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**IMPLEMENTATION OF ITEP IN MANIPUR: FUTURE
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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Keywords	Abstract
<i>Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), Teacher Education Reform, Challenges, Opportunity, NEP 2020.</i>	The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduces the 4-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) as a significant and comprehensive educational reform with focuses on strengthening teacher education in India. This study focuses on the importance of ITEP as a radical change in dealing with some persistent limitations of conventional and traditional teacher education programmes by incorporating disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical theory and practical training in one undergraduate framework. Applying the exploratory research design, the published policy documents, and associated literature articles are examined to comprehend the opportunities as well as the challenges as far as the implementation of ITEP in the Manipur state. The findings highlight the potential of the programme with regard to achieving the following: the production of professionally qualified and competent teachers, enhancing the institutional strengthening, holistic development, education reform, and employment opportunities while also drawing an attention on some critical implementation issues like institutional readiness, curriculum integration, infrastructure gaps, financial constraints, and shortage of well-qualified faculty, etc. The study concludes with the research suggesting certain policy responses that could be put into place by



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	policy makers, administrators and educators of teacher training to successfully put ITEP into practice and realise its transformative possibilities in the redesign of the teacher education scenario in Manipur.
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1. INTRODUCTION

The proposed and recommended programme that is proposed under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), which is a landmark project in the current reform of teacher education in India (Patel, 2024). Being a 4-year integrated undergraduate course, ITEP is designed to reinvent traditional paradigms of teacher preparation by integrating subject knowledge, pedagogical theory and practical teaching practice to form one overall model. This reform is a summary of a progressive insight that effective teachers must have more than disciplinary knowledge, but professional competence, the capacity to reflect and ongoing exposure to real classroom scenarios.

On a bigger scale of the Indian teacher education reform, ITEP is rather applicable, as it will assist in overcoming various perennial problems related to the traditional teacher training programmes. The traditional approaches have been commonly known to be fragmented in design, with little practical exposure and a lack of theory-practice consistency. ITEP aims to address these flaws through a holistic and multidisciplinary approach that will help educators to be flexible, professionally competent and respond to the dynamic needs of the learners in the 21st century. The paper intends to critically review ITEP implementation processes, and how it would help to enhance and reform teacher education system in Manipur.

It measures the opportunities and barriers in regard to improving the teacher preparation in terms of the institutional readiness, infrastructural capacity, integrating curriculum, availability of teachers and effective implementation. This analysis seeks to inform the present scholarly and policy discourse around advancing the quality, relevancy, and general effectiveness of teacher education programmes in Manipur, in particular with the roll out of ITEP potentially starting in the 2026-27 academic session.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mohanty (2022) analyzes the difficulties related to the implementation of four-year ITEP programmes in an Indian multidisciplinary setting. The first challenge is the financial consequence of enacting such programmes which are relatively more resource-consuming as compared to traditional B.Ed. programmes that take one year to complete. The probe casts doubt on the issue of scalability and sustainability with references to differences in expenditure between institutions like NCERT Regional Colleges of Education and colleges of teacher-training administered by the state government. Mohanty (2022) also prefigures the historic arguments with references to observations of the Kothari Commission that had raised concerns of nationalisation of integrated teacher education based on the principle of standard maintenance.



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Kongkham (2025) mentions that most of the B.Ed. trainees portrays a favourable attitude towards ITEP. Additional problems mentioned by Rini (2025) include lack of infrastructural facilities, insufficiency of faculty training, policy gaps, and access to teacher training in rural and underserved communities. Nonetheless, the study also demonstrates the possibilities of the holistic education promotion, the creation of the experiential learning models, and the correspondence of teacher preparation to the international standards (Rini Manda et al., 2025). There are various structural and contextual issues, such as socio-political instability and financial limitations, the absence of awareness and institutional capacity, among others which are major obstacles to successful implementation (Vahneichong, 2025). The paper further argues that the transition of a chance-based to a choice-based teacher education enrolment model can contribute to teacher candidate professionalism and motivation.

Recent empirical data provided by Sreekanta (2024) highlighted the potential of four-year integrate programme to be transformative in terms of the development of cross-disciplinary competencies through incorporating general education with subject knowledge and the professional skills in the course duration. Another strong point is the concurrent and uninterrupted combination of the material and pedagogical training, as ITEP is contrary to traditional programmes, where pedagogy is a supplement. However, the study also recognises the obstacles of old recruitment rules and job-specific problems of the subject that cannot ensure full achievement of programme results (Patel, 2024).

