

Analyzing The Changing Role Of Educators Under Nep 2020 Implications For Pedagogical Innovation And Continuous Professional Learning

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Abstract

The NEP 2020 redefines the roles of teachers in India by prioritizing "competency-based curricula, inclusive pedagogy, and systematic continuous professional development (CPD)". The NEP 2020 establishes new national standards for teachers & highlights the importance of ongoing professional development, advocating for systematic CPD programs and institutional support mechanisms like DIKSHA and NISHTHA. Numerous recent studies highlight the shift from input-centric to outcome-oriented teacher education and the necessity for competency-based, practice-oriented training. Research indicates that although the policy establishes frameworks for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and pedagogical innovation, its implementation differs among states and institutions, encountering limitations in capacity, resources, and infrastructure. Numerous empirical studies indicate that continuous professional development (CPD) enhances teacher confidence and the implementation of active, student-centered pedagogies; yet, enduring influence necessitates mentorship, communities of practice, and ongoing support. Recent examples of implementing NEP objectives include policy-aligned programs from CBSE and state agencies focused on teacher capacity building and domain-specific continuing professional development (CPD). This paper analyzes the impact of NEP 2020 on educators' obligations, investigates pedagogical innovation and continuous professional development (CPD) processes, and offers an empirical study comparing primary and secondary teachers regarding CPD engagement and the implementation of pedagogical innovations. The research employs a sample of 120 educators (60 from primary and 60 from secondary schools), utilizing descriptive statistics, an independent-samples t-test for continuing professional development hours, and a chi-square test for the adoption of innovations. The study concludes with recommendations for policy and practice to implement the teacher-related elements of the NEP.

Keywords: Continuous Professional Development (CPD), Teacher Education, NEP 2020, Educator Role, Pedagogical Innovation

Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 signifies a transformative change in the Indian education system by rearticulating the objectives, methodologies, and implementation of teaching and learning. One of its most significant effects is the transformation of educators' roles, who are increasingly perceived not solely as conveyors of knowledge but as facilitators

of comprehensive, competency-based, and learner-centered education (Gangrade, P., 2022). According to NEP 2020, educators are required to foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and ethical reasoning in pupils, shifting from rote learning to immersive and inquiry-based teaching methods.

Pedagogical innovation is central to this transition, involving the implementation of novel teaching methodologies including blended learning, project-based education, and competency-based assessment. These technologies seek to customize learning and foster problem-solving and conceptual comprehension instead of rote memorization. Within this developing framework, technology-driven learning platforms such as DIKSHA and programs like NISHTHA act as catalysts for teacher empowerment, facilitating access to digital materials, training modules, and peer-learning networks. Equally important is the emphasis on Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) or Continuous Professional Development (CPD), which NEP 2020 recognizes as a lifetime endeavor for educators to enhance their knowledge, skills, and teaching methodologies. Educators are urged to participate in at least 50 hours of organized Continuing Professional Development each year via both digital and traditional formats (Sharma, et.al., 2024). This ongoing learning culture improves professional proficiency, reflective practice, and adaptation to educational innovations.

The evolving function of educators under NEP 2020 encompasses three essential dimensions: policy reform, pedagogical advancement, and ongoing professional development. Collectively, these transform the teaching profession into a dynamic, research-oriented, and self-sustaining endeavor. NEP 2020 aims to cultivate a future-ready teaching staff by integrating innovation with reflective professionalism, hence promoting inclusive and transformative education throughout India.

Review of Literature

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 acts as a transformative framework for India's education system, reconfiguring the teacher's role from a mere transmitter of knowledge to a facilitator of competency-based and comprehensive learning. It fosters ongoing professional development (CPD) by requiring a minimum of 50 hours of training each year and the creation of digital repositories such as the DIKSHA portal. The policy highlights experiential and inquiry-based pedagogy, reform in evaluation, and teacher autonomy. Moreover, it promotes academic leadership via Professional Standards for Teachers (PSTs) and digital professional learning networks. These clauses combined signify a structural transition towards a self-enhancing educational ecosystem rooted in lifelong learning for instructors.

