

Reflection of Empowerment and the Vital Role of a Teacher from Mirror of the New Education Policy 2020

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Abstract

Education is the means for the development of a just and equitable human society and its successful functioning depends entirely on teachers. Truly speaking, it is the quality teacher who can do proper justice with his/her profession and shape the future of our millions of innocent learners. Analysing today's ever fast changing global trend, it is necessary that our student community is familiar with the latest pedagogical skills and strategies. In fact, the newly implemented New Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) in this context, highly talks of empowering quality teacher education through revamping recruitment and related service conditions of teachers. Again, it has emphasized to restore the prestige and honour to the teaching profession in terms of providing respect as well as the significant status to the same so as to motivate the outstanding students to join the profession unhesitatingly. Invariably, NEP 2020 has the vision to transform India gradually through working minutely on the existing policies as worked out earlier making education very much inclusive and flexible. Of course, teachers are the key functionaries in any educational institution, who transact knowledge, skills and values among students. So, they definitely command respect and status of high order in the social framework. The NEP 2020, recognises the same and underscore the importance of teacher empowerment through incorporating better strategies, incentives, working conditions and many more so that they stand true to the expectations of the learners and stakeholders of education in terms of their continuous professional development, feeling more freedom and autonomy in dealing with pedagogical as well as curricular activities which will definitely pave the way for quality education. Taking into account the transformative vision of the current education policy, the role of teachers are clearly redefined as facilitators, creators, and change agents. Obviously, the successful implementation of the education policy and its guidelines with respect to reforms in the education sector needs co-ordinated efforts from all the stakeholders, proper functioning of the regulatory mechanism and transparent governance at every phase of education. It is against this backdrop, that the paper meticulously throws light and draws the attention of the elite readers on the empowerment and multifaceted role of teachers as reflected in the latest implemented NEP 2020.

Keywords: *Teaching Profession, Quality Education, Multidisciplinary and Holistic Education, Quality Teacher, Teacher Empowerment, Role of Teacher, Stakeholders, Regulatory Mechanism & Governance, NEP 2020.*

Education leads to the advancement of a nation and its successful functioning purely depends on the teachers who are dedicated and loyal towards their profession. Only such teachers can very well transfer their multi-disciplinary knowledge, skills, strategies and expertise to the students and transform their behaviour completely. So, to facilitate the quality education, teachers of quality are needed who

have sufficient knowledge, subject expertise, motivation, dedication and enthusiasm to carry out the teaching profession. This will lead to the institutional outcomes by way of successful functioning of the teaching-learning process, enhance learner's academic achievement and professional excellence of the faculty. But, as it is noticeable today, such teachers are almost

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rare because preparing quality teachers is a major concern these days.

The teaching profession, as it is seen today, is highly demanding and challenging in the perspective of the latest global trend, pedagogical innovations and changing curricular activities. In this digitalized era, the teacher is supposed to be effective and efficient enough to deal with the requirements of the students as well as carry the expectations of the institution and society as a whole. The teacher education programs must address the same and there is essentially the need for its systematic and organized approach for teacher preparation. It ought to be reoriented, reformed and invite criticism from different corners so that quality standards should be maintained. In fact, quality and excellence are the hallmarks of the present day teacher education curriculum as emphasized by the Indian education system at different levels of education. In this connection, the recently implemented New Education Policy 2020 offers respectable and prestigious positions to educators and extensively pays attention to work for providing them a congenial working atmosphere where they can render their services with satisfaction and professional loyalty. Needless to say, aligning itself with the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, the NEP 2020 focuses extensively on transforming India. Based on the foundational pillars, namely (1) Access, (2) Equity, (3) Quality, (4) Affordability and (5) Accountability; this policy seeks to make India a vibrant global knowledge super power through making education more and more multidisciplinary, inclusive, flexible and holistic as per today's need. The said policy, highly acknowledges the instrumental role played by teaching faculty in preparing prospective teachers who in turn work for the school level children and, thus, vows to empower them intellectually, ethically and

technologically for improving the overall quality of education in India.

Objective of the study: (i) Evaluating the various provisions of empowerment and role of teachers as mentioned in the NEP2020.

Methodology: the comprehensive idea drawn with respect to the subject matter of the present study, basically follows the qualitative approach to gather relevant information from the secondary sources of data collection, i.e. magazines, journals, web articles, etc. purely dealing with contents related to NEP 2020. Thus, a thorough review of the articles which were recently published for insight, interpretation and overview with regard to the study in hand.

