

Integrated Teacher Education Programme as a Catalyst for Multidisciplinary Teacher Education in India under NEP 2020

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Abstract

This conceptual research paper examines the important role of the Four-Year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) as a catalyst for transforming teacher education in India under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in India have suffered from inadequate infrastructure, lack of quality, and degree commercialization, as pointed out by the Justice Verma Committee. To fill these systematic gaps and enhance the quality of teacher education, the NEP 2020 strictly ordered that all standalone TEIs must be transformed or merged with multidisciplinary Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) by 2030. This paper highlights the structure of ITEP, norms, and regulatory guidelines of ITEP established by NCTE, offering a four-year dual-major degree aligned with the new 5+3+3+4 school education framework. Furthermore, it explores the benefits of ITEP, such as bridging theory with practice, technology integration, and preparing teachers for modern classrooms, alongside key implementation challenges, including rural-urban disparities, faculty readiness, and financial barriers for students.

Keywords: Stand-Alone TEIs, Transformation, ITEP, Multidisciplinary, Quality, Integrations

1. Introduction

The quality of a nation is fundamentally determined by its education, especially the quality of teachers and Teacher Education. Teacher Education plays an important role in creating a pool of school teachers that will shape the next generation (NEP, 2020). However, in India, most independent TEIs are more than 10,000 independent total, and they are merely trying to sell degrees for a fee rather than empowering student teachers; the regulation systems have not been successful in stopping malpractices (J. Verma Commission (2012). Therefore, the Indian Government's Ministry of Education decided to take immediate action is now desperately needed to revitalize teacher education and its regulatory framework, and the NEP 2020 introduced the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP). In order to raise standards and restore the teacher education system's integrity, credibility, efficacy, and high quality again (NEP 2020, Paragraphs 15.2 &15.3). The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes 'quality education' by promoting flexibility, creativity, and innovation in teaching-learning. It also announced that the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) would be offered only in multidisciplinary higher education institutions, because teacher education requires high-quality content as well as pedagogy, and further, the teaching profession also becomes a complete professional course like engineering, medicine, and

agriculture. Therefore, all teacher education programmes must be housed in multifunctional institutions by 2030, according to NEP 2020. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has released draft guidelines for converting NCTE recognised Stand-Alone TEIs into Multidisciplinary Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in accordance with the NEP2020 teacher education regulatory structure, which was approved by the General Body of Council in its 66th meeting on 18.05.2025.

The Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) is one of the most significant recommendations of NEP2020. ITEP is a comprehensive four-year bachelor's degree with two majors. This programme prepares teachers for the new curriculum and pedagogical structure of school education (5+3+3+4) as reconfigured, making it responsive and relevant to the development needs and interests of learners at different stages of their development, including the Fundamental, Preparatory, Middle, and Secondary stages. It aims to prepare student teachers with both professional and disciplinary knowledge in an integrated manner.

Based on the above, the aim of this thematic paper is to provide more insights about why the NEP 2020 introduced ITEP, how ITEP will be implemented through the guidelines of NCTE, why ITEP is called a catalyst, and what are the benefits and challenges faced by implementing ITEP in India.

2. Objective of the Study

- To study explored the historical development of teacher education in India and its impact on current practices.
- To explain the role of the NEP 2020for in implementing the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP).
- To understand the norms and standards for the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP).
- To develop an understanding of the guidelines for transforming Stand-Alone Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) into Multidisciplinary Higher Education institutions.

3. Historical Evolution of Teacher Education in India

Teacher Education in India has evolved through various reports of committees and commissions and policies on Education such as The Kothari Commission (1944-66) laid the groundwork by advocating for integrated programs that combined 'theoretical and hands-on training' while emphasizing science education and the elevated status of teachers. It was further strengthened by the National Policy on Education (1986/92), which institutionalized teacher education through the establishment of DIETs, CTEs, and IASEs, focusing on merit-based recruitment and technology-assisted learning. The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE, 2009) subsequently modernized the field by introducing a two-year B.Ed., six-month internships, and a strong emphasis on inclusive and interdisciplinary pedagogy. Even with these reforms, the Justice Verma Commission (2012) highlighted a persistent lack of quality and the commercialization of degrees in standalone institutions. To address these systemic gaps and restore academic integrity, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recommended the four-year ITEP, moving teacher preparation into multidisciplinary university environments to ensure that future educators possess the comprehensive subject expertise and pedagogical mastery required for 21st century classrooms.

