



# ITEP IN LIGHT OF NEP2020 ISSUES AND CONCERN IN QUALITY EDUCATION

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), which is described in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, is a significant shift in India's approach to the training of teachers. Its primary objective is to address ongoing issues that are associated with the quality of education. ITEP's goal is to produce educators who are more skilled, reflective, and prepared for the classroom by combining subject competence with pedagogical training into a full four-year interdisciplinary program. This will allow ITEP to achieve its goal of enhancing the professionalism of teaching. The implementation of ITEP, on the other hand, brings up significant concerns regarding the preparation of infrastructure, the consistency of curriculum, equal access, and the development of faculty across a variety of educational contexts. The ability of ITEP to successfully accomplish the larger objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP), such as fostering fairness and inclusion and improving learning outcomes, is contingent on the program's ability to overcome these systemic hurdles. The purpose of this article is to investigate the degree to which ITEP is aligned with the future vision of NEP 2020. Additionally, a critical analysis of the possible problems and consequences that ITEP poses for the future of high-quality teacher education in India is presented.*

*Keywords: National Education Policy ,Teacher Education, Education Reform, Challenges In Teacher Preparation, Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP),*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which focusses on teacher education reform, is transforming India's education system. NEP 2020 makes significant reforms to teacher training in India to increase efficiency, applicability, and professionalism, seeing teachers as the main element affecting educational quality and student performance. At the heart of these changes is the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), which replaces disparate and often inadequate teacher training courses with a more integrated and cohesive four-year curriculum. The Indian conventional teacher education system has been criticised for its antiquated curricula, poor practical training, and lack of integration with educational aims. NEP 2020 proposes a comprehensive teacher education program that follows worldwide best practices and is grounded in India's sociocultural environment. According to NEP 2020, the ITEP integrates topic knowledge, pedagogical abilities, and practical training. This comprehensive method prepares prospective teachers to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and holistic development.

The call for more hands-on learning experiences and more technological integration in teacher preparation programs is a major theme running through NEP 2020's proposals. The ITEP aims to connect theoretical

knowledge with practical application through internships, classroom-based projects, and hands-on teaching experiences. Teachers also need to be skilled in utilising technology as a tool for education, and this policy acknowledges that relevance. Given that the COVID-19 pandemic has expedited the use of online and hybrid learning modalities, this is of utmost importance. A further crucial part of NEP 2020 is the ITEP's focus on inclusion and equity. The goal of the program is to produce teachers in India who can accommodate the diverse needs of their pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with special needs. All students should have equal opportunity to succeed, which is in line with NEP 2020's larger goal of an inclusive education system. A number of obstacles persist, even though NEP 2020 has lofty objectives and ITEP has the ability to revolutionise teacher education. These include making sure policies are consistent across regions and states, investing in teacher educators' professional growth, and maintaining sufficient infrastructure. A dedication to ongoing education sector reform, together with persistent effort and stakeholder participation, will be necessary for the successful implementation of ITEP. The ITEP is a part of NEP 2020, which aims to revolutionise teacher education in India. Incorporating fresh perspectives and resolving long-standing issues have the potential to significantly enhance educational standards and better prepare future educators for the demands of the modern classroom.

### **National Education Policy of India 2020**

On July 29, 2020, the Union Cabinet of India launched the National Education Policy of India 2020 (NEP 2020), which defines India's future education system. The new policy supersedes the 1986 National Education Policy. After the proposal was released, the administration stated that no one will be compelled to study any language and that English will not be replaced by any regional language. The language policy in NEP is consultative and wide; governments, institutions, and schools decide how to apply it. Indian education is Concurrent List. Scholars and educationists have criticised the policy's fast adoption as a danger to equal education. Nationwide demonstrations have followed its introduction in India.

### **Integrated Teacher Education Programme**

The four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) aims to train passionate, motivated, qualified, professionally trained, and well-equipped teachers who can design and implement developmentally appropriate learning experiences for students at different school levels. ITEP aims to provide aspiring teachers with the best curriculum, pedagogy, values, and practice. The National Education Policy 2020 states, "Teacher education is vital in creating a pool of school teachers that will shape the next generation. Multidisciplinary knowledge, values, and practice under the best mentors are needed for teacher training. Teachers must grasp Indian values, languages, knowledge, ethos, and traditions, especially tribal traditions, as well as the newest education and pedagogy developments.

