



Continuous professional development and teacher education post implementation of national education policy 2020

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of teachers in light of the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The NEP 2020 has highlighted the need for implementing 50 hours of CPD for improving the quality of education and achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.0, which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. It draws upon a range of literature on CPD, which suggests that on-going professional development is crucial for teachers to improve their practice and support student learning. The NEP 2020 calls for regular, ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers to keep them updated with the latest pedagogical practices and to improve their teaching skills. The policy emphasizes the importance of teacher education programmes that are research based, context specific, and aligned with the needs of the 21st century skills. The policy focuses on the need for a comprehensive teacher education system that covers multidisciplinary education, and integration of technology to enhance the quality and accessibility of teacher education programmes. It also calls for the establishment of a National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) to inform the design of teacher training programmes and improve the quality of teacher education in the country. Continuous professional development programmes that are tailored to the specific needs of teachers are more likely to be effective. There should be less division between initial teacher education and continuing development of teachers. The NISHTHA (National Initiatives for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Development) programme, which has successfully trained teachers, should be implemented across all the states/union territories for academic and professional skills development of heads of the schools and teachers.

Keywords: Teachers, Teaching profession, Continuous professional development, National education policy

INTRODUCTION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 intends to develop an education system that is not only inclusive and holistic but also addresses the global education development agenda reflected in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.0 of the 2030 United Nations agenda for achieving the sustainable development goals, which was also adopted by India in 2015. Sustainable development goal 4.0 seeks to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030. The NEP 2020 has envisaged that the pedagogy must evolve to make education more experiential, holistic, integrated, inquiry driven, discovery oriented, learner centered, discussion based, flexible, and, of course, enjoyable. The curriculum

must include basic arts, crafts, humanities, games, sports and fitness, languages, literature, culture, and values, in addition to science and mathematics, to develop all aspects and capabilities of learners; and make education more well-rounded, useful, and fulfilling to the learner. The gap between the current state of learning outcomes and what is required must be bridged by undertaking major reforms that bring the highest quality, equity, and integrity into the system; from early childhood care and education to higher education. The aim of education will not only be cognitive development, but also building character and creating well-rounded individuals equipped with key 21st century skills (Dewey J, 1958).

The curricular and pedagogical structure and the curricular framework for school education will be guided

by a 5+3+3+4 design, consisting of the foundational stage (in two parts, that is, 3 years of anganwadi/pre-school +2 years in primary school in grades 1-2; both together covering ages 3-8), preparatory stage (grades 3-5, covering ages 8-11), middle stage (grades 6-8, covering ages 11-14), and secondary stage (grades 9-12 covering ages 14-8) (MHRD, 2020). According to NEP 2020, the overall thrust of curriculum and pedagogy reform across all stages will be to move the education system towards real understanding and towards learning how to learn and away from the culture of rote learning as is largely present today (Government of India, 1986). It aims to integrate vocational education with mainstream education, beginning with vocational exposure at early ages in middle stage and vocational education at secondary stage. Every child needs to learn at least one vocation. It would lead to emphasizing the dignity of labour involving Indian arts and artisanship (Johnson CC, 2007).

The NEP 2020 placed teachers at the center of reforms concerning pedagogy, assessment, and professional development. It emphasises the need for providing opportunities for teachers to develop competencies that are required to prepare students or learners for the changing world of work and to achieve expected learning outcomes. To bring about these transformations and systemic changes in the existing education system, we need to develop the competencies of the teachers through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme and prepare them as lifelong learners. Lifelong learning encompasses the continuous self-motivated pursuit of knowledge and acquisition of skills for individual and professional interests and reasons (McIntyre DJ, et al. 1998).

LITERATURE REVIEW

A 'professional' teacher does not only need to have knowledge of 'what' and 'how' of their practice, but also needs to explain 'why' and 'when' of their educational practices. Professional development of teachers implies "activities that develop teachers' skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher" and can be understood as a lifelong learning process, which starts with pre-service education and continues until teachers retire from their service (Perez-Ibanez I, 2018). Continuous professional development of teachers should include both formal and informal modes of training so that the concept of lifelong learning and assessment can be implemented in true spirit. Formal CPD involves active and structured learning that is usually done outside the organisation. Some activities in this form of structured learning include:

- Offline and online training programmes.
- Participation in seminars, workshops and conferences.
- Participation in lecture sessions and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

- Qualification enhancement programmes.
- Participation in a network formed specifically for the professional development of teachers.
- Individual or collaborative research.

During informal CPD, also known as self-directed learning, the teachers carry out development activities according to their own choice and without a structured syllabus. It includes browsing through web resources, studying publications, participating in discussion forums, online chats and attending webinars.

