

## **Professional Development of In-service Teachers in National Education Policy 2020: Challenges and Opportunities**

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### **Abstract**

Improvement in knowledge and skills bring desired outcome of the teaching-learning process. This is what a teacher should be aspire to do in the course of time in in-service of teaching. This is what the professional development of the teachers refers too. A quality teacher education system should have a provision to help the in-service teachers in the career advancement which benefits all the stakeholders. Most of the best teacher education system of the world has systematic plan for the professional development of in-service teachers. India, which has one of the oldest teacher education systems, is trying to make her teacher education modern and advanced with the help of professional development of the teachers. Recently, India has implemented National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 to redesign and re-energise the education system with the goals to transform it into one of the best education system of the world in general and teacher education in particular. NEP 2020 has also emphasized much on the professional development of in-service teachers. In context of this, the paper has analysed the challenges and opportunities of NEP 2020 for the professional development of teachers. By implying the theoretical framework, the researchers have analysed the various challenges and opportunities for the professional development of in-service teachers. The data generated from this study would be helpful in refinement of the various provisions of NEP 2020 in future and its implementation at various levels. This study will create additional path for further research for the planners, various stakeholders of teacher education and researches.

**Key Words: Teacher Education; National Education Policy 2020; Professional Development; In-service Teachers; Challenges & Opportunities**

## **Professional Development of In-service Teachers in National Education Policy 2020: Challenges and Opportunities**

In present fast moving world the knowledge explosion is unprecedented and the concept of learn, unlearn and re-learn is the mantra of success in the education. The problem of this fast moving world is how to update the existing knowledge, skills and values to meet the emerging challenges. The more speed in the changes in the education process the more challenges to the teachers and their education. There is a need to update the knowledge, skills and values of the teacher education to make it vibrant. Further the professional commitment and career advancement of the teachers are essential to keep the teacher motivated to perform desired tasks of teaching and learning. This updating and up gradation in teacher service is called the Professional Development (PD) of the teachers. The Professional development is defined as “The process by which ... teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents ... and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills, planning and practice... through each phase of their teaching lives” <sup>1</sup> While, The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) explains the Professional Development of Teachers as ““Professional development is defined as activities that develop an individual’s skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher.” <sup>2</sup> In both definitions of the Professional Development of the Teachers (PDT) the activities of the in-service teachers for the development of knowledge, skills, experiences etc. are important.

After 34 years of National policy of Education 1986, the government of India has introduced the National Education Policy 2020 to guide the national education at every level for the needs of the nation and for the 21th century. With the coming of the educational technology, Artificial intelligence (AI), Industry 4.0 and subsequent result of the massive change at every level of human affairs, it was needed to change the policy at every level particularly in education. The NEP 2020 recognises the role of the professional development of the teachers in bringing quality education and thus gave special emphasis on the professional development of the teachers.

An education system should cater the needs of the individual and the society. Without guiding the education the needs of the individual and the society, cannot be fruitful for personal growth, societal progress and national development. Many studies show that there is a correlation between the educations particularly the quality education and the economic development of a nation. Many

studies also show that there is a relationship between quality education and professional development of the in-service teachers. The more and more the in service teachers would be active in the teaching and learning the more and the education system would be vibrant and thriving. And to keep the in-service teachers active the role of professional development is important. Professional development encourages the in service teachers to move ahead in ladder of career, epistemological advancement of the subjects, pedagogy, curriculum etc. and bring the desired changes in the education of the schools and children. It means the professional development is indirect molding of the new generation learners in desired direction. In the words of Dilshad, Hussain and Batool (2019) “teachers must be trained and developed so that they may perform their duties efficiently and effectively.” 3

In the lights of the above discussion the present paper has analysed the challenges and opportunities of the professional development in the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020.

### **Research Questions of the Study**

These are the research questions of the study.

1. What are the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020 for the Professional Development of the Teachers?
2. What are the challenges of the Professional Development in the lights of the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020?
3. What are the opportunities of the Professional Development in the lights of the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020?

### **Objectives of the Study**

There are following objectives set in the light of the research questions of the study.

1. To study the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020 related to the Professional Development of the Teachers
2. To analysis the challenges of the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020 for the Professional Development of the Teacher
3. To analysis the opportunities of the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020 for the Professional Development of the Teachers

### **Research Methodology**

The present study is based on the qualitative design as the framework is theoretical in nature. The methodology of the study is descriptive analytical in which documents from various sources e.g. policy makers, research papers, books, newspapers, dissertations etc. related to Professional development have been analysed to find the answer of the research questions.

