



Reforming Teacher Education: Opportunities And Challenges Under NEP 2020

Dr. Nilesh Kapadia

Assistant Professor

Department of Hindi Education,

Faculty of Education (IASE),

Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has finally opened the door for the world of 21st-century education. The policy builds from the foundational principles of access, equity, quality, affordability, accountability and an inclusive education system. One of the most remarkable aspects of NEP 2020 is that it acknowledges how teachers are supposed to play various roles in the classroom. Educators are now seen as mentors and facilitators. The policy stresses teacher training focused on the needs of the socio-economically disadvantaged groups. Technology is highlighted as a vehicle to integrate into teacher education and classroom practice to improve learning outcomes. Teachers are the backbone of the education system. The implementation of NEP 2020 is an ambitious agenda, so it has many challenges. Some key recommendations are outlined below.

Keywords NEP 2020, Teacher Education, Education Policy, Challenges

Integrated Teacher Education Programmes (ITEPs)

The introduction of a four-year multidisciplinary B.Ed. programme introduced under NEP 2020 is one of its flagship initiatives. This programme aims to convert outdated and fragmented teacher training courses into a more holistic curriculum, integrating pedagogy with liberal arts and sciences. By giving future educators a well-rounded education hope they will come back with critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills in their students (Smitha, 2020). ITEPs also encourage experiential learning through internships and practical training, giving them real-life experiences.

Multidisciplinary Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs)

By 2030, according to NEP 2020, it recommends that large-scale, multidisciplinary Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) be created. The vision of these institutions is to establish common grounds for consolidating teacher training resources so that there is equitable access to quality education for prospective teachers. TEIs are regarded as hubs of excellence meant to be an antidote to the present educational requirement through diverse fields of advanced courses. Such institutions will allow teacher trainees continually to learn from other disciplines, including psychology, technology, and environmental sciences (Dixit, 2020).

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

NEP 2020 also acknowledges the need for continuous professional development of teachers. In CPD programmes, the intention is to keep educators up-to-date in pedagogical and subject knowledge. It specifies that institutional and nationally structured CPD frameworks should be built based on which career progression

is linked to professional development. These programmes include workshops, seminars, and certification courses designed to match the varying needs of teachers at diverse stages of their careers or to adapt existing programs (Makam, 2022).

Teacher Education and Technology Integration

The central thrust of NEP 2020 is the use of technology in teacher education, and it suggests collaboration for the use of digital tools and platforms in pedagogical practices. It outlines a measure for the broad application of virtual classrooms, online training modules and digital content for learning opportunities. Technology is also used as fuel for providing personalised learning experiences as teachers can up-skill at their own pace (Agnihotri, 2022). Moreover, artificial intelligence and data analytics can be used in teacher training.

Inclusive Education – Specialised Training

The policy pays strong attention to inclusive education by delivering targeted training programs for teachers to prepare them for managing diverse classrooms. This approach has included pedagogies, cultural sensitivity, and disability awareness modules in specialised modules. Teachers must do all this while having different socio-economic backgrounds, linguistic communities or being disabled. NEP 2020, apart from extending its focus on bi- and multilingual pedagogies to bridge language barriers and achieve equitable learning outcomes, also encourages administrators to be associated with issues like migration (Nandi et al., 2022).

Role of the Teacher According to the NEP 2020

The crux of this National Education Policy 2020 is that the role of the teacher should be friend, philosopher, guide, and aligned with global standards. Teachers should promote critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills in students. According to NEP 2020, the teacher's role is as follows.

Mentors and Facilitators

Teachers are encouraged to stand away from traditional rote learning and follow learner-centered ways of thinking, such as active learning, inquiry, and critical thinking. Teachers are expected as mentors to create a classroom environment which allows students to explore their abilities and talents.

Inclusive Educators

Education, as per NEP 2020, emphasises inclusivity, and the role of the teacher in creating an equitable classroom is vital. It is assumed that teachers are to attend to the special requirements of learners from marginalised groups and, learners from disadvantaged economic backgrounds or learners with disabilities. Different types of inclusive pedagogies, like differentiated instruction and individualised learning plans, could lead educators to provide an environment that supports everyone's success (Dar & GanaieNasir, 2021). Additionally, teachers are also expected to promote gender weakness and cultural awareness and to make classrooms something of mutual respect.

Technology Integrators

NEP 2020 suggests that teachers in today's digital world should function as technologists who can integrate digital tools to help teachers and learners through teaching and learning processes. On the other hand, teachers are expected to leverage technology to create highly engaging instructive encounters from a shared library, close gaps using accessibility and reach learners in the remotest or least served areas (Kumar et al., 2021). It includes using online platforms, educational apps and virtual classrooms to offer interactive and flexible learning.

Promoters of Holistic Development

Under NEP 2020, teachers are visualised as facilitators of all-around development, which includes cognitive, social, emotional and physical aspects of learning. They are expected to embrace interdisciplinary approaches in their teaching and encourage their students to engage knowledge from one subject to another and apply it to real-world practice. In addition to developing these mindsets, this role is about nurturing ease

with creativity, problem-solving, and ethical reasoning so that students are ready to play a role in society as global citizens.