Salient features of teacher empowerment as highlighted in the latest implemented NEP 2020

The newly implemented education policy talks of empowering the teaching community through adopting various approaches which has been summarised briefly in the following points produced below.

Accountability for the future: Teaching is considered as a noble and prestigious profession in society. Teachers are considered to be great intellectuals who are accountable for preparing the future generation in the right manner as they are to transmit knowledge, skills and moral values to the children and, thus, shape their career to serve the nation. Because of such a noble role deemed to be performed by a teacher, they command trust and respect in the society. So, there is a need to adopt concrete measures consistently to motivate and empower teachers for betterment of the nation.

Technology integration: The National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) will help to integrate technology into all levels of education by way of improving classroom processes, supporting professional development of teachers, providing access to

disadvantaged groups, and thus, collaborating educational planning, administration and management. Digital education platforms like DIKSHA/SWAYAM, will be promoted and wholly functional at school and higher education level.

Establishment of National Mission for Mentoring & Professional Education: This has been established for senior or retired teachers who would be willing to provide short and long term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.

Integration of Professional Education- All professional education will be integrated at the higher level.

Merit- based scholarships and employment for rural areas: The special merit- based scholarships will be operational in rural areas to provide job opportunities locally especially to female students who can well converse in local language when they get a job. To attract the outstanding students from rural areas in the teaching profession such scholarships shall be instituted across the country for studying quality 4-year integrated B.Ed. programmes. There is provision of preferential employment too on the completion of the course in their own local areas.

Multidisciplinary approach towards teacher education: Again, it has urged for high quality training for teacher trainees and made colleges and universities to adopt a wide multidisciplinary approach in the field of teacher education by 2030. The online platforms like SWAYAM, etc. will train teacher trainees in a much standard way within a short duration.

Halting unnecessary transfers: The practice of excessive teacher transfers will be halted, so that students don't get disturbed and have continuity to learn from their favourite educators and be comfortable with the existing educational environments as well. Transfers will take place under special circumstances.

Strengthening the Teacher Eligibility Tests: Teacher eligibility test (TETs) will be strengthened to maintain quality in the recruitment process.

Ensuring adequate number of teachers and maintaining teacher sharing across schools as per grouping- of- schools adopted by State or governments of Union Territories.

Comprehensive teacher recruitment planning: Every state will conduct this exercise for filling subject wise teacher vacancies over the next two decades.

Overhauling the service environment and culture: It will ensure a healthy service condition at institutions as this will help in the maximization of abilities of teachers with much effectiveness, satisfaction and dedication.

Recognition and promotion: Outstanding work of teachers must be given recognition. Such teachers are to be promoted and provided proper financial incentives. So, a robust merit-based structure of tenure, promotion, and salary structure needs to be developed at multiple levels.

Establishment of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST): These are directed to comprise teacher standards for performance appraisal, for each stage, that would be carried out on a periodic basis.

Continuous Professional Development: Continuous opportunities for self-excellence will be offered to teachers. This will help them to learn the latest innovations and other advances in their professional area through online teacher development modules.

Need of Special Educators: Such teachers are urgently required for certain areas of school education. Special and skilled subject teachers meant for children with learning disabilities and Divyang children at the middle and secondary stage of schooling are needed urgently.

Expansion of research capabilities and innovation investment: These aspects are

important in generating a vast pool of knowledge for a nation. Especially at the higher education level, the teaching - learning process functions best where there is a strong culture of research and knowledge creation. The National Research Foundation (NRF) is assigned to create a research based culture and innovations across universities, provide peer-reviewed research funding, recognising outstanding research works, etc.

Overhauling the regulatory mechanism: The setting up of the National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) is a big development in the higher education system responsible to see matters related to financial probity, good governance, audits, infrastructure, faculty/staff, courses, etc. All this related information will have to be projected on the public websites maintained by the NHERC and on that of the institutions as well.

Initiating the move to set up the Board of Governors (BoG) by 2035: For effective governance and leadership in respect of higher education institutions, measures will be taken to ensure high quality leadership and promote an institutional culture of excellence. Empowering the said BoG (consisting of qualified and competent persons of the institution) will take all the important decisions regarding the governance and appointments without any external interference.

Emphasizing the aspects pertaining to equity and inclusion prioritised for both higher education and school education for ensuring equitable access to quality education with much emphasis on the needs of Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) of the society. In this connection, the government has been tasked to channelize funds for the education of SEDGs and support high quality Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) engaged in teaching local or bilingual languages.