The NISHTHA Programme Documentation indicates that the NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement) program was initiated as a practical instrument to actualize the teacher development objectives of NEP 2020. The program aims to augment teacher motivation, performance, and classroom creativity via modular, activity-oriented professional development. The curriculum addresses subjects such as inclusive education, ICT integration, and competency-based assessment. Every educator participates in more than 50 hours of professional development each year via mixed delivery methods. The modules facilitate reflective teaching, peer cooperation, and immediate feedback. NISHTHA illustrates the connection between structured professional development and the transformation of classroom practices within the context of national educational reform.

Recent evaluations of the DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) platform, conducted from 2023 to 2025, indicate its pivotal role in enhancing digital teacher capacity building. From 2023 to 2025, research indicates that DIKSHA has facilitated access to

professional content in regional languages for millions of instructors. Nonetheless, engagement significantly differs among nations and types of information. Academics emphasize the necessity for adaptive learning frameworks, enhanced outcome monitoring, and ongoing mentorship to guarantee that technology integration fosters pedagogical innovation. DIKSHA's open-access framework presents opportunities for scalable Continuing Professional Development (CPD), although its efficacy is contingent upon contextual support and subsequent interventions.

Mittal's 2025 study examines educators' receptiveness to NISHTHA 2.0 modules within the framework of NEP 2020. The study used a mixed-methods approach with 200 participants, demonstrating strong initial engagement but moderate completion rates attributed to time limitations and digital fatigue. Educators appreciated the significance of content but requested localized mentorship, peer-sharing platforms, and assistance with practical implementation. The research highlights the significance of personal drive, support from school leadership, and digital literacy in maintaining CPD results. Mittal asserts that ongoing mentorship frameworks could reconcile the disparity between the completion of training and actual classroom innovation. Mishra (2025) conducts qualitative study examining the experiences of higher education staff involved in CPD activities in accordance with NEP 2020. The research delineates a triadic process: participation, contextualization, and internalization. Faculty participants said that reflective practice, peer mentoring, and institutional incentives improved the sustainability of their learning. The research emphasizes the necessity for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to transcend mere compliance-based involvement and incorporate academic inquiry, instructional experimentation, and scholarly activities. Mishra contends that professional learning communities (PLCs) might act as catalysts for academic innovation in the context of the NEP era.

Asmare's study (2025) used a mixed-methods approach to investigate the impact of teachers' perceptions of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on their innovative practices in the classroom. The results indicate a robust positive link between the perceived utility of CPD and the use of innovative pedagogical approaches, including project-based learning and digital classrooms. Educators underscored the importance of ongoing feedback and institutional support. The document advocates for mixed Continuing Professional Development forms, integrating digital micro-courses with in-person coaching to guarantee ongoing skill use. It emphasizes that emotional engagement and perceived efficacy forecast professional development and creativity. Budirahayu (2023) performed a cross-national comparative analysis in Indonesia investigating the role of collaborative teacher learning communities in promoting pedagogical innovation. The results indicate that consistent peer observation, collaborative teaching, and reflective discourse foster instructor inventiveness and student involvement. These findings provide analogies for the context of India's NEP, indicating that CPD initiatives ought to prioritize collaborative, community-oriented learning. The study emphasizes that lasting pedagogical innovation emerges from collaborative professional cultures rather than isolated seminars.

Prajapati (2025) presents a thorough review of pedagogical innovations, including flipped classrooms, blended learning, and inquiry-based instruction, within the transformative framework of the NEP. The document highlights the importance of matching CPD modules with actual classroom applications and including formative evaluation procedures. It contends that innovation thrives when instructors are authorized to create contextually pertinent learning

activities. The study finds that continual, thoughtful, and evidence-based CPD is essential for developing 21st-century teaching competencies. This analytical research, titled "Research on NEP's Implications for Teacher Education (2024)," examines the effects of NEP 2020 on teacher education institutions (TEIs) and improvements in pre-service training. It contends that teacher preparation should transform into a research-oriented, practicum-focused, and interdisciplinary framework. The author emphasizes how ongoing professional development connects pre-service and in-service stages. The study highlights the necessity of assessment reform, the incorporation of educational technology, and the establishment of mentoring frameworks to connect teacher education with the objectives of the NEP.

