



TRANSFORMING TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE VISION OF NEP 2020

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Abstract

Teachers are the real architect of our nation as they frame the destiny of our children. It's because of this reason teaching is one of the most esteemed professions across the globe. In the Ancient education system Teachers were termed as 'Gurus' as they had unmatched knowledge and intellect level and were people with highest moral character, only those who possess high order thinking skills and intellectual capabilities joined this profession. In the present scenario, undoubtedly the standards of teachers have degraded to a large extent. There are several reasons for this but one major cause is the deterioration of the standards of teacher education system in our country. The nurturing and expansion of poorly regulated private teacher's training institutions in our country has resulted into the commercialization of teacher education, which in turn has resulted into the growth in the numbers of unskilled and inefficient teachers. There is an urgent need to reinstate the dignity attached with teacher and teacher education at the earliest for the all-round development of our nation. The announcement of the National Education Policy on July 29th, 2020 is a great step towards restructuring and revamping the teacher training system in our country. This paper attempts to discuss the recommendations of the National Education Policy and explore various challenges and suggestion for its effective implementation at ground zero.

Keywords: *Teacher Education, NEP 2020, Challenges, Implementation.*

Introduction

Teacher education is significant in creating the next generation of teachers. The teaching profession are alike high-level service professions such as medicine and law—where people's

lives are literally at stake and in the hands of practitioners. Therefore, it requires the highest standards of education and training with precision. Teacher education is a profession that requires a multidisciplinary perspective and knowledge, the development of character and values, and experience in the leadership of the best mentors. Teachers should be grounded in Indian values, ethics, knowledge and tradition, while keeping abreast of the latest developments in education and pedagogy.

Unfortunately, the teaching profession is buried in mediocrity accompanied by rampant corruption in the era of commercialization. Today, most teacher training institutions are in the control of private bodies, offering substandard and poorly designed teaching programs which lack a general sense of commitment to the need for rigor and quality in teacher training. As per the observation made by the Justice J. S. Verma Commission (2012), set up by the Supreme Court of India, many of these independent training institutes - more than 10,000 - do not even attempt serious teacher education, and they sell teaching certification at exorbitant prices. Regulatory efforts have so far failed to prevent widespread corruption in the system, or enforce basic standards for quality, which as a result has led to the deterioration of the teacher training programs. Therefore, the norms and the regulatory framework should be revitalized through radical action to improve standards and restore integrity, credibility, efficiency and quality for the teacher training system. (DNEP 2019, 15)

The National Education Policy 2020 is designed to streamline the education system and create a blue print for a new and developed India. The policy was ratified by the Indian Cabinet on July 29th, 2020. NEP was first implemented by the Ministry of Education in 1968 and then after a substantial gap in 1986. After more than three decades, new National Education Policy was announced recently in 2020 under the leadership of our visionary Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The committee that drafted the NEP 2020 policy document was chaired by the former head of ISRO K. Kasturirangan. In the 2014 parliamentary election manifesto; the ruling Bhartiya Janta party promised revolutionary reforms in India's education system (Saha Mushkan, 2020). NEP 2020 is a sincere attempt to realize their promise toward making India a global hub of education.

Vision of National Education Policy 2020

1. Teacher education is very important in creating a team of teachers who will enlighten the next generation. Teacher education is a profession that requires a multidisciplinary perspective and

knowledge, the refinement of character and value under the supervision of the best mentors. Teachers should be grounded in Indian values, ethics, knowledge and tradition, while being well versed in educational and pedagogic strategies. (NEP 15.1).

2. Till 2030, teacher education will gradually shift to multidisciplinary colleges and universities, recognizing that teachers will require high-quality standard training including of pedagogical skills. While all colleges and universities are becoming more multidisciplinary, there goal should be to establish department of education offering B.Ed., M. Ed. and Ph.D. in educational studies. [NEP 2020, 5.22]

3. The core principles of the education system include the teacher and faculties at the centre of teaching- learning process - their selection, continuous professional advancement, good working and service conditions. [NEP 2020, Principles of this Policy, p.5]

Recommendations of NEP 2020 for teacher education system are as follows:

a) Restoring the integrity and credibility of the teacher training system: Unfortunately, the integrity and credibility of the teacher education system has taken a hit and is witnessing a sharp decline as thousands of teacher education organization operate purely on a commercial basis and offer very little teacher education. If teacher training needs to be revamped and reach the level of integrity and credibility it is pivotal to restore the dignity attached to the teaching profession and as a result achieve success in the school system. Such unregulated and substandard teacher training institutes should be shut down immediately and good institutes with positive intentions should be consolidated. (DNEP2019, 15 Para 4)

b) Transferring Teacher Education to Multidisciplinary Departments: The goal of National Education Policy 2020 is to guarantee that teacher education is of high quality in content, pedagogy, and practice by transitioning teacher education to multidisciplinary departments in colleges and universities and establishing a four-year bachelor's degree as the minimum qualification for all teachers at different strata of the school system.

