



## REVOLUTIONIZING TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA: INSIGHTS AND CHALLENGES OF NEP 2020

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### RESEARCH ARTICLE



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#### Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 signifies a fundamental change in the Indian education system, with teacher education seen as essential for realizing its transformational objectives. This strategy prioritizes the cultivation of comprehensive, introspective, and proficient educators to meet the varied requirements of 21<sup>st</sup> century students. The paper examines the key provisions of NEP 2020 concerning teacher education, including the integration of multidisciplinary training, the establishment of teacher education institutions (TEIs) aligned with global standards, and a focus on experiential and holistic learning approaches. It also explores challenges such as infrastructure limitations, regulatory hurdles, and the need for professional development frameworks to actualize the policy's objectives. Further, the study delves into the role of teacher education in fostering sustainability, inclusivity, and equity within the education system. Special attention is given to the implications of digitalization, lifelong learning, and collaborative teaching methodologies. Through a critical analysis of NEP 2020's implementation strategies, this paper identifies opportunities for innovation and areas requiring further intervention to ensure the envisioned transformation is both impactful and sustainable. These results add to a better understanding of how NEP (2020) may transform teacher education and support India's objective of developing a teaching profession that is both competent and empowered, with the ability to nurture future generations for sustainable development.

**Keywords:** NEP 2020, teacher education, sustainable development, multidisciplinary training, continuous professional development

### Introduction

The 2020 National Education Policy (NEP) is a fundamental commitment to reforming India's educational structure, with a special emphasis on improving teacher education quality. The University Education Commission (1948-49), Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), End of the Ford Foundation (1954), Pires Committee (1956), and Education Commission (1964-66) all played important roles in shaping India's teacher education system after independence by addressing various aspects of training, curriculum, and educational policies (Chand & Das, 2022). The federal government of India has substantial responsibilities for regulating teacher education by defining rules and standards for institutions, affiliations, teacher eligibility, and infrastructural needs, as well as designing curriculum for different education programs (Hoque, 2023). On the other side, governmental agencies are vital in helping shape teacher education programs. They play an important role in establishing and maintaining state-level standards for teacher education, as well as in carrying out and supervising programs to improve teacher preparation in their home states. The concept of "quality" is gaining traction in the field of education, despite the fact that it has many meanings depending on context. The main policy perspectives on the locations of TEIs in India revolve around the need for new forms of governance, the role of regulatory bodies, and the significance of university-based teacher education in addressing these concerns and improving the standard of teacher preparation programs (Panda, 2022). Making ensuring everyone can get a good education is the key to India's continued success and leadership in the global arena when it comes to things like national unity, scientific advancement, social equality, economic growth, and cultural preservation (Korada, 2023). Improving the quality of teacher education in India is crucial for building a strong and efficient educational system. With a focus on improving teacher education programs, NEP 2020 has set the stage for revolutionary transformation. With an eye on improving the quality and efficacy of teacher preparation programs, this research analyses the most important parts of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 that pertain to teacher education. Examining the most important parts of NEP 2020 that deal with teacher education, this study will try to determine how these changes could affect the quality of programs that train future educators. The article also aims to find the potential and problems that come with implementing NEP 2020 in the field of teacher education.

### **Multidisciplinary Curriculum and Holistic Development under NEP 2020**

NEP 2020 places a strong emphasis on curriculum reform to promote a multidisciplinary approach to education. By 2030, interdisciplinary higher education institutions (HEIs) will require instructors to have completed a four-year integrated B.Ed. program (NEP 2020, Section 15; p.42). This inclusive curriculum combines fundamental educational concepts with specific subjects such as language, history, music, mathematics, computer science, chemistry, economics, art, and physical education. It also encompasses early childhood care and education, foundational literacy and numeracy skills, advanced pedagogical methods, psychological research, and a comprehensive understanding of India's cultural heritage, including its art, customs, and values. The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2021 has been proposed to provide strategic guidelines for pre-service teacher education and training. These recommendations seek to spot and advance effective practices for training teachers in several academic, vocational, and specialized fields (NEP 2020, Section 5.28; p. 25). As stated in NEP 2020, the focus on a multidisciplinary approach and the integration of many topics within teacher education shows a forward-looking plan to produce well-rounded teachers ready to meet the changing requirements of modern classrooms. These changes seek to create a strong teacher education framework able to promote holistic learning experiences and future-ready teachers by including basic skills, advanced pedagogy, and a deep awareness of India's cultural and educational ethos.