Few sensitisation training programmes of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) have been held in Manipur to create sensitization and create a discussion about ITEP implementation according to the National Education Policy (NEP 2020). These workshops, which had the theme of ITEP as a flagship initiative under NEP2020, aimed to equip future teachers with a multidisciplinary and pedagogically sound base; a focus on professional development to address the changing educational needs; discussions about how to align institutional practices with NEP goals and how to improve quality assurance mechanisms, are a valuable move in collaborative reform in teacher education the state over (The Sangai Express, Dec.30, 2025).

All of these studies together point to the conclusion that although ITEP has significant potential to revolutionize the teaching education in India the effective realization of this model requires the attentive coordination of the policy, institutional capacity, curricular design, and employment structures. The literature provides the significance of the contextual adaptation of the international best practices and at the same time the issues of systemic, financial and cultural challenges inherent to the Indian education system.

3. ITEP IMPLEMENTATION IN MANIPUR

The implementation of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) in Manipur is part of the NEP 2020 mandate by the Government of India to bring about a teacher education transformation in India. Manipur has also started moving towards ITEP with selected higher education institutions like Lilong Haoreibi College, Thoubal getting the nod on the introduction of four year integrated



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programme from the next academic cycle, especially aiming at full operationalisation by 2026-27 (NCTE, ERC meeting, 03 March, 2025). Some other institutions in Manipur have indicated plans to introduce the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) and are in the process of seeking approval, but as of now, have not been able to receive the final recognition from the National Council for Teacher Education (The Sangai Express). Evidence that the National Common Entrance Test (NCET), 2025 in admission to 4-year ITEP has been notified by the Directorate of University and Higher education, Govt. of Manipur, under the notice No. DUHE-29/2/2022-DUHE-DU&HE dated 10th March, 2025 (Directorate of University and Higher Education, Govt. of Manipur, 2025) Government authorities and the state education department are closely monitoring progress in order to ensure institutional readiness, compliance with the guidelines of NCTE and the new structure of school education. ITEP implementation in Manipur is expected to overcome important challenges such as fragmented training provision, limited exposure to practicum modules and varying standards of quality. The programme focuses on integrated subject pedagogy learning, competency-based training, practicum-oriented preparation, and all-round teacher development, which makes it very relevant to the changing educational needs in the state. Unfortunately, some teacher transfers in particular when badly timed or inadequately communicated, have sparked protests in Manipur, indicative of wider frustrations in the education system. The Manipur government gave approval to the transfer of several principals and professors to different colleges, specifically as part of the implementation efforts of ITEP (Manipur Update, March 19, 2025). These moves are intended to spread experienced educators across the various institutions that are introducing the new programme.

4. OBJECTIVE

The general objectives of this research are as follows:

1. “To discuss the possible opportunities and future prospects of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) in redefining teacher education in Manipur”.
2. “To identify major problems in the implementation of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) in Manipur, and recommend suggestive measures to implement ITEP successfully”.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study has taken the exploratory research approach to acquire relevant information focusing on the subject. Data was collected from secondary sources including research articles, publications of academic journals, scholarly websites, policy documents and government reports.

6. CHALLENGES OF ITEP IMPLEMENTATION

The Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) implementation has a number of critical challenges that can have an impact on its effectiveness and long-term sustainability. One of the leading challenges can be directly associated with curriculum design and integration. The ITEP curriculum is broad and deep in character, covering the content of disciplines, pedagogical theory, co-curricular elements and extensive practical training. While this breadth is designed to encourage



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the development of teachers holistically, this can often impose a significant academic workload on pupil teachers. As a result of this, a number of students tend to focus more on the core academic subjects at the expense of important co-curricular and professional aspects of teacher education. Furthermore, although the curriculum supports a multidisciplinary and integrated approach, in which subject knowledge and pedagogy are combined through experiential learning and activity-based learning, teacher educators often continue to rely on traditional instructional approaches. This disparity between the intention of the curriculum and the practice in the classroom is a major impediment to the effective achievement of ITEP's aims.