The 4 years degree program will be equivalent in comparison to other undergraduate degrees and students who have passed the 4 years integrated B.Ed. will be eligible to pursue master's degree program in either core stream or the pedagogic stream. (DNEP2019, P5. 5.1)

Teacher education in a multidisciplinary college or university will ensure that teacher education benefits from interaction with other areas of higher education, and student teachers

will thrive in a liberal environment with access to a variety of academic resources, including libraries, the Internet, and co-curricular activity.

c) Curriculum-pedagogical approaches of teacher education: Integrated B.Ed. program, multi-level, discussion-based and constructivist learning, and core/numerical literacy, inclusive pedagogy and assessment, awareness of India and its traditions, development of skills in 21st century learners such as problem solving, critical and creative thinking, ethics and ethical reasoning, communication and discussion skills are among the core areas of the curriculum, with a pedagogical approach to prepare teachers for reform and revitalization.

d) Associating of school experiences/internship with pre-service teacher training programme: Local schools are expected to be linked with multi-disciplinary teacher training institutions for internship/mentoring/school experience in the pre-service teacher education curriculum.

e) Admission to Pre- Service Teacher Training Programme: The Admission to Pre- Service Teacher Preparation Programmes of all Higher educational institutions should be made on the basis of test of aptitude as well as the test of subject(content mastery) conducted at a centralized level by the National Testing Agency(NTA).

f) In - Service Teacher Training Programme as per NEP 2020: Education departments in multi-disciplinary colleges and universities should offer distance and part-time programs, and encourage practicing teachers to continue their higher education and enhancement of skills. DSERT, IASE, CTE and DIET should develop courses and activities for in-service teachers as well as mentoring programs for newly inducted teachers.

Besides offering full-time programs, courses must be designed as per the needs of the learners in flexible formats, including part-time, evening, blended, and online. Use of technology platforms like SWAYAM/DIKSHA for online teacher training must be promoted so that a standardized curriculum can be rolled out to a substantial number of teachers within a short period of time.

Challenges of Teacher Education

1. Funding Challenges: National Education Policy 2020 aims to quickly bring spending in the education sector to 6% of GDP. According to the Economic Survey 2019-20, India spends only 3.1% of its GDP on education. Increasing the budget to 6 percent of GDP in a vast country like India, which has high spending in various sectors, will be of immense challenge.

In many states, teacher education programs appear to be funded solely by fees collected from students. Financial grants from the government are very limited.

2. **Infrastructural problems:** Many educational institutions are facing financial difficulties and lack of basic facilities like test schools, laboratories, libraries, hostels and secure buildings. In some cases, these agencies operate from rented premises, further complicating the issue.
3. **Unskilled Educators:** In various teacher training institutes, especially those run by private organizations, we find that teacher educators are under qualified and unprofessional. They lack innovation skills and are not able to make their class interactive. They always use traditional teaching methods and they are comfortable enough or lack technical skills to integrate ICT in classroom communication.
4. **Traditional and Theoretical Curriculum:** The NEP 2020 has proposed varied recommendations for the up gradation of teacher education in the country but there has been no significant development in the basic structure of the curriculum as per the recommendation. This discord between policy recommendations and practical curriculum is significant constraint in the successful implementation of the objectives National Education Policy.
5. **Ignorance of Life Skills Development:** Life skills are significant for personal growth and development which regrettably has not received enough attention in teacher education programs. The dominant memory-based approach lacks active student participation, resulting in the lack of development of life skills which are pivotal for student's holistic development.

Suggestions for Improvement

1. **Derecognizing substandard teacher education institutions:** Teacher training institutions that do not meet basic education criteria and are not functioning as per the norms and guidelines laid by the National council for teacher education (NCTE) must be closed at the earliest. Teacher Education institutions should be responsible for compliance with key accreditation criteria; providing a decided time frame to apply corrective measures, if there seems to be a violation, prompt action must be initiated. There should be an appropriate legal approach to ensure compliance to the minimum standards as per regulation.
2. **Continuous Monitoring of Teacher Education Institutions:** The teacher training institutions must be periodically inspected by professional and regulatory agencies. The process of granting affiliation by Universities to teacher training colleges should be made

stringent. There must be transparency in the selection process of the teacher educators and a report must be submitted by the institutions about the progress of the work done at the state and central level.

- 3. Embracing Innovative Pedagogical Techniques:** Integrating new and progressive teaching methods into the curriculum should be prioritized. These amendments aim to ensure that teachers adapt to fulfill the different roles and responsibilities required by emerging technologies.
- 4. Digital Literacy:** Digital literacy is very important in today's world. It involves the use of digital platforms and portals to interact, communicate and comprehend information on various topics. A strong understanding of digital skills is essential for individuals to thrive in today's world.
- 5. Continuous Professional development:** It is one of the significant components according to the recommendations of National education policy 2020. It enables teachers to get training and enlighten their professional capabilities, resulting in a more engaging role in improving their soft skills and pedagogical competencies associated with the holistic development of the teaching and learning process.

Conclusion:

NEP 2020 aims to refurbish teacher education in India. A sincere effort is required by the regulatory bodies to revamp teacher education curriculum to meet the challenges and to make the teacher skilled, without this implementing the recommendations of National Policy of Education 2020 would be a serious challenge. Overall, the NEP 2020 is largely a very progressive document with a firm understanding of the current socio-economic environment and an outlook on future challenges. No policy bears any fruit if it is not implemented in a phased manner. Anyway, this proposal seems to be well thought out and a genuine attempt to reshape the destiny of the educational scenario in India. The policy emphasizes the amalgamation of vocational education into higher education for skills and employment generation. It will not be wrong to conclude that NEP 2020 has laid a concrete plan for developed India if implemented in true spirit; then it has everything to make India a worldwide hub of education by the year 2030.

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