Continuous Learners

NEP 2020 urges teachers to cultivate lifelong learning. The policy is on Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes that serve as an essential provision to enhance their pedagogical skills. Teachers are invited to participate in workshops, online courses & peer learning networks to keep informed of the latest trends & innovations in education. The policy encourages a learning culture across all teachers and teachers can adjust to changing educational demands.

Collaborators and Community Leaders

Teachers and parents are projected as leaders of the community. Teachers can help raise the education system by working with colleagues, sharing best practices and discussing policy. In NEP 2020, teachers are encouraged to step up and accept leadership roles in their school and community.

Teacher Education Challenges in NEP 2020

There are many challenges to implementing NEP 2020. These challenges highlight the gap between policy and real-life situations that must be addressed to transform the education system. Some significant challenges are as follows.

Infrastructure Deficits

Due to the lack of adequate infrastructure in TEIs, implementing NEP 2020 is a significant problem. In rural areas, many TEIs lack the basic facilities of well-equipped classrooms, libraries and technology. Its digital and multidisciplinary approach means the policy needs to upgrade the infrastructure, including modern laboratories, smart classrooms and internet connectivity (Marne & Deshmukh, 2022). These improvements are necessary to overcome the upcoming ITEP vision and digital integration in teaching.

Resistance to Change

Another big challenge is people's resistance to change. The recommendations of NEP 2020 have not been implemented due to institutional disinterest and educators' unwillingness to change methodologies. Traditional TEIs and successful mentors favour conventional educational practices and are regarded as disruptive innovations like technology integration and interdisciplinary approaches (Kumari, 2020).

Capacity Building

Training a large number of teachers with different and specialised competencies is problematic. According to NEP 2020, teachers should facilitate holistic and inclusive learning. Yet teacher training programmes do not currently possess sufficient capacity to meet this demand. Key providers of existing programmes often lack the resources and expertise to provide focused training, which results in deficient teacher preparedness (Muralidharan & Singh, 2021).

Resource Disparities

There is limited access to quality training and resources. Further, rural and remote areas lack sufficient numbers of trained educators, development opportunities and the ability to use digital tools. These disparities intensify the urban and rural education divide that truncates the inclusivity of NEP 2020 (Nandi et al., 2022). Much attention and investment is needed to ensure quality teacher training.

Funding Constraints

In 1966, the Kothari Commission recommended that education funding be set at 6% of GDP. Funding constraints are a critical barrier to implementing NEP. However, significant financial investment is also needed to build the infrastructure, offer continuous professional development (CPD), and establish multidisciplinary

TEIs. Yet, most TEIs operate on shoestring budgets far from meeting basic operational costs (Agnihotri, 2022). They lack the funding to upgrade facilities, hire trained trainers, and implement innovative programmes.

Technological Barriers

The thrust of NEP 2020 is integrating technology into teacher education, but implementation is challenged by challenges related to the absence of technical infrastructure and digital literacy. There is a gap between what policy is expected and what people at the ground level can do, and many educators, especially in rural societies, are ignorant of how to use the various types of digital tools. In addition, this digital divide limits teachers in underserved zones of access to online training programs, especially marginalised educators. To overcome these barriers, we need comprehensive digital literacy training and digital solutions that are localised to where these projects are taking place.

Conclusion

This paper examines whether NEP 2020's teacher education reforms are an opportunity or a threat. This study analyses contemporary literature and case studies and offers actionable suggestions on addressing implementation challenges and building a culture of lifelong learning in educators. In light of NEP 2020, the time has come for Indian teachers to grab the opportunity and become nation-builders. The National Education Policy will play an important role in taking the education system to a new level.

References

- Agnihotri, A. (2022). National Education Policy-2020: Prospects for Teacher Education Institutions. *Edutech Enabled Teaching* (pp. 153-170).
- Dar, R. A., & GanaieNasir, N. A. (2021). Importance of NEP 2020 For Changing Role Of Teacher Educators. *Ilkogretim Online*, 20(1), 8289-8301.
- Dixit, R. K. (2020). National education policy (NEP) 2020-opportunities and challenges in teacher education. *National Education Policy 2020*, 120.
- Kumar, K., Prakash, A., & Singh, K. (2021). How National Education Policy 2020 can be a lodestar to transform future generation in India. *Journal of Public affairs*, 21(3).
- Kumari, S. (2020). NEP 2020 challenges to teachers' education. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 6(10), 420-424.
- Makam, S. (2022). NEP 2020–A Critical Analysis of New Education Policy and Challenges in its Implementation. *Anvesha*, 14, 20-28.
- Marne, G. S., & Deshmukh, N. S. (2022). National Education Policy-2020: Issues and Challenges. *Journal Of the Oriental Institute ISSN*, 30, 53.
- Muralidharan, K., & Singh, A. (2021). India's new national education policy: Evidence and challenges. *Science*, 372(6537), 36-38.
- Nandi, A., Das, T., & Halder, T. (2022). A Critical Analysis of Recommendations of NEP 2020 to Reform Teacher Education in India. *Agpe the royal gondwana research journal of history, science, economic, political and social science*, 3(5), 6-14.
- Smitha, S. (2020). National education policy (NEP) 2020-Opportunities and challenges in teacher education. *International Journal of Management (IJM)*, 11(11), 1881-1886.