



## Innovative approaches to teacher education in higher education institution of Assam: A study in the context of NEP-2020

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### Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has emerged as a transformative framework for restructuring teacher education across India. The Policy advocates transformative changes in teacher education, emphasizing innovation and a multidisciplinary approach to meet evolving educational needs. Assam, being a diverse and educationally vibrant state in the North Eastern region, has been witnessing gradual yet significant changes in its higher education sector, particularly in teacher education programmes. This paper is centered around the innovative approaches of teacher education associated with implementing the NEP (2020) in Assam, emphasizing its impact on higher education. The primary goals of this paper are to investigate the innovative practices and reforms that have been implemented in teacher education programs in higher education institutions, as well as to investigate the role that NEP 2020 plays in shaping the policy framework and institutional initiatives for teacher education in Assam's higher education sector. Additionally, the paper will analyze the challenges and prospects of implementing innovative teacher education practices in higher education institutions of Assam in accordance with NEP 2020. The study is qualitative in nature, and in order to accomplish its goals, it makes use of secondary sources such as policy documents, institutional reports, research papers, and official publications. The findings revealed that Assam's higher education system is undergoing a paradigm shift in teacher education under the influence of NEP-2020. Innovative practices such as technology integration, experiential learning, and curriculum reform are being gradually adopted across universities. NEP-2020 has provided the necessary direction and framework to institutionalize quality and innovation in teacher preparation. However, sustained efforts in capacity building, infrastructure development, and financial investment are essential for overcoming existing challenges. With consistent policy support and institutional collaboration, Assam's higher education sector holds strong potential to emerge as a model for innovative and future-ready teacher education in India.

**Keywords:** NEP 2020, innovation, teacher education, higher education

### Introduction

Teacher education is crucial within the educational environment, as the quality of teaching significantly influences student learning outcomes and overall educational advancement. In response, the Government of India implemented the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020), with the objective of enacting revolutionary reforms in all educational tiers, encompassing both pre-service and in-service teacher education (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2020) [14]. This policy constitutes the first significant shift since the National Policy on Education (1986), aiming to integrate India's education with the dynamic requirements of the 21st century by prioritizing flexibility, multidisciplinary learning, inclusivity, equity, and innovation. The policy endorses an integrated and multidisciplinary approach, promoting programs that combine content knowledge with successful teaching strategies, ensuring educators have a comprehensive understanding of their disciplines. The NEP-2020 implements a significant reform by adopting a four-year Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP), designed to equip future educators with a thorough amalgamation of superior curriculum, pedagogy, and practical experience. Moreover, the policy underscores the creation of professional standards, advocating for ongoing development to ensure educators remain informed about advancing educational techniques, technology, and subject matter expertise. The NEP-2020 promotes research and innovation in education, aiming for a transformative change in teacher

education that equips educators with a variety of abilities to address the evolving needs of students and improve the education system as a whole (Gaur, B.P., 2024) [3].

Assam, located in India's North-East region, offers a unique setting for the implementation of NEP-2020's teacher education reforms. The state, characterised by its unique linguistic, cultural, and socio-economic makeup, has consistently faced issues like uneven infrastructure development, teacher shortages, rural-urban imbalances, and inconsistent educational performance. These concerns affect the reception, adaptation, and scaling of innovations in teacher education. Recent studies in Assam have commenced the documentation of attitudes, problems, and implementation trajectories associated with NEP-2020 by institutions, administrators, educators, and students. A study on students' attitudes in Assam investigated the reception of ICT tools, vocationalization, holistic learning, and flexibility under NEP-2020 among first-semester students in four-year undergraduate programs (Saikia.R & Roy. P, 2024) [7, 8]. Furthermore, institutional reports have emphasised how principals and higher education leaders are managing the transition to new frameworks, including the Four-Year Undergraduate Course (FYUGC) and increased duties under NEP-2020 (Bharali, A, 2024) [2].

### Rationale of the Study

The purpose of investigating creative teacher education in Assam under NEP-2020 arises from the necessity to comprehend not only the specified changes but also the

processes of conceptualization, initiation, and institutionalization of innovations inside the state's higher education system. Examining how teacher education reforms in Assam respond to its distinct problems (geographical isolation, linguistic diversity, resource limitations) may provide valuable insights for efficient implementation, applicable not only in Assam but also in equivalent contexts abroad.

Furthermore, innovations including the application of technology in education, the implementation of flexible curriculum, experiential and project-based learning, the incorporation of language and cultural contexts, multidisciplinary contributions, mentoring, and changes in assessment are fundamental to the vision of NEP-2020. Their adoption, adaptability, achievements, and challenges must be examined. A qualitative methodology utilizing secondary sources (policy papers, institutional reports, research articles) facilitates the assessment of the existing situation and the identification of deficiencies. It also facilitates contemplation on the kind of innovation that are beneficial or feasible within the Assam context.

### Review of Related Literature

Acharjee (2025) <sup>[1]</sup> emphasized about the critical role of collaboration efforts in realizing NEP 2020's vision and strengthening the foundation of the education system through empowered and well-prepared teachers. Kumar, N & Rani, S (2025) <sup>[6]</sup> explores innovative practices submerged within NEP-2020, emphasizing their role in enhancing educational quality, equity and accessibility. He found key innovation such as competency-based learning, integration of technology, hands-on learning, multilingual education, and a move from rote learning to critical thinking and creativity. Bajaj, M (2024) discussed how NEP 2020 reimaged teacher education and the innovative strategies proposed to elevate the quality and impact of teaching in India. Bharali, A (2024) <sup>[2]</sup> examined the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing the NEP 2020 in Assam and summarized that it may be challenging but full of opportunities to growth and transformation by empowering principals with right tools, resources and supports. Gaur, B.P. (2024) <sup>[3]</sup> underscored a commitment to transformative reforms in teacher education and the broader educational landscape, emphasizing responsiveness, creativity and holistic developments in students. Kakodkar (2024) <sup>[4]</sup> reviewed about transformation in the teachers' role according to the NEP 2020 and results argued that its guidelines give a direction for their transformation and suggest relevant and useful training to bring transformative changes. Saikia, D (2024) <sup>[7, 8]</sup> found that innovative teaching and learning methods prioritize student engagement, critical thinking and practical application of knowledge, moving way from traditional rote memorization and passive learning. Saikia and Roy (2024) <sup>[7, 8]</sup> examined students' perception towards new education policy. The study revealed that this policy was implemented from last year that is 2023 in Assam and gave opportunity to the students to choose and learn different subjects according to their choices and preferences. Singh, D.K. (2024) <sup>[9]</sup> explored the key strategies advocated by NEP 2020, including active learning methods such as problem-based and inquiry-based learning. Study revealed that the integration of technology, through blended learning models, digital tools, and virtual reality, is highlighted as a means to personalize and enrich the educational experiences.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the innovative practices and reforms implemented in teacher education programmes within higher education institutions in Assam, in accordance with NEP-2020.
2. To analyze the impact of NEP-2020 on the policy framework and institutional initiatives pertaining to teacher education within Assam's higher education sector.
3. To examine the challenges and opportunities associated with the implementation of innovative teacher education practices in higher education institutions in Assam under NEP-2020.

### Methods and Materials

The present study employs a qualitative research design. The study is both descriptive and analytical in nature, aiming to describe the current status of innovative practices in teacher education within Assam and analyze how these align with the objectives of NEP 2020.

The study is entirely based on secondary sources of information, including government policy documents and reports, Institutional reports, Research articles, books, conference papers, web sources, and official portals. The data collection involved a systematic search and review of relevant secondary sources between 2020 and 2025. The collected documents were analyzed using qualitative content analysis.

### Findings and Discussions

**Objective 1:** To examine the innovative practices and reforms implemented in teacher education programmes within higher education institutions in Assam, in accordance with NEP-2020.

The National Education Policy (NEP-2020) advocates for a transformative change in teacher education, fostering innovation in pedagogy, curriculum, institutional frameworks, and evaluation methods. The implementation of these reforms in Assam has been incremental yet transformational. Higher education institutions, especially those providing teacher education programs like B.Ed. and M.Ed., have commenced the realignment of their curricula and practices to comply with the vision of holistic and interdisciplinary education outlined in NEP-2020.

**Policy Framework and Governance Reform:** At the state level, Assam's Department of Higher Education has undertaken several initiatives to align its teacher education policies with NEP-2020. The State Implementation Committee (SIC) was formed in 2021 to monitor progress across higher education institutions, including teacher education departments. The committee's focus areas include curriculum redesign, capacity building, and integration of multidisciplinary education (Department of Higher Education, Assam, 2022) <sup>[21]</sup>.

Furthermore, the Assam State Council for Higher Education (ASHEC) has collaborated with NCTE to draft guidelines for transitioning teacher education institutions to multidisciplinary models. Policy revisions have also emphasized restructuring of stand-alone TEIs into constituent colleges of universities to enhance quality assurance and academic integration (NCTE, 2021).

In alignment with NEP-2020's structural reforms, the State Teacher Education Policy (STEP), 2022, proposes the

gradual merger of teacher education colleges into larger university ecosystems. This move ensures that pedagogical training is not isolated from research and multidisciplinary exposure, thereby bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and applied education.

**Institutional Initiatives and Curriculum Realignment:** At the institutional level, several universities and colleges in Assam have undertaken curriculum reforms to integrate NEP-2020 directives. Gauhati University initiated the revision of its B.Ed. and M.Ed. syllabi in 2022–23 to align with the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE). The revised syllabus introduces modules on 21st-century skills, inclusive education, environmental sustainability, and technology integration. Dibrugarh University has initiated credit-based modular systems in teacher education, enabling flexibility and interdisciplinary learning (Dibrugarh University Academic Handbook, 2023) <sup>[12]</sup>.

In teacher education colleges, institutional development plans (IDPs) have been formulated to guide the adoption of NEP-aligned innovations such as choice-based credit systems (CBCS), internship models, and skill-based courses. Colleges like Nowgong College and Bongaigaon College have initiated school linkage programmes, allowing student teachers to gain hands-on experience in local schools as part of field engagement. These initiatives strengthen experiential learning and foster community-school partnerships.

**Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Quality Assurance:** NEP-2020 calls for robust institutional capacity building, accreditation, and accountability. Assam's higher education institutions have responded by strengthening internal quality assurance mechanisms. For instance, Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) in universities are now mandated to monitor the implementation of NEP-recommended reforms. The NAAC accreditation process has also incorporated indicators reflecting NEP-2020 compliance, especially in curriculum design and teaching innovation (NAAC, 2023).

The Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC), Gauhati University, has emerged as a key nodal agency facilitating policy translation into practice. Between 2015 and 2023, HRDC organized over 120 short-term courses, refresher programmes, and online workshops on teacher education, NEP orientation, ICT pedagogy, and gender inclusion (HRDC Report, 2023). These programmes have directly contributed to institutional readiness for NEP-2020.

**Integration of Inclusivity and Local Context:** NEP-2020's stress on contextualization and inclusivity has found resonance in Assam's teacher education policy. The state's multilingual and multicultural fabric necessitates culturally responsive teaching. Consequently, B.Ed. curricula have incorporated language policy components, encouraging the use of Assamese and local languages as mediums of instruction and pedagogical resources. Furthermore, colleges in tribal and rural regions such as Kokrajhar and Dima Hasao have integrated community-based fieldwork to ensure that teacher trainees understand local educational needs (ASHEC Report, 2023).

Similarly, teacher education institutions have begun integrating inclusive education modules focusing on gender

sensitivity, disability inclusion, and socio-economic equity. These reforms ensure that pre-service teachers are better equipped to address diverse learner needs, consistent with NEP's inclusive education agenda.

**Collaboration with National Missions and Digital Platforms:** Institutional alignment with national-level initiatives such as NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement) and DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) has enhanced the reach of NEP-2020 reforms in Assam. Through these collaborations, pre-service and in-service teachers receive access to high-quality training resources, enabling uniform quality standards across the state (MoE, 2022).

Additionally, Assam's teacher education institutions are engaging with SWAYAM MOOCs to supplement classroom instruction with online modules on educational research, innovative pedagogy, and assessment strategies. This blended model reflects NEP's goal of integrating digital resources for teacher professionalization and continuous learning.

**Objective 2:** To analyze the impact of NEP-2020 on the policy framework and institutional initiatives pertaining to teacher education within Assam's higher education sector.

The implementation of NEP-2020 in Assam has significantly influenced both the policy landscape and the institutional mechanisms governing teacher education. This section analyses how the policy's principles are being translated into concrete initiatives at state and institutional levels.

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**Objective 3:** To examine the challenges and opportunities associated with the implementation of innovative teacher education practices in higher education institutions in Assam under NEP-2020.

Despite significant progress, the implementation of NEP-2020's teacher education reforms in Assam faces multiple structural, institutional, and contextual challenges. These barriers, however, also create opportunities for innovation and systemic strengthening.

**Infrastructural and Resource Constraints:** One of the foremost challenges is the inadequate infrastructure in many teacher education institutions, particularly in rural and remote districts. Several B.Ed. colleges lack access to well-equipped digital labs, smart classrooms, or research facilities essential for implementing technology-enabled learning. The uneven distribution of resources between urban and rural institutions widens the quality gap, making the uniform application of NEP-2020 reforms difficult (ASHEC, 2023).

Furthermore, financial constraints often delay the modernization of laboratories, libraries, and ICT infrastructure. The RUSA grants and state funding have supported some development, but sustained financial planning is necessary to ensure long-term impact (MoE, 2023).

**Faculty Shortage and Professional Preparedness:** A recurring issue across teacher education institutions in Assam is the shortage of qualified faculty with expertise in educational research, ICT pedagogy, and interdisciplinary approaches. Many TEIs operate with part-time or contractual faculty who may not have access to consistent professional development opportunities. This limits institutional capacity to deliver NEP-2020's envisaged innovative curricula (NCTE, 2022). While HRDCs and national programmes provide opportunities for skill enhancement, the absence of structured mentoring systems and limited incentives for research innovation hinder long-term professional growth. Faculty workload, coupled with administrative duties, further restricts time for academic innovation and community engagement.

**Institutional Rigidity and Resistance to Change:** The transition toward a multidisciplinary, flexible education system has met with institutional resistance in certain quarters. Traditional examination-centric systems, bureaucratic delays in curriculum approval, and limited autonomy of affiliated colleges impede rapid reform (Gauhati University IQAC Report, 2023) <sup>[13]</sup>. The process of phasing out stand-alone TEIs and integrating them into multidisciplinary universities has also encountered administrative hurdles and concerns about loss of

institutional identity. Moreover, the restructuring of academic programmes to fit NEP's choice-based and credit transfer system requires comprehensive planning, faculty retraining, and regulatory clarity—areas that remain in progress.

**Sociocultural and Linguistic Challenges:** Assam's socio-linguistic diversity presents both opportunities and challenges. While NEP-2020 encourages education in local and regional languages, teacher training institutions often face difficulties in developing high-quality instructional materials in multiple languages. The lack of standardized Assamese and tribal language resources for teacher education limits the inclusivity goals of the policy (ASHEC, 2023).

Additionally, rural-urban disparities in student preparedness and exposure to technology affect the uniform adoption of digital learning methods. Bridging these gaps requires localized strategies and community-based teacher preparation approaches.

**Administrative and Coordination Challenges:** Implementation of NEP-2020 requires inter-agency coordination among the Ministry of Education, NCTE, SCERT, universities, and colleges. However, overlapping jurisdictions and procedural delays have slowed the reform process. For instance, guidelines for the ITEP rollout and NCFTE adoption are yet to be uniformly implemented across Assam, creating policy ambiguity for institutions (NCTE, 2023).

Despite existing infrastructural and administrative challenges, the implementation of NEP-2020 opens a transformative phase for teacher education in Assam. The policy's emphasis on flexibility, inclusivity, and innovation provides a unique framework to reshape the professional development of teachers and educators. Assam, with its growing network of higher education institutions and diverse socio-cultural landscape, stands at the threshold of meaningful reform. The following opportunities illustrate the potential pathways for strengthening teacher education in the state.

**Capacity Building:** The expansion of the Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC) at Gauhati University and the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) across Assam provides a strong institutional base for ongoing capacity building. These centers are increasingly focusing on faculty enrichment through orientation programmes, refresher courses, and short-term training aimed at equipping teacher educators with updated pedagogical and research competencies. With NEP-2020 emphasizing the professionalization of teacher education, such initiatives contribute to creating reflective practitioners capable of integrating innovation into their teaching. Moreover, HRDC and SCERT can act as hubs for research collaboration and curriculum reform, encouraging interdisciplinary thinking and innovative pedagogical practices. Over time, continuous investment in these institutions can foster a sustainable ecosystem of quality assurance and professional excellence in teacher education across Assam.

**Digital Expansion:** The integration of digital learning platforms and MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

marks a significant leap toward democratizing teacher education in Assam.

Platforms like SWAYAM, DIKSHA, and NISHTHA have expanded access to quality resources for teacher trainees and educators across rural and urban areas alike. This digital shift enables flexibility in learning, allowing teachers to pursue professional development without being restricted by time or place. The COVID-19 pandemic, while disruptive, accelerated the adoption of digital pedagogy, encouraging institutions to experiment with hybrid models of instruction. As Assam continues to expand its internet and ICT infrastructure, especially in rural colleges and universities, the potential for blended and online learning becomes even greater. Digital expansion also opens new avenues for innovation through virtual classrooms, digital content creation, and peer learning networks—