



Teacher Preparedness For Co-Scholastic And Skill Education Post-NEP 2020: A Study On Training And Implementation Gaps

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes holistic education through the integration of co-scholastic and skill-based learning within the school curriculum. The present study examines the level of teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education practices and explores the relationship between preparedness and actual classroom implementation. The study also investigates whether teacher preparedness varies based on type of school, board affiliation, and gender.

A descriptive survey method was employed, and data were collected from school teachers using a structured questionnaire aligned with the objectives of NEP 2020. The sample included teachers from government and private schools affiliated with CBSE and State Boards. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential techniques, including independent samples t-tests, to test the stated hypotheses.

The findings revealed no statistically significant differences in teacher preparedness based on type of school, board affiliation, or gender, indicating that preparedness-related challenges are systemic rather than institution-specific. However, the analysis highlighted a positive association between teacher preparedness and the effective implementation of co-scholastic and skill education practices. Factors such as training exposure, confidence in assessment methods, and institutional support emerged as critical enablers of implementation.

The study concludes that while NEP 2020 provides a strong policy framework, its successful realization depends largely on sustained investment in teacher professional development and supportive school environments. Strengthening teacher preparedness is essential for translating the policy's holistic and skill-oriented vision into meaningful classroom practice.

Keywords: Co-Scholastic, Skill Education, NEP-2020, Preparedness, Training, Implementation gap, teacher preparedness

Introduction

Background and context of NEP 2020: The formulation of educational policies in India has historically reflected the nation's evolving developmental goals and socio-economic priorities. The **first National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1968**, based on the recommendations of the Kothari Commission, emphasized a common school system and national integration. The **second policy in 1986**, revised in 1992, focused on equity, access, and quality, especially for marginalized communities. However, both policies primarily emphasized academic knowledge, with limited focus on skill development or co-scholastic learning.

After over three decades, the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** marked a significant paradigm shift. Grounded in the vision of transforming India into a knowledge society, NEP 2020 emphasizes **holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary education**. It integrates **co-scholastic domains**—such as arts, physical education, and life skills—with core academics and promotes **skill development from an early age**. The policy envisions the development of 21st-century competencies like creativity, problem-solving, and communication. Central to its success is the **preparedness of teachers**, who are key to operationalizing these reforms at the grassroots level. Understanding their readiness and the challenges they face in implementing NEP 2020 is crucial for effective policy realization and sustainable educational transformation.

Importance of co-scholastic and skill education: The integration of co-scholastic and skill education has emerged as a critical component of holistic learning in the context of school education. These domains, which include art, physical education, moral values, life skills, and vocational training, contribute significantly to the overall development of learners beyond cognitive achievements. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recognizes the transformative potential of co-scholastic and skill-based education in preparing students for real-life challenges and enhancing their employability, creativity, and emotional well-being. By promoting experiential and multidisciplinary learning, these components aim to develop essential 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and adaptability. Their effective integration within the school curriculum requires not only structural reforms but also a high level of teacher preparedness. Teachers play a pivotal role in translating policy into practice, and their understanding, attitudes, and competencies directly influence the successful implementation of co-scholastic and skill education initiatives.

Role of teachers in implementation: Teachers play a pivotal role in translating educational policies into meaningful classroom practices. The successful implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 largely hinges on the capacity, preparedness, and motivation of teachers to embrace its transformative vision. NEP 2020 emphasizes a shift from rote learning to experiential, skill-based, and learner-centric education. It advocates for integrating co-scholastic areas such as arts, physical education, moral values, and vocational skills with core academic subjects, thereby promoting holistic development. In this context, teachers are not merely content deliverers but facilitators of interdisciplinary learning, creativity, and life skill development.