### **Pedagogical Reforms for Effective Teaching**

Learner-centered pedagogies and experiential learning are encouraged by the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). The policy would provide training in both traditional pedagogical methods and innovative teaching methods, as revealed by Korada's (2023) research. Pedagogy that pertains to fundamental reading and numeracy, multi-tiered instruction and evaluation, instruction for children with disabilities, education for children with specific interests or skills, the incorporation of educational technology, learner-centered as well as collaborative learning are some of the methodologies that fall under this category. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) will examine, document, and compile diverse international pedagogical methodologies for teaching various subjects and offer recommendations on applicable insights for integration into Indian pedagogies. The strategy recognizes the existence of many foreign pedagogical techniques for teaching certain courses (NEP 2020, section 5.27; p.25). The research conducted by Maseeh (2023) emphasizes the significance of Ph.D. candidates completing courses in academic writing, pedagogy, education, and teaching that are distinctive to their respective fields of study. It has been determined that they must undergo this type of training in order to improve their abilities as instructors. This approach provides doctorate candidates with the chance to acquire experience in curriculum building strategies, effective evaluation procedures, advanced communication skills, and pedagogical approaches, thereby enhancing the overall efficacy of their teaching. NEP (2020) is designed to offer comprehensive training and support to instructors at all levels, while also acknowledging the importance of pedagogical reforms in assuring effective teaching. This is achieved by considering all relevant factors.

### **Technology Integration in Teacher Education**

The policy highlights the transformative potential of technology in revolutionizing education, particularly in teacher preparation. Key benefits identified include optimizing learning outcomes, promoting inclusivity, enhancing pedagogical competencies, fostering flexibility, improving retention, and advancing the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education (Dhillon & Bharti, 2022). Technology must be included into teacher preparation if we are to prepare teachers to meet the expectations of the digital era and improve the quality of their teaching. Complementing these goals, NEP (2020) emphasizes the creation of the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) as a vital project (NEP 2020, Section 23.3; p. 57). NETF is seen as a means of encouraging informed decision-making in the acceptance and efficient use of technical advancements in education. NETF wants to provide an atmosphere of shared best practices and informed conversation among legislators, educational leaders, and stakeholders by giving access to modern research, data, and chances for cooperation. Such efforts are critical for the successful integration of technology into teacher training. Emphasizing ICT and creating NETF demonstrates a forward-thinking approach to integrating technology in teacher development. These programs seek to bridge the gap between traditional teaching methods and modern technological advancements by fostering collaboration, providing access to research, and facilitating informed decision-making. Successful integration of ICT into teacher preparation programs has the potential to empower teachers, enhance the learning process, and offer equitable access to high-quality education in a rapidly changing digital landscape.

### **Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Lifelong Learning**

NEP 2020 highlights the necessity of ongoing professional development for educators. Every teacher will be expected to participate in a minimum of fifty hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) annually, driven by their personal interests and aimed at enhancing their professional growth (NEP 2020, section 5.15; p.23). The latest approaches to competency-based learning, formative and adaptive assessment of learning outcomes, experiential learning, arts-integrated methods, sports-integrated strategies, and storytelling-based techniques, among others, will be comprehensively explored in CPD opportunities. The CPD program provides opportunities for teachers to enhance their knowledge, skills, and capabilities, either for their present roles or future career prospects (Natavarlal, 2023). In order to promote local professions, knowledge, and skills, the policy also highlights the necessity of strong practicum training for all B.Ed. programs, which takes the form of in-class teaching at local schools (Korada, 2023). Furthermore, it advocates for the establishment of specialized, expedited local teacher education

programs for exceptional individuals who may be employed as ‘master instructors’ in schools or educational complexes. One of the most significant projects in the NEP (2020) is the implementation of digital platforms for online teacher training, like SWAYAM and DIKSHA (NEP 2020, Section 15.10; page 44). These systems help to simplify the process of offering consistent training courses to many teachers in an efficient way. Through the course of this research, the mechanisms that are presented for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) are investigated and evaluated in terms of their capacity to provide educators with modern educational methods while also cultivating a culture of continuous professional development and learning throughout one’s whole life.

### **Challenges in Implementing Teacher Education Reforms**

NEP 2020 in India brings major improvements and reforms in several spheres of education, including teacher preparation, to different degrees. Although the strategy seeks to bring about constructive changes, its application in the sphere of teacher preparation presents some difficulties. Many of India’s educational institutions, which train teachers, suffer with inadequate facilities like laboratories, libraries, and classrooms. Implementing the NEP necessitates substantial investments in enhancing infrastructure and supplying essential resources for efficient teacher training. The NEP emphasizes the need for well-qualified and trained faculty members. However, there is a shortage of qualified teacher educators in the country. The NEP promotes the integration of technology in education, including teacher education. However, many teacher training organizations may lack the requisite infrastructure and experience to properly integrate technology. Teacher education programs must prepare instructors to meet the different learning requirements of children, including those with special needs. NEP (2020) aims to reform the way examinations are administered so that they are less focused on recall and more on abilities and the complete person. To effect these changes, we will need to develop new procedures for evaluating pupils and educate them how to apply them. A common problem in school improvements is people who don’t want to change. There are many reasons why teachers, managers, and other parties might not want to follow through with the NEP’s changes. These include fear of the unknown, a lack of knowledge, or worries about having to do more work. It is essential that schools have sufficient funds in their budgets to support programs that assist staff members develop, programs that train instructors, and upgrades to facilities when it comes to education. On the other side, if there are issues with the budget, it could be difficult to carry out these plans in an efficient manner. In order to ensure that the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) in the field of teacher education are accomplished, legislators, educators, and other interested parties need to collaborate in order to address these issues.

