



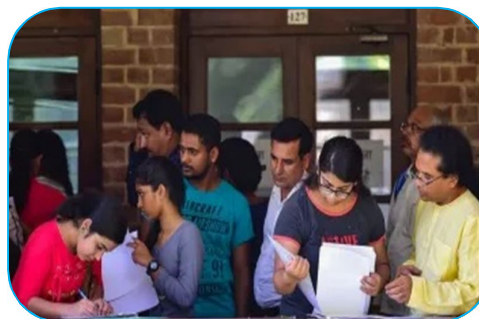
**A STUDY ON THE AWARENESS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' PARENTS
REGARDING THE FOUR-YEAR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME (FYUGP)
UNDER NEP 2020 IN MURSHIDABAD DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL**

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ABSTRACT

The Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP), introduced under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, represents a major structural reform of Indian higher education, and its success depends heavily on the awareness and support of parents, who strongly influence students' academic decisions. This study examined the level of awareness of FYUGP among parents of undergraduate students in Murshidabad district, West Bengal, and tested whether awareness differed by gender, locale, and occupation. A descriptive survey design was adopted, and data were collected from 50 parents selected through simple random sampling using a self-developed 50-item five-point Likert-type questionnaire covering five dimensions of awareness: educational quality and academic development; infrastructure and institutional preparedness; economic burden; social and psychological impact; and career prospects. Descriptive statistics, an independent-samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA with Tukey's HSD post-hoc test were used to analyse the data. Results showed that the majority of parents (60.0%) possessed a moderate level of awareness, while 20.0% each fell into the low and high categories ($M = 158.58$, $SD = 13.35$). Awareness did not differ significantly by gender ($t(48) = 0.70$, $p = .486$) or locale ($t(48) = 1.19$, $p = .242$), but differed significantly by parental occupation, $F(2, 47) = 5.18$, $p = .009$, with Occupation Group 1 scoring significantly higher than the other two groups. The findings indicate that while parents are not entirely unaware of FYUGP, many still lack a full understanding of key provisions such as the Academic Bank of Credits, multiple entry-exit system, and multidisciplinary learning. The study recommends structured parent-orientation programmes, simplified regional-language information materials, and stronger institution-parent communication to support effective implementation of FYUGP.



KEYWORDS: National Education Policy 2020; Four-Year Undergraduate Programme; Parental Awareness; Higher Education Reform; Murshidabad.

1. INTRODUCTION

India's higher education system has long been regarded as a pillar of knowledge and human-resource development, but the changing global economy and employment landscape have demanded a more flexible, multidisciplinary, and research-oriented model. The Government of India responded with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, whose most significant reform at the undergraduate level is the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP). FYUGP introduces a Multiple Entry and Exit

System, an Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), Major–Minor subject selection, Skill Enhancement Courses, Ability Enhancement Courses, Value Added Courses, and a research-oriented fourth year, allowing students to exit with a Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor's Degree, or an Honours/Honours-with-Research degree depending on the number of years completed.

FYUGP is currently being implemented in a phased manner across Indian universities, including those in West Bengal. However, the effectiveness of any curricular reform depends not only on institutions and policymakers but also on the awareness and support of stakeholders, among whom parents play a decisive role in shaping students' educational choices. Many parents remain only partially informed about FYUGP's structure, credit system, multiple entry-exit facility, and research opportunities. Since parental understanding directly affects how confidently families support students through this new system, assessing the level of parental awareness has become an important and timely area of educational research.

The present study was therefore designed to determine the level of awareness of FYUGP among parents of undergraduate students in Murshidabad district, West Bengal, and to examine whether this awareness varies with gender, locale, and occupation.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A substantial body of research has examined awareness and readiness surrounding NEP 2020 and FYUGP, though most studies have focused on students, teachers, or institutions rather than parents. Wankhade (2021) and Naveen (2022) reviewed the objectives and provisions of NEP 2020 and concluded that stakeholder awareness — including that of parents — is essential for successful implementation. Survey-based studies of students, such as Swargiary and Roy (2023), Kumari and Gowalkar (2023), Chandvekar et al. (2023), and Sidharth et al. (2025), consistently reported moderate awareness levels, with stronger understanding of provisions directly affecting students' immediate academic path (such as credit systems and multiple entry-exit) and weaker understanding of long-term features such as the Academic Bank of Credits and research tracks.

Institution-focused studies, including Banerjee and Mete (2023), Patel (2023), and Pratheesh (2025), highlighted that inadequate orientation programmes, academic advising, and student-support infrastructure limit awareness even where curricular reforms are formally in place. Digital access was also found to matter: Chaudhari (2023) reported that students with easier access to digital facilities and the ABC portal demonstrated higher awareness of NEP 2020 provisions. Teacher-focused studies (Nadim & Baig, 2024; Mukherjee & Bhuiyan, 2023) generally found positive attitudes toward FYUGP among educators, tempered by concerns about infrastructure and training.