4. The current trends of Teacher Education in India

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the fundamental transformation of teacher education.

ation in India. One of the main changes is the shift to the Four-Year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), which will be the required qualification by 2030. In-service training has been revolutionized by digital platforms such as DIKSHA and NISHTHA. Despite, this more than 18,000 institutions suffer from a lack of infrastructure, outdated curricula, and poor facilities. To reduce the gap between ‘theoretical and practice’ classroom preparedness, current initiatives place a strong emphasis on transdisciplinary learning and more stringent requirements, such as the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET).

5. Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP): As a Catalyst in Indian’s Teacher Preparation

The four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) was introduced under the National Education Policy 2020 to transform teacher education into multidisciplinary teacher education. The goal of this innovative strategy is to produce educators with enhanced ‘high-quality pedagogical abilities and in-depth subject understanding.’ The ITEP is a comprehensive program structure that meets the urgent need for educators who are not only proficient in academics but also adept at contemporary teaching techniques and flexible enough to work in a variety of educational settings (Ministry of Education, 2020). By introducing the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) in multidisciplinary education that encourages collaboration, fosters innovations, and empowers students with a broad range of skills and competencies. The ITEP is most important for systemic change by compelling teacher education institutions to change as Multidisciplinary Teacher Education. In Para 15.4, NEP 2020, *“As teacher education requires multidisciplinary inputs and education in high-quality content as well as pedagogy, all teacher education programs must be conducted within composite multidisciplinary institutions”*.

5.1 Purpose and Structure

The main goal of the establishment of ITEP by the NEP 2020 is to improve the integrity and credibility of the teaching profession. This will help teachers to carry out their teaching as efficiently as possible. It will prepare ‘21st century skilled teachers’ for teaching at all levels of NEP the 2020 new school education structure (5+3+3+4), after the senior secondary. To be qualified to offer the ITEP, all Stand-Alone Teacher Education Institutions must become multidisciplinary by 2030, in accordance with the NEP 2020.

5.2 Norms and Standard of ITEP

The norms and requirements for the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) listed in appendices 1 through 15 must be adhered to by any institution that offers the programs listed in below,

1. The Early Childhood Care Education programme (ECCE) leading a Diploma in Preschool Education (CPSE).
2. The Elementary Teacher Education Programme leading as Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.)
3. The Bachelor of Elementary Teacher Education Programme leading to a Bachelor of Elementary Education (B.El.Ed.) degree.
4. The Bachelor of Education Programme leading to a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree.
5. The Master of Education Programme leading to a Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree.
6. The Diploma in Physical Education Programme leading to a Diploma in Physical Education (D.P.Ed.) degree.
7. The Bachelor of Physical Education Programme leading to a Bachelor of Physical Education (M.P.Ed.) degree.
8. The Master of Physical Education Programme leading to a Master of Physical Education (M.P.Ed.) degree.

9. The Diploma in Elementary Education Programme through Open and Distance Learning System leading as Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)
10. The Bachelor of Education Programme through Open and Distance Learning System leads to a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree.
11. The Diploma in Arts Education (Performing Arts) Programme leads to a Diploma in Arts Education (Performing Arts).
12. The Bachelor of Education Programme (Part-Time) leading to Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree.
13. The B. Ed. and M. Ed, (3 years integrated) program is structured as a B. Ed. and M. Ed. integrated degree.
14. Finally, a four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) was introduced.

5.3 Duration & working days

The four-year ITEP programme consists of eight semesters, including internship (field-based experience and teaching practice), with at least 125 working days each semester and 40 hours per week. The minimum attendance percentage for student teachers in all courses is 80 %, and 90% for school internship.

5.4 Intake, Eligibility, Admission Procedure and Fees

- Each fundamental program unit has 50 pupils.
 - Candidates must have at least 50% in Senior Secondary school for admission to ITEP programmes.
- The relaxation in the percentage of marks in the Senior Secondary or +2 examination its equivalent and the reservation for Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Class (OBC), Persons with Disabilities, Economically Weaker Section, and any other categories shall be in alignment with the regulations of the Central Government, State Government, or Union Territory Administration, as applicable.
- Under the NEP 2020, The National Common Entrance Test will be conducted by NTA for the 4-year ITEP programme. The exam will be conducted through an online/computer-based test (CBT) in multilingual and its score would reflect the performance level of the candidate for merit-based selection to secure admission.
- Educational institutions shall be charged only such fees as prescribed by the affiliating body, State Government, or concerned universities in accordance with the provisions of the NCTE.