The literature on CPD of teachers has consistently emphasized the importance of on-going professional development for teachers in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Continuous professional development not only provides opportunities for new learning, exploration, and development but also promotes the recognition of the hard work that teachers undertake, particularly during demanding conditions. Studies have shown that CPD programmes can lead to positive outcomes, such as increased teacher effectiveness, improved student achievement, and greater job satisfaction for teachers. Across the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries, the most common forms of professional development, according to teachers, are: "Courses/seminars attended in person" (76%) and "reading professional literature" (72%). They are followed by "education conferences where teachers, principals and/or researchers present their research or discuss educational issues" (49%); "peer and/or self-observation and coaching as part of a formal arrangement" (44%); "participation in a professional network" (40%); "online courses and/or seminars" (36%); "other types of professional development activities" (33%); and "formal qualification programme" (14%). In Australia, Austria, Latvia, Lithuania, Singapore and Slovenia, over 90% of teachers participate in "courses/seminars attended in person", while less than or equal to 50% of teachers do so in France, Japan and Romania (Government of India, 1953).

Research has also highlighted the importance of CPD programmes that are tailored to the specific needs of teachers and are based on evidence based practices. Such programmes are more likely to lead to positive outcomes and be sustainable in the long term. In 2021, a survey of fourteen countries indicated that professional development is compulsory for a specific purpose or depends on individual circumstances (including 3 countries where there is also compulsory professional development for all teachers). In less than one-third of the countries and other participants, professional development is only compulsory for specific purposes, such as promotion (in Israel, Lithuania, Mexico and Poland), salary increases (in Colombia, Israel and Spain) and/or the completion of induction for early career teachers (in England (United Kingdom)). In five countries, the requirements depend on teachers' individual

circumstances: Professional development is compulsory for individual teachers taking on specific responsibilities (in the Czech Republic and Ireland), for retraining or upskilling experienced teachers (in Japan and Norway), or for specific professional development activities set by municipalities and/or schools (in Sweden). Additionally, studies have found that CPD programmes that are collaborative and include opportunities for teachers to work in teams and share their learning with colleagues are more effective than those that are solely individual in nature (Walia P, et al. 2022).

The literature also emphasizes the importance of providing ongoing support for teachers during and after CPD programmes. This support can take the form of mentoring, coaching, or ongoing professional development opportunities (Dagnew Kelkay A, 2020). The teacher must make professional development plans, which must clearly articulate his/her needs, and set measurable and achievable objectives that reflects the teaching context, fulfilling the needs of the employer. A teacher should be able to:

- Identify the learning needs, based on training need analysis (check the competencies that he/she possess and that required for future in the profession).
- Design and develop the professional career plan (identify the knowledge and skills that he/she would need and how to acquire them).
- Address his/her professional knowledge and skills needs (identify the courses or programmes for acquiring the knowledge and skill needs based on career goals and objectives).
- Reflect on his/her learning.
- Apply his/her learnings and experiences.
- Record his/her involvement, contributions and achievements (develop a portfolio of activities to know how far the goals and objectives have been achieved and the impact on the teaching work).
- Share his/her learnings and experiences with others.

It is widely accepted that a teacher's development spans an entire career and to achieve the aim of sustainable development and teaching learning, we need to invigorate the process of CPD of teachers, with opportunities that enable teachers to continuously acquire, expand and extend their knowledge and develop skills and abilities for improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Policy Perspectives on Teacher Education

The need for a formal In-Service Teacher Education (INSET) through refresher courses, short-term courses, workshops, and conferences in teacher training colleges was first emphasized in the report of the secondary education commission (1952-1953) for professional development of secondary school teachers. The education commission (1964-1966) recommended that "school complexes" with a nodal school shouldering the

responsibility for the CPD of all teachers working in the schools, should be established. State Institutes of Education (SIEs) have come up in various States as outcome of these recommendations (Martins-Loucao MA, 2020). The National Policy of Education (NPE) 1986 and the plan of action 1992 mentioned categorically that "teacher education is a continuous process, and its pre-service and in-service components are inseparable." The national curriculum framework for school education highlighted that "the quality and extent of learner's achievement are determined by teacher competence, sensitivity, and teacher motivation". The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE)-2009 also proposed many initiatives to strengthen in-service teacher education as a means of professional development.

The national education policy 2020 highlighted the need for a technology based comprehensive teacher requirement planning and forecasting exercise to be conducted by each State to assess expected subject wise teacher vacancies over the next two decades. Teachers will be required to maintain an e-portfolio which would make it handy for them to analyse their skills, set goals and objectives accordingly for career advancement (Alves I, 2020). The e-portfolio will be linked to their Career Management and Progression (CMP) and National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST). A common guiding set of NPST will be developed by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in its restructured new form as a Professional Standard Setting Body (PSSB) under the General Education Council (GEC), in consultation with National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), teachers from across levels and regions, expert organisations in teacher preparation and development, and expert bodies in vocational education, and higher education. The standards would cover expectations of the role of the teacher at different levels of expertise/stage, and the competencies required for that stage. In 2021, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has come out with a draft of the national professional standards for teachers, comprising the following domains for developing the teacher's competencies as per the professional standards:

- Core values and ethics.
- Professional knowledge and understanding.
- Classroom components and dynamics.
- Professional development and growth.