### **Collaborative Pathways for Advancing NEP 2020 Goals**

NEP 2020 offers India’s multiple chances for cooperation among different education-related parties. Effective implementation of the goals of the policy depends on cooperation and beneficial improvements in the educational system depend on it as well. The NEP promotes cooperation among public and private sectors to improve the quality of education. The educational system in India is able to gain global perspectives with the assistance of international collaboration, which also contributes to the overall improvement of educational quality. Industry and business collaboration is emphasized in NEP 2020 as a means of bridging the gap between the demands placed on the workforce and the education available. The sharing of best practices, the establishment of common standards, and the building of a network for continuous professional development are all possible outcomes of collaborative efforts amongst teacher training programs. The contributions of non-governmental organizations (NGRs) and community-based groups to education are significant and beneficial. Participation in the community, assistance for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and the management of outreach programs are all possible side effects of working with these groups. The NEP emphasizes the integration of technology in education. Collaboration with educational technology (EdTech) companies can provide access to innovative tools, online learning resources, and digital platforms. For NEP 2020 to be a success, it is crucial that the federal and state governments work together. NEP 2020 invites the community to be involved in running schools. Working together with the local communities can help create plans to make schools better, get community resources to use, and give everyone in the education system a sense of ownership and responsibility. It is essential to collaborate with professional training centers and agencies as well as skill development organizations in order to guarantee that educational programs are in accordance with the requirements of employers. Partnerships that assist students in enhancing their abilities may significantly increase their employability and make the transition from school to the workforce less difficult. In order for cooperation to be successful, it is necessary for all parties participating in NEP 2020 to reach a consensus on the need of working together to achieve common objectives. The aims of the policy may be carried out in a manner that is more comprehensive and efficient if relationships are established that make advantage of the capabilities of all of the stakeholders.

### **Conclusion**

The National Education Policy (2020) presents a visionary framework for the comprehensive reform of teacher education in India. This transformative initiative introduces innovative strategies to enhance the quality of teacher preparation while recognizing the vital role educators play in shaping the nation’s future. Central to the policy is curriculum reform, which emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach by integrating subjects such as technology, history, language, and music into teacher education. By 2030, NEP 2020 envisions the implementation of an integrated four-year B.Ed. program, underscoring the need for a strong foundation in pedagogy and specialized disciplines. This strategy is consistent with the changing needs of the educational world, cultivating educators who are adaptive and well-prepared for modern problems. The policy’s emphasis on pedagogical improvements, such as learner-centered pedagogies and experiential learning, demonstrates a commitment to



providing educators with the resources they need to successfully handle different student needs. Research has shown that a combination of conventional and innovative teaching approaches is necessary to educate educators to fulfil a wide range of students' learning needs, which is in line with the policy's goals. Furthermore, NEP 2020 acknowledges the game-changing possibilities of technology in the classroom, promoting inclusion, and strengthening pedagogical skills. This commitment is further reinforced through the establishment of the NETF, which aims to facilitate the adoption and optimization of technology in education. The Continuous Professional Development framework, which is a cornerstone of NEP 2020, underscores the importance of continuous learning for educators. CPD is designed to ensure that instructors remain informed about evolving educational methodologies and trends by prioritizing competency-based learning and exposure to a variety of pedagogical approaches. With an emphasis on competency-based learning, formative assessment, and exposure to diverse pedagogies, the CPD program is designed to keep teachers up-to-date on the latest educational trends and best practices. However well-intentioned the policy is, it will be difficult to put into practice. Some of the challenges include a lack of resources (such as academics) and outdated infrastructure, as well as the need for stakeholders to change their outlook. To overcome these challenges, various groups will need to band together in coalitions, share resources, and work together. There are numerous opportunities for collaboration, including international collaborations, public-private partnerships, industry engagement, and the involvement of NGOs and community-based organizations. The quality of education can be improved, inequalities between academia and industry can be bridged, and a network for continuous improvement can be established through effective collaboration. The success of NEP 2020 depends on a collective commitment to its execution, overcoming challenges via collaboration, and a steadfast dedication to the ideals of excellence, inclusiveness, and continuous learning. The policy serves as a guide, steering the evolution of teacher education in India towards a future marked by global significance, flexibility, and superiority.

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