



Transforming teacher education in India: A critical analysis of the NEP 2020 framework

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Abstract

Teacher education is a key part of improving the quality of education in India. However, the existing system has faced several concerns related to curriculum, teacher preparation, institutional quality, and professional development. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 proposes major reforms to address these concerns. It seeks to make teacher education more holistic, multidisciplinary, practical, and learner-centred. This paper critically examines the framework of NEP 2020 and its implications for teacher education in India. It focuses on important reforms such as the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme, multidisciplinary learning, competency-based preparation, continuous professional development, and the use of technology in teacher training. The paper also examines the challenges that may affect effective implementation. These include limited institutional capacity, shortage of qualified faculty, uneven infrastructure, regional disparities, and gaps between policy goals and practice. The analysis suggests that NEP 2020 has significant potential to strengthen teacher education and improve teacher professionalism. However, its success depends on effective implementation, adequate resources, strong institutions, and continuous monitoring. The paper argues that meaningful transformation requires not only policy reform but also sustained institutional and professional support. A balanced approach can help build a more competent, reflective, inclusive, and future-ready teaching workforce in India.

Keywords: Teacher education, NEP 2020, educational reform, teacher professional development, education policy

Introduction

Teacher education is an important part of a strong education system. Teachers influence how students learn and develop. They do more than teach subjects. They help students build confidence, values, creativity, and critical thinking. Therefore, the quality of teachers depends greatly on the quality of their preparation. In India, teacher education has expanded over time. Yet, several concerns still exist.^[1] These include weak practical training; outdated teaching methods, uneven institutional quality, and limited opportunities for professional development. The needs of classrooms are also changing. Students come from different social and cultural backgrounds. They have different learning abilities and needs. Technology has also become an important part of education. Teachers are now expected to use digital resources and new teaching methods. They must also support inclusive and learner-centred classrooms.^[2] These changes require a different approach to teacher preparation. Teacher education cannot focus only on theoretical knowledge. It must also develop practical skills, professional attitudes, creativity, and the ability to solve classroom problems.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020^[3] provides a new direction for teacher education in India. The policy was approved by the Union Cabinet on 29 July 2020. It seeks to improve the quality of education through wide-ranging reforms. Teacher education is one of its important areas of focus. NEP 2020 places teachers at the centre of educational reform. It proposes changes in teacher preparation, professional development, curriculum, and institutional structures.

One of the major proposals is the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP). The programme aims to combine disciplinary knowledge with professional teacher preparation. This approach can provide future

teachers with a broader academic foundation. NEP 2020 also supports multidisciplinary education. It encourages teacher education to be connected with wider fields of knowledge. Such an approach can help future teachers understand subjects from different perspectives. It can also strengthen their understanding of learners and society.

The policy also gives importance to continuous professional development. Teacher learning should not stop after completing a teacher education programme. Teachers need regular opportunities to update their knowledge and teaching skills. They must be able to respond to new educational practices and changing student needs. Professional development can therefore become an on-going part of a teacher's career.

At the same time, the proposed reforms raise important concerns. A policy can provide a clear vision, but implementation is more complex. Many teacher education institutions face limitations in infrastructure and human resources. There are also differences between institutions and regions. Some institutions may have better facilities and trained faculty than others.^[4] These differences can affect the implementation of national reforms. The availability of qualified teacher educators is another important concern.

There is also a possible gap between policy objectives and actual practice. Introducing a new programme does not automatically improve teacher quality. The quality of curriculum delivery matters. Practical training must also be meaningful. Institutions need adequate resources and effective academic leadership. Schools and teacher education institutions must work closely together. Without these conditions, major policy reforms may produce limited results.^[5]

NEP 2020 therefore needs to be examined from both sides. It offers a strong opportunity to modernise teacher education in India. Its focus on integrated learning, multidisciplinary

education, professional competence, and continuous development is significant. However, these ideas must be supported by realistic implementation strategies. Attention must also be given to equity and institutional differences.

This paper critically examines the transformation of teacher education proposed under NEP 2020. It discusses the major changes introduced by the policy. It also considers the opportunities and limitations associated with these reforms. The paper argues that NEP 2020 has the potential to strengthen teacher education in India. However, its success will depend on effective implementation, adequate resources, qualified faculty, institutional capacity, and continuous evaluation. Meaningful transformation will require more than policy changes. It will require sustained effort at every level of the education system.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the idea that teacher education is a major foundation of educational quality. Well-prepared teachers can respond better to changing classroom needs. They can also support inclusive, creative, and learner-centred education. Therefore, any major change in the education system must also consider how teachers are prepared and supported.