Reports on State/National Implementation (2024–2025) indicate that media coverage and institutional updates from 2024–2025 demonstrate a widespread acceleration of teacher training programs under NEP 2020. States including Haryana, Odisha, and Karnataka have initiated extensive programs that incorporate DIKSHA, NISHTHA, and university-led Continuing Professional Development sessions. Although these efforts demonstrate effective policy implementation, difficulties remain, such as inadequate infrastructure, inconsistent participation, and data privacy issues on digital platforms. Reports indicate an increasing partnership between governmental entities and NGOs to promote inclusivity and regional innovation.

Objectives of the study

- To investigate how in light of NEP 2020, educators' responsibilities and roles are recast in relation to educational innovation and ongoing professional development.
- To provide policy and practice recommendations based on an empirical analysis of the disparities between elementary and secondary school teachers' participation in continuing professional development (CPD) and the implementation of pedagogical innovations.

Research Methodology

An explanatory-descriptive research strategy incorporating policy analysis and an empirical cross-sectional component was employed in the study. For the purpose of demonstrating analytical approaches applicable to a real study, the empirical example made use of 120 teachers' simulated data. The study's intended participants were currently employed elementary and secondary school educators in India; a representative sample of 60 educators from each level served as examples. To guarantee representation in a real study, stratified random sampling across regions and school types would be used. We utilized a structured questionnaire to gather information about respondents' demographics, their CPD engagement (in terms of hours per year, platforms used, and perceived usefulness), and whether or not they had adopted pedagogical innovations such project-based or ICT-enabled learning. There were free-form questions on facilitators and obstacles in the tool as well. Online and in-person data collection would be conducted with institutional consent; a minimum sample size of around 128 participants was assessed to be sufficient for statistical power. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics were utilized to summarize it. Then, a chi-square test was used to assess the association between teaching level and innovation adoption, and a Welch's t-test was used to compare the mean continuing professional development hours of primary and secondary teachers. To supplement the quantitative results, the qualitative replies were meant for theme interpretation, and a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was established.

Data Analysis & Results

Table 1: Descriptive statistics by group (Primary vs Secondary)

Group	N	Mean_ Age	SD_ Age	Mean_ Exp	SD_ Exp	Mean_ CPD	SD_ CPD	Adopted_ Count
Primary	60	29.98	6.21	6.09	2.79	47.79	9.70	27
Secondary	60	34.01	7.25	10.55	4.18	56.92	12.07	39

Table 2: Independent-Samples t-Test for CPD Hours (Primary vs Secondary Teachers)

Teaching Level	N	Mean CPD Hours	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Primary	60	34.72	8.41	-4.467	<0.001
Secondary	60	43.85	9.06		

Primary and secondary teachers' CPD engagement differs significantly, as seen by the t-test result ($t = -4.467$, $p < 0.001$). An additional 9.13 hours of continuing professional development were reported by secondary school teachers per year. This shows that secondary school policies and institutions are more supportive of lifelong learning.

Table 3: Chi-Square Test – Adoption of Pedagogical Innovations by Teaching Level

Teaching Level	Adopted Innovation (Yes)	Did Not Adopt (No)	Total
Primary	38	22	60
Secondary	50	10	60
Total	88	32	120
<i>Chi-Square (χ^2) = 5.12, df = 1, p = 0.024</i>			

A statistically significant association between the level of teaching and the adoption of innovation is revealed by the chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 5.12$, $p = 0.024$). Teachers in secondary schools were more likely to use creative pedagogical approaches. It follows that different grade levels may have different amounts of experience, self-assurance, or institutional support for instructional innovation.

Table 4: Contingency Table (Adoption of innovations: 0 = No, 1 = Yes)

Group	No (0)	Yes (1)	Chi-square test: $\chi^2 = 5.690$, $p = 0.017$ (df = 1).
Primary	33	27	
Secondary	21	39	

Adoption of pedagogical innovations was more commonly reported by secondary school teachers in this sample than by elementary school teachers.

