NEW EDUCATION POLICY SHAPING THE FUTURE OF TEACHER TRAINING IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract. *This overview explores the transformative impact of the New Education Policy (NEP) on teacher training in India, considering the urgent need for structured educational policies globally. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted education, prompting a shift towards ed-tech and creating new opportunities that level the playing field among institutions. With India's youth-centric demographic advantage, the NEP aims to reshape the education system by emphasizing individualized learning, creative teaching strategies, and skill-based education.*

Efforts in training teachers are highlighted, including the National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) program, impacting over 4.2 million teachers. The evolution from bearers of knowledge to facilitators, influenced by technology, has made education more inclusive, cooperative, progressive, and dynamic. The integration of technology, student-centric learning, holistic development, and skill-based education reflect the NEP's comprehensive approach.

The major NEP initiatives promoting teachers' skills include a multi-disciplinary approach, continual professional development, practical training, technological integration, inclusivity, and equity, along with standardization and accreditation. The NEP aligns with India's demographic dividend, emphasizing the constant upskilling of teachers to meet evolving demands. This transformative era in education, facilitated by NEP, prepares teachers to equip the younger generation for the challenges and opportunities of the future.
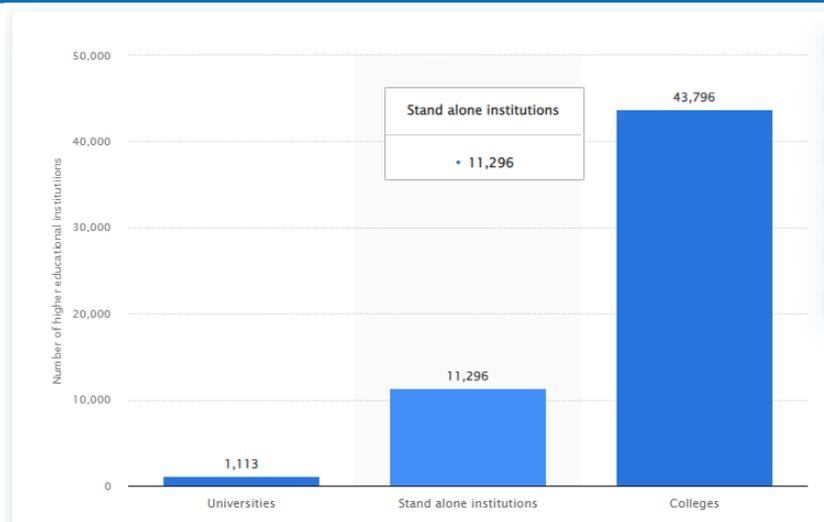
Introduction: What is the need for an education policy? Every country needs a well-defined structure to set education standards, followed by educational institutions nationwide. Knowledge and growth are the two primary outcomes of being educated (https://www.gcu.edu/blog/teaching-school-administration/why-education-important) .

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused significant disruptions to the educational system both domestically and globally. Many people think that the shift to ed-tech has created new opportunities and leveled the playing field for institutions that were previously separated by factors like faculty and academic quality, geographic location, and technological accessibility.

Need for Teachers' Education: With fast-changing times, it becomes imperative to constantly upscale one's skills to be in sync with the present time. Overall, education is now more inclusive, cooperative, progressive, and dynamic than it has ever been.

Education in India: Some Facts: Given that it has one of the youngest populations in the world, India is thought to benefit from a demographic dividend that will fuel future economic growth. With thousands of universities and more than a million schools, India's education sector is one of the most highly capitalized in the nation and a key tool for maximizing this dividend. The ed-tech market is predicted to reach over 10 billion dollars by 2025, and the education sector in India is projected to grow to a value of 225 billion dollars.(https://www.statista.com/topics/6146/education-in-india/#editorsPicks)

Number of higher educational institutions across India in 2021, by type

Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/report-content/statistic/660862 2024

Empowering Educators: Preparing for the Future with the New Education Policy: The Indian education system is being upscaled with more and more focus on ed-Tech. In addition to acclimating the student body to the new learning methodology, enormous effort is being made in both private and public-school infrastructures to train teachers and investigate new and efficient online assessment tools. The goal of NEP is to fundamentally alter the educational system by emphasizing individualized learning, creative teaching strategies, and skill-based education.

Efforts at Training Teachers for Future

1. **The National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement** (NISHTHA) program, for example, was started by the government. Through ongoing professional development and training, this program seeks to improve the skills and knowledge of over 42 lakh (4.2 million) teachers nationwide. This will enable inexperienced educators to advance their careers, seize more opportunities, and have a longer-lasting effect on the educational system.

