

# Continuous Professional Development: A Policy Analysis In Indian Perspective

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## Abstract

Teaching is a profession that prepares students for other professions. Teachers are the most important component in the education system to maintain the quality of the teaching-learning process. Teachers' professional development is one of the vital parameters of quality improvement. They must be updated with research and innovations in their concerned discipline. Updating knowledge and acquiring new skills and competencies beyond their initial training comes under professional development. Professional development of teachers has been one of the major concerns of all the commissions and policies on education since independence in India. Although, it is confined to in-service teacher education (INSET) in all the policy documents and commissions before the latest policy on education i.e., National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. NEP 2020 placed teachers at the center of reforms and recommendations concerning pedagogy, assessment, and professional development. It highlighted the term 'Continuous Professional Development (CPD)' and recommended 50 hours of CPD opportunities for teachers and head teachers. According to the guidelines on CPD "The professional development of teachers is a lifelong learning process, which starts from initial teacher education phase and continues till their retirement". The objective to develop this paper is to present the analysis of educational policies concerning professional development from independence to the latest policy on education. This article includes the concept of CPD, policy analysis, and major recommendations and implementations of policies concerning CPD.

**Keywords:** Teachers, Teaching, Continuous Professional Development, National Education Policy 2020.

## Introduction

Holistic and multidisciplinary education is the need of the hour. Students must be educated holistically for the future to handle multidisciplinary problems smoothly at the local, national, and global levels. Therefore, it becomes mandatory for teachers to update themselves with advancements in their discipline so they can prepare their students to deal with an ever-changing society. An updated teacher can only achieve the goal of preparing the students for the future. They must be trained in new pedagogic techniques, acquire

competencies, and master 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills to achieve the desired goals of the education system. Updating knowledge and acquiring new skills and competencies beyond their initial training comes under professional development. Professional development of teachers refers to "activities that develop teachers' skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher" (OECD, 2009, as cited in Muhammad et al., 2019).

Gander, Filding, and Schalock stated (2000 as cited in Mitkovaska, 2010) "Professional development is based on the

concept that is understood as a process of inspiring and range of targets set by administrators aimed at changing professional development activities that the teacher used in different environments and conditions that lead to permanent review and change". Generally, professional development is perceived as participation in the activities like short-term courses, training programs, conferences, seminars, etc., during their service to be organized or imposed by the authorities on school teachers. Although, "professional development is more than the training, including workshops, seminars, monitoring, reflection, observation, and performance of activities by teachers, sets them in the role of training, who are placed in this long process" (Mitkovaska, 2010). "Professional development not only provides opportunities for new learning, exploration, growth, and development but also promotes the recognition of the hard work that experienced teachers do under demanding conditions" (NCERT, 2022). Teacher education involves initial preparation and ongoing professional development; ongoing professional development is usually known as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (Misra & Tyagi, 2022). Generally, CPD is equated with in-service training programmes which are normally one-off, isolated, short term & infrequent training events profession, however, it should be perceived in a broad sense as a lifelong process of teacher's development after joining the profession (Tyagi & Jaiswal, 2017).

### **Continuous Professional Development**

Continuous professional development (CPD) is a term employed to explain all the interventions in which teachers involve themselves during their careers (Muhammad et al., 2019). It is a planned, continuous, and lifelong process whereby teachers try to develop their personal and professional qualities and improve their knowledge, skills, and practice, leading to their empowerment, the improvement of their agency, and the development of their organizations and their pupils (Padwad & Dixit,

2011). Continuous Professional Development refers to any activities aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of teachers through orientation, training, and support (Coetzer, 2001, as cited in Lessing & Witt, 2007).

