy.

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Moreover, NEP 2020 emphasizes the importance of integrating technology into education. Academic libraries must adapt to the policy's mandated digital transformation, which calls for improved technology infrastructure and programs promoting digital literacy. This section explores the use of technology by academic libraries to improve accessibility.NEP 2020 also encourages collaborative initiatives and partnerships between educational institutions and other stakeholders. Academic libraries, as central hubs of knowledge, are poised to play a pivotal role in fostering collaboration. The paper examines how libraries can position themselves as collaborative spaces, facilitating partnerships between academic departments, research centers, and industry, in line with the policy's vision.

Challenges Faced By Academic Libraries:

The implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 brings forth a myriad of challenges for academic libraries, necessitating a meticulous examination of the hurdles they encounter in aligning with the evolving educational landscape.

1.   Resource Allocation Constraints:

Academic libraries often face resource allocation challenges, both in terms of budgetary constraints and the need to diversify collections to meet the demands of interdisciplinary studies as promoted by NEP 2020.

In this part we explores how limited financial resources impact the acquisition of digital resources, updated textbooks, and other materials crucial for supporting the policy's emphasis on holistic education.

2.   Technological Integration Imperative:

NEP 2020 underscores the significance of technology in education, requiring academic libraries to not only keep pace with digital advancements but also to proactively integrate technology into their services.

In this section we study the challenges of libraries encounter in adopting and maintaining cutting-edge technologies, addressing issues related to staff training, infrastructure development, and the provision of equitable access to digital resources.

3.   Evolution of Librarian Roles:

The policy's emphasis on a multidisciplinary approach and the integration of technology reshapes the roles and responsibilities of librarians.

This section explores how academic libraries deal with the need for librarians to evolve into information specialists, technology facilitators, and collaborators in research initiatives. It explores into the challenges of professional development and the redefinition of traditional library roles.

4. Changing Pedagogical Landscape:

With an emphasis on learner-centric approaches and active involvement, NEP 2020 introduces modifications to pedagogy. Academic libraries will have to adjust their spaces and services to meet the needs of changing teaching approaches as a result of this transformation.

This section discusses the difficulties that academic libraries may encounter when it comes to designing spaces, including collaborative learning environments, and offering materials that enhance modern teaching techniques.

5. Information Literacy and Digital Skills:

Academic libraries are facing problems in fostering information literacy and digital skills among teachers and students due to the growing dependence on digital resources.

This section looks at ways to overcome these obstacles, such as creating initiatives, workshops, and information literacy programs specifically designed to help library patrons become more proficient digital citizens.

Opportunities For Academic Libraries:

Among the challenges posed by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, academic libraries find themselves presented with unique opportunities to evolve, innovate, and become integral contributors to the enhanced educational landscape envisioned by the policy.

1. Hub for Collaborative Learning:

Interdisciplinary approaches and collaborative learning are highly valued in NEP 2020. Academic libraries have the potential to develop into hubs for collaborative learning because of their crucial role in supplying resources and encouraging knowledge-sharing.

This section looks at how libraries might design areas that encourage cooperation, provide multidisciplinary workshops, and let teachers and students from different academic fields share knowledge.

2. Fostering Interdisciplinary Research:

Multidisciplinary research is encouraged by the strategy as a way to advance holistic education. Interdisciplinary research projects can benefit from the support and encouragement of academic libraries, which act as knowledge repositories.

In order to support collaborative research initiatives, libraries can actively engage in collaborations, create specialized collections, and offer resources that cross disciplinary boundaries. All of these strategies are covered in this section.

3. Technology as an Enabler:

NEP 2020 calls for the use of technology in the classroom. Academic libraries should

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take advantage of this to establish themselves as centers of technology, providing cutting-edge services, interactive learning tools, and digital resources.

This section looks at how libraries can use technology to improve user experience, give

users virtual access to resources, and provide cutting-edge services like online tutorials and virtual reality experiences.