The NPST will also inform the design of pre-service teacher education programmes. This could be then adopted by states and determine all aspects of teacher career management, including tenure, professional development efforts, salary increases, promotions, and other recognitions. Promotions and salary increases will not occur based on the length of tenure or seniority, but

only on the basis of such appraisal. State governments shall prepare cadres of professionally qualified educators for early childhood care and education, through stage specific professional training, mentoring mechanisms, and career mapping. Necessary facilities will also be created for the initial professional preparation of these educators and their CPD (Aithal PS, et al. 2020).

Teachers doing outstanding work must be recognized and promoted, and given salary raises, to incentivize all teachers to do their best work. Therefore, a robust merit based structure of tenure, promotion, and salary structure will be developed, with multiple levels within each teacher stage, that incentivizes and recognizes outstanding teachers. A system of multiple parameters for proper assessment of performance will be developed by state/UT governments that is based on peer reviews, attendance, commitment, specific hours of CPD, and other forms of service to the school and the community. It will be ensured that career growth (in terms of tenure, promotions, salary increases, etc.) is available to teachers within a single school stage (*i.e.*, foundational, preparatory, middle, or secondary), and that there is no career progression related incentive to move from being teachers in early stages to later stages or vice versa (though such career moves across stages will be allowed, provided the teacher has the desire and qualifications for such a move). This is to support the fact that all stages of school education will require the highest quality teachers, and no stage will be considered more important than any other. Vertical mobility of teachers based on merit will also be paramount; outstanding teachers with demonstrated leadership and management skills would be trained over time to take on academic leadership positions in schools, school complexes, Block Resource Centres (BRCs), Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs), Block Institutes of Teacher Education (BITEs), District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) as well as relevant government departments (Dahri NA, et al. 2021).

Johnson revealed that the quantity of professional development is strongly linked with standards based teaching practices in the classroom. He found out that teacher with 40-79 hours of professional development reported only minimal use of standards based teaching practices, as compared to the teachers who attended 80 hours of professional development programme.

According to NEP 2020, each teacher will be expected to participate in at least 50 hours of CPD opportunities every year for their own professional development, driven by their own interests. School principals and school complex leaders will have similar modular leadership/management workshops and online development opportunities and platforms to continuously improve their own leadership and management skills, so that they too may share best practices with each other. Such leaders will also be expected to participate in 50 hours or more of CPD modules per year, covering leadership and

management, as well as content and pedagogy, with a focus on preparing and implementing pedagogical plans, based on competency based education. Continuous professional development will systematically cover the latest pedagogies regarding Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN), formative and adaptive assessment of learning outcomes, competency based learning, and related pedagogies learning, such as experiential learning, art integrated, sports integrated learning, storytelling based approaches, etc. Teachers will be given continuous opportunities for self-improvement and to learn the latest innovations and advances in their professions. These will be offered in multiple modes, including in the form of local, regional, state, national, and international workshops as well as online teacher development modules. Platforms (especially online platforms) will be developed so that teachers may share ideas and best practices. The use of technology platforms, such as digital infrastructure for knowledge sharing (Diksha) for online training of teachers will be encouraged, so that standardized training programmes can be administered to large numbers of teachers within a short span of time (Rahman MS, et al. 2020).

The national council of educational research and training has developed CPD guidelines, covering all the significant areas of teacher education, tailored to the time and needs of teachers and head teachers. It comprises various programmes and activities for participants with allotted time for each activity.

DISCUSSION

Holistic and Multi-disciplinary Education for Teachers

Dewey uses the metaphor of teachers trying to pour knowledge into the “empty heads” of students. He asserts, “that education is not an affair of ‘telling’ and being told, but an active and constructive process, is a principle almost as generally violated in practice as conceded in theory”. In the traditional school system, students do not become critical thinkers, but rather receive content and are expected to accept it as true. He also believed in multicultural education, which he considered an efficient way “to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race and national territory which keep men from seeing the full import of what they are doing”. According to Dewey’s philosophy, the five characteristics that any good education system should maintain are:

- Integration of personal experience with academic learning.
- Structured opportunities for reflection.
- Inquiry based learning.
- Face-to-face communication,
- Connection with the community, all of which are sound methodological and teaching practices.

