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HIGHER EDUCATION AND POLICIES REFORMS: KEY FOR SUCCESS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

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ABSTRACT

Education has a key and decisive role in this scenario of contingencies. The National Education Policy 2020 has therefore been transformed into the framework of this reform, which could help to build a new education system in the country. The new education policy 2020 promises to bring about several sweeping reforms to update and modernize the Indian education system. Some of the most welcome changes among these are concerning teachers. The current paper describes the analysis of the requirements for NEP 2020, NCERT 2022 Guidelines on CDP and NCF recommendation in 2022 for Early Childhood Care and Education and teacher's role and responsibility to make success of NEP 2020.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers truly shape the future of our children - and, therefore, the future of our nation. It is because of this noblest role that the teacher in India was the most respected member of society. Society gave teachers, or shastri, what they needed to pass on their knowledge, skills, and ethics optimally to students.

To influence education policy, teachers need to stay informed about the policies that are in the works and how they might affect students. It's important for teachers to not only have an overview of what's going on in education policy but also an understanding of the different arguments and perspectives surrounding these policies. The quality of teacher education, recruitment, deployment, service conditions, and empowerment of teachers is not where it should be, and consequently the quality and motivation of teachers does not reach the desired standards.

In 2020, the Ministry of Human Resource Development introduced the NEP or the New Education Policy. NEP 2020 holds dismal conditions of teacher education, recruitment, deployment, and service conditions responsible for the lack of teaching quality and motivation among Indian teachers. The policy emphasizes the importance of high-quality teacher education. It aims to initiate several systemic reforms to encourage bright and talented young minds to take up the teaching profession.

FEATURES AND KEY BENEFITS OF THE NEP 2020

- Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education to be raised to 50% by 2035, Around 3.5 crore seats to be added in higher education.
- Teachers and faculty as the heart of the learning process
- Use of technology in teaching and learning
- Universalization of education from preschool to secondary level.
- Introduction of a new pedagogical and curricular structure based on cognitive and socio-emotional development of students.
- Emphasis on the development of foundational literacy and numeracy skills in primary education.
- Increased focus on research and development in education.

Here are some of the crucial reforms brought about by NEP for teacher education-

TEACHER RECRUITMENT & EMPLOYMENT

For recruitment in a private or government school, the teacher must qualify through Teacher Eligibility Tests (TETs) conducted by the National Testing Agency. Teacher Eligibility Tests (TETs) will now be extended to cover teachers across all the new stages (Foundational, Preparatory, Middle, and Secondary) of school education. For subject teachers, TET as well as NTA test scores in the corresponding subjects will also be considered for recruitment.

NEP 2020 encourages schools to deal with a shortage of teachers by sharing teachers across campuses, especially for disciplines such as art, craft, music, and dance. The policy also recommends reaching out to local eminent persons or experts as ‘master instructors’ in traditional arts.

TEACHING CAREER & PROFESSIONALISM

The NEP aims to set the National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) to determine all aspects of teacher career management, efforts for professional development, salary hikes, etc. Teacher audits and professional appraisals are also an essential part of NEP for teachers.

On July 2022, NCERT has developed suggestive CPD guidelines, covering all the significant areas of teacher education, tailored to the time and needs of teachers and Head teachers. The suggested guidelines under the 50 hours of CPD programme would comprise various programmes and activities for participants with allotted time for each activity. The focus of the suggested pursuit is to encourage proactive learning and community participation following a bottom-up approach. The blended mode and cafeteria approach suggested in the document will provide autonomy to teachers to choose programmes/activities according to their time schedule and curricular needs, thus fostering their first-hand experiences.

Continuous Professional Development Portfolio An electronic portfolio (e-portfolio) is a purposeful collection of teachers' 50-hour CPD activities that showcase the teacher's learning progression. The collection can include articles, certificates of paper presentations, workshops, online short-term courses, etc. The collection will also include the analysis of their skills and competencies; setting the goals and objectives; a personal needs analysis; identifying the needs; determining the gaps with existing skills and competencies; and, regular periodic reviews. Authorities will analyse each teacher's portfolio and share feedback in a stipulated time period, as decided by an appropriate authority.

SOCIALIZATION OF TEACHER EMPOWERMENT

The policy defines the essential role of teachers in NEP 2020. Teachers are to be given the right to participate in setting school goals and policies in the long run. Involving teachers in the reform process by giving them the freedom to decide what and how to teach will provide them with space and ownership over their work. The critical aspect of teacher autonomy is deemed to empower teachers and motivate them to perform better. The policy also aims to recognize, document, and share

innovative pedagogies and teaching methods devised by Indian teachers. And finally, under the enculturation of teacher empowerment, NEP will also work to build vibrant teacher communities for better networking and reducing isolation among teachers. Innovative teaching methods adopted by teachers to improve the learning outcomes will be recognized, documented, and shared widely as recommended practices.

Implementation of NEP will require discarding the age-old practices of memorization and rote learning and adopting Constructivist pedagogies to go beyond textbooks and the aim must be to change from syllabus completion to achieving learning outcomes.