Four-Year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP): "Recognizing that teachers will require training in high-quality content and pedagogy, teacher education will gradually be moved into multidisciplinary colleges and universities by 2030." The 4-year integrated B.Ed. given by interdisciplinary HEIs will be the minimum degree for teachers by 2030. This 4-year integrated B.Ed. will be a dual-major in education and a specialised field like language, history, music, mathematics, computer science, chemistry, economics, art, physical education, etc. In addition to cutting-edge

pedagogy, teacher education will include sociology, history, science, psychology, early childhood care and education, basic literacy and numeracy, India and its values/ethos/art/traditions, and more.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the role of ITEP in addressing quality concerns in teacher education under NEP 2020.
2. To assess the impact of ITEP on enhancing teaching competencies and educational outcomes.

## METHOD

A qualitative field research examines the implementation of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The program's conformity with the policy's purpose of strengthening teacher education and practical and contextual aspects affecting its execution will be assessed. Data will come from comprehensive interviews with teacher educators, student-teachers, directors, and policy implementers from selected teacher training institutes where ITEP has been developed or reviewed. The project will examine NEP-aligned institutional documents, curricular frameworks, and implementation guidelines. To complete the picture, participant observation will focus on pedagogical techniques, curricular integration, and student engagement throughout teaching and learning sessions and practicums. Thematic analysis will reveal ITEP quality education trends, attitudes, and disparities. This method contextualises NEP 2020 goals and highlights teacher education reforms' pros and cons.

## Analyzing ITEP and NEP 2020: A New Era in Teacher Education

With the implementation of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), a key component of India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the country's educational system has reached a watershed moment, particularly in the field of teacher education. In India, teacher training has always been disjointed and unreliable; this new four-year degree program aims to rectify that. It is the goal of ITEP to produce teachers who are up to the task of meeting the demands of the modern classroom by providing them with a well-rounded education that includes subject area expertise as well as thorough pedagogical training.

The strategy emphasises the importance of teaching as a highly regarded profession, on par with law and medicine, and makes sure that teacher preparation is not an afterthought but a deliberate, research-based, and practice-oriented endeavour. There will be more consistency and better quality in teacher training across the country as a result of this paradigm change. In addition, NEP 2020 ensures that prospective educators will have access to a diverse body of knowledge and a dynamic academic environment by integrating ITEP programs into interdisciplinary institutions and implementing a merit-based admission procedure through a national entrance test. This means that aspiring educators will receive career guidance earlier on, develop a stronger sense of professional identity, and be better prepared to handle the challenges of working in diverse classrooms.

Successful implementation, adequate infrastructure support, and the cultivation of academic and institutional capacities are all necessary for this goal to come to fruition, though. In the end, ITEP under NEP 2020 is more than simply a change in structure; it's a fundamental shift towards preparing the next generation of educators to help India reach its educational goals of fairness, inclusiveness, and excellence.

## **Decoding the Structure and Purpose of ITEP**

The previously Four-Year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 would transform Indian teacher education. This program provides comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and cohesive training for instructors. The ITEP offers a four-year general education and pedagogy degree instead of the disjointed and uncertain B.Ed. This program supports NEP 2020's goal of developing high-quality teachers with 21st-century pedagogy and Indian values. The ITEP certifies and educates educators with subject knowledge, critical thinking, and ethics to address India's largest education issue—quality teaching. However, ITEP implementation causes major issues with educational quality and equality. NEP 2020 prioritises professionalising and rigorizing teacher education, however current teacher training institutes may not be able to do so. Teacher shortages, outdated infrastructure, and limited transdisciplinary teaching exposure plague many colleges. From a two-year B.Ed. model to a four-year integrated degree involves considerable curriculum adjustments and institutional and systemic preparation, which varies by state and locale. Current B.Ed. institutions and universities' transition structure is uncertain, generating concerns about overlaps, teacher shortages, and qualification recognition.

Integrated Teacher Education Programme social and geographical inclusiveness is a big challenge. National Council for Teacher Education-accredited ITEP institutions are common, which may benefit urban, wealthy pupils. The rural-urban divide over quality teacher education may worsen. ITEP's scalability and the likelihood of a dual-tier teacher education system based on the National Education Policy (NEP) and obsolete paradigms are issues as a few schools implement it. In varied linguistic and socio-cultural settings, the integrated approach must clarify how it will manage teaching experience, internships, and school curricula. ITEP is well-designed, but it needs rigorous monitoring, collaborative curriculum development, and all-level capacity building. To achieve NEP 2020's principle and practice goals, the program should incorporate regular feedback, performance standards, and outcome-based assessments. Finally, ITEP is a significant step in India's teacher education framework, but its success depends on addressing its issues, particularly in ensuring uniformity, inclusivity, and quality across educational contexts.