## RQ1 and RO-1

There are following recommendations of the National Policy of Education (NEP) 2020 which can play important role in Professional Development of the teachers. As the Professional Development is for the in-service teachers, NEP 2020 has given special emphasis on various programmes to update and upgrade the in-service teachers for the massive changes in the education system and bring the quality education for individual, society and national development.

The in-service programmes for the Professional Development has been outlined in the National Education Policy 2020 are as follows.

S.No.	Name of the Programme	For the	Remarks
1	Continuous Professional Development (CPD)	Teachers	
2	National Mission for Teachers (NMT)	Training and Capacity Building	
3	Online and offline training programs		
4	Mentorship and coaching for teachers		

NEP 2020

1. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has put four important programmes for the Professional Development of the teachers keeping all aspects of Professional Development e.g. Continuous Professional Development (CPD), National Mission for Teachers (NMT) , Online and Offline training programmes and Mentorship and coaching for teachers. <sup>4</sup> Besides these four programmes the other recommendations relevant to the professional development are:
2. In the light of the recommendation the programme of Continues Professional Development (CPD) programme has been made of 50 hours comprising on foundation literacy and numeracy, formative and adaptive assessment, experiential learning, and competency based learning and arts and sports.

3. There is recommendation related to exalt the status of the profession of the teaching i.e. to the teacher. A teacher feeling pride in his profession would enter in the class with positive mindset and huge responsibility. In this regard the NEP 2020 recommends improving and reaching the levels of integrity and credibility required to restore the prestige of the teaching profession.” 5

4. Another recommendation of the National Education Policy 2020 related to the Professional Development is putting emphasis on the running of the quality teacher education. As most of the teacher education institutions not only provide teacher education but also serve as the centre for the training programme and provide resource persons for the various in-service training programmes. The National Education Policy 2020 states in this regards as “the Regulatory System shall be empowered to take stringent action against substandard and dysfunctional teacher education institutions (TEIs) that do not meet basic educational criteria, after giving one year for remedy of the breaches.” 6

5. In professional development of the teacher, the National Education Policy 2020 has laid down the provision of multi-disciplinary and holistic approaches to produce the students for the 21th century, for which the teacher should be trained in those approaches. The teacher education institutions should have multidisciplinary and holistic nature. In the light of this, the NEP has set a time frame to all the institutions to turn into multi-disciplinary. The NEP 2020 states “By 2030, only educationally sound, multidisciplinary, and integrated teacher education programmes shall be in force”. 7

6. The NEP 2020 has given emphasis on the use of existing institutions in the professional development of the teachers. The NEP 2020 states that “In-service continuous professional development for college and university teachers will continue through the existing institutional arrangements and ongoing initiatives;” 8

7. The integration of technology to upgrade the professional development is an important recommendation of NEP 2020. The experience of Corona period has proved the vision of the NEP 2020 for the professional development true as the whole education system disturbed due to lack of trained teachers to keep education online. The NEP 2020 keeping this view has

recommended for the training of the teachers in teaching, learning, online educational sources, pedagogy, assessment and evaluation etc. The NEP has recommended the use of the platform like SWAYAM/DIKSHA for the online training of the teachers. <sup>9</sup>

## RQ2 and RO2

In the light of above recommendations which if implemented in spirit can bring massive changes and transform Indian education. The challenges for the professional development of the teachers envisioned in NEP 2020 should be solved on priority basis. These challenges are various in natures.

The first challenge is of making a realistic policy in the context of Indian education system and Indian political scenario. The recommendations that have been made must be achievable. Just making the good policy is not enough. The policy makers have to prove that they know the reality of the nation and know the needs of the professional development of the teachers in all aspects. Setting lofty ideas which cannot be achieved on ground would bring failure and frustration.

Another challenge is related to the implementation of the various recommendations of the professional development of the teachers. India is a nation which stretches about 3000 km from north to south and from east to west with vast diversity of the people in term of races, religions, languages, regions, development, and aspirations. In such condition the basic question arises that how much of these recommendations related to the professional development of the teacher address the issues?

3. India has the largest teacher education system in the world.<sup>10</sup> There are 15,896 teacher education institutions in India. The number of the teacher education courses which are offering is 22,706 (2023).<sup>11</sup> Among these teacher education institutions 91% is in the private hands. Would they accept the recommendations of NEP 2020 related to the professional development and be uniformed and restructured by 2030?