Another major challenge is around the misalignment between ITEP and existing recruitment and eligibility frameworks. Despite the introduction of the 4 year integrated programme, minimum standards and guidelines for the recruitment of teachers have not been adequately updated to reflect the multidisciplinary structure of the programme (Patel, 2024). ITEP enables pupil teachers from a foundational stage, preparatory stage, middle and secondary level to choose a variety of subject combinations; however, recruiting agencies often prescribe rigid and stage-specific subject requirements for teaching positions. This problem is not confined merely to ITEP alone, because one has witnessed similar situations in conventional B.Ed. programmes, whereby graduates with honours degrees in subjects such as physics or chemistry may be considered ineligible for some teaching posts. For ITEP students, this misalignment brings uncertainty and anxiety about their future employment prospects and may lead to the loss of programme attractiveness and perceived value.

Infrastructure and resource-related constraints add to the challenges of implementing ITEP, particularly in the state of Manipur. Many institutions suffer from insufficient physical infrastructure, such as the number of classrooms, laboratories and teaching-learning spaces, which are needed for multidisciplinary and practice-oriented training. Inadequate of qualified and well-trained teachers, who can effectively provide integrated and research-oriented advanced teaching, is also a pressing concern. Moreover, the low rates of access to digital technologies, high-tech teaching tools, and educational equipment restrict the successful and effortless implementation of some novel pedagogical methods such as ITEP. The benefits or the structure of ITEP is not well known to many stakeholders (students, families, and even educators) and, therefore, it is not being fully adopted yet with a resistance or bewilderment. The difficulties of establishing meaningful institutional partnerships, poor monitoring and evaluation systems have remained factors that inhibit the process of attaining systematic implementation and quality assurances of ITEP. Together, these issues present the necessity of the policy action, the strengthening of the institution, and the existing mechanisms of review to guarantee the effective implementation of ITEP in a broad scope of educational settings.

7. OPPORTUNITIES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF ITEP

The ITEP provides glimpses of dramatic transformation of teacher education conceptualisation in India by bridging professional education with the forces of modern education and policy agendas. One of the most useful opportunities is the combination of technology and new pedagogical



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practices. By implementing technology-mediated pedagogies, the future educationists will be in a better position to address the needs of the learners, personalise the learning, and accommodate the fast online education, which is dynamic and frequent in the digital age. This aspect is also facilitated by the proposed initiatives, including the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) and platforms like SWAYAM and DIKSHA, which provide easy access to and standardised opportunities to develop professionally (Maseeh, 2023). The other important opportunity is the power of collaboration among universities, colleges and schools. ITEP promotes both institution and practice partnership by offering a long term commitment with the school environments. Organised internship, school attachments and mentorship deals means that pupil teachers have considerable access to the classroom, and in their turn, schools get the fruits of academic support and new pedagogical input of the HEI. This working ecosystem promotes relevancy, responsiveness and pragmatic orientation of teacher education programmes.

ITEP puts a significant emphasis on practical learning, classroom learning, and mentoring, as well. The exposure of the pupil teachers to the real teaching experiences under the guidance of the experienced mentors makes the pupil teachers utilize the theoretical knowledge in the real situations. The applied approach improves professional competence, confidence and reflective practice, because teachers will be ready to cope with the situation of classroom complexities in an effective way. The emphasis on experiential learning, which is encouraged by NEP 2020, fosters creative and interactive learning which is learner-centred and enables facilitating an improved engagement and the enhancement of learning performance among students (Irfan et al., 2023).

The other good opportunity is the option of providing a dual degree structure of ITEP. Through NEP 2020, students can take a 4-year integrated program of BA/B.Sc./B.Com and a B.Ed. The model encourages an academia richness and, at the same time, builds upon pedagogical competence. The two degree program will not only offer the interdisciplinary education but also save time and offer well-rounded teachers that can successfully remove the content-practice gap that currently exists in the classroom by incorporating the content and the professional training.

ITEP is also fair and accommodating of the instruction learning process. The programme can be used to increase the availability on high-quality teacher training by the marginalised and underprivileged students using policy-based interventions such as scholarships, waiving of fees and others like favourable academic terms. The ITEP may be facilitated to possess mentorship and academic support infrastructures where all learners regardless of their socio-economic statuses would excel in their professions (Chakraborty, 2022). This multidisciplinary nature of this programme also provides a great chance to the holistic development of the pupil teachers. ITEP allows future teachers to become critical thinkers, creative, and problem-solving by incorporating pedagogy and disciplines throughout the core subjects such as arts, sciences, social sciences, and technology (Sarvamangala, 2025). This interdisciplinary method assists the teachers to connect the subject knowledge back to real life as well as addressing the diverse needs of the classroom that will assist in the development of the learners as an entity (Kapadia, 2023).