The NEP emphasizes the teacher's contribution, their sacrifice, and efforts to uphold the dignity, respect and honor of this profession. This can happen only if the policymakers consider creating an independent agency like Teacher Recruitment Board/ Indian Teaching Services on the lines of Indian Administrative Services or State Civil Services and speeding the recruitment of the teachers which is pending for about a decade. The policy makers should be light in their approach, while giving them all the perks and facilities to attract the young, intelligent, and creative minds in this profession but should be tight while monitoring them for getting the desired results, making them accountable and responsible.

Punctuality is an attribute that may be considered as an essential requirement for every individual irrespective of his/her profession; more so far, a teacher as it is linked with the career of future citizens. Once one accepts the teaching profession, he/she must maintain a timeline for all activities in an academic institution as well as in the system so that the system runs without hindrance. Adherence to professional ethics is an attribute required by every professional. Ethics are the essence of every life. Teachers are role models for the students, and they imitate teachers to a great extent in their lives. Passion for knowledge & lifelong learning is another attribute that is needed for a teacher to be successful in their career. If a teacher develops a feeling that on completion of his/her acquiring the required qualification (degree/diploma), his/her learning is complete, he/she can't be a good teacher in life; rather he will simply do a teaching job to earn his livelihood.

SPECIAL EDUCATORS

There is an urgent need for additional special educators for certain areas of school education. Some examples of such specialist requirements include subject teaching for children with disabilities/ Divyang children at the Middle and Secondary school level, including teaching for specific learning disabilities. Greater synergy will be enabled between the course curriculum of NCTE and RCI to ensure adequate availability of qualified special educators who can handle subject teaching as well. Approach to Teacher Education.

Recognizing that the teachers will require training in high-quality content as well as pedagogy, teacher education will gradually be moved by 2030 into multidisciplinary colleges and universities. As colleges and universities all move towards becoming multidisciplinary, they will also aim to house outstanding education departments that offer B.Ed., M.Ed., and Ph.D. degrees in education.

By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree that teaches a range of knowledge content and pedagogy and includes strong practicum training in the form of student-teaching at local schools. The 2-year B.Ed. programmes will also be offered, by the same multidisciplinary institutions offering the 4-year integrated B.Ed. and will be intended only for those who have already obtained Bachelor's Degrees in other specialized subjects. All such B.Ed. degrees would be offered only by accredited multidisciplinary higher education institutions offering 4-year integrated B.Ed. programmes.

Special shorter local teacher education programmes will also be available at BITEs, DIETs, or at school complexes themselves for eminent local persons who can be hired to teach at schools or school complexes as 'master instructors', for the purpose of promoting local professions, knowledge, and skills, e.g., local art, music, agriculture, business, sports, carpentry, and other vocational crafts.

Shorter post-B.Ed. certification courses will also be made widely available, at multidisciplinary colleges and universities, to teachers who may wish to move into more specialized areas of teaching, such as the teaching of students with disabilities, or into leadership and management positions in the schooling system, or to move

from one stage to another between foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary stages.

THE NCF FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION: REFORMS

In September 2021, the Union Ministry of Education constituted a 12-member national steering committee to develop a new National Curriculum Framework (NCF) in line with the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP). The National Curriculum Framework has far-reaching impact as it serves as a guideline for designing syllabus, textbooks, and informs teaching practices in the country. The

NCF will be the torchbearer of the overhaul of the Indian Education System and will show positive changes by 2030. NEP principles will be implemented through NCF for each stage. The National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCFECCE) is the one for the foundational stage (3-8 years). It was launched by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on October 20, 2022.

The NCF for Early Childhood Care and Education is a step in that direction and aims to develop a lifelong love for learning in children. Taking cues from ancient Indian traditions, NCF will lead to Panchakosha Vikas (five-fold development) in children. In fact, the entire curriculum is centered around the development of these sheaths:

- Physical Development (Sharirik Vikas)
- Development of Life Energy (Pranik Vikas)
- Emotional/Mental Development (Manasik Vikas)
- Intellectual Development (Bauddhik Vikas)
- Spiritual Development (Chaitisik Vikas)

It is established that over 85% of an individual's brain development occurs by age 6. Hence, the Panchakosha Vikas model will truly enhance children's mindfulness.



Quality Education, Learning without Burden and Decolonizing the Indian Education System – these 3 perfectly capture the essence of the National Curriculum Framework. If you want your school to make the future generation smart, both intellectually and emotionally, then shake hands with LEAD to utilise cutting-edge EdTech solutions always to be one step ahead. NCFTE will thereafter be revised once every 5-10 years by reflecting the changes in revised NCFs as well as emerging needs in teacher education.

It is worth mentioning that while proposing various provisions for holistic, multidisciplinary, and universally accessible education, the NEP 2020 has also suggested process for recruitment of quality teachers with transparency, teachers' training, promotional avenues, teacher empowerment, handsome salary with social security and incentives so that the nation builders can devote themselves for the purpose they are appointed. However, in addition to teaching, nowadays, every teacher has multiple roles to be played in an institution where some responsibilities are administrative, including organizing various events, handling students' and employees' matters etc. As such, a teacher may have to attain some attributes to deal with these activities in the greater interest of an establishment in general and as an ideal teacher.

Keeping in mind that "Teachers affect eternity; no one can tell where their influence stops" (Henry Brooks Adams).

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