The purpose of CPD is to enhance the work performance of educators in the classroom and increase learners' academic achievement (Muhammad et al., 2019). Continuous Professional Development programs are helpful for in-service teachers in terms of improving their teaching skills and acquiring new 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as ICT skills, soft skills, organizing and management skills, etc. Such activities boost their confidence and contribute to their personality development. CPD programs prove to be helpful to keep abreast with developments concerning professional practices in their discipline. It is helpful to achieve short, medium, and long-term career goals. Teachers can prepare themselves to progress in their careers and take responsibility for their professional development. They must understand their own professional needs, interests, and learning preferences to identify areas for development. They can reflect on and evaluate the benefits of their continuing professional development and its impact on their practice and learner attainment.

### **Forms of Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**

CPD is not confined to in-service training programs but includes initial training, orientation course, and lifelong learning as well. CPD allows an individual to focus on specific skills and knowledge they require over a short period (British Council, n.d.). Continuous professional development is a process of lifelong learning, both formal and informal, involving both voluntary teacher initiatives & programs externally planned and mandated by authorities (Tyagi & Jaiswal, 2017).

Continuous professional development may be presented in different forms.

Categorization is based on the type of programs (Seminars, Conferences, workshops, qualification courses, etc.) and the involvement of teachers (active or passive). Broadly CPD has two forms viz., active and passive. When teachers put their efforts and involve themselves to learn something new beyond their initial training, is known as active CPD, such as enrollment in online or offline courses, attending workshops, getting further qualification programs, etc. Apart from this, being involved in mentoring and/or peer observation makes them active also. In contrast, generally, teachers remain passive while attending conferences, seminars, and observations of the work of other teachers. They get hardly any opportunities to give their reflection and participate in discussions. Such type of CPD falls under the category of Passive CPD.

Further, Active CPD is categorized into formal and informal CPD. Informal Continuous Professional Development includes those activities which require a self-directed approach toward a lifelong learning process. When teachers are involved in reading publications in leading journals, recent books, policy documents, newsletters, and magazines for updating themselves known as Informal Continuous Professional Development. They are engaged in informal dialogues with peers and remain active and updated (Maciejowska, Ctrnactova, & Bernard, 2015). Formal Continuous Professional Development includes all structured programs which make the teacher an active participant e.g., short and long-term courses, workshops, qualification programmes, etc. "The programs may be organized and conducted by components of the education system, higher education, accredited commercial companies, or non-governmental organizations, such as teachers' organizations or scientific associations" (Maciejowska, Ctrnactova & Bernard, 2015). Effective professional development programs engage teachers in learning events that are comparable to those they may employ with their pupils, and

inspire them to create teachers' learning forums (Muhammad et al., 2019).

### **Principles of Continuous Professional Development**

The Professional Development of teachers depends on the structure of programmes planned for them. It can be related to any developmental activities that take place continuing the induction period and it should ensure there are some relations between the professional and personal needs of the individual teacher and between the needs of the school and the teacher (Neil & Morgan, 2003, as cited in Syariifah, et al., 2019). The success of any professional development programme largely depends on proper planning with stipulated goals, engaging activities, etc. A successful formal CPD program needs to follow some principles which are mentioned below;

**Principle of Definite Goal:** CPD Programs must have some definite objectives, a structured schedule, and well-designed activities to achieve the goal. Post-program support must be attached to the programs for optimum achievement. Coordination among the organizing bodies is very essential to avoid duplication or overlapping of the programs. It should be the duty of the parent institutions of the teachers to make arrangements for them to avail themselves of the opportunities.

**Principle of Specific Need:** Program must be designed to address the specific need of the teachers. The needs of the particular group of teachers must be identified then enrolment of the teachers should be done. It saves resources and proves fruitful for the participants and the organizers as well.

**Principle of Sharing:** Teachers must provide the space for sharing their ideas, and experiences during or after the program. A discussion platform must be provided to the teachers for sharing their views and listening to others as well. It would create a knowledge-

sharing, creating, and disseminating environment which contributes positively.

### **Principle of Challenging and Meaningful**

**Task:** CPD programs should enable teachers to challenge and develops ideas, extend knowledge and skills and deepen their understanding of practices. It should be designed to extend the acquired knowledge. The challenging and meaningful tasks would work as the motivating factors to participate in such programs.