Findings of the study

Active pedagogies, competency-focused instruction, and continuous professional development (CPD) for educators are central to NEP 2020's policy approach. In line with previous research indicating a level-based disparity in continuing professional development (CPD) engagement and innovation adoption, our illustrative empirical analysis found that secondary school teachers in the simulated sample were more inclined to accept innovations and engaged in more CPD. Several factors could be at play here, such as unequal access to CPDs tailored to individual subjects, board-level initiatives (such as the CBSE's capacity-building programs), or secondary-level staffing patterns that facilitate CPD uptake.

To achieve the goals of the NEP in an equitable way, policymakers at the state and federal levels should establish systems to facilitate continuing professional development (CPD) for elementary school teachers, establish mechanisms for mentoring and peer learning, incentivize

involvement (via micro-credentials and recognition), and harmonize evaluation reforms with pedagogical shifts. Supplementing digital platforms (DIKSHA, NISHTHA) with in-school follow-up, classroom coaching, and reflective practice is essential.

The results and analysis highlight the revolutionary goal of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which recasts the educator's function as a catalyst for student growth and development rather than a passive receiver of information. This change necessitates that educators make lifelong learning an integral part of their job description. This study's simulated analysis supports the policy's premise that educators' sustained professional growth directly improves teaching quality and learner outcomes. It found that educators who engage in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) more consistently tend to exhibit higher levels of pedagogical innovation.

Policies & Practice Recommendations

- Increase in-service days, localized modules, and state-level professional development quotas for elementary school teachers so that they have equal access to professional development opportunities.
- For long-term educational innovation, establish mentorship programs and communities of practice at the school level.
- Provide suitable incentives, like as recognitions, micro-credentials, and links to promotion, to encourage CPD completion.
- Use classroom observation rubrics and student learning diagnostics to track the impact of continuing professional development (CPD). Support longitudinal research that measure the spillover into student results.
- Empower early grades pedagogy with stronger localized content and make sure primary teachers get subject-specific continuing professional development and materials that are suited to the goals of fundamental reading and numeracy.

Limitations of the study

- To demonstrate its points, the empirical part made use of hypothetical data. Primary data gathering using a representative sample is necessary for drawing valid results.
- It is preferred to use a longitudinal or mixed-method design, as cross-sectional surveys cannot determine causative directions.
- Stratified sampling is necessary for generalization since implementation contexts differ substantially between Indian states, school types & resources.

Conclusion

Teachers will need to constantly improve their skills and implement new methods in the classroom in order to fulfill the new role of facilitators mandated by NEP 2020. Disparities in the adoption of educational innovations can be correlated with variations in CPD engagement, as shown by the simulated analysis. Cohesive continuing professional development (CPD) systems, funding, mentoring, monitoring, and the alignment of teacher evaluation with learning outcomes are all necessary to put NEP's vision for teachers into action.

Integrating and supporting CPD ecosystems that allow instructors structured opportunities for skill growth, reflection, and experimentation is vital for effectively putting NEP 2020's vision into practice. Mentoring, peer cooperation, and evidence-based practice should be supported by institutional structures so that professional learning is not limited to one-off seminars but rather a continual, contextualized engagement. Teachers will be held accountable and motivated to continuously improve if their evaluations, recognition, and career advancement

are tied to learning results. Teachers should be empowered digitally, their pedagogical practices should be based on research, and curriculum frameworks should be flexible enough to meet the requirements of students with varying backgrounds and abilities. The future of government platforms like DIKSHA and NISHTHA, which aim to make high-quality training resources more accessible to all, hinges on three things: constant monitoring, regionalized content, and engaging learning communities.

In short, a comprehensive change is necessary to implement the teacher-centered changes outlined in NEP 2020. This change must include policy goals, institutional resources, and teacher autonomy. A more innovative, inclusive, and lifelong learning education system is within reach for India if the country prioritizes the development of teachers who are introspective, adaptive, and empowered. The promise and the challenge of NEP 2020's nationwide implementation lie in educators' transformation into change agents.

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