This study views the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as a policy framework for transforming teacher education in India. The policy seeks to move teacher preparation beyond traditional and largely theoretical approaches. It promotes a more integrated, multidisciplinary, practical, and competency-based model. The framework therefore connects policy reform with changes in teacher knowledge, skills, professional attitudes, and classroom practices.^[6]

The first concept in the framework is integrated teacher preparation. NEP 2020 proposes the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme. The programme brings disciplinary knowledge and professional preparation together. This approach is expected to provide future teachers with stronger academic and pedagogical foundations. The framework assumes that teachers need both subject knowledge and knowledge of how students learn.^[7]

The second concept is multidisciplinary education. Teaching is connected with many areas of knowledge. A teacher needs an understanding of society, culture, psychology, language, technology, and education. Multidisciplinary learning can therefore provide a broader perspective. It can help teachers understand students and classroom situations from different viewpoints.^[8]

The third concept is professional competence. Teacher education should develop more than academic knowledge. It should build practical teaching skills. These include lesson planning, classroom management, assessment, communication, problem-solving, and the use of appropriate teaching methods. Continuous professional development is also important. Teachers need opportunities to improve their skills throughout their careers.^[9]

The fourth concept is experiential and practice-based learning. Effective teacher preparation requires meaningful exposure to real classroom situations. Teaching practice can help student teachers connect theory with practice. It can also develop confidence and reflective thinking. The framework therefore considers school-based experience an important part of teacher preparation.^[10]

The fifth concept is technology and innovation. Digital technology is changing the way teaching and learning take place. Teachers need the skills to use technology effectively and responsibly. Technology should not replace teachers. Rather, it should support teaching, assessment, communication, and professional learning. The framework therefore treats digital competence as an emerging component of teacher professionalism.^[11]

The sixth concept is equity and inclusion. India has significant social, economic, linguistic, and regional diversity. Teachers must be prepared to work with learners from different backgrounds. Teacher education should therefore promote inclusive practices and sensitivity towards diverse learning needs. A reform that improves quality but increases inequality cannot be considered fully successful.^[12]

The framework also includes implementation capacity as a critical factor. Policy intentions alone cannot transform teacher education. The availability of qualified teacher educators, infrastructure, financial resources, institutional leadership, regulatory support, and effective monitoring can influence outcomes. Differences among states and institutions may also affect implementation.^[13]

Thus, the conceptual framework establishes a relationship between NEP 2020 reforms, teacher preparation, professional competence, institutional capacity, and educational outcomes. The study assumes that meaningful transformation will occur only when policy reforms are supported by adequate institutional conditions. The framework also recognises that implementation challenges can weaken the expected impact of the policy.

NEP 2020 and the Transformation of Teacher Education in India

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has placed teacher education at the centre of educational reform in India. The policy was approved by the Union Cabinet on 29 July 2020. It presents teachers as a key force behind educational change. This position is important because curriculum reform alone cannot improve learning. The quality of education also depends on the knowledge, skills, values, and professional preparation of teachers. NEP 2020 therefore seeks to change teacher education from a largely qualification-oriented system into a more integrated and professionally focused system.^[14]

A major institutional body in this process is the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE). NCTE is a statutory body established under the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993. It came into existence in its present statutory form in 1995. Its main responsibility is the planned and coordinated development of teacher education and the maintenance of norms and standards. It works under the broader policy environment of the Ministry of Education, Government of India. The role of NCTE is particularly important because NEP 2020 requires changes in both teacher preparation and professional standards.^[15]

One of the most important reforms under NEP 2020 is the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP). The policy proposes that the four-year integrated B.Ed. should become the minimum degree qualification for school teachers by 2030. The programme combines disciplinary knowledge with professional teacher education. It is linked with the 5+3+3+4 structure proposed for school education. This is a significant shift from treating teacher training as a

separate professional qualification. The underlying argument is clear. A good teacher needs strong knowledge of the subject as well as a strong understanding of pedagogy and learners.^[16]

The implementation of ITEP provides an important example of how NEP 2020 is moving from policy to practice. NCTE launched ITEP in pilot mode in the academic session 2023–24. In its first phase, 57 institutions received recognition to offer the programme. These included central and state institutions, government B.Ed. colleges, and institutions working with nearby multidisciplinary higher education institutions.^[17] This development is important because it demonstrates that the integrated model is no longer only a policy proposal. However, the limited initial scale also shows that the transformation is still developing. Expansion must be accompanied by careful monitoring of academic quality.