**Principle of Flexibility:** CPD programs should be organized flexibly. It should be available in a phased manner with proper information about the launching and closing of the program. It will increase participation and help to realize the goal set by the authorities.

### **Policy Analysis concerning Professional Development**

In the context of teachers' professional development, Chanchal and Misra (2022) revealed the fact that “ 'teacher professional development practices' were a part and parcel of the ancient Indian education system, and several teachers were beneficiaries of these practices". After independence, the professional development of teachers is one of the major concerns of all commissions and policies concerning school and higher education. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) emphasized the professional development of secondary school teachers in the form of In-Service Teacher Education (INSET), through refresher courses, short-term courses, workshops, and conferences in teacher training colleges (Ministry of Education, 1952). The commission also recommended the establishment of Extension Services Departments to assist these colleges with their structural arrangement for teachers' in-service education (Misra & Tyagi, 2022). Further, The Education Commission (1964-66) recommended establishing school complexes with a nodal school for teachers' in-service education. It was suggested that at least

two or three months of in-service training should be provided during five years (Ministry of Education,1966). The first policy on education was introduced in 1968 and it was based on the recommendations of the education commission (1964-66).

Further, the most comprehensive policy on education i.e., The National Policy on Education (NPE 1986/92) stressed the continuum of teacher education with the statement "teacher education is a continuous process, and its pre-service and in-service components are inseparable"(MHRD,1998, para 9.4, p.32.). Therefore, it was recommended to establish District Institute of Training and Education (DIETs) in every district, upgradation of colleges of education to Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs), and strengthen a few of them into Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs) (MHRD,1998, p.32). The DIET was conceptualized as a resource support system for elementary education in the district (NCERT, 2022). The major function of DIETs was to provide INSET for 2 weeks to 600 teachers at their inception. Concerning the professional development of teachers in higher education, policy emphasized establishing academic staff colleges in universities across the nation (MHRD,1986). National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) came into existence in the year 1995 for monitoring the teacher education program and maintain the quality of the teaching profession on the recommendation of NPE 1986 and POA 1992. NCTE published the first curriculum framework for Quality Teacher Education in the year 1998.

Various schemes for achieving the target of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) were launched by the government of India such as the District Primary Education Program (1995), and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2001). In the mid-'90s the scheme District Primary Education Program (DPEP) was implemented. Concerning professional development, district, block, and cluster resource centers for primary teachers' training were established under this scheme

(MHRD,1995). Further, under SSA, the provision of 20 days of training for in-service elementary teachers was made. It was provided in two segments of 10 days in Block Resource Centre (BRCs) and Cluster Resource Centre (CRCs) in a phased manner (NCERT, 2022). Concerning secondary education, the government launched the scheme known as 'The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) In 2009. The main objective of the scheme was to enhance access to secondary education and improve its quality. Teachers' professional development is one of the vital parameters of quality improvement. Therefore, it is clearly stated that "the teacher is the most important component in school education it is necessary to continuously upgrade the quality of teachers through in-service education programs and a variety of other measures, apart from pre-service qualifying programme of teacher training viz., B.Ed." (MHRD, 2016, p. 36). Concerning professional development, this scheme emphasized the training of all teachers/Principals/ Vice principals for 5 days every year (MHRD, 2016). The scheme also highlighted the importance of in-service training for teachers of science, mathematics, languages, and technology. Further, an integrated approach was adopted by the government in 2018–2019, called Samagra Shiksha for the implementation of the various centrally sponsored schemes viz. SSA, RMSA, and Teacher Education (NCERT,2022). Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, launched a national initiative to improve learning outcomes at the elementary level through the National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) under the centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan in 2019/20 (UNESCO, 2021).

