NEP 2020: Issues and Challenges Ahead in Teacher Education

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Abstract: *NEP 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and the successor to his 34-year-old National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986. Aiming to make both school and university education more inclusive, flexible and interdisciplinary to meet the needs of the 21st century, and to highlight the unique abilities of each student, we aim to bring India to a vibrant knowledge base. Transform society into a global knowledge superpower. The policy was developed via an extensive collaborative process that was unmatched in scope and depth The NEP 2020 policy provides for reforms at all levels of education from school to higher education. NEP aims to increase the focus on strengthening teacher training, reforming the existing exam system, early childhood care and restructuring the regulatory framework of education. Teacher education as a whole needs urgent and comprehensive reform. There is a need to bring greater convergence between professional preparation and continuing professional development of teachers at all stages of schooling in terms of level, duration and structure. Considering the complexity and significance of teaching as a professional practice, it is imperative that the entire enterprise of teacher education should be raised to a university level and that the duration and rigour of programmes should be appropriately enhanced. The challenge of quantity must be met head-on, while ensuring quality and equity. Teachers make the highest impact on quality in the classroom. They are at the heart of education. There is a need for high quality teacher educators. Teachers have to recognise/understand children needs & their requirements, deficiencies, weakness, difficulties, problems & strengths etc. to make teaching & learning more interesting and qualitative. This paper discusses the issues and challenges faced by Teacher Education.*

Keywords: Teacher Education, NEP 2020, Quality, Challenges

1. Introduction

Teacher Education has always been an important component of education since time immemorial. This is because all societies in the world have always needed teachers to propagate/transmit their cultures from one generation to another. Teachers need to be seen as creators of knowledge and thinking professionals. A teacher needs to be an information provider, role model, facilitator, assessor, planner, resource and developer. Educated teachers, with wide knowledge, command the respect of fellow teachers and the people in their communities. They need to be empowered to recognize and value what children learn from their home, social and cultural environment and to create opportunities for children to discover, learn and develop. Teacher is a facilitator, is a friend, and is a philosopher. The purpose of teacher education programme should be to develop in each student his general education and personal culture, his ability to teach and educate others, an awareness of the principles which underlines good human relations and a sense of the responsibility to contribute both by teaching and leading as an example to social, cultural and economic progress. The nation building task will be performed under the leadership of a brilliant set of teacher educators and master educators who will prepare the teachers and who in turn will develop the creative abilities of the teeming millions of the country.

Purpose of the NEP for Teacher Education
The objective of the policy is to achieve a community of competent teachers dedicated to providing education of high quality, with high levels of performance as well as ethical and professional standards of conduct.

New Education Policy 2020 Key Benefits
- Teachers and faculty as the heart of the learning process.
- Respect for diversity and local context in all curriculum, pedagogy, and policy.
- Equity and inclusion as the cornerstone of all decisions.
- Community participation.
- Use of technology in teaching and learning.

NEP for Teachers Recruitment
The New Education Policy aims to help recruit the very best and brightest to enter the teaching profession at all levels, by ensuring teachers their livelihood, respect, dignity, and autonomy, while also installing in the system basic methods of quality control and accountability. The National Education Policy states that by 2030 the minimum educational qualification for teachers would be a four-year duration integrated BEd degree. If this happens, only candidates with a four-year BEd degree and CTET or TET certificate will be eligible to apply for teacher recruitment in government schools.

Main aim of NEP 2020
NEP, 2020 aim to increase the GER to 100% in preschool to secondary level by 2030 whereas GER in Higher Education including vocational education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035. Today if the world is inclined to seek a long term means to build and promote peace on this planet earth, we have to opt for education and ultimately we should go for teachers as they will contribute by performing their role in building and promoting culture of peace among children / students and in their institutional environment that will further extend peace to the community, society, nation and lastly to the world. This is high time when Teacher Education programmes should combine knowledge, experiences and dreams pertaining to the building of peace and harmony on one hand, and joint effort of other people and agencies of education on the other, in such a way so as to change the culture of war to culture of peace and non-violence in the world we live in. The present paper discusses the role of teacher education in promoting Peace and harmony among

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the people for a better and happy living.

Salient features of teacher education in NEP 2020
- Liberty,
- Responsibility,
- Pluralism,
- Equality, and Justice;

Promoting Multilingualism and the Power of Language in Teaching and Learning;
Life skills such as communication, cooperation, teamwork, and resilience;
Focus on regular formative assessment for learning rather than the summative assessment.