The multidisciplinary character of ITEP is another important feature. NEP 2020 expects teacher education to gradually become part of multidisciplinary higher education institutions. This approach challenges the traditional separation between general academic education and professional teacher training. Teaching requires knowledge from several fields. Teachers need to understand psychology, language, society, technology, assessment, and pedagogy along with their subject area. Multidisciplinary education can therefore provide future teachers with a wider intellectual foundation. However, simply placing a teacher education programme inside a university does not automatically make it multidisciplinary. Genuine academic interaction across disciplines is necessary.^[18]

NEP 2020 also places strong emphasis on school-based practical training. Teacher education is often criticised when student teachers receive substantial theoretical instruction but limited exposure to real classroom situations. NEP 2020 seeks to strengthen practicum and experiential learning. This is a valuable reform because teaching competence develops through practice as well as study. Student teachers need opportunities to observe classrooms, plan lessons, teach students, assess learning, and reflect on their own performance. The effectiveness of this reform, however, will depend on the quality of school placements and mentoring. A practicum that exists only as a formal requirement will not produce the desired professional competence.^[19]

Another major reform is the development of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST). NEP 2020 assigned NCTE the responsibility of developing common guiding standards for teachers. NCTE subsequently developed the NPST Guiding Document. The framework defines expectations for teachers at different stages of their professional careers and identifies the competencies required for effective teaching. It is also intended to inform pre-service teacher education and professional development.^[20]

The NPST is significant because it attempts to define teacher quality in a systematic manner. It moves the discussion beyond the question of whether a teacher possesses a formal qualification. Professional competence includes knowledge, skills, ethical conduct, classroom practice, and continuing development. The NCTE framework also envisages standards that can support professional growth across different career stages. The Guiding Document was launched in 2024, and the Ministry

of Education approved the NPST Guiding Document and the National Mission for Mentoring (NMM) Bluebook in March 2024.^[21]

The National Mission for Mentoring (NMM) is another important initiative connected with teacher professional development. Its purpose is to create mentoring support for teachers and encourage professional learning through interaction and guidance. NCTE records show that a national mentoring portal was launched in 2023 and that an initial group of 60 mentors was identified for capacity-building activities. This approach recognises an important reality. Teachers cannot be expected to improve only through occasional training programmes. Professional learning is more meaningful when teachers have continuing access to experienced mentors and professional networks.^[22] NEP 2020 also gives importance to continuous professional development (CPD). The policy expects teachers to engage in regular learning and professional improvement. This reflects the changing nature of teaching. Classroom practices, technology, curriculum expectations, and student needs continue to change. A teacher who stops learning after completing a degree may struggle to respond to these changes. Continuous professional development can therefore strengthen teacher adaptability. At the same time, training programmes need to be relevant to classroom realities. Quantity of training should not be confused with quality of professional learning.^[23]

Digital technology is another area influencing the transformation of teacher education. NEP 2020 encourages the use of educational technology and digital resources. Technology can expand access to teaching materials and professional learning. It can also support collaboration among teachers and teacher educators. However, technology cannot replace professional judgement. Digital resources are useful only when teachers know how to select and apply them appropriately. Differences in internet access, devices, digital skills, and institutional facilities can also create unequal opportunities. Therefore, digital teacher education must be supported by investment in infrastructure and capacity building.^[24]

The reform agenda also has a strong connection with inclusive education. Indian classrooms are socially, linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse. Teachers need to understand these differences. NEP 2020 therefore promotes learner-centred and inclusive approaches. Teacher education must prepare future teachers to work with students with different abilities and learning needs. This requires more than a separate course on inclusion. Inclusive thinking should be reflected in curriculum design, teaching practice, assessment, and classroom management.

Despite the breadth of these reforms, implementation remains a major concern. India has a large and diverse teacher education system. Institutions differ in faculty strength, infrastructure, academic resources, governance, and financial capacity. The transition towards multidisciplinary teacher education can therefore be difficult for institutions that lack the necessary resources. NCTE's continuing work on ITEP, NPST, mentoring, and the transformation of teacher education institutions shows that implementation is an ongoing process rather than a completed reform.^[25]

There is also a risk of focusing too heavily on structural reform. Introducing a four-year programme or establishing

professional standards does not automatically improve teaching quality. The real test lies in what happens inside classrooms. Student teachers need competent teacher educators. They need meaningful school experience. Teachers need useful professional development. Institutions need adequate resources. Regulatory bodies need effective monitoring. Without these supporting conditions, ambitious policy objectives may remain largely formal.