Research specifically addressing parental awareness remains scarce. Batool (2025), surveying 300 parents, found low overall awareness and mixed perceptions of NEP 2020, attributing this to inadequate information dissemination and limited parental engagement. Bodke and Prakash (2025) similarly examined parental awareness and attitudes toward art-integrated education under NEP 2020. However, no substantial study has assessed parental awareness of FYUGP specifically within West Bengal, and none within Murshidabad district.

2.1 Research Gap

Existing literature has largely examined awareness among students, teachers, and institutions, leaving parental awareness comparatively under-researched — particularly with regard to a comparative analysis based on gender and residential background, and particularly in West Bengal. This study addresses that gap by assessing FYUGP awareness among parents of undergraduate students in Murshidabad district and comparing awareness across gender, locale, and occupation.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To determine the level of awareness of FYUGP under NEP 2020 among parents of undergraduate students.
- To examine whether parents' awareness of FYUGP differs significantly by gender.

- To examine whether parents' awareness of FYUGP differs significantly by locale (rural/urban).
- To examine whether parents' awareness of FYUGP differs significantly by parental occupation.

3.1 Hypotheses

- H01: There is no significant mean difference in awareness of FYUGP based on gender.
- H02: There is no significant mean difference in awareness of FYUGP based on locale.
- H03: There is no significant mean difference in awareness of FYUGP based on parental occupation.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

A quantitative research approach using the descriptive survey method was adopted to assess parental awareness of FYUGP.

4.2 Population and Sample

The population comprised parents of undergraduate students enrolled in FYUGP at colleges in Murshidabad district, West Bengal. A sample of 50 parents was selected using the Simple Random Sampling technique, giving every parent in the target population an equal chance of selection.

4.3 Variables

The independent variables were gender, locale (rural/urban), and parental occupation. The dependent variable was the level of parental awareness of FYUGP under NEP 2020.

4.4 Data Collection Tool

Data were collected using a self-constructed five-point Likert-type questionnaire (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree), developed with supervisory guidance. The first section recorded demographic information (gender, locale, occupation); the second section comprised 50 items distributed evenly across five awareness dimensions — Educational Quality, Skill and Academic Development; Infrastructure and Institutional Preparedness; Economic Burden and Financial Issues; Social, Psychological and Accessibility Impact; and Career Opportunities and Future Prospects (10 items each). Ten items (Q8, 10, 18, 25, 29, 34, 41, 42, 46, 47) were negatively worded and reverse-scored. Item scores were summed to obtain a Total Awareness Score, with a theoretical range of 50–250; a higher score indicates greater awareness. Internal consistency of the scale was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.64$).

4.5 Statistical Techniques

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and percentage) addressed the first objective. An independent-samples t-test compared awareness between gender and locale groups, and a one-way ANOVA with Tukey's HSD post hoc test compared awareness across three parental-occupation groups. All tests were conducted at the 0.05 level of significance.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Overall Level of Awareness (Objective 1)

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the Total Awareness Score.

N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
50	158.58	13.35	129	182

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Total Awareness Score (obtained range 129–182; theoretical range 50–250).

Respondents were classified into Low, Moderate, and High awareness categories using the conventional Mean $\pm$ 1 SD cut-off (Table 2).

Level of Awareness	Score Range	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Low	< 145.23	10	20.0
Moderate	145.23 – 171.93	30	60.0
High	> 171.93	10	20.0
Total	—	50	100.0

Table 2. Prevalence of Level of Awareness of FYUGP under NEP 2020 (N = 50).

The majority of parents (60.0%) fell into the Moderate awareness category, with 20.0% each in the Low and High categories. This indicates that while outright unawareness is not widespread, most parents possess only a partial understanding of FYUGP, leaving considerable scope for targeted awareness-building, particularly for the 20% with low awareness. This pattern is broadly consistent with student-focused studies such as Swargiary and Roy (2023) and Sidharth et al. (2025), which similarly reported moderate, rather than comprehensive, awareness of the NEP 2020 provisions.

5.2 Awareness by Gender (Objective 2 / H01)

Gender	n	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p-value
Male	39	157.87	14.04	0.70	48	.486
Female	11	161.09	10.77	—	—	—

Table 3. Independent-Samples t-Test for Gender.

The difference between male (M = 157.87, SD = 14.04) and female (M = 161.09, SD = 10.77) parents was not statistically significant, $t(48) = 0.70$, $p = .486$, Cohen's $d = 0.24$ (small effect). H01 is therefore retained: parental awareness of FYUGP does not differ significantly by gender, suggesting that both fathers and mothers in the sample hold broadly similar levels of understanding of the programme.

