# Towards Quality Teachers, Quality Education: Challenges And Opportunities In Indian Teacher Education Under NEP-2020

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**Abstract:** Quality education of the learner depends on quality teachers and, an inclusive and fear-free environment. For quality, teachers we need quality in teacher education programs. National Education Policy 2020 is the third national education policy launched by the government of India on July 29, 2020. The new education policy framework aims to provide quality education to every learner as well as the whole country and to highlight India's education in a world-class context. The objective of the paper focuses on various challenges faced by teacher education programs that hinder the quality of education. The present study is qualitative in nature. Content analysis techniques are used to analyze various challenges faced by teacher education programs. The findings of the study revealed factors like lack of quality teacher training Institutes, upgrading curriculum and pedagogical approaches, ensuring quality in teacher recruitment and selection, bridging the gap between theory and practical exposure, embracing technological integration in teacher education, poor learning outcomes and teacher quality, etc. are the current challenges faced by teacher education programs. The new National Education Policy on Teacher Education will focus on enhancing the quality of teacher education and present the teacher education system in a world-class context by overcoming these challenges.

*Index Terms* **- NEP-2020, Quality Education, Education policy framework**

## I. INTRODUCTION

On July 29, 2020, the Indian government finally unveiled the third National Education Policy, which had been in the works for almost 27 years. The key to this new policy is to provide quality education to every learner as well as the whole country and to highlight India's education in a world-class context. The draft of this policy is divided into four parts namely part-I (school education), part -II (higher education), part -III (another key area of focus) and Part- IV (making it happen)(Ravi Babu, n.d.)

Teacher education, a critical component of the NEP 2020, plays a central role in shaping the quality of education and nurturing future generations. Teacher education plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of
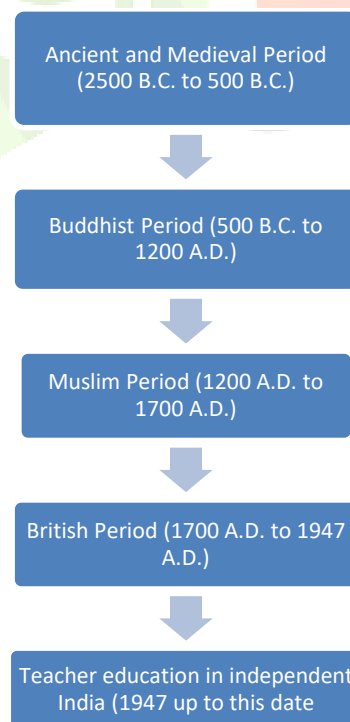
education and the overall development of students (Menon et al., 2023). The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India recognizes the importance of teacher education and proposes several reforms to address the challenges faced in this domain (Biswas, n.d.).

**Recommendation of NEP 2020 regarding teacher education**

❖ Enhancing the standard of teacher preparation programs and taking action against the commercialization of the teaching profession.

❖ Emphasis on multidisciplinary perspectives, values, language, and ethos including tribal tradition.

❖ The implementation of Integrated Teachers Training has received particular attention.

❖ The new national education policy includes measures to upgrade educational institutions' infrastructure to sustain the quality of teacher education.

❖ Implement an entrance exam for students applying to press service teacher education to uphold the caliber of teacher preparation.

❖ Special emphasis has been placed on research work in the field of teacher education.

The teacher education program begins with the ancient educational system and continues to shape the current system following the local and global needs of Indian society. The progress of a country depends upon the quality of its teachers and for this reason, teaching is the noblest among all professions. Teaching is one of the oldest and most respected professions in the world(*Book*, n.d.). The role, functions, competence, and preparation of teachers have undergone a dramatic change from time to time but the need for teachers has been imperative for all times.

The history of Indian teacher education may be divided into five parts(*Book*, n.d.).



Ancient and Medieval Period (2500 B.C. to 500 B.C.)

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Buddhist Period (500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.)