2. **Focus from Bearers of Knowledge to Facilitators**. They support students in their exploration and comprehension of ideas and motivate them to take an active role in their education. Problem-solving, critical thinking, and collaborative learning are prioritized more. To make learning interesting and useful, students participate in group discussions, practical exercises, projects, simulations, and even instructional games.

3. This change has been greatly influenced by technology. It has created a plethora of educational opportunities. Teachers can now instantly provide feedback and customize learning experiences thanks to the development of digital platforms, online resources, and interactive tools. With the increased accessibility of remote learning, which offers flexibility and more educational opportunities, learning is no longer limited to traditional classroom settings.

4. **Integration of Technology**: With the introduction of digital learning resources, technology is now a crucial component of education. These days, a lot of people use digital content, educational apps, virtual classrooms, and online learning platforms. The COVID-19 pandemic, which required remote learning, expedited this even more.

5. **Holistic Development**: The significance of holistic development is also becoming more widely recognized. Sports, the arts, extracurricular activities, and emotional intelligence are therefore receiving increased emphasis in the curriculum.

6. **Skill-Based Learning**: As the value of employability-enhancing practical skills becomes more apparent, there is a growing emphasis on vocational and skill-based education.

7. **Inclusion and Equity**: To better meet the diverse needs of students from a range of socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, efforts are being made to ensure greater inclusion and equity in education.

8. Incorporation of Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL): This trend is anticipated to continue, with a focus on social skills such as empathy, emotional regulation, and social interaction. Students who receive this all-encompassing education will be prepared to handle obstacles in the real world.

9. Emphasis on Sustainability: As environmental awareness rises, the curriculum is starting to include more and more information about sustainability. The goal of education is to raise a generation of environmentally conscious people.

The major initiatives in promoting teachers' skills in the light of New Education Policy:

Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Train the Teachers: With the help of this strategy, educators should be able to teach a wide range of subjects and won't be limited to traditional, compartmentalized fields.

Continual Professional Development: Teachers are encouraged to pursue lifelong learning through the NEP, which provides them with the tools and resources to continuously improve their knowledge and abilities. To stay current, this is accomplished by making use of online resources, teacher development workshops, and other professional development opportunities.

Emphasizing Practical Training: The necessity of providing teachers with practical training is acknowledged by the National Education Policy. It attests to the value of practical classroom experience gained during teacher preparation programs, which offers aspiring teachers priceless insights into actual teaching situations.

Technological Integration: With the digital revolution rapidly advancing, the NEP emphasizes how important it is to incorporate technology into teacher preparation programs. In the current context, educators are receiving training on how to integrate digital tools and resources into their lesson plans in an efficient manner.

Standardization and Accreditation: To guarantee that all educators receive training that is of a sufficient caliber and level of competence, the NEP policy aims to standardize both the accreditation procedures and teacher training programs.

Student-centered Teaching: Teachers are encouraged to adopt a more student-centred approach by NEP. It helps teachers to modify their methods according to each student's unique learning preferences and needs.

Conclusion: The importance of teachers' education cannot be overstated, especially in a rapidly changing landscape. The youth-centric demographic structure of India places education at the forefront of the nation's capitalization on its demographic dividend. The NEP aligns with this vision, emphasizing the need for constant upskilling to meet the demands of evolving times.

Efforts are underway to revolutionize teacher training through initiatives like the National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) program. This program, reaching over 4.2 million teachers, aims to enhance their skills, providing long-lasting benefits to the education system.

The shift from being bearers of knowledge to facilitators is transforming the role of teachers. Technology has played a crucial role, offering a multitude of educational opportunities. Teachers now have the tools to provide instant feedback and customize learning experiences, making education more inclusive, cooperative, and dynamic.

The NEP focuses on integrating technology, fostering student-centric learning, promoting holistic development, and emphasizing skill-based education. The incorporation of socio-emotional learning, inclusion and equity, and an emphasis on sustainability showcases a comprehensive approach to education.

The major initiatives under NEP, such as the multi-disciplinary approach, continual professional development, practical training, technological integration, inclusivity and equity, and standardization and accreditation, are pivotal in enhancing the skills of teachers.

In essence, the NEP is steering India towards a transformative era in education, preparing teachers for the challenges and opportunities of the future. As educators embrace a more student-centered approach, adapt to technological advancements, and prioritize inclusivity, they are poised to equip the younger generation with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in an ever-evolving world.

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