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Introduction of ITEP in Manipur is anticipated to provide an immense expanse of workforce, particularly by absorbing a great number of teachers. The compatibility with the national agenda of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is one of the curious opportunities presented by ITEP. NEP 2020 emphasises the importance of quality early learning on children aged 3 - 6 years and ITEP provides teachers with skills and knowledge on ECCE as specialists. This orientation equips teachers with means to facilitate early literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional development to reinforce a primary learning and reduce gaps in learning (Chakraborty, 2022).

Finally, ITEP promotes the culture of a lifelong learning and Continuous Professional Development (CPD). According to NEP 2020, a teacher should engage in a minimum of 50 hours of CPD annually, usually through online modules and professional learning communities as well as workshops. Such initiatives involve an emphasis on modern pedagogies, competency-driven education, and formative assessment, experiential and combined pedagogies like arts-driven and narrative pedagogies. Institutionalisation of CPD, ITEP is seen to address the issue of teachers being professionally updated, reflective and responsive to emerging issues in education. All of these possibilities make ITEP a transformative framework that has the ability to enhance the quality, equity, and effectiveness of teacher education in India, and equip educators to address the needs of a dynamic and inclusive education system.

The multidisciplinary nature of this programme also affords a great opportunity for the holistic development of teachers, educators. By combining pedagogy and disciplines across the core subjects like arts, sciences, social sciences, and technology, ITEP develops critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills in future educators (Sarvamangala, 2025). This interdisciplinary approach helps teachers to tie subject knowledge with real life and to cater to the various needs of the classroom that will help develop the learners as a whole (Kapadia, 2023).

The implementation of ITEP in Manipur is expected to create a huge scope of employment, especially through the recruitment of a large number of teachers. One of the interesting opportunities arising from ITEP is the alignment with the national focus on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). NEP 2020 highlights the significance of quality early learning for children aged 3 - 6 years and ITEP equips teachers with specialist knowledge and skills in ECCE. This focus prepares educators to support early literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional development in order to strengthen foundational learning and diminish learning gaps (Chakraborty, 2022). Lastly, ITEP upholds a culture of lifelong learning and Continuous Professional Development (CPD). In accordance with NEP 2020, teachers are expected to participate in at least 50 hours of CPD every year through workshops, online modules and professional learning communities. These initiatives include a focus on contemporary pedagogies, competency-based education, formative assessment, experiential learning and integrated approaches such as arts-based and storytelling pedagogies. By institutionalising CPD, ITEP ensures that teachers are professionally updated, reflective and responsive to new challenges in education. Collectively, these opportunities make ITEP a transformative framework with the potential to improve the quality, equity, and effectiveness of



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teacher education in India, and prepare educators to respond to the needs of a dynamic and inclusive education system.

8. STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGE OF ITEP

A holistic and multi-faceted approach to Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) implementation would entail structural, institutional, pedagogical, and socio-economic issues. Among the best strategies is the enhancement of professional capacity of teacher educators. The continuous professional development programmes must be structured in such a way that they equip the teacher educator with competencies needed to embrace innovative, multidisciplinary, and technology integrated pedagogical approaches that would be in line with the vision of NEP 2020. Specific training of the ICT-enabled pedagogy, experiential learning, and interdisciplinary curriculum delivery is necessary to close the current policy intentions and classroom practices gap (Bhowmik et al., 2022; Kumari and Pandey, 2025).

Another important plan is the establishment of formal mentorship systems. The teacher educators as well as the pupil teachers can be assisted through mentorship programmes that are carried out by experienced teachers who are able to deal with the curriculum requirements, the balance between academic and co-curricular aspects and efficiently apply theory to practice. Professional confidence, lowered curriculum overload, and better teacher preparation, in general, can be promoted by such support systems.

Interventions that are implemented at the policy level are imperative in solving recruitment issues. The recruitment rules and the lowest eligibility standards should be adjusted to the multidisciplinary nature of ITEP. The issue on flexibility on choice of subjects should be formally considered so that the graduates are not discriminated against in the job market. It is crucial that the policy makers, the institutions of teacher training, and recruiting agencies coordinate ITEP training with job needs and minimize doubts about employment opportunities (Mandal et al., 2025). Additionally, awareness and advocacy programs can be used to sensitize the stakeholders on the importance of ITEP and the necessity of modernizing recruitment structures.