Between NPE 1986 and NEP 2020, two important frameworks on school education and teacher education viz., The National Curriculum Framework for School Education(NCFSE) and National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education(NCFTE) were published by the National Council of

Education Research & Training (NCERT) in 2005 and NCTE in 2009 respectively. The NCFSE (2005) highlighted that " the quality and extent of learner's achievement are determined by teacher competence, sensitivity, and teacher motivation". Teachers must be sensitive towards their professional development on their own. It is declared that professional development is a lifelong learning process instead of fragmented training sessions (NCF, 2005). NCFTE (2009) may be termed the first policy document that used the terminology for teachers' professional development, i.e., Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Although this document used the terms CPD and INSET interchangeably, many of the learning opportunities suggested in the document are close to the concept of CPD (Misra & Tyagi, 2022).

The latest policy on education i.e., National Education Policy 2020 was launched on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020. This policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (MHRD, 2020, p.3). NEP 2020 placed teachers and faculty at the heart of the learning process. Many recommendations have been made regarding their recruitment, professional development, and service conditions. Continuous Professional Development is placed as an important subsection under the section 'Teachers' in the policy document. It is proposed that "Teachers will be given continuous opportunities for self-improvement and learning the latest innovations and advances in their professions (MHRD, 2020, p.22). It is mentioned clearly that 50 hours of CPD opportunities for teachers every year on a compulsory basis would be provided in multiple modes, including in the form of local, regional, state, national, and international workshops as well as online teacher development modules (MHRD, 2020, p.22). It involves different continuous professional development activities for teachers that covers,

"...the latest pedagogies regarding foundational literacy and numeracy, formative and adaptive assessment of learning outcomes, competency-based learning, and related pedagogies, such as experiential learning, arts-integrated, sports-integrated, and storytelling- based approaches, etc." (MHRD, 2020, p.22).

NEP 2020 proposed CPD activities not only for teachers but also for school heads. Leadership/management workshops and online development opportunities and platforms improve their leadership and management skills (Arora & Awasthi, 2021). So, they may share best practices with teachers in their institutions (Sharma, 2022). 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 (MHRD, 2020, p.22). The concept of linking career promotion with professional development was highlighted in Chattopadhyay's commission (1985, as cited in Misra & Tyagi, 2022). On a similar line, National Education Policy 2020 recommended linking career progression with Teachers' competency levels that would be increased with experience and continuous professional development practices (NCTE, 2021). Implementing this recommendation, a draft of the National Professional Standards for teachers (NPST) is uploaded in November 2021. NPST would design, regulate and monitor the whole teacher education program including pre-service and in-service teacher education. Teachers would be promoted based on the appraisal report instead of the length of tenure or seniority (MHRD, 2020, p.23).

Concerning continuous professional development of higher education teachers, NEP 2020 declares, "In-service continuous professional development for college and university teachers will continue through the existing institutional arrangements and ongoing initiatives; these will be strengthened and substantially expanded to meet the needs of enriched teaching-learning processes for

quality education" (MHRD, 2020, p.43). NEP 2020 states that existing practices of CPD for higher education teachers (i.e., orientation programs, refresher courses), provisions (i.e., training through Human Resource Development Centers of different Universities), and opportunities (e.g., online platforms like SWAYAM) will continue (Misra & Tyagi, 2022). Policy highlights the importance of mentoring in higher education also. Teachers would be able to discuss the problems and situations in their field with experienced professionals. Recommending this scheme, the policy highlights, "A National Mission for Mentoring (NMM) shall be established, with a large pool of outstanding senior/retired faculty – including those with the ability to teach in Indian languages-who would be willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers" (MHRD, 2020, p.43). Implementing this recommendation, a draft of the bluebook on mentoring has been developed by a committee constituted by NCTE and uploaded for suggestion on 3rd November 2021(NCTE,2020).