5.3 Awareness by Locale (Objective 3 / H02)

Locale	n	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p-value
Rural	48	158.13	13.43	1.19 (pooled)	48	.242
Urban	2	169.50	3.54	—	—	—

Table 4. Independent-Samples t-Test for Locale.

Using the pooled-variance test, the difference between rural (M = 158.13, SD = 13.43) and urban (M = 169.50, SD = 3.54) parents was not statistically significant, $t(48) = 1.19$, $p = .242$. A Welch-corrected test, which does not assume equal variances, produced a different result ($t = 3.60$, $p = .048$); the discrepancy arises because the urban group contained only two respondents, an extreme sample-size imbalance that limits the reliability of either estimate. Based on the more conventionally reported pooled test, H02 is retained. This finding should be interpreted cautiously given the very small urban sub-sample, and future studies should ensure more balanced rural–urban representation.

5.4 Awareness by Parental Occupation (Objective 4 / H03)

Occupation Group	n	Mean	SD	SE
Group 1	7	172.00	6.11	2.31
Group 2	7	152.71	17.42	6.59
Group 3	36	157.11	12.09	2.01

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics by Parental Occupation.

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	1583.0	2	791.5	5.18	.009
Within Groups	7174.6	47	152.65	—	—
Total	8757.6	49	—	—	—

Table 6. One-Way ANOVA Summary for Parental Occupation.

The ANOVA was statistically significant, $F(2, 47) = 5.18$, $p = .009$, $\eta^2 = 0.18$ (large effect), indicating that at least one occupation group differs from the others. H03 is therefore rejected.

Group (I)	Group (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	p (adj.)	Significant
1	2	+19.29	.014	Yes
1	3	+14.89	.015	Yes
2	3	-4.40	.666	No

Table 7. Tukey HSD Post-Hoc Comparisons — Parental Occupation.

Post-hoc comparisons showed that Occupation Group 1 ($M = 172.00$) scored significantly higher than both Group 2 ($M = 152.71$, $p = .014$) and Group 3 ($M = 157.11$, $p = .015$), while Groups 2 and 3 did not differ significantly ($p = .666$). The overall occupation effect is thus driven primarily by Group 1 having a distinctly higher level of awareness, plausibly reflecting greater occupational exposure to information, institutional communication, or educated professional networks — consistent with occupation-linked awareness gaps reported in NEP-related research such as Kumar, Khan, and Bhati (2026).

6. MAJOR FINDINGS

- Most parents (60.0%) demonstrated a moderate level of awareness of FYUGP under NEP 2020; 20.0% showed low and 20.0% showed high awareness.
- Awareness did not differ significantly between male and female parents.
- Awareness did not differ significantly between rural and urban parents on the conventional pooled test, though the extremely small urban sub-sample limits this conclusion.
- Awareness differed significantly by parental occupation, driven mainly by one occupation group scoring notably higher than the other two.
- Even among moderately aware parents, understanding remained limited regarding specific provisions such as the Academic Bank of Credits, the multiple entry-exit system, multidisciplinary learning, and the research-oriented fourth year.

7. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings underscore that raising parental awareness is essential to the effective implementation of FYUGP. Educational institutions should organize regular parent-orientation programmes explaining the structure, credit system, and long-term benefits of FYUGP. Colleges and universities should develop simple, regional-language information materials — including for the Bengali-speaking parent population represented in this study — to bridge the information gap, particularly for less digitally connected and rural households. Teachers and academic counsellors should proactively engage parents through seminars, workshops, and counselling services, and institutions should specifically target occupation groups showing lower awareness through focused outreach. Strengthening ongoing collaboration between parents, teachers, and institutions will help ensure that families can meaningfully support students navigating the new four-year structure.

8. CONCLUSION

This study found that parents of undergraduate students in Murshidabad district possess a moderate overall level of awareness of the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme under NEP 2020. Awareness did not vary significantly by gender or residential locale, but did vary significantly by parental occupation. These results reinforce the conclusion, echoed across the broader NEP 2020 literature, that awareness-building among stakeholders — and particularly among parents, who remain comparatively under-studied — is a necessary condition for the successful rollout of FYUGP. Sustained orientation programmes, accessible information materials, and stronger institution–parent communication channels are recommended to close the remaining awareness gap.

8.1 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

- The study was limited to 50 parents in Murshidabad district, which restricts generalizability.
- The rural–urban comparison was affected by a highly unbalanced sample (48 rural vs. 2 urban parents).
- Data relied on a self-designed questionnaire and self-reported responses.
- Future research should employ larger and more balanced samples, extend the study to other districts and states, examine teacher and student awareness comparatively, and assess the effectiveness of specific awareness-raising interventions.

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