Therefore, NEP 2020 should be understood as an opportunity for transformation rather than a guarantee of transformation. Its major reforms are significant because they address several weaknesses in conventional teacher preparation. ITEP can integrate academic and professional learning. Multidisciplinary education can broaden teacher knowledge. Practicum can connect theory with classroom practice. NPST can provide a clearer understanding of professional competence. NMM can strengthen mentoring. Continuous professional development can support lifelong teacher learning.

The overall transformation, however, will depend on implementation quality. The Ministry of Education, NCTE, higher education institutions, teacher education institutions, universities, state education departments, and schools must work together. Their roles cannot remain separate. Teacher education is closely connected with school education. Reform will be meaningful only when changes in teacher preparation are reflected in actual classroom practice.

In this sense, NEP 2020 represents a significant change in the philosophy of teacher education in India. It moves the focus from obtaining a teaching qualification towards developing a capable and continuously learning professional. The policy provides a broad framework for this transition. The challenge now is to ensure that institutional capacity, professional support, resources, and quality assurance develop at the same pace. The success of the reform should ultimately be measured not by the number of programmes introduced, but by whether future and practising teachers become better prepared to support diverse learners and improve the quality of education in India.

Major Reform Dimensions of Teacher Education under NEP 2020

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 proposes a broad restructuring of teacher education in India. Its approach is different from a narrow focus on teacher certification. It places greater emphasis on professional competence, multidisciplinary learning, practical experience, continuous development, and institutional quality. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has been given a major role in translating these ideas into programmes and professional standards. NCTE identifies the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), National Mission for Mentoring (NMM), and revision of teacher education curricula and regulations as major areas of reform.

1. Integrated and Multidisciplinary Teacher Education

The four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) is a major reform under NEP 2020. The policy proposes it as the minimum qualification for school teachers by 2030. ITEP combines subject knowledge with professional teacher preparation through a dual-major

structure. It covers Education and a specialised subject, along with areas such as psychology, sociology, early childhood education, foundational literacy, educational technology, and Indian knowledge. The model recognises that subject knowledge alone does not make an effective teacher. However, its success depends on institutional quality. NCTE recognised 42 institutions for 2023–24 and 22 for 2024–25. Expansion must therefore be supported by monitoring and quality assurance.^[26]

2. Shift towards Multidisciplinary Institutions

NEP 2020 proposes that teacher education should gradually be located in multidisciplinary higher education institutions. This is a significant structural change. Traditional teacher education can sometimes operate separately from wider academic and research environments. The multidisciplinary model seeks to overcome this separation.

A future teacher may teach mathematics but also need knowledge of psychology, language, technology, culture, assessment, and child development. Exposure to different disciplines can therefore make teacher preparation broader and more relevant. It can encourage future teachers to understand education as a social and intellectual process.

Yet, institutional restructuring alone cannot create multidisciplinary education. A college may become formally linked to a university without creating meaningful interaction between disciplines. Faculty collaboration, shared courses, research activity, and academic exchange are necessary. The reform will therefore require more than administrative reclassification.

3. Stronger Practicum and Experiential Learning

Another important reform is the focus on practical and experiential learning. NEP 2020 gives greater importance to school-based training so that student teachers can connect theory with real classroom experiences. Teaching is a practice-oriented profession, and theoretical knowledge alone cannot prepare teachers for every classroom situation. Practical experience can improve confidence, communication, lesson planning, classroom management, and reflective skills. However, the quality of practicum is crucial. It should not be treated as a formal requirement. Student teachers need regular supervision, guidance, and feedback. Strong partnerships between teacher education institutions and schools are therefore essential for meaningful professional preparation.

4. Competency-Based Teacher Preparation and Professional Standards

NEP 2020 seeks to strengthen teacher quality by focusing on professional competence. The National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), developed through NCTE, provide guidance on teacher preparation, classroom practice, professional growth, lifelong learning, and career development. Teacher quality should not be judged only by academic qualifications. Effective teachers must understand learners, plan lessons, assess progress, communicate clearly, and respond to different classroom needs. However, professional standards should not become rigid measures of performance. Teaching also requires creativity, judgement, empathy, and awareness of local contexts. Therefore, NPST should support professional growth rather than impose excessive control.