The policy also envisions continuous professional development, autonomy in pedagogical approaches, and the empowerment of teachers as key agents of change. However, the extent to which teachers are informed about, trained in, and supported for these reforms determines the actual impact of NEP at the grassroots level. Challenges such as limited resources, lack of orientation, inadequate training, and institutional inertia may hinder the intended transformation. Therefore, assessing teachers' preparedness, understanding, and practical engagement with NEP 2020 reforms becomes essential for evaluating policy implementation and identifying existing training and implementation gaps.

Statement of the problem: Teacher Preparedness for Co-Scholastic and Skill Education Post-NEP 2020: A Study on Training and Implementation Gaps

Research Objectives:

- 1) To measure the percentage of teachers who have received formal training in co-scholastic and skill education after the implementation of NEP 2020.
- 2) To assess the level of teacher preparedness using a standardized preparedness scale (e.g., Likert scale survey) across different school types (private, government, rural, urban).
- 3) To quantify the gap between the recommended NEP 2020 implementation guidelines and the actual classroom practices reported by teachers.
- 4) To explore teachers' perceptions and interpretations of co-scholastic and skill education as envisioned in NEP 2020.

Research questions:

- 1) What is the level of understanding among teachers regarding the co-scholastic and skill education components introduced in NEP 2020?
- 2) How prepared are teachers across government and private schools to implement co-scholastic and skill education as envisioned by NEP 2020?
- 3) What are the key challenges and barriers faced by teachers in integrating co-scholastic and skill-based education into their classroom practices?
- 4) Does teacher preparedness vary significantly based on demographic variables such as gender and type of school (government vs. private)?

Significance of the study:

This study is significant as it addresses a critical but underexplored aspect of NEP 2020—**teacher preparedness for co-scholastic and skill education implementation**. While the policy outlines a progressive vision, its success depends largely on how well teachers understand and apply its provisions in real classrooms. This research uniquely focuses on identifying specific gaps in teachers' conceptual clarity, preparedness, and ability to integrate co-scholastic and skill components, particularly in the context of diverse school settings (government vs. private) and teacher demographics (male vs. female).

By exploring these dimensions, the study provides actionable insights for education departments, policymakers, and school leadership. It will help in designing **context-specific training programs**, improving **teacher support systems**, and ensuring that NEP 2020 reforms are meaningfully embedded in practice. The study not only fills a crucial research gap but also contributes to building a **future-ready teaching force** aligned with India's evolving educational priorities.

Review of Related Literature:

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Research gaps identified:

- **Lack of Research on Teachers' Practical Readiness to Implement Co-Scholastic and Skill Education Post-NEP 2020:** Although NEP 2020 strongly advocates integrating co-scholastic and skill education into the mainstream curriculum, limited studies have empirically assessed whether teachers are adequately prepared, both in understanding and practice, to implement these reforms at the school level.
- **Scarcity of Comparative Studies across School Types and Teacher Demographics:** Existing research often overlooks how teacher preparedness varies across different school systems (government vs. private) and by gender. This gap prevents policymakers from designing targeted interventions that account for contextual and demographic differences in teacher capacity and support needs.

Research Methodology:

Research design: This study employs a mixed-method research design to explore teacher preparedness for co-scholastic and skill education implementation in the context of NEP 2020. Given the multifaceted nature of educational reform, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches enables a more comprehensive understanding of the issue.

The **quantitative component** involves the administration of a structured questionnaire to a representative sample of teachers from both government and private schools. This tool is designed to assess measurable variables such as the level of preparedness, understanding of NEP 2020 provisions, and frequency of

implementing co-scholastic and skill-based activities. Comparative analysis based on school type and gender is conducted using statistical methods.

The **qualitative component** includes semi-structured interviews and open-ended responses to gain deeper insights into teachers' perceptions, challenges, and contextual factors affecting implementation. This allows for the exploration of attitudes and experiences that may not be fully captured through quantitative tools.

The mixed-method design not only ensures triangulation of data but also enhances the reliability and validity of the findings. This approach is particularly appropriate for policy-based research, where understanding both the scope of implementation and the human factors influencing it is essential.

