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NEP 2020: Role of National Professional Standards for Teachers in Education System

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Abstract

Our children's futures and, thus, the future of our country are genuinely shaped by their teachers. In India, teachers were the most esteemed members of society due to their noble function. Teachers were only the best and most intelligent. Teachers, were given the resources they required by society to impart their ethics, knowledge, and abilities to students in the best possible way. The quality of teacher education, recruiting, deployment, service conditions, and teacher empowerment are all below par, and as a result, teachers' motivation and quality fall short of expectations. To encourage the best people to pursue careers in teaching, the high regard for educators and the esteemed position of the teaching profession must be reinstated. The National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) is a core structural reform introduced under paragraph 5.20 of India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It is designed to replace outdated, tenure-based systems with a rigorous, merit-linked, and competency-based framework. Developed by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), the NPST standardizes expectations for what school teachers must know how they perform, and how they advance across their careers. NCTE is working on the detail draft of national professional standard of school teacher along with a framework of teacher mentoring. Here the author provided the background context of such advocacy of professional standard from the perception of continuous professional development and argued that this policy still have several limitations despite positive intentions. And much more debate is needed for fine tuning the implementation framework of policy.

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Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 places the teacher at the center of the fundamental reforms proposed in the education system. The Policy indicates that teachers truly shape the future of our children and, therefore, all students at all levels of school education must be taught by passionate, motivated, highly qualified, professionally trained, and well-equipped teachers. To enable this, teachers must be re-established as the most respected and essential members of our society. Everything must be done to empower teachers and help them to do their job as effectively as possible. The very best and brightest must enter the teaching profession at all levels, by ensuring livelihood, respect, dignity, and autonomy, while also instilling in the system basic methods of quality control and accountability. –NEP 2020

“A common guiding set of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by 2022, by the National Council for Teacher Education in its restructured

new form as a Professional Standard Setting Body (PSSB) under the General Education Council (GEC), in consultation with NCERT, SCERTs, teachers from across levels and regions, expert organizations in teacher preparation and development, expert bodies in vocational education, and higher education institutions. The standards would cover expectations of the role of the teacher at different levels of expertise/stage, and the competencies required for that stage. It will also comprise standards for performance appraisal, for each stage, that would be carried out on a periodic basis. 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. The professional standards will be reviewed and revised in 2030,

and thereafter every ten years, on the basis of rigorous empirical analysis of the efficacy of the system.”- Para 5.20 NEP 2020.

The National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), introduced under NEP 2020, transitions India's education system to a merit-based, competency-focused framework. It outlines four career stages ranging from beginner to lead teacher with a focus on standardized professional development and performance-based appraisal. The National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) is a core structural reform introduced under paragraph 5.20 of India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It is designed to replace outdated, tenure-based systems with a rigorous, merit-linked, and competency-based framework. Developed by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), the NPST standardizes expectations for what school teachers must know how they perform, and how they advance across their careers. NCTE is working on the detail draft of national professional standard of school teacher along with a framework of teacher mentoring. Here the author provided the background context of such advocacy of professional standard from the perception of continuous professional development and argued that this policy still have several limitations despite positive intensions. And much more debate is needed for fine tuning the implementation framework of policy. Our children's futures and, thus, the future of our country are genuinely

shaped by their teachers. In India, teachers were the most esteemed members of society due to their noble function. Teachers were only the best and most intelligent. Teachers, or gurus, were given the resources they required by society to impart their ethics, knowledge, and abilities to students in the best possible way. The quality of teacher education, recruiting, deployment, service conditions, and teacher empowerment are all below par, and as a result, teachers' motivation and quality fall short of expectations. To encourage the best people to pursue careers in teaching, the high regard for educators and the esteemed position of the teaching profession must be reinstated.

Importance of Setting Teachers' Professional Standard

Teacher standards also inform the development of professional learning goals, provide a framework by which teachers can judge the success of their learning and assist self-reflection and self-assessment. Teachers can use the Standards to recognize their current and developing capabilities, professional aspirations and achievements. The Standards contribute to the professionalization of teaching and raise the status of the profession. They could also be used as the basis for a professional accountability model, helping to ensure that teachers can demonstrate appropriate levels of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement.



Further, these standards provide a common understanding of what is valued in the profession and expectations from teachers across the country. This understanding will inform the following:

1. Defining the nature of teacher's work
2. Creating working and service conditions
3. Reinventing teacher education programmes
4. Enabling certification and registration of teachers
5. Promoting life-long learning and career development
6. Establishing uniformity of teacher qualification and

- enabling mobility
7. Evaluating teacher quality
8. Supporting teacher motivation
9. Teacher accountability/duties

Structural Framework of NPST

The NPST structures the teaching career into four distinct, progressive milestones. Progression through these levels dictates promotions, salary increases, and tenure, completely moving away from automated time-bound seniority.

Career Stage	Traditional Equivalent	Core Mandate & Competencies
Pragammi Shikshak	Beginner Teacher	Focuses on fundamental pedagogical content knowledge, safe classroom management, and adaptation to student diversity.
Praveen Shikshak	Proficient Teacher	Demonstrates independent application of technology-integrated strategies and evidence-based continuous assessments.
Kushal Shikshak	Expert Teacher	Acts as a high-performing mentor, orchestrating cross-disciplinary instruction and active collaboration.
Vishesh Shikshak	Lead Teacher	Shapes institutional policy, designs innovative curricula, and leads regional or national educational advancements.