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Muslim Period (1200 A.D. to 1700 A.D.)

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British Period (1700 A.D. to 1947 A.D.)

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Teacher education in independent India (1947 up to this date

**(Fig. History of Indian Teacher Education)**

**Meaning of Teacher Education**

"All formal and informal activities and experiences that help to qualify to a person to assume the responsibility as a member of the educational profession or to discharge his responsibility most effectively"- Good's dictionary

Teacher education encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory, and professional skills. Teacher Education = Teaching Skills + Pedagogical skills + Professional Skills(*Challenges of Teacher Education*, n.d.).

**Teaching skills**- Teaching skills refer to different techniques, approaches, and strategies that would help the teachers to plan and impart instruction, provide appropriate reinforcement, and conduct effective assessments. It includes effective classroom management skills, preparation and use of instructional materials, and communication skills.

**Pedagogical skills**- refer to the abilities and competencies that teachers possess to effectively facilitate the learning process and engage students in meaningful ways. These skills are essential for creating a successful and impactful learning experience.

**Professional skills**- include the techniques, strategies and approaches that would help teachers to grow in the profession and also work towards the growth of the profession. It includes soft skills, counseling skills, interpersonal skills, computer skills, information retrieving and management skills and above all lifelong learning skills.

Quality teacher education is a crucial aspect of improving student achievement and overall educational outcomes. Research has shown that teacher quality is one of the most important factors influencing student success in the classroom.

## 2. OBJECTIVES:

1. To identify key challenges faced by pre-service and in-service teachers.
2. To investigate the impact of technological advancement and changing educational trends on teacher education programs and practices.
3. To explore the barriers and obstacles that hinder effective teacher preparation and continuous professional development.

## 3. RESEARCH QUESTION:

1. What are the key challenges faced by teachers during their training and professional development?
2. How do the changing educational landscape and technological advancement impact teacher education programs?
3. What are the barriers and obstacles that hinder effective teacher preparation and continuous professional development?

## 4. METHODOLOGY:

The present paper is a documentary study and qualitative in nature. The content analysis method was used by the researcher. The research work is mainly based on various sources like academic journals and articles, curriculum analysis, policy documents, official reports and publications (reports of GOI, NEP-2020 final daft), books and book chapters, conference proceedings, online course materials, etc.

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

After going through the content analysis, the findings for the objective are discussed below

### 5.1 Challenges of teacher education:

➢ **Lack of Quality Teacher Training Institutes:** Inadequate number of high-quality teacher training institutes that can effectively deliver the updated curriculum and pedagogical practices envisioned in NEP-2020.

➢ **Upgrading Curriculum and Pedagogical Approaches:** The need to revamp the teacher education curriculum to align with the recommendations of NEP-2020 and incorporate innovative pedagogical approaches.

➢ **Ensuring Quality in Teacher Recruitment and Selection:** Maintaining rigorous standards for teacher recruitment and selection processes to ensure that competent and dedicated individuals are chosen for teacher education programs.

➢ **Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practical Exposure:** Addressing the gap between theoretical knowledge acquired during teacher education and the practical skills required for effective classroom instruction.

➢ **Embracing Technological Integration in Teacher Education:** Incorporating technology-enabled learning and digital literacy into teacher education programs to equip educators with the skills necessary for digital classrooms and online instruction.

➢ **Strengthening Continuous Professional Development:** Sustaining ongoing professional development opportunities for in-service teachers to keep pace with evolving educational policies, methodologies, and research findings.

➢ **Poor Learning Outcomes and Teacher Quality:** One of the major challenges in teacher education is the poor learning outcomes in Indian classrooms. The NEP 2020 acknowledges that this is often a result of inadequate teacher education, recruitment, deployment, and service conditions. The policy emphasizes the need to improve the quality of teachers by enhancing their training, skills, and motivation.