5. Continuous Professional Development and Mentoring

NEP 2020 views teacher development as a continuing process. This is reflected in the National Mission for Mentoring (NMM). NCTE has taken responsibility for both NMM and NPST as part of its NEP-related mandates.

The mentoring approach is valuable because teachers often learn through professional interaction. An experienced teacher can help a beginning teacher deal with classroom challenges. Mentoring can also encourage reflection and sharing of good practices. However, professional development should not be reduced to attending training programmes. Teachers need opportunities to apply what they learn. They also need feedback and institutional support. Professional development becomes meaningful when it is connected with actual classroom problems.

6. Technology and Digital Transformation

Technology has become another important dimension of teacher education reform. NEP 2020 supports the use of educational technology and digital resources in teaching and teacher preparation. NCTE has also identified digital architecture and open educational resources among its reform-related activities. Digital tools can expand access to learning materials. They can support online professional development. They can also help teachers collaborate across geographical boundaries. These benefits are particularly relevant in a large country such as India. However, digital transformation also creates challenges. Institutions differ in their access to devices, connectivity, technical support, and trained personnel. Teachers may also have different levels of digital competence. Technology can therefore reduce educational barriers in one context while creating new inequalities in another. Digital reform must be supported by infrastructure and teacher training.

7. Reform of Teacher Education Regulation and Quality Assurance

NEP 2020 calls for significant improvements in the regulation of teacher education. NCTE has revised its regulations and programmes to align them with the policy. The NCTE (Amendment) Regulations, 2021 established the framework for ITEP, while later changes supported the transition of existing integrated programmes. Effective regulation is important for maintaining standards in curriculum, faculty, infrastructure, and institutional functioning. However, regulation should not become excessive or restrictive. Too much procedural control may limit innovation. The key challenge is to maintain quality standards while giving institutions flexibility to address local educational needs.

8. Inclusion, Equity, and Learner-Centred Teacher Education

NEP 2020 places strong emphasis on inclusive and learner-centred education. This approach requires changes in teacher preparation. Indian classrooms bring together learners with different languages, cultures, social conditions, economic backgrounds, and abilities. Teachers must therefore be prepared to understand these differences and address varied learning needs. Teacher education should develop flexible teaching approaches and encourage respect for diversity. Inclusion should not be limited to theoretical lessons or examination requirements. It should be reflected

in everyday classroom practices. However, teachers may face shortages of resources, limited institutional support, and inadequate specialised assistance. Therefore, effective inclusive education also requires broader improvements in the school system.

Critical Analysis of Implementation: Challenges and Prospects

The implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has gradually moved from policy discussion to institutional action. However, the process is still evolving. Teacher education involves universities, teacher education institutions, schools, regulatory agencies, state governments, and the Ministry of Education. Effective implementation therefore requires coordination among all these stakeholders.

A key reform under NEP 2020 is the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP). The policy proposes a four-year integrated B.Ed. as the minimum qualification for school teachers by 2030. NCTE has introduced ITEP in multidisciplinary institutions, with admission through the National Common Entrance Test (NCET). The programme combines Education with another disciplinary subject and provides preparation for different stages of school education.

The progress of ITEP also highlights some practical difficulties. NCTE records show that 42 institutions were recognised for ITEP in 2023–24 and 22 in 2024–25. This gradual expansion suggests that the reform is being introduced in phases. It also raises a broader concern about whether enough well-equipped multidisciplinary institutions can be developed within the policy timeline.

A major challenge is the capacity of existing teacher education institutions. NEP 2020 aims to move teacher education towards multidisciplinary higher education institutions. This change requires more than administrative restructuring. Institutions need qualified faculty, suitable infrastructure, digital resources, research facilities, and effective academic leadership. NCTE has issued guidelines for transforming stand-alone teacher education institutions into multidisciplinary institutions, showing that this transition is complex and demanding.

The availability of qualified teacher educators is another important issue. Curriculum reform can have limited impact if faculty members are not adequately prepared to implement it. Teacher educators need knowledge of pedagogy, research, technology, assessment, inclusion, and experiential learning. Simply expanding new programmes without improving faculty capacity may result in structural change without meaningful improvement.