## **Opportunities of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme**

Some of the significant opportunities that this program presents, which have direct implications for both our educational system and society as a whole, are as follows:

- It will be of great assistance to our educational system in terms of strengthening and functioning smoothly because all of the teachers who will be appointed will be well educated and well trained.
- Due to the fact that educational development is the foundation for all forms of growth and development, it will be beneficial to our nation building program.

- This ITEP will assist students in obtaining both sorts of degrees, namely Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Commerce, as well as having the opportunity to register in a single program. This initiative will also assist in shortening the length of the school year for pupils, which will go from five years to four years.
- By the year 2030, every single college and university will include a diverse curriculum. This has the potential to be the most extensive opportunity for all kinds of students who are enrolled in the arts, commerce, and science.
- After enrolling in a specific stream, they have the opportunity to acquire information in a variety of subjects and fields of study and expertise. It would be beneficial to implement the ITEP in order to increase the number of instructors in schools and colleges who have received adequate training.

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

Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) is a fundamental program under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 to improve quality, coherence, and professionalism in Indian teacher education. ITEP's four-year undergraduate degree combines subject knowledge and pedagogical training. This revolutionary method substitutes the two-step procedure of acquiring a bachelor's degree and a B.Ed., making admission into teaching faster and easier. The interdisciplinary integrated curriculum gives prospective educators a well-rounded education in arts, sciences, and vocational disciplines, as well as pedagogical training.

Experiential learning is another ITEP emphasis. The approach begins with school-based internships and practicums to ensure student-teachers are constantly involved in classrooms. This hands-on experience bridges academic and practical knowledge, better equipping graduates for modern teaching difficulties. ITEP also promotes critical thinking, creativity, communication, and ethics, which NEP 2020 considers essential for 21st-century educators. The programme's action research, inclusive education, and educational psychology components support India's goal of creating reflective and research-minded teachers.

Also, by 2030, the NEP 2020 demands that all interdisciplinary schools must have adopted the Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP). The goal of this mandate is to prevent teacher education from being in a static academic setting and instead incorporate it into it. This systemic shift encourages and facilitates cross-disciplinary work and a holistic view of education. The ITEP will be supervised by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in collaboration with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to guarantee uniformity and uphold standards. A standardised admission exam will be used to admit students to the program, which will ensure national parity and promote a merit-based selection process. Overall, the ITEP represents a significant step forward in the process of elevating education as a profession, improving teacher preparedness, and professionalising teaching, all in line with the revolutionary goals of NEP 2020.

### **EMPOWERING EDUCATORS THROUGH ITEP**

It is possible that the ITEP will improve the quality of teacher education since it provides a number of advantages that have the ability to improve the standard.



**Fostering High-Quality Teaching Practices:** The Integrated Teacher curriculum Programme (ITEP) can improve teaching by giving prospective teachers a more unified and intensive curriculum. ITEP offers a four-year curriculum that helps students master both subject matter and teaching methods in a cohesive manner, unlike the traditional approach. Through integrated school internships and practicums, aspiring teachers may develop a research-oriented perspective, reflect on their work, and obtain early classroom insights. ITEP's multidisciplinary framework promotes critical thinking, effective communication, and socio-emotional skills, which educators need in a changing educational environment. ITEP improves education quality as described in NEP 2020 by educating teachers who are academically capable, devoted, and inventive.

**Towards a Unified Approach in Teacher Preparation:** The ITEP's integrated curriculum that integrates academic and pedagogical training from the start tackles teacher education's fragmentation. The ITEP emphasises simultaneous development of topic knowledge and teaching approaches throughout its four-year curriculum, unlike traditional systems, which sometimes result in a lack of understanding of content education. This method allows future teachers to apply educational ideas to their subjects, improving relevance, responsiveness, and effectiveness. Engaging in classroom practices and reflective teaching helps narrow the theory-practice gap, preparing educators for real-world teaching issues. The ITEP lays the groundwork for a more integrated and practice-focused teacher preparation paradigm, matching with NEP 2020's holistic vision.

**Elevating Teaching to a Professional Standard:** The Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) professionalises education, aligning it with engineering, law, and medicine. Its extensive four-year curriculum and dual-degree methodology improve academic and pedagogical knowledge and change society's perspective of teaching as a serious, professional, and knowledge-driven profession. This extended training strategy involves devotion, reflective practice, and skill growth, which raises educator standards. ITEP fosters a strong feeling of professional identity and pride in teacher candidates by providing a more extensive and organised road into the field, attracting more motivated and talented applicants. According to NEP 2020, elevating teaching as a profession prepares educators to handle the complex and varied demands of 21st-century classrooms.