It is also significant to deal with infrastructure and resource limitations. The administrators must focus on the investment in the physical infrastructure, digital technologies, laboratories and teaching learning resources to ensure the provision of conducive learning environments. ITEP is resource-intensive and policymakers have to devote specific funds to it. Funding may be further reinforced with the collaboration of the private bodies and industry stakeholders, as well as philanthropic institutions, and help to accelerate technological progress, especially in the under-funded areas (Tasa et al., 2024). The other area that should be built by capacity building is to create a cultural change at the institutions level. Orientation programmes, the use of leadership training, and collaborative learning communities can be used to improve the willingness of the faculty to embrace new pedagogical paradigms and technologies. The cultural aspects that should be addressed to promote innovation and acceptance of educational changes include resistance to change, hierarchical organizations, and uncertainty avoidance (Panicker, 2020).



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Another important strategy is the development of effective monitoring and evaluation systems. Assessment, feedback and ongoing improvements should be structured in systematic systems to measure the competence of ITEP in institutional and programmatic levels. Frequent data gathering and review activities will assist policymakers and institutions to determine the gaps, evaluate results, and make evidence-based amendments to the programme (Jadhav, 2022).

There is also the need to have curriculum rationalization and moving in tandem with practical requirements as a way of solving the problems of overload and misalignment. The four-year framework can be made coherent, relevant and viable by conducting regular curriculum reviews that involve academic experts, school practitioners as well as policymakers. Special focus should be directed towards the combination of competencies in a harmonious way that does not decrease the depth and practicality (Khatun and Deb, 2023).

Lastly, there should be strategies to reduce the influence of socio-economic barriers to support the objectives of NEP 2020 in terms of equity and inclusion. The financial aid systems like the scholarship, waiving of fees, stipend and flexible program delivery systems are to be implemented to assist the students representing the marginalized and economically weak groups. The resulting connectivity, access to devices, and ICT training to close the digital divide will also guarantee equal participation in the regions. To conclude, successful ITEP implementation requires all stakeholders to work together at the policy, institutional and pedagogical levels. ITEP can realise its transformative potential in enhancing teacher education in India by making investments in capacity building, infrastructure, policy alignment, and inclusive practices.

9. CONCLUSION

The Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) is a conceptual shift in the conceptualisation and provision of teacher education in India. ITEP envisions improvement in teacher preparation based on synthesis of subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, and professional values in a single structured programme to improve the quality, coherence and effectiveness of teacher preparation. Such a holistic approach can change the lapses that have always been in the traditional model of teacher education that may produce competent prepared teachers responsive to the needs and requirements of the 21st century learning process.

Although the ITEP implementation process has a transformative potential, the success and effectiveness of the implementation process is also determined by the solution of numerous problems and issues, including the complexity of the curriculum design, outdated recruitment, and eligibility patterns, shortage of qualified teachers, corruption in recruitment and retention process, salary gaps, unfair imbalance posting of teachers (hill and valley areas), and the inexhaustible absence of infrastructure and resources. These issues require facilitated and long-term policy and institutional measures. At the same time, ITEP has great opportunities due to the combination of technology, increased collaboration between universities and schools, and significant focus on the practical experience and work in classrooms. These opportunities could significantly improve the professional competence and preparedness of the future teachers when exploited appropriately.



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The strategic steps, which include constant professional development of teacher instructors, redesign of the recruitment policies to fit the multidimensional framework of ITEP, and a close focus on the development of infrastructure and learning tools, are necessary to guarantee the success of the programme. It is also necessary that a curriculum orientation is made, resource mobilisation and contextual adaptation to the multilingual and socio-culturally diverse environment of Manipur. Availability of teachers, institutional capacity building and strong policy implementation mechanisms will be very important. There is also the importance of a continued partnership between policymakers, administrators and teacher educators and other stakeholders to ensure proper implementation and sustainability. Overall, ITEP can provide a strong platform to reform and reshape the process of Manipur's teacher educational system and to foster a new generation of competent, creative, dynamic, thoughtful, socially oriented and future prepared teachers. Through ongoing institutional, financial and careful implementation, ITEP is able to be instrumental in improving the learning performance of students and improving the overall educational standards within Manipur. The effectiveness of this program will not only have an impact on the classroom, but also have far-reaching impact on the future of the education system.

10. AUTHOR(S) CONTRIBUTION

The writers affirm that they have no connections to, or engagement with, any group or body that provides financial or non-financial assistance for the topics or resources covered in this manuscript.

11. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

12. PLAGIARISM POLICY

All authors declare that any kind of violation of plagiarism, copyright and ethical matters will take care by all authors. Journal and editors are not liable for aforesaid matters.

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