Research Variables: (Independent and Dependent): To examine teacher preparedness effectively, identifying and analyzing relevant research variables is essential. Research variables form the backbone of any empirical study as they help in establishing relationships, testing hypotheses, and deriving meaningful conclusions. In the context of this study, both independent and dependent variables have been identified to explore the training and implementation gaps faced by teachers across diverse school settings.

1) Variable Type: Independent Variable:

i) Type of School (Government vs. Private)

- **Nature:** Categorical (Nominal)
- **Purpose:** To compare differences in teacher preparedness, understanding, or implementation practices between government and private school teachers.

ii) Gender (Male vs. Female)

- **Nature:** Categorical (Nominal)
- **Purpose:** To examine whether gender influences teachers' understanding, attitudes, or implementation of co-scholastic and skill education.

iii) Type of School board: (CBSE vs. State Board schools)

- **Nature:** "Type of School Board" is a categorical independent variable with two groups: CBSE and State Board schools.
- **Purpose:** Its purpose is to compare teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education under NEP 2020 across different curriculum systems, highlighting board-specific differences in understanding, training, and implementation.

2) Variable Type: Dependent Variable:

i) Perceptions of Implementation Challenges

- **Definition:** Teachers' views on difficulties in executing NEP 2020 guidelines in real classroom settings.
- **Data Source:** Interviews or thematic analysis.
- **Indicators:** Mention of time constraints, lack of resources, institutional support, student readiness, etc.

ii) Attitudes Toward Skill Education and Co-Scholastic Domains

- **Definition:** Teachers' beliefs, values, and openness toward integrating these areas into mainstream teaching.
- **Data Source:** Reflective narratives, case studies.
- **Indicators:** Positive/negative attitudes, perceived value, resistance or acceptance.

Hypothesis:

➤ Hypothesis 1 (Based on Type of School – Government vs. Private)

Null Hypothesis (H_{01}): There is no significant difference in teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education between government and private school teachers.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{11}): There is a significant difference in teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education between government and private school teachers.

➤ Hypothesis 2 (Based on Gender – Male vs. Female)

Null Hypothesis (H_{02}): There is no significant difference in the level of understanding of NEP 2020's co-scholastic and skill education guidelines between male and female teachers.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁₂): There is a significant difference in the level of understanding of NEP 2020's co-scholastic and skill education guidelines between male and female teachers.

➤ **Hypothesis 3 (Bases on Type of School Board (CBSE vs. State Board))**

Null Hypothesis (H₀₃): There is **no significant difference** in teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education between CBSE and State Board school teachers.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁₃): There is a **significant difference** in teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education between CBSE and State Board school teachers.

➤ **Hypothesis 4 (Implementation vs. Training/Preparedness)**

Null Hypothesis (H₀₄): There is no significant relationship between teacher preparedness and the actual implementation of co-scholastic and skill education practices.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁₄): There is a significant relationship between teacher preparedness and the actual implementation of co-scholastic and skill education practices.

- **Population and sample:** The study targets school teachers from government and private schools. A stratified random sample of teachers was selected to ensure representation across gender and school types. This sampling ensures meaningful comparison and reliable insights into teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education under NEP 2020.
- **Sampling technique:** A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure balanced representation across school types (government and private) and gender (male and female). This method allows for subgroup comparisons and enhances the reliability of findings related to teacher preparedness and implementation of co-scholastic and skill education under NEP 2020.
- **Tools and techniques for data collection:** Data were collected using a structured questionnaire for the quantitative component to assess teacher preparedness and understanding. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a selected sub-sample to gather qualitative insights into teachers' perceptions, experiences, and challenges related to implementing co-scholastic and skill education under NEP 2020.
- **Data analysis methods:** Quantitative data were analyzed using **descriptive statistics** (mean) and **inferential statistics** (t-test) to examine differences based on gender and school type. Qualitative data from interviews were subjected to **thematic analysis**, identifying key patterns and themes related to teacher preparedness and implementation of NEP 2020 reforms.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Type of School

| Type of School | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Government Schools | 8 | 40% |
| Private Schools | 12 | 60% |
| Total | 20 | 100% |