4. Breaking the isolation of the teacher education institutions is another important challenge. The government teacher education institutions and the schools due to their affiliation to the government bodies can be brought in the main stream of the education but the isolation of the private teacher education institutions and schools will not be break so easily as the isolation brings unchallenged authority to the private players which brings profit in the various forms from the admission to examination to awarding the certificate.

5. Another challenge to the recommendations of the NEP 2020 related to the professional development of the teachers is the mindset of the management and the teachers. As 91 percent institutions of teacher education is in the hands of the private players whose main motive behind running the institutions is to earn money as Justice Verma Committee highlighted his in his report. <sup>12</sup> As a result the private players would accept recommendations whole heartedly is doubtful. When they are earning huge profit without spending on the training of the teachers, then why they would incur on the professional development of the teachers? So, in place of accepting the recommendations of NEP 2020 they would try to escape from implementing on the various pretext and hide behind the political power.

Another challenge is of mentorship of the various stakeholders for changing the mindset towards the professional development. In first place, the culture of mentorship has yet not developed in India at the large scale. The structure and the quality of mentorship will determine the extent of the challenge which will take time.

For continuous professional development of the teacher in India is a huge task. The problem of regular session, the resource persons, the use of education technology and finance for the professional development all need huge expenditure. The government expenditure on education has yet not reached the recommended level of 6 percent of the GDP. Till today, this is just about 4 percent of GDP which cannot afford the burden of the recommendations of the NEP 2020. <sup>13</sup>.

The private schools, in place of spending on the professional development, if enhances the salary of the teachers would be a boost of the moral for the teachers. Why a private school would incur hugely on the professional development when there is sufficient supply of the teachers?

Without strict norms for the implementation of the recommendations the chances of improvement of the professional development of the teachers is not high in a democratic political set up. The lack of will from the side of the stakeholders is important.

### **RQ3 and RO3**

The recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020 have opened opportunities in the professional development for the teachers. If the recommendations are implemented honestly and effectively, the following opportunities may be arisen:

The first important opportunity that these recommendations have brought is the attracting the talented students in the profession of the teaching by redefining the status of the profession of teaching which may boost the morale of the teachers in the society and class room.

As a result a new wave of the people entering in the profession of the teaching can be seen which would change the scenario of the teacher education and education in India.

2. The implementation of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) would provide the opportunities of holistic development of the teachers and subsequently the improvement of the quality of the teacher education and education at every level could be seen.
3. The recommendations related to the National Mission for Teacher (NTM) had brought the training and capacity building in the centre of the in-service programme. At higher level of education the Malviya Mission Teacher Training Programme (MMTTP) has opened the new era of quality training and the capacity building for the teachers. The work that is going at various levels for in-service teachers would bring quality change in education.
4. The recommendation related to mentorship of the teachers would bring an opportunity for the improvement in the quality of teacher education and school education. The mentorship would open the application of multidisciplinary approach in the education and would solve the problems related to the teacher education. As a result, the vision, vista, and areas of the education would be broadened and would place the nation on the path of the world leadership (Viswaguru).
5. The opportunities for the professional development of the teacher working in the interior of the nation would be possible. Those working in isolation and cannot access the mainstream education programmes of the professional development now can attend with the help of the integration of the technology. The NEP 2020 has recommended the use of technology particularly educational technology for the access, equity and inclusivity in the education which would be beneficial to the teacher professional development.
6. The integration of the technology and the use of various tools, resources and platform have linked the Indian teacher education with the global teacher education system. Now the teachers can be benefitted from the various programmes of professional development for the teachers organised by the leading teacher education institutions of the world. As a result the quality of teacher education and professional development programme for Indian in-service teachers would enhance.
7. The availability of qualified teachers, quality curriculum, online resources pedagogy, use of advanced technology would bring the quality change in teacher education and the professional development of the teachers. As a result the chance of attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and internal invest in education would be high. At present the government has allowed 100 percent FDI in the education sector. As per the available data FDI in education sector is \$2.2 billion (2020). 14

## **Conclusion**



The present paper has studied the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020, challenges and opportunities in the context of Professional Development of the teachers. Professional Development of the Teachers (PDT) is important for in-service teachers to bring the quality in education. The study found that the recommendations related to the Professional Development of the Teachers are relevant and catalyst. The challenges for the Professional Development of the Teachers are numerous but if implemented honestly there would be huge opportunities to the various stakeholders.

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