



# **INTEGRATED TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN NEP 2020: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

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## **Abstract**

The world is changing rapidly due to explosion of knowledge have led to a constant transformation of the educational system worldwide. Teachers are the architects of a nation, influencing and motivating students through their intellect, ideals, experience, wisdom, and dynamic personality. To create dedicated and dutiful teachers, a nation must provide various teacher education programs to ensure a diverse and effective education system. The National Education Policy 2020 in India introduced a revolutionary 4-year integrated teacher education program. In this paper attempt has been made to explore the opportunities and challenges of major Integrated Teacher Education Programme initiatives.

**Key words** – Teacher Education, Integrated Teacher Education Programme, NEP 2020.

## Introduction

The world is changing rapidly due to explosion of knowledge have led to a constant transformation of the educational system worldwide. Teachers are considered as the most creative and unique person because teacher has the capability to influence and motivate students through his intellect, ideals, experience, wisdom and dynamic personality and for this reasons teachers are considered a true architect of a nation. India is blessed to have renowned educationists like Charaka, Susruta, Aryabhata, Varahamihira, Chanakya, Panini, Patanjali, Nagarjuna, Gautama, Sankardev, Maitreyi, Gargi, and Thiruvalluvar who have not only enlightened India but also the world, and their lessons are indebted to the entire world. It has been rightly pointed out by the Education Commission (1964-65) that “The destiny of India is being shaped in her classroom” (Chakraborty, 2022). The teaching profession is considered a noble profession as it directly impacts a country's development, which relies on its education system. The Indian government has placed special emphasis on education, establishes various commissions for continuous development, such as the University Education Commission in 1948, Mudaliar Commission in 1952, Indian Education Commission (1964-66), National Policy on Education (1968, 1986 & 1992), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA, 2000-2001), Right to Education Act (2009), and the latest National Education Policy 2020. (Chakraborty, 2022). Understanding the concept and meaning of teacher education programs is crucial as teachers are only created in educational institutions teacher education programme is provided.

## Concept and Meaning of Teacher Education Programme

A nation must offer various teacher education programs to create dedicated and competent teachers. These programs can prepare teachers for primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels of education. DIETS programs prepare teachers for primary education, while B. Ed programs prepare teachers for secondary and higher secondary education.

## Concept of Integrated Teacher Education Programme

India's education sector has been a priority since independence, but still lags behind other countries in teacher education. The National Education Policy 2020 was introduced by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) under the Ministry of Education. It contains new guidelines for the effective execution of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (Chakraborty, 2022). Previously a student had to complete a minimum three years degree programme like BA, B. Sc or a B.Com or a Master degree programme and after that if he/she wished to be a teacher than he/she had to compulsorily enrol for a 2 year B. Ed programme. But Integrated Teacher Education Program is different from that type of teacher education program. It is a four year uniquely designed integrated degree programme in which a student will study general course like B.A or B. Sc for the first two year and in the last two year they will study about teacher education and in this way students will be able to save a year and after the completion of the programme they will be awarded a degree like BA/ B. Sc alongwith B. Ed. National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has launched Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) in 57 Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) from the academic session 2023-24 throughout the country. This is a flagship programme of NCTE under NEP 2020 (Department of School Education and Literacy).

## Salient Features of Integrated Teacher Education Program in NEP 2020

Some of important recommendations which have been suggested in NEP 2020 are as follows:

- It involves a dual-major holistic bachelor's degree offering B.A. B.Ed./ B. Sc. B. Ed. and B.Com. B.Ed. which is one of the major mandate of the National Education Policy 2020 related to Teacher Education.
- Teachers will be appointed in teaching profession only through ITEP from 2030.
- Teacher education will be moved into multidisciplinary colleges and universities by 2030.

- All the multidisciplinary colleges and universities will have education departments and that offer B.Ed., M.Ed., and Ph.D. degrees in education.
- It will be offered in pilot mode initially in about 57 selected multidisciplinary institutions across the country.
- The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) under the Ministry of Education will devise the curriculum of this course.
- The new curriculum enables a student-teacher to get a degree in education as well as a specialized discipline such as history, mathematics, science, arts, economics, or commerce.
- The ITEP will be available for all students who choose teaching as a profession after secondary, by choice.
- The ITEP will prepare teachers for the 4 stages of the new school structure i.e. Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary (5+3+3+4).
- This integrated course will benefit students since they will save one year by finishing it in four years rather than the customary five years required by the present B.Ed. plan.
- The commencement of Four Year ITEP will be from the academic session 2023-24.
- Admission into the ITEP will be carried out by the National Testing Agency (NTA) through the National Common Entrance Test (NCET).
- This course will be offered by multidisciplinary institutions and will become the minimal degree qualification for school teachers.
- This is a flagship programme of NCTE under NEP 2020.

## Opportunities of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme

Some of the important opportunities of this programme which directly affects our education system as well as the society are as follows:

- i. It will be very much helpful for our education system to strengthen and function smoothly because all the teachers who will be appointed would be well trained and well educated.
- ii. It will help to our nation building programme because educational development is the backbone for all types of growth and development.
- iii. This ITEP will help to students for getting both types of degree i.e. BA , BSC, and BCOM along with Bed at a single enrolment.
- iv. This programme will also help to reduce academic year i.e. five years to four years for students.
- v. All the colleges and universities will be multidisciplinary by 2030 . This can be the greatest scope for all types of students who enrolled in science, commerce and arts. They can be able to get knowledge in various subjects/ disciplines after enrolling in one particular stream.
- vi. Implementation of the ITEP would be helpful for engagement of well trained teachers in schools and colleges.

## Challenges of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme

The National Education Policy 2020 is a significant step towards the development of our education system, introducing the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP). However, it has several shortcomings that may pose challenges for the nation's development and implementation of ITEP are as follows:

- i. Implementation of the ITEP may have a curriculum burden for the students owing to they have to complete five years curriculum in four years.
- ii. Implementation of ITEP requires educational institutions, infrastructure, well trained teachers, prescribed curriculum. This may take lots of time to provide all types of facilities for the students, teachers and parents.
- iii. All the colleges and universities may not be able handle this type of course due to lack teaching staffs and time management.
- iv. All the students may not be interested for the ITEP because they want to complete their graduation as far as short duration and engage in any type of job to financially help their parents.
- v. This programme may create gap for teaching profession and others professions. Because for engagement in teaching profession one needs to have 4 years Bed certificate but in others professions this type of educational qualifications is not required. So people may prefer teaching profession to others professions.
- vi. Parents may be financially weak for affording all the expenditures require for this course.

## Conclusion

Teacher education is crucial for a country's development, as well as the overall progress of the nation. The National Education Policy 2020 introduces an integrated teacher education program, which could be a key factor in achieving this goal. Despite potential implementation barriers, the policy aims to strengthen and develop the entire education system, making the country a recognized developed nation globally. The implementation of this program has immense strength and benefits, but challenges may arise. The hope is that NEP 2020 will lead to a more robust and well-developed education system.

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