➢ **Attracting Bright and Talented Individuals to Teaching:** Another challenge is attracting bright and talented individuals to the teaching profession. The NEP 2020 aims to make teaching an attractive profession of choice for young minds. It proposes reforms such as competitive salaries, career progression opportunities, and recognition for outstanding teachers. The goal is to create an environment that encourages the best minds to choose teaching as their profession.

➢ **Pre-Service Teacher Education:** The NEP 2020 recommends the development of a National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE 2021) to guide all teacher education, both pre-service and in-service. This framework will cover teachers working in academic, vocational, and special education streams. It aims to provide a comprehensive and standardized approach to teacher education, ensuring that teachers are well-prepared to meet the diverse needs of students.

➢ **Implementation Challenges:** Implementing the reforms proposed by the NEP 2020 poses practical challenges for the government, universities, and schools. It requires effective translation of the policy into action, allocation of adequate resources and infrastructure, and alignment of the education system with the

policy's objectives. Overcoming these challenges will be crucial to ensure the successful implementation of the reforms.

➢ **Cultural Revolution in Higher Education:** The NEP 2020 envisions a cultural revolution in higher education, including teacher education. It aims to break disciplinary silos and encourage interdisciplinary learning. This cultural shift requires a change in the mindset of scholars and teachers, who are traditionally anchored in their disciplines. It will necessitate a transformation in the higher education system over the next 15-20 years.

➢ **Large-Scale Implementation:** The NEP 2020 calls for a large-scale implementation of its reforms, considering the vast population of school-going and college-going age groups in India. This presents both quantitative and qualitative challenges, including the need for simplifying decision-making structures, reallocation of budgetary resources, and capacity building at various levels of the education system.

## 6. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES:

It is important to note that the NEP 2020 recognizes these challenges and proposes reforms to address them. The policy aims to improve teacher education, attract talented individuals to the teaching profession, and create a more inclusive and equitable education system in India.

➢ **Enhancing Teacher Education Programs**: Teacher education programs should be redesigned to align with the objectives of NEP-2020 and focus on providing high-quality training in content, pedagogy, and practice. This can be achieved by revising the curriculum, incorporating innovative teaching methods, and promoting experiential learning.

➢ **Improving Recruitment and Deployment**: Efforts should be made to improve the recruitment and deployment processes for teachers. This can include implementing merit-based scholarship programs to attract talented individuals to the teaching profession, especially from rural areas. Additionally, measures should be taken to improve service conditions and provide professional growth opportunities for teachers.

➢ **Strengthening In-Service Teacher Training**: In-service teacher training programs should be strengthened to ensure that teachers have access to continuous professional development opportunities. This can be done through the establishment of comprehensive training frameworks, collaboration with educational institutions and organizations, and the use of technology-enabled training platforms.

➢ **Integrating Technology**: Teacher education programs should integrate technology and digital skills training to prepare teachers for the digital age. This can involve incorporating technology-enabled teaching methods, providing access to digital resources, and offering specialized training programs for teachers to enhance their digital literacy.

➢ **Collaboration and Partnerships**: Collaboration between educational institutions, government agencies, and other stakeholders is crucial for the successful implementation of NEP-2020 and addressing the challenges of teacher education. Partnerships can facilitate the sharing of best practices, resources, and expertise, leading to improved teacher education outcomes.

By implementing these strategies, it is possible to overcome the challenges and ensure that teacher education aligns with the goals and objectives of NEP-2020, ultimately leading to the development of a skilled and motivated teaching workforce in India.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The National Education Policy 2020 presents a progressive roadmap for transforming teacher education in India. However, several challenges need to be addressed to effectively implement the policy's vision. Tackling the obstacles related to quality teacher training institutes, curriculum revamping, and embracing technological integration, among others, will be essential in realizing the goals of NEP-2020. By prioritizing these challenges and implementing targeted strategies, India can work towards establishing a robust and effective teacher education system that prepares educators to meet the evolving demands of the 21st-century education landscape.

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