The quality of practical training is equally important. NEP 2020 gives greater importance to school-based experience because teaching skills develop through actual practice. However, practicum becomes valuable only when student teachers receive proper guidance, supervision, and feedback. Strong and continuous partnerships between schools and teacher education institutions are therefore essential.

Regional inequality creates another challenge. Teacher education institutions across India differ in infrastructure, faculty strength, funding, and academic capacity. As a result, the same policy may produce different outcomes in different regions. Implementation must recognise these differences and provide additional support to institutions that face greater resource constraints.

The National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) provide an important opportunity for professional improvement. The framework can clarify expectations regarding teacher competence, professional growth, and continuous learning. However, professional standards should not become a rigid system of evaluation. Teaching takes place in different social, cultural, and institutional settings. Standards should therefore provide direction while allowing teachers sufficient professional flexibility.

Continuous professional development and mentoring are also central to sustainable reform. NEP 2020 recognises that teacher learning should continue throughout a teacher's career. NCTE's National Mission for Mentoring can provide professional support, especially to beginning teachers. Its success, however, will depend on whether mentoring develops into regular professional guidance rather than becoming another routine training exercise.

Technology offers additional opportunities for teacher education. Online platforms can provide access to courses, teaching resources, professional networks, and learning materials. They can also help reach teachers in remote areas. Yet technology alone cannot remove existing inequalities. Poor internet access, limited digital devices, weak digital skills, and inadequate technical support may reduce its effectiveness. Digital initiatives must therefore be accompanied by proper infrastructure and training.

Another concern is the regulatory burden. NCTE regulation is important for maintaining quality and professional standards. At the same time, excessive procedural requirements can limit institutional flexibility and innovation. A balanced regulatory approach is needed. It should protect quality while allowing institutions to experiment with new approaches to teacher preparation.

NEP 2020 also faces a policy-to-practice gap. A policy may establish new objectives, but these objectives do not automatically change what happens in classrooms. For instance, adopting competency-based education does not necessarily result in competency-based teaching or assessment. Similarly, introducing multidisciplinary courses does not guarantee meaningful interdisciplinary learning. Implementation should therefore be evaluated through actual practices and educational outcomes rather than formal compliance alone.

Recent NCTE initiatives indicate that the implementation process is continuing. The organisation has issued notices and guidelines related to ITEP, institutional transition, and participation in the new framework. This suggests that institutions are still adapting to the structural and regulatory changes introduced under NEP 2020.

Conclusion

NEP 2020 marks a significant change in the approach to teacher education in India. It places greater emphasis on professional skills, practical preparation, multidisciplinary knowledge, inclusion, and lifelong learning. The four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) is an important part of this change. By combining academic subjects with professional training, it can help future teachers develop a stronger understanding of both what to teach and how to teach. The policy also introduces professional standards, mentoring, experiential learning, and stronger quality regulation. Together, these measures can improve teacher preparation and help teachers respond to changing classroom needs. However, policy reforms cannot

produce results without suitable institutional conditions. Shortages of qualified teacher educators, inadequate infrastructure, unequal resources, and weak school–institution linkages may limit the effectiveness of these reforms.

The gradual expansion of ITEP indicates that implementation is underway. However, increasing the number of participating institutions should not be treated as evidence of improved teacher quality. Greater attention is needed to curriculum delivery, faculty development, practical training, and student outcomes. Professional standards should also support improvement without restricting teachers' creativity, judgement, and independence.

Teacher education must further reflect the diversity of Indian classrooms. Future teachers need preparation in inclusive education, digital learning, assessment, classroom management, and learner-centred approaches. Continuous professional development can help teachers update their knowledge and respond to new educational challenges. At the institutional level, innovation should be encouraged while maintaining appropriate national standards.

The involvement of teachers and teacher educators is equally important. They should not be viewed only as recipients of policy decisions. Their experience can provide valuable insight into what works and what remains difficult in practice. Regular feedback from teachers, institutions, schools, and learners can help policymakers identify implementation gaps and make necessary improvements.

Conclusively, NEP 2020 offers a promising framework for improving teacher education in India. Its success, however, will depend on implementation rather than policy intention alone. Adequate resources, capable faculty, meaningful practicum, effective monitoring, professional participation, and institutional cooperation are essential. The ultimate success of the policy should be measured by whether it produces confident, competent, reflective, and socially responsive teachers. If its reforms are implemented carefully and evaluated continuously, NEP 2020 can contribute significantly to improving both teacher education and the wider quality of school education in India.

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