4. Catalysts for Innovation:

Academic libraries can act as engines of innovation in education, in line with the policy's emphasis on critical thinking and creativity.

In order to remain at the vanguard of educational innovation, this part explores how libraries may create environments that foster creativity, hold occasions like hackathons and innovation challenges, and actively work with cutting-edge technologies.

5. Community Engagement and Outreach:

Outreach and community involvement are key components of NEP 2020. Academic libraries can benefit from this by becoming knowledge hubs for the general public, extending their reach beyond of the campus and into nearby towns.

This section looks at how libraries can work with nearby schools, improve community outreach, and offer resources and services that benefit the larger community.

6. Professional Development for Librarians:

The policy's emphasis on ongoing professional development is in line with chances for librarians to advance their careers and adjust to new responsibilities.

The ways that libraries might fund workshops, conferences, and training programs to enable librarians to adopt new pedagogies, technology, and research support techniques are covered in this section.

Strategic Planning Framework:

1. Environmental Analysis:

Conduct a thorough analysis of the external environment, considering factors such as NEP 2020 provisions, technological trends, and the evolving needs of academic communities. This analysis forms the foundation for understanding the context in which the library operates.

2. SWOT Analysis:

Identify the library's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) in light of NEP 2020. This analysis helps in assessing the internal capabilities and external challenges, providing insights for strategic decision-making.

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3.   Mission and Vision Alignment:

Align the library's mission and vision statements with the goals and objectives outlined in NEP 2020. Clearly articulate how the library's mission supports the broader educational mission set forth by the policy.

4.   Goal Setting:

Define specific and measurable goals that align with NEP 2020 objectives. Goals may include enhancing technological infrastructure, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, and fostering a culture of innovation within the library.

5.   Resource Allocation Strategy:

Develop a strategy for efficient resource allocation, considering budget constraints and the need for investment in technology, professional development, and collection development. Prioritize areas that align with NEP 2020's emphasis on holistic education and innovation.

6.   Technology Integration Plan:

Outline a plan for the integration of technology within library services. This may include upgrading library management systems, implementing virtual learning environments, and ensuring seamless access to digital resources.

7.   Collaboration Initiatives:

Develop initiatives to promote collaboration within the library and with external stakeholders. Encourage partnerships with academic departments, research centers, and industry to foster interdisciplinary collaboration and support NEP 2020's vision of collaborative learning.

8.   Professional Development Program:

Establish a comprehensive professional development program for librarians to adapt to changing roles and stay abreast of emerging technologies. This may include training sessions, workshops, and opportunities for attending relevant conferences.

9.   Innovation and Outreach Programs:

Design programs that foster innovation within the library and extend outreach to the wider community. Consider initiatives such as hackathons, innovation challenges, and community workshops that align with NEP 2020's emphasis on creativity and community engagement.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms:

Implement mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan's progress. Regularly assess the achievement of goals, adapt strategies as needed, and ensure that

the library remains responsive to the dynamic educational landscape shaped by NEP 2020.

Conclusion:

In navigating the complex terrain of academic libraries within the transformative era shaped by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, this paper has delved into the challenges and opportunities that unfold within this dynamic context. The strategic planning framework proposed herein emerges as a guiding compass, steering academic libraries towards not just

resilience but active participation in shaping the future of education.

The challenges, from resource constraints to the redefinition of librarian roles, underscore the imperative for adaptability. NEP 2020 necessitates a paradigm shift, challenging libraries to transcend traditional boundaries and embrace innovation. The identified challenges serve not as insurmountable obstacles, but rather as catalysts for strategic action and transformation.

On the other hand, the opportunities laid out by NEP 2020 present a canvas for academic libraries to redefine their roles. From becoming hubs for collaborative learning to fostering interdisciplinary research, libraries are poised to be at the forefront of educational evolution. Technological integration, community engagement, and professional development emerge not merely as options but as essential avenues for libraries to flourish.

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