5.5 Curriculum and Program Implementation

The ITEP curriculum model created by the NCTE serves as the foundation for both the curriculum and the program's execution. Otherwise, up to 30% freedom will be granted to other colleges and organizations offering this program to change or adapt the suggestive curriculum in accordance with local needs.

5.6 Faculty Qualifications

5.6.1 Head of the Department, Associate Professor in Education, or Professor in Education

A postgraduate degree in arts and sciences, an M.Ed., a Ph.D. in education, and ten years of professorial and eight years of associate professorial teaching experience in a teacher education institution are required.

5.6.2 Qualification for Assistant Professor in Liberal Discipline and Pedagogy

1. Any postgraduate degree in Arts or Science with a minimum of fifty-five percent marks and a B.Ed. degree with a minimum fifty-five percent marks or equivalent grade.
2. Should have passed the National Eligibility Test, State Level Eligibility Test, or Doctor of Philosophy in Education.

5.6.3 Qualification for Assistant Professor in Educational Studies

1. Postgraduate degree in Education (M.Ed.) with a minimum fifty-five percent marks or equivalent grade.
2. With a National Eligibility Test, State Level Eligibility Test, or Doctor of Philosophy in Education.

5.7 Total no. of Administrative and Professional Staff

1. One- Assistant Librarian
2. One- Computer Lab Assistant
3. One- Data Entry Operator (DEO)
4. One- Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS)
5. Can employed additional professionals and administrators.

5.8 Terms and Conditions of Staff Service: The policies of the Central or State Government, affiliated body, or University shall govern the terms and conditions of service for both teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as the selection process, pay scale, retirement age, and other benefits of the same.

5.9 Infrastructure facilities

5.9.1 Land and Building: The institutions set aside 2000 square meters for the delimited built-up area and 3000 square meters for the first intake of 50 students. The remaining space is used for playfields, lawns, and other purposes.

5.9.2 Facilities for instruction

1. **Classrooms:** The institutions have six designated classrooms for each unit, each measuring 500 sq. ft. If there are two or more units, the number of classrooms will be increased accordingly.
2. **Library:** The National Council of Educational Research and Training and other statutory entities, as well as reports and policy documents from the Education Commission, books, and journals published and suggested by NCTE are all considered library resources.
3. **Laboratories:** A geography laboratory would be designated, along with laboratories for the humanities and science streams, as well as rooms for physical education and health, a multipurpose hall, faculty rooms, administrative offices, a common area, and a store room.
4. The necessary quantity of functional furniture for both general and disabled people should be provided for educational and other purposes. A rainwater harvesting system, kitchen garden, access to clean drinking water, water and restroom facilities, furniture and equipment repairs and replacements, and co-curricular activities of choosing are all included.
5. The institution should follow the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) safety regulations.

5.10 Management Committee: A managing committee will be established by the institution in accordance with the regulations of the relevant State Government or affiliated university, if applicable.

5.11 The Mandate for Transformation

All Stand-Alone TEIs must be transformed into interdisciplinary institutions by 2030 to offer the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP). For teacher education, this guarantees a composite multidisciplinary environment.

6 Guidelines for Transformation ITEP into Multidisciplinary HEIs

According to the NEP 2020, The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has released draft guidelines for transforming NCTE-recognized stand-alone TEIs into Multidisciplinary HEIs. The primary

mechanisms for this transformation include the following:

- Transformation of Stand-Alone TEIs into Multidisciplinary HEIs.
- Merging of Stand-Alone TEIs with existing Multidisciplinary HEIs (under the same management or different management).
- Collaboration of Stand-Alone TEIs with Multidisciplinary HEIs.
- Guidelines for Transforming NCTE Recognised Stand-Alone TEIs into Multidisciplinary HEIs, approved by General Body of the Council in its 66th meeting on 18.05.2025.

If the NCTE mandating the guidelines, the ITEP directly promotes a Multidisciplinary Academic Environment. This transformation guidelines aligned with UGC, reflects a commitment to reform and transparency in teacher education.