Interpretation:

The sample is moderately skewed towards private schools (60%), indicating comparatively higher participation from private institutions in the study on NEP 2020 implementation of co-scholastic and skill education.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Board Affiliation

| Board Affiliation | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| CBSE | 12 | 60% |
| State Board | 8 | 40% |
| Total | 20 | 100% |

Interpretation:

A higher representation of CBSE-affiliated schools (60%) suggests stronger engagement or accessibility among CBSE teachers regarding NEP 2020–aligned reforms compared to State Board schools.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

| Gender | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Female | 13 | 65% |
| Male | 7 | 35% |
| Total | 20 | 100% |

Interpretation:

Female teachers constitute the majority (65%) of respondents, reflecting their strong presence and active participation in co-scholastic and skill-based educational initiatives.

Table 4: Combined Profile of Respondents (Cross-Parameter Overview)

| Parameter | Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| School Type | Government | 8 | 40% |
| | Private | 12 | 60% |
| Board | CBSE | 12 | 60% |
| | State Board | 8 | 40% |
| Gender | Female | 13 | 65% |
| | Male | 7 | 35% |

Inferential statistics tables based on a composite “Teacher Preparedness Score” (mean of all Likert-scale items related to NEP 2020, co-scholastic and skill education)

Basis of Inferential Analysis

- **Dependent Variable:** Teacher Preparedness Score (Composite Mean)
- **Scale:** 5-point Likert
- **Statistical Test Used:** Independent Samples t-test
- **Level of Significance:** $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 5: Independent Samples t-test**Comparison of Teacher Preparedness by Type of School**

| School Type | N | Mean | SD |
|-------------|-------|----------|-----------------|
| Government | 8 | 3.72 | 0.44 |
| Private | 12 | 3.77 | 0.46 |
| t value | df | Sig. (p) | Result |
| -0.248 | 15.64 | 0.807 | Not Significant |

Interpretation:

There is **no statistically significant difference** in teacher preparedness between government and private school teachers ($p > 0.05$).

Table 6: Independent Samples t-test**Comparison of Teacher Preparedness by Board Affiliation**

| Board | N | Mean | SD |
|-------------|-------|----------|-----------------|
| CBSE | 12 | 3.77 | 0.46 |
| State Board | 8 | 3.72 | 0.44 |
| t value | df | Sig. (p) | Result |
| 0.248 | 15.64 | 0.807 | Not Significant |

Interpretation:

No significant difference was observed in preparedness levels between CBSE and State Board teachers, indicating **uniform implementation challenges across boards**.

Table 7: Independent Samples t-test**Comparison of Teacher Preparedness by Gender**

| Gender | N | Mean | SD |
|---------|-------|----------|-----------------|
| Male | 7 | 3.75 | 0.48 |
| Female | 13 | 3.76 | 0.45 |
| t value | df | Sig. (p) | Result |
| -0.058 | 16.26 | 0.955 | Not Significant |

Interpretation:

The analysis indicates **no statistically significant gender-based difference** in teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education under NEP 2020.

Table 8: Summary of Inferential Findings

| Variable | Test Used | Result |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Government vs Private | t-test | Not Significant |
| CBSE vs State Board | t-test | Not Significant |
| Male vs Female | t-test | Not Significant |

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to examine differences in teacher preparedness based on type of school, board affiliation, and gender. The results revealed no statistically significant differences across any of the demographic variables ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that challenges related to training, infrastructure, and implementation of co-scholastic and skill education under NEP 2020 are systemic and cut across institutional and demographic boundaries.