Fundamental Performance Domains of NPST

The NPST evaluates a teacher's professional capability across three fundamental core domains-

1. **Professional Knowledge:** Mastery over specialized subject matter, childhood developmental psychology, and diverse linguistic or regional student socio-economic backgrounds.
2. **Professional Practice:** Capability to design challenging learning sequences, use ICT tools, manage classrooms safely, and execute objective, multi-dimensional assessments.
3. **Professional Engagement:** Proactive participation in peer-learning circles, school community development, and continuous self-up gradation.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

1. CPD 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.
2. Platforms (especially online platforms) will be developed so that teachers may share ideas and best practices.
3. Each teacher will be expected to participate in at least 50 hours of CPD opportunities every year.
4. School Principals and school complex leaders will have similar modular leadership/management workshops Knowledge-
 - Knowledge of subject & Teaching Learning methods.
 - Knowledge of society.
 - knowledge of policy & organization Skills
 - Accountable for the quality of learning outcome
 - Conduct research within place of practice
 - Contribute to collaborative learning & professional community
 - Translate research outcomes in practice Attitude
 - Committed to the profession by means of ensuring leaning of students
 - Willing to contribute to the collective knowledge of profession
 - Committed to the ethical code of profession
 - Committed to the integrity of work and accountable to communicate broader immediate community

Strategic Drivers of the Policy

1. **Merit-Driven Appraisals and Tenure:** Automated promotions based strictly on years of employment are discontinued under the new framework. "Promotions and salary increases will not occur based on the length of tenure or seniority, but only on the basis of. This firmly links career trajectory to data-backed performance indices.
2. **Mandated Continuous Professional Development (CPD):** To match the shifting benchmarks of the NPST, every practicing teacher must complete a minimum threshold of professional learning annually. "NEP 2020 requires teachers to complete 50 hours of CPD per year."
3. **Redesigned Pre-Service Pre-requisites:** The standard path for entering the profession is undergoing a full transition to align with global standards. "By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree that teaches a range of knowledge content and pedagogy."

Discussion

Today's educators must understand learner-centered values, have a personal identity based on their particular competences, and be able to serve the community in addition to their career. They must therefore fulfill a variety of roles, including those of lifelong learners, educators, counselors, academic leaders, administrators, managers, resource mobilizers, strategic planners, community service providers, and many more.

A. Traits of New Teacher Professionalism

- Inclusive membership
- Public ethical code of practice
- Collaborative and collegial
- Activist orientation
- Flexible and progressive
- Responsive to change
- Self-regulating
- Policy-active
- Inquiry-oriented
- Knowledge-building.
- Techno-efficiency and techno-pedagogical efficacy

B. Career Management and Progression (CMP)

- A robust merit-based structure of tenure, promotion, and salary structure & incentivizes and recognizes outstanding teachers.
- A system of multiple parameters for proper assessment of performance will be developed.
- Career moves across stages will be allowed.
- Vertical mobility of teachers based on merit will also be paramount to take on academic leadership positions.

C. Operational Challenges

Academic research highlights several critical barriers to systemic deployment, Institutional Capacity Deficits, Substandard state-level Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) lack the required multi-disciplinary infrastructure to teach modern digital or experiential modules.

- **Assessment Subjectivity:** Designing fully transparent, objective appraisal tools to evaluate real-time classroom behavior across rural and urban schools remains technically challenging.
- **Systemic Resistance:** Overhauling well-entrenched, seniority-led union systems faces structural pushback from in-service school cadres. Generate a formal bibliography in APA or MLA style.

Conclusion

Teacher education is presently delinked with school education. A majority of the Teacher educator have no idea about reality of school. Teacher educators who are advocates of theories are incapable to practice it in teaching learning. The development of teaching standards for teachers has emerged as a global practice. The main argument in favour is that the standards help teachers to become professionally responsible and engage them in meaningful, sustained, and relevant professional development throughout their careers. But it is also true that standards are not a magic bullet to solve all the problems of the world of teaching. Therefore, the developers have to adopt a careful and cautious approach while developing and implementing NPST in India. The developers have to keep in mind that the success of NPST will depend on its acceptability and use by the teaching community. Therefore, the NCTE and all others involved with NPST planning and development have an arduous responsibility to vision these standards well, promote them

adequately, and have a viable mechanism to support the teachers to make the best use of the developed NPST. An attempt has been made to provide a quick interpretation of the pertinent NEP-2020 advocacy from the standpoint of school teachers' professional standards and professional development. Restoring the self-concept, self-respect, and self-confidence of the teachers as well as their position and status in the society and the immediate community they operate, is the first requirement. They need psychological empowerment. Using of Teachers for any other duty than teaching must be the last resort while only after the entire official personnel has been exhausted. Effective school is the solution of quality of learning. School specific strategy must be priority which needs best academic leadership. School complex is Role of most viable idea in resource sharing and professional peer learning. Annual Teacher Appraisal is must and need effective framework for such exercise. NEP 2020 can be operationalized without a clear road map to transform the way teachers are positioned in the educational system need a serious implementation plan that will take on board all stakeholders.

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