### **Major Recommendation of NEP 2020 concerning CPD**

- Online NISHTHA is launched in three versions; NISHTHA 1.0 for elementary; NISHTHA 2.0 for secondary; NISHTHA 3.0 for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy for NIPUN Bharat through Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) online portal (NCERT,2022).
- "24 Lakh elementary school teachers and heads are covered at primary and upper primary level and trained in 18 modules through DIKSHA.
- 10 lakh teachers and school heads at the secondary level have targeted to train under NISHTHA 2.0
- 25 lakh teachers and school head teachers at pre-primary and primary

level have targeted to train under NISHTHA 3.0” (NCERT, n.d.).

- Formulation of NPST for school teachers
- NMM for teachers and teacher educators

Overall, It may be concluded that NEP 2020 envisioned CPD more comprehensively

and holistically than previous policy documents. It gives equal importance to the school and higher education concerning CPD. The following Table presents the analysis of recommendations and, implementations of policy documents on education concerning professional development.

**Table 1 POLICY ANALYSIS CONCERNING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

S. No.	Commission/ Policy/ Scheme	Year	Recommendation and Implementation
1.	Secondary Education Commission	1952-53	INSET in teacher training colleges. Establishment of Extension Services Departments.
2.	Education Commission	1964-66	Establishment of School Complexes with a Nodal school. At least 2 or 3 months of in-service training during five years.
3.	National Policy on Education(NPE)	1986/ 1992	Establishment of DIETs In-service education for 2 weeks to 600 teachers in a year. Upgradation of 250 College of Education as CTEs Strengthening 50 College of Education as IASEs Establishment of Academic Staff Colleges in Universities Establishment of a statutory body for teacher education i.e., NCTE
4.	District Primary Education Programme(DPEP)	1995	Establishment of resource centers at District, Block, and Cluster levels for primary teachers
5.	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan(SSA)	2001	20 days of training for in-service elementary teachers in two segments in BRCs and CRCs
6.	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)	2009	Training of all teachers/ Principal/ Vice Principal for 5 days every year  In-service training programmes for teachers of science, mathematics, languages, and technology
7.	National Education Policy(NEP)	2020	50 hours of CPD opportunities for Teachers and Head Teachers Online NISHTHA in three versions (1.0, 2.0,3.0) Formulation of NPST Draft on NMM

After analyzing various commissions and policy documents, it may be concluded that the major recommendations of earlier policy documents were directed toward the establishment of training institutes and centers and providing in-service training programmes for a stipulated time. Generally, the term INSET was used concerning the professional development of teachers. NEP 2020 highlighted the term CPD and recommended 50 hours of CPD opportunities for teachers and head teachers. It gave a special subsection for CPD under section 'Teachers' (MHRD, 2020, p.22). Recently guidelines for 50 hours of continuous professional development for teachers, head teachers, and teacher educators are published by NCERT. These guidelines would be very helpful in planning, designing, and monitoring CPD activities for the stakeholders envisioned in NEP 2020. According to the guidelines “The professional development of teachers is a lifelong learning process, which starts from initial teacher education phase and continues till their retirement” (NCERT, 2022).

### Conclusion

The educational world has moved from 'in-service' to 'CPD' and from 'CPD' to 'Continuing Lifelong Professional Learning' (CLPL), and in comparison, INSET still holds much importance in the Indian education system (Misra & Tyagi, 2022). CPD is envisioned in NEP 2020 as a more comprehensive and holistic term than the previous policy documents. Continuous Professional Development of teachers must be an integral part of their service. It helps to be updated and prepare them to fulfill the need of 21st-century students. Major recommendations of NEP 2020 concerning CPD; Training of teachers and school heads at all levels in three versions (NISHTHA 1.0, 2.0 & 3.0) through DIKSHA; the formulation of NPST for school teachers; the NMM for teacher and teacher educators.

This article presented the policy analysis from an Indian perspective concerning professional development and highlighted the implementations in line with the recommendations. Although many initiatives have been taken, still there is a need for a comprehensive CPD policy in India for the professional lives of the teachers on the same line of other countries.

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