The Challenges of Teaching & Learning
As teachers work to engage and educate this generation of students, they face the following challenges:
- Learning must be relevant to students. Learning means more when Millennials understand practical applications for the information they receive. Content must be specific, concise and fast. Millennials are hungry for information and will search for it on their own if teachers do not present what they perceive to be relevant. Because so much information is constantly available, Millennials do not feel they need to learn everything immediately. Instead, they want to be taught how and where to find what they need when they need it.
- Technology can be distracting. Although Millennials respond best to high technology, these students and more often their teachers may become very distracted by it. ICT in the classroom requires students and educators to be taught how and when to use technology as a tool appropriately and safely.
- Technology can be expensive. The costs associated with implementing new technological resources in academic institutions are daunting. Funding hardware, software, infrastructure, professional development and technical support must be an ongoing priority. ICT costs are recurring, as is the need for teachers to be repeatedly trained and prepared to use technology.

Teaching Methods: Integrating Education
In the process of integrating Education, how to teach is more important than what to teach. Classroom activities must attempt to give students an understanding of their traditions and teach them what they need to know in order to exercise their responsibilities as citizens. The teaching methods should be used deliberately to support learning aims to relate the knowledge, skills and attitudes of Teacher Education. The methods which are helpful in making teacher education a subject of study, concern and action both in the classroom and beyond are:
- Cooperative learning
- Group discussion
- Peer teaching
- Brain storming
- Role play
- Energizers
- Storytelling
- Dialogues
- Service learning
- Experiential teaching
- Inquiry based learning and teaching.

Challenges Ahead
Today the world is interconnected and interdependent. We are facing the challenges such as climate change, health epidemics, global poverty, global economic recessions and trade imbalances, assaults on human rights, terrorism, political instability, and international conflicts. It is important to recognize the crucial role of education in contributing to building a culture of peace and condemning instances in which education is undermined in order to attack democracy and tolerance. Educating young people to become global citizens will allow them to learn about the interdependence of the world's systems, believe that solutions to global challenges are attainable, and feel morally compelled to confront global injustices and take responsible action to promote a just, peaceful and sustainable world. One of the biggest challenges for teachers is that their role in the *school management* has also changed. The school needs them as individuals, who can make decisions and cope with the stress of the changing world of schools. At the same time teachers need to be able to work in teams, co- operate with colleagues and parents, they have to write projects to gain money for the school programmes, they have to be PR experts and need to do all these things for a modest monthly income. The main question is how these changes manifest themselves for the society, for the participants (teachers, learners, parents) of education.

Rationalized Institutional Architecture
Higher education institutions will be transformed into large, well resourced, vibrant multidisciplinary institutions providing high quality teaching, research, and community engagement. The definition of university will allow a spectrum of institutions that range from Research-intensive Universities to Teaching-intensive Universities and Autonomous degree- granting Colleges.

Affiliation of colleges is to be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges. Over a period of time, it is envisaged that every college would develop into either an Autonomous degree-granting College, or a constituent college of a university.

Motivated, Energized, and Capable Faculty
NEP makes recommendations for motivating, energizing, and building capacity of faculty through clearly defined, independent, transparent recruitment, freedom to design curricula/ pedagogy, incentivizing excellence, movement into institutional leadership. Faculty not delivering on basic norms will be held accountable.

Teacher Education
A new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021, will be formulated by the NCTE in consultation with NCERT. By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree. Stringent action will be taken against substandard stand-alone Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs).

Mentoring Mission
A National Mission for Mentoring will be established, with a large pool of outstanding senior/retired faculty – including those with the ability to teach in Indian languages – who would be willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.

Financial support for students
Efforts will be made to incentivize the merit of students belonging to SC, ST, OBC, and other SEDGs. The National Scholarship Portal will be expanded to support, foster, and track the progress of students receiving scholarships. Private HEIs will be encouraged to offer larger numbers of free ships and scholarships to their students.

Open and Distance Learning
This will be expanded to play a significant role in increasing GER. Measures such as online courses and digital repositories, funding for research, improved student services, credit-based recognition of MOOCs, etc., will be taken to ensure it is at par with the highest quality in- class programmes.

Online Education and Digital Education:
A comprehensive set of recommendations for promoting online education consequent to the recent rise in epidemics and pandemics in order to ensure preparedness with alternative modes of quality education whenever and wherever traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible, has been covered. A dedicated unit for the purpose of orchestrating the building of digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building will be created in the MHRD to look after the e-education needs of both school and higher education.