**Transforming Teacher Education in Sync with NEP 2020:** In keeping with the transformational goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) emphasises high-quality teacher education as essential to a successful educational system. The NEP 2020 encourages integrated, interdisciplinary approaches that give subject matter knowledge and teach future educators modern pedagogical methods, critical thinking, and ethics. ITEP achieves this aim by offering a four-year program that combines liberal education with professional training, unlike outmoded teacher preparation approaches. This program trains teachers to be competent in their topics and skilled at supporting learning in varied classroom settings and with different learners. ITEP represents the NEP's focus on competency-based, practice-oriented teacher education to improve learning outcomes and build a strong, future-ready teaching workforce in India through its comprehensive design.

## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM

Several countries have experimented with integrated teacher education programs, providing insights into how ITEP can be adapted and implemented.

## **Teacher Education Insights from Finland's Success Story**

For initiatives including India's ITEP, Finland's model of excellent teacher education provides a useful reference point. The Finnish style of teacher education emphasises topic specialisation from an early stage, allowing future teachers to become well-versed in both their subjects and effective methods of instruction. This model's strength lies in the fact that it prioritises training based on research and ongoing practical experience. In Finland, preservice teachers have hands-on experience in the classroom through lengthy internships and supervised practice lessons. This helps them to apply classroom theory early on. They develop thoughtful teaching techniques and a stronger sense of professional identity via this extended time spent in schools. Further elevating the status and efficacy of the teaching profession is Finland's very selective teacher education programs, which accept only the most enthusiastic and competent applicants. All of these things point to the need of integrated, practice-oriented training in becoming good teachers, and they teach us a lot about how to use ITEP in India.

## **Contrasting Teacher Education Models: India and the USA**

Particularly in view of India's recent adoption of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), a comparison of the two countries' teacher preparation systems reveals striking conceptual and structural differences. Historically, teacher preparation in the United States has followed a fragmented model: candidates would earn a bachelor's degree in a field unrelated to education, then either complete a separate certification program or a postgraduate course lasting one to two years. Educators may have extensive knowledge of their subjects but lack the experience to adequately communicate that information to students from a variety of backgrounds because of this divide between topic knowledge and teaching abilities. In addition, there is a lack of uniformity in the quality and preparedness of teachers due to the fact that teacher training varies among states and institutions in the United States.

A more unified and methodical approach is exhibited by India's ITEP, which takes its cues from integrated European models such as those in Germany and Finland. Coherence and consistency in teacher preparation are ensured by integrating subject mastery with professional education from the outset of this four-year curriculum. By fostering early engagement with the teaching profession and improving pedagogical foundations, this strategy increases students' academic experiences. However, there are several obstacles to implementing the ITEP model in India, even if it is clearly beneficial in terms of aligning with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Challenges to the program's scalability include issues with institutional capacity, teacher preparation, curriculum standardization, and meeting the unique educational needs of India's large and diverse population. It is also important to address the issue of under-resourced and rural communities' unequal access to ITEP.

Therefore, although India's drive towards an integrated teacher education framework places it in a favourable position with regard to long-term educational reforms, the difference with the model used in the United States serves as a reminder that structural change must be accompanied by systemic support. If the benefits of professionalized, high-quality teacher education are to be completely realised, the Indian experience with ITEP underlines the necessity of context-sensitive adaptation, localised planning, and ongoing investment in teacher training infrastructure. This is necessary in order to fully realise the intended benefits of ITEP.

## CONCLUSION

ITEP will change teacher education in India via NEP 2020. The program trains future Indian teachers to be innovative, culturally sensitive, and multidimensional. Since it raises professional standards and teacher competency, the ITEP will impact the next generation of educators and improve student results nationwide. Academic research and interdisciplinary teacher education align with the NEP 2020's vision of a comprehensive, adaptable, and interconnected educational system. These tactics improve teachers, encourage critical thinking, and prepare them to cover more material in the classroom, according to research. NEP 2020's emphasis on multimodal teacher education will shape India's education future. NEP 2020 and ITEP implementation provides potential and problems. Implementing these improvements requires addressing infrastructure, faculty development, inclusion, and quality assurance. Meanwhile, there are significant potential to strengthen education, innovate in the classroom, promote inclusion, and enhance teaching. With good planning and cooperation, the NEP 2020 and ITEP may change teacher education in India, providing high-quality education to all pupils.

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