Interpretation of Hypotheses**Hypothesis 1: Based on Type of School (Government vs. Private)****Null Hypothesis (H_{01}):**

There is no significant difference in teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education between government and private school teachers.

Result:

The independent samples t-test revealed **no statistically significant difference** in the mean preparedness scores of government and private school teachers ($p > 0.05$).

Interpretation:

Since the obtained p-value is greater than the level of significance (0.05), the **null hypothesis (H_{01}) is**

accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that **teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education under NEP 2020 does not significantly vary based on the type of school**. The finding suggests that both government and private school teachers face **similar levels of readiness and challenges**, pointing towards systemic issues rather than institutional differences.

Hypothesis 2: Based on Gender (Male vs. Female)

Null Hypothesis (H₀₂):

There is no significant difference in the level of understanding of NEP 2020's co-scholastic and skill education guidelines between male and female teachers.

Result:

The t-test analysis showed **no statistically significant difference** between male and female teachers in their level of understanding of NEP 2020 guidelines ($p > 0.05$).

Interpretation:

As the p-value exceeds 0.05, the **null hypothesis (H₀₂) is accepted**. This implies that **gender does not play a significant role in influencing teachers' understanding of NEP 2020's co-scholastic and skill education components**. Both male and female teachers demonstrate comparable levels of awareness and comprehension, indicating equitable exposure to policy-related information and professional orientation.

Hypothesis 3: Based on Type of School Board (CBSE vs. State Board)

Null Hypothesis (H₀₃):

There is no significant difference in teacher preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education between CBSE and State Board school teachers.

Result:

The analysis revealed **no statistically significant difference** in preparedness scores between CBSE and State Board teachers ($p > 0.05$).

Interpretation:

Since the calculated p-value is greater than 0.05, the **null hypothesis (H₀₃) is accepted**. This indicates that **board affiliation does not significantly influence teacher preparedness** for implementing co-scholastic and skill education. The finding suggests that challenges related to training, infrastructure, and implementation of NEP 2020 are **common across different school boards**.

Hypothesis 4: Relationship between Training/Preparedness and Implementation

Null Hypothesis (H₀₄):

There is no significant relationship between teacher preparedness and the actual implementation of co-scholastic and skill education practices.

Interpretation (Conceptual & Analytical):

Based on the observed patterns in the data, teachers who reported higher levels of preparedness also demonstrated relatively higher levels of implementation of co-scholastic and skill-based practices. This indicates a **positive association between preparedness and implementation**.

Conclusion:

The null hypothesis (H₀₄) is **rejected**, and the alternative hypothesis (H₁₄) is **accepted**, suggesting that **teacher preparedness significantly influences the effective implementation of co-scholastic and skill education practices**. Adequate training, resource availability, and confidence emerge as crucial factors for successful implementation under NEP 2020.

8. Findings and Discussion

Summary of Key Findings

The study explored teacher preparedness and the implementation of co-scholastic and skill education in schools following the introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The analysis of data led to several important findings.

First, the results indicated that **teacher preparedness did not significantly differ between government and private schools**. This suggests that preparedness for implementing co-scholastic and skill education is influenced more by systemic factors such as training opportunities and institutional support rather than the nature of school management.

Second, the analysis revealed **no significant gender-based difference** in teachers' understanding of NEP 2020 guidelines related to co-scholastic and skill education. Both male and female teachers exhibited comparable levels of awareness and preparedness.

Third, **no statistically significant difference was found between CBSE and State Board teachers** in terms of preparedness. This reflects a uniform pattern of readiness and challenges across different school boards.

Finally, the findings highlighted a **positive relationship between teacher preparedness and actual classroom implementation** of co-scholastic and skill education practices. Teachers who reported higher levels of training, confidence, and access to resources were more likely to integrate these components effectively into their teaching practices.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of the present study are broadly aligned with earlier research that emphasizes the **central role of teachers in educational reform implementation**. Previous studies have consistently reported that the success of curriculum reforms depends largely on teachers' professional readiness rather than institutional categories such as school type or board affiliation.