By and large, the New Education Policy 2020, being comprehensive in nature, has designed a concrete roadmap for the proper functioning of the future Indian education system. Nevertheless, it has emphasized the role and responsibilities of the teaching community as per the needs of this twenty first century in its guidelines and provide positive professional direction as the same affirms that teachers are the torch bearers of our future generation. So, in this context, given below are the significant points making obvious the **important role of teachers as specified in the New Education Policy 2020?**

- Facilitating learning through adopting a multi-disciplinary approach in education in order to allow students get multiple career opportunities.
- Integrating technology based teaching-learning will help students to increase their presence in the hybrid mode. Teachers with the help of AI-learning tools can strategically help every student to get proper instruction, assessment and feedback. Guiding students to use AI-learning platforms, Open Educational Resources and other digital pedagogies within the **ethical parameters**.
- Making students 'lifelong learners' with an aim of making the children adapt with twenty first century skills.
- Facilitating learner-centric and enquiry-based education.
- Effectiveness in providing vocational education to learners.
- Keeping up to date with the latest trends in teaching curriculum for better transaction of knowledge and one's professional advancement.
- Upgrading knowledge and connecting learners with Indian culture, make them aware with respect to sustainable

environment and ethically sound paradigms of knowledge.

- As a competent and motivated faculty, teachers will help in successful functioning of higher education institutions as well as maintain freedom in designing their own curricular and pedagogical approaches.
- Generating congenial classroom environment for students, wherein learners are allowed to think creatively, critically, logically and provide positive reinforcement.
- A teacher being a respectable member of the society acts as a role model for students as well as to the society as he or she devotes considerable amount of time with the students formally and informally both. Mentoring on the part of the teacher helps better communication and interaction and reinforce the best performance outcomes and development of students' careers. Every teacher has his/her unique style of teaching which suits the learner's interest and develops satisfaction and trust among the pupils.

Concluding Remarks

Truly speaking, the role of teacher is very significant in so far as cultivating the minds of young learners are concerned. Obviously, teachers are treated as role models for their students. So, it is essential that teachers should be experienced and well qualified and possess good mastery over the content, pedagogy and practice, besides having strong passion for the teaching profession in true sense. Needless to say, teachers are those important personalities who lay the foundation of a child at the very early stage and fully work for all round development of the students. For this task, it is go ahead with the professional excellence to make pupils adapt to newer and newer

essential for them to be mindful and committed towards their own profession. Visualising the recent trends, they should remain updated with latest skills and innovations, and strategically handle the problem points related to students. Progress of a country will be halted if teachers are not appreciated and valued. Highly energized and motivated faculty with a positive mindset undertake the professional responsibilities in the institution nicely. Only such teachers can serve their job in an effective way. It is recommended for the stakeholders of education to see that institutions organise orientation and refresher courses for teachers frequently, which of course, will go a long way to enhance and upgrade their professional excellence in a better way. Provision should be there to encourage the less effective teachers through proper financial incentives, so that they demonstrate interest in teaching learning process and help in the academic outcome of the students. Recognising the professional importance of quality educators, the NEP 2020 caters to their needs by way of undertaking merit based employment, providing incentives and housing facilities to rural teachers, halting teacher transfers, strengthening teacher eligibility test, technology based comprehensive teacher recruitment planning, ensuring sound and better working conditions to maximize the performance of teachers, recognition of work and promotion, salary increment and so on.

Towards the end, it would be worthwhile to make the remark that a very high expectation for the vital role of a teacher comes into play in the educational scene, projected by the NEP 2020, that focuses on the social transformation on the line of modernity in view of the existing global trends. As such, a present day teacher ought to be innovative, and well integrated to knowledge and skill required to build a nation that may compete effectively in this globalised

world. Clearly, the NEP 2020 envisages the teacher as a disseminator of multidisciplinary and holistic education. This altogether means that the teacher is placed at the core of reform in the Indian education system. It further entails that teachers are treated as highly responsible persons for transforming the society by producing future citizens who may work with pride and commitment to make a vibrant nation. Needless to say, to realise the vision of NEP 2020 on the realistic ground, it demands the collaborative effort to be made by all the authorised educational agencies to ensure the functioning of education colleges in adherence with guidelines laid down in the policy, inevitably within the framework of strict regulations. Let it be hoped best that authorities and stakeholders concerned would work sincerely to lay the strong foundation of an education system in our country that is oriented to transform the Indian society in a way to be capable of meeting the current global challenges successfully.

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