7. The Scope of implementing the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP):

The four-year ITEP provides numerous opportunities to enhance ‘the quality in teacher education’ in India and help to achieve the National Educational Goals. This framework aligns with global trends in teacher education for making Indian educators internationally more competency (Lenka & Singh, 2024; Patel & Panda, 2024). From the following some of the significant opportunities are given.

- Behera (2020) highlights that bridging the gap between theory and practical.
- Kapadia (2023) found that the framework of interdisciplinary approach of ITEP prepares teachers to address diverse classrooms needs and promotes holistic development.
- Sri et al. (2023) reported that the ITEP imparts essential skills and knowledge, and also fosters a transformative mindset for managing the complexities of modern classrooms.
- Verma & Shankar (2023) indicated that digital tools and online platforms enable to provide inclusive learning opportunities, especially in underserved region.
- Anand & Singh (2025) highlights that the ITEP’s curriculum with Continuous Professional Development (CDP) frameworks ensured that teachers up-to-date with pedagogy, technology, and content knowledge.
- Chakraborty (2022) reported that this collaborative approach of ITEP leading more effective educational strategies, it strengthens the academic research and classroom practices.
- Mohanty (2023) indicated that technology integration and experiential learning ensure that educators ready to work under the limited-resource conditions.
- Devi & Konwar (2025) highlights that ITEP can make Professionally skilled and well-qualified teachers
- Those are some of the most important potentials for implementing ITEP, suggested by previous researchers.

8. Challenges in implementing four-year ITEP

In India, the teaching career often faces many problem, talented students deter to select teaching profession. So, the NEP 2020 aimed to attract the talented students to the teacher education through to implement the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) for transforming the teacher education in to quality and change our education system into global standards. Even though, this program faces numerous challenges such as following,

- Lenka & Singh, 2024; Sahu et al., 2020) highlighted that the inadequate infrastructure is the major problem for implementing, in many TEIs, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, lack of modern class-rooms, and insufficient digital tools for multidisciplinary and experiential learning.
- Anand & Singh (2025) reported that there is no well-prepared faculty to do innovative teaching methodologies.
- There is no possible to equity and accessibility, Singh & Mishra (2023) indicated that high fees structure and limited institutions available for offering ITEP are the barriers to the marginalized communities.
- The ITEP emphasises the technology integration classrooms, but in many TEIs haven't digital infrastructure for successful integrate technology-enabled learning (Tilal & Bandyopadhyau, 2023).
- Singh & Mishra (2023) reported that economically disadvantaged background students face financial barriers, and limited access to scholarships.
- The curriculum design of ITEP that integrates pedagogy with liberal arts and science is a complex task, Chakraborty (2022) identified that there is lack of clarity and standardisation in curriculum design, it makes confusion among stakeholders.
- There is regional disparity is one of the major problems, Nial et al. (2023) found that belongs to the urban area institutions having better equipped to implement this program, while rural area institutions struggle with resource constraints.
- Behara (2020) reported that there is lack of experienced teachers and educators in many schools and TEIs for provide guidance and support student-teachers' teaching practice effectively.
- Those some of the major challenges in implementing ITEP in India.

Conclusion

The NEP 2020 introduction of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) plays a major turning point for teacher education in India. For an extended period, teacher education institutions in India have faced several issues such as poor qualities standards, outdated curriculum, and commercialization of degrees, as highlighted by the Justice Verma Commission. By shifting teacher preparation into multidisciplinary higher education institutions, ITEP aims to build academic integrity, and high-quality in the teaching profession and also rise the respect on teaching profession.

The four-year dual-major programme combines subject knowledge with modern pedagogy, making future teachers for the new 5+3+3+4 school structure and curriculum. But there are obstacles in the way of a seamless adoption nationwide such as inadequate digital infrastructure, lack of trained faculty for innovative teaching, high fee structures, and complex curriculum design, so need immediate attention from policymakers to ensure educational access for students from economically backward sections, governments must provide necessary financial aid, scholarships, and clear structural guidance to converting institutions. In conclusion, ITEP is not just a standard degree program, it is a powerful catalyst that can be reshaped Indian education to achieve global standards. If the Indian government, universities, and regulatory bodies like NCTE work together to solve these challenges by 2030, ITEP will successfully prepare 'skilled and modern' educators who can shape the future of Indians effectively.

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