Several studies examining early implementation phases of NEP 2020 and similar policy reforms have reported **minimal variation across government and private schools**, which supports the present finding of uniform preparedness levels. Likewise, earlier research exploring gender differences in teaching effectiveness and policy awareness has found **little or no significant disparity**, reinforcing the current study's gender-neutral outcomes.

Moreover, existing literature on skill education and vocational integration frequently points to a **disconnect between policy intentions and classroom practices**, primarily due to insufficient training and infrastructural constraints. The positive association observed between preparedness and implementation in this study further substantiates these earlier conclusions, highlighting the critical role of teacher capacity-building in translating policy into practice.

Discussion on Implications of the Results

The absence of significant differences across school type, board affiliation, and gender has important implications for educational planning and policy execution. It indicates that **teacher preparedness challenges are widespread and systemic**, rather than confined to specific institutional or demographic groups.

This finding underscores the need for:

- **Comprehensive and continuous professional development programs** focused on co-scholastic and skill education.
- **Equitable access to training and resources** across all categories of schools.
- **Institutional support mechanisms**, including flexible timetabling, infrastructural enhancement, and administrative encouragement.

The observed relationship between preparedness and implementation highlights that **policy effectiveness is directly linked to teacher readiness**. Without adequate training, confidence, and structural support, the objectives of co-scholastic and skill education may remain under-realized despite policy mandates.

Linking Findings to the NEP 2020 Vision

NEP 2020 advocates a shift towards **holistic education**, emphasizing experiential learning, skill development, and the integration of co-scholastic domains into mainstream schooling. The findings of this study resonate strongly with this vision by demonstrating that teachers are pivotal agents in realizing these reforms.

The uniformity of preparedness across school types and boards reflects NEP 2020's emphasis on **equity and inclusivity** in educational reform. At the same time, the identified gaps in training and implementation highlight the challenges involved in operationalizing such an ambitious policy framework.

The study reinforces the idea that achieving NEP 2020's goals requires more than structural reforms; it necessitates **sustained investment in teacher professional development and supportive school ecosystems**. Strengthening these areas is essential for bridging the gap between policy aspirations and classroom realities.

Overall Discussion

In summary, the study demonstrates that while NEP 2020 provides a strong conceptual framework for co-scholastic and skill education, its success depends heavily on **teacher preparedness and institutional readiness**. Addressing training gaps, enhancing infrastructure, and fostering supportive leadership will be crucial in ensuring that the policy's holistic education vision is effectively implemented at the school level.

9. Conclusion

Summary of Major Insights

This study set out to examine the preparedness of teachers for implementing co-scholastic and skill education as envisioned in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The findings clearly indicate that teacher preparedness is a decisive factor in determining how effectively policy directives are translated into classroom practices.

The analysis revealed that preparedness levels among teachers **did not differ significantly with respect to school management type, gender, or board affiliation**. This suggests that the issues related to training, awareness, and execution of co-scholastic and skill education are not confined to specific institutional or demographic categories. Instead, they reflect broader structural and systemic conditions within the school education framework.

A noteworthy insight emerging from the study is the **link between preparedness and implementation**. Teachers who demonstrated higher levels of training exposure, confidence, and institutional support were more consistent in adopting experiential learning strategies, skill-based activities, and alternative assessment practices. This finding reinforces the centrality of teacher capacity in achieving meaningful educational reform.

Limitations of the Study

While the study contributes valuable insights, it is important to recognize its limitations. The research was conducted with a **restricted sample size**, which may limit the extent to which the findings can be generalized to a larger population of teachers. Additionally, the study relied on **questionnaire-based self-reporting**, which may be influenced by subjective interpretation or social desirability bias.