As per the recommendations of the NEP 2020, teacher education will gradually be moved into multidisciplinary colleges and universities by 2030. As colleges and universities move towards becoming multidisciplinary, they will also aim to house outstanding education departments that offer Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), Master in Education (M.Ed.), and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees in education. The 4 years integrated B.Ed. offered by such multidisciplinary Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) will, by 2030, become the minimal degree qualification for school teachers. The 4 years integrated B.Ed. will be a dual-major holistic bachelor's degree in education as well as in specialized subjects, such as language, history, music, mathematics, computer science, chemistry, economics, art, physical education, etc. Beyond the teaching of cutting edge pedagogy, the teacher education will include grounding in sociology, history, science, psychology, early childhood care and education, foundational literacy and numeracy, knowledge of India and its values/ethos/art/traditions, and more. The 2 years B.Ed. programmes will also be offered, by the same multidisciplinary institutions offering the 4 years integrated B.Ed., and will be intended only for those who have already obtained bachelor's degrees in other specialized subjects. These B.Ed. programmes may also be suitably adapted as 1 year B.Ed. programmes, and will be offered only to those who have completed the equivalent of 4 years multidisciplinary bachelor degrees or who have obtained a master's degree in a specialty and wish to become a subject teacher in that specialty. All such B.Ed. degrees would be offered only by accredited multidisciplinary higher education institutions offering 4 years integrated B.Ed. programmes. Multidisciplinary higher education institutions offering the 4 years in-class integrated B.Ed. programme and having accreditation for Open and Distance Learning (ODL) may also offer high quality B.Ed. programmes in blended or ODL mode to students in remote or difficult to access locations and also to in-service teachers who are aiming to enhance their qualification.

The pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes in India are inherently biased towards meeting the demands of the general education and uses basic teaching methods and techniques and educational psychology for training of teachers. Teachers must also possess the knowledge of the role and functions of the various institutions and industry and should liaise and interact with local businessmen, industry, employers, government agencies and trade unions/associations to find positions for their students to gain on the job learning experience and placement. They should also remain up to date on career trends and the skills employers need for the various job roles. Vocational teachers will have to be trained on developing project proposals, use of training packages with media/e-learning materials, assessment of trainees and maintenance of student's profile. Skilling is being increasingly integrated in higher

education with community and degree colleges affiliated to universities offering NSQF (National Skills Qualifications Framework) aligned vocational courses and Bachelor of Vocational Education (B.Voc.) degrees. Integration of separated tracks of academic and vocational education is taking place under the NSQF. The B.Voc. degrees introduced in 2013 will continue to exist, but vocational courses will also be available to students enrolled in all other bachelor's degree programmes, including the 4 years multidisciplinary bachelor's programmes. Higher education institutions will also be allowed to conduct short term certificate courses in various skills, including soft skills. In order to maintain uniform standards for teacher education, the admission to pre-service teacher preparation programmes shall be through suitable subject and aptitude tests conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), and shall be standardized keeping in view the linguistic and cultural diversity of the country.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, teachers have to be at the center of all educational reforms. Teachers need to develop 21st century skills and key competencies required to prepare students for the changing world of work and to achieve expected learning outcomes. Continuous professional development of teachers is seen as an important aspect of this process, as it enables teachers to continuously acquire, expand and extend their knowledge and develop skills and abilities needed to transfer the competencies to the students. There should be less division between initial teacher education and continuing development programmes for teachers. States/UTs need to develop an action plan for restructuring pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes based on national professional standards for teachers and include competency based education and working experience through work based learning in the workplace or industry. This can lead to improved teaching practices, better outcomes, and overall increased job satisfaction for teachers. The National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA), which is a flagship programme of the ministry of education, government of India for the professional development of heads of the schools and teachers should be implemented across all the States/UTs. It is now being conducted in four versions, namely NISHTHA 1.0 (for elementary teachers), NISHTHA 2.0 (for secondary teachers), and NISHTHA 3.0 (for developing foundational literacy and numeracy), and NISHTHA 4.0 (for early childhood care and education).

The changing nature of skills and job requirements demand a new set of skills for teaching and training. Teachers should develop and keep themselves updated in professional and 21st century skills, such as innovation, design thinking, problem solving, digital leadership, programme management, project

management, etc. There is also a need to develop short term training programmes for teachers so that they can impart professional knowledge and skills in emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, automation, big data analytics, internet of things, augmented and virtual reality, 3d printing, and modeling, cybersecurity, etc. The Regional Institutes of Education (RIEs), State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), Block Resource Centres (BRCs), and Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) have to be strengthened to act as vibrant resource centres for CPD of teachers. Training on the implementation of learner centric pedagogy, competency based education, and multi-disciplinary education should be an integral part of all the training programmes for professional development of teachers in these institutions. The training programmes should be teacher centric, with a focus on self-directed and inquiry based learning so that the teachers are able to implement the concept of student centric learning.

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