Technology in education
An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration. Appropriate integration of technology into all levels of education will be done to improve classroom processes, support teacher professional development, enhance educational access for disadvantaged groups and streamline educational planning, administration and management.

Promotion of Indian languages
To ensure the preservation, growth, and vibrancy of all Indian languages, NEP recommends setting an Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI), National Institute (or Institutes) for Pali, Persian and Prakrit, strengthening of Sanskrit and all language departments in HEIs, and use mother tongue/local language as a medium of instruction in more HEI programmes. Internationalization of education will be facilitated through both institutional collaborations, and student and faculty mobility and allowing entry of top world ranked Universities to open campuses in our country.

Professional Education
All professional education will be an integral part of the higher education system. Stand- alone technical universities, health science universities, legal and agricultural universities etc will aim to become multi-disciplinary institutions.

Adult Education
Policy aims to achieve 100% youth and adult literacy.

Financing Education
The Centre and the States will work together to increase the public investment in Education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.

New Educational Institutes
Under NEP 2020, numerous new educational institutes, bodies and concepts have been given legislative permission to be formed. These include:
- National Education Commission, headed by the Prime Minister of India
- Academic Bank of Credit, a digital storage of credits earned to help resume education by utilizing credits for further education
- National Research Foundation, to improve research and innovation
- Special Education Zones, to focus on the education of underrepresented group in disadvantaged regions.
- Gender Inclusion Fund, for assisting the nation in the education of female and transgender children
- The policy proposes new language institutions such as the Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation and the National Institute/ Institutes for Pali, Persian and Prakrit. Other bodies proposed include the National Mission for Mentoring, National Book Promotion Policy, National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy.

In my view, teacher education - rather than teacher training - needs to change in the near future. Some experts say it is too late to begin the changes, as we need new competencies in teaching right now. However, if teacher education in Hungary follows its best tradition, and it remains practical, flexible and child-centred, there is a hope that the next generation of learners will get the support and skills they need in life during their schooling years from their own teachers. The need of a generation of teachers who aim to develop learners instead of teaching them, who help their pupils to become independent (learning to learn), who provide students with motivation and interest for life-long learning and urge them to become autonomous learners, is essential in the education of the future. The responsibility of governments, higher education institutions, and mostly teacher educators both in pre-and in- service education, is huge and play a major role in building a better society.

Aim of the National Teacher Policy (NTP)
The aim of the National Teacher Policy (NTP) is to professionalize the teaching profession to levels comparable with other professions like medical, engineering, legal, and accounting among others. Not only are teachers responsible for facilitating learning, but teachers are responsible for encouraging motivation in their student's studies. Teachers bring change and provide guidance in a learner's life. More focus on practical learning rather than theoretical learning. Every student can get quality education no matter caste, gender or any disability. Teachers must have their disciplinary as well as professional associations, which NEP

also desires to establish. Indian teachers have not been able to form vibrant associations. The teachers and the school leaders must become opinion leaders as well and put forth their views on what should change in schooling. There is very little publication from the school leaders. Global competence is a crucial shift in our understanding of the purpose of education in a changing world. Students everywhere deserve the opportunity to succeed in the global economy and contribute as global citizens. We must fashion a more creative and visionary educational response to the interconnected world of the 21st century, starting now. The challenge of quantity must be met head-on, while ensuring quality and equity. Teachers make the highest impact on quality in the classroom. They are at the heart of education. There is a need for high quality teacher educators. For teachers, learning and teaching are a complementary process. No profession is free of challenges. Teachers have to face several hurdles in their careers. Teachers have to recognise/understand children needs & their requirements, deficiencies, weakness, difficulties, problems & strengths etc to make teaching & learning more interesting and qualitative.

2. Conclusion

NEP 2020 recognises that teachers will require training in high-quality content as well as pedagogy. Teachers need to intentionally learn and upskill themselves to keep up with the rapidly changing world. Teachers will be responsible for inculcating 21st-century skills, knowledge, and learning outcomes in students according to their grade level, as per NEP 2020. Teachers need to be given more autonomy in choosing aspects of pedagogy, so that they may teach in the manner they find most effective for the students in their classrooms. Teachers also need to focus on socio-emotional learning - a critical aspect of any student's holistic development. Teachers need to come up with novel approaches in teaching that improve learning outcomes in their classrooms.

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Conflict of Interest
The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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