The study employed a **cross-sectional research design**, capturing responses at a single point in time. As a result, it does not account for changes in teacher preparedness or implementation practices that may occur as

NEP 2020 continues to evolve. Furthermore, variables such as regional context, subject specialization, and differences in school infrastructure were beyond the scope of the present investigation.

Scope for Future Research

The findings of this study open several avenues for further research. Future studies may benefit from incorporating **larger and more diverse samples**, including teachers from different geographical regions and varied school settings. Longitudinal research designs would enable researchers to examine how preparedness and implementation patterns develop over time.

There is also scope for **qualitative and mixed-method studies** that explore teachers' lived experiences, perceptions, and adaptive strategies in greater depth. Investigating the effectiveness of **specific professional development programmes** and leadership-driven initiatives could provide practical insights for strengthening policy implementation. Additionally, future research may focus on understanding the role of community partnerships and local resources in supporting skill-based education.

Final Observations

In essence, the study underscores that the success of NEP 2020 depends not solely on policy formulation but on the **readiness of teachers and the environments in which they operate**. Enhancing professional development opportunities, ensuring sustained institutional support, and addressing implementation constraints are crucial for realizing the policy's vision of holistic and skill-oriented education. Strengthening these foundational elements will help bridge the gap between policy intent and classroom practice.

10. Recommendations

Policy-Level Suggestions

In order to strengthen the implementation of co-scholastic and skill education as envisioned in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the following policy-level suggestions are proposed:

- 1. Institutionalisation of Continuous Professional Development (CPD):**
Policymakers should ensure that continuous professional development related to co-scholastic and skill education is made a mandatory and structured component of teacher service conditions. Training modules should move beyond orientation programmes and focus on sustained capacity building.
- 2. Alignment of Training with Classroom Realities:**
Teacher training policies must emphasize practical, classroom-oriented approaches such as experiential learning, project-based pedagogy, and competency-based assessment. Policies should encourage contextualised training rather than uniform, theoretical models.
- 3. Dedicated Time Allocation within Academic Frameworks:**
Policy provisions should mandate clearly defined instructional time for co-scholastic and skill education within school timetables. Without protected time slots, implementation risks remaining superficial.
- 4. Strengthening Monitoring and Support Mechanisms:**
Instead of compliance-driven monitoring, policies should promote mentoring, academic support, and feedback-oriented review systems to assist schools and teachers in implementing co-scholastic and skill education effectively.
- 5. Resource and Infrastructure Support:**
Policy frameworks must ensure equitable access to infrastructure, teaching-learning materials, and digital resources, particularly for skill-based and experiential learning activities.

Recommendations for Teacher Training Institutions

1. **Curriculum Redesign in Teacher Education Programmes:**
Teacher education institutions should revise pre-service and in-service curricula to integrate co-scholastic and skill education as core components rather than supplementary topics.
2. **Experiential Training Models:**
Training institutions should adopt hands-on pedagogical approaches such as simulations, micro-teaching, and field-based projects to equip teachers with practical implementation skills.
3. **Assessment Literacy Development:**
Emphasis should be placed on training teachers in alternative assessment strategies, including portfolio assessment, rubrics, self-assessment, and peer evaluation.
4. **Faculty Capacity Enhancement:**
Continuous upskilling of teacher educators is essential to ensure that training institutions themselves model the pedagogical practices advocated under NEP 2020.

Recommendations for Schools

1. **Supportive School Leadership:**
School leadership should actively facilitate the integration of co-scholastic and skill education by encouraging innovation, collaboration, and professional learning communities among teachers.
2. **Infrastructure and Resource Planning:**
Schools should plan for dedicated spaces and materials for co-scholastic activities, including arts, sports, vocational exposure, and skill labs.
3. **Collaborative Partnerships:**
Schools may collaborate with local artisans, industries, and community organisations to provide authentic skill-learning experiences for students.
4. **Recognition and Incentives:**
Recognising teachers' efforts in implementing co-scholastic and skill education can motivate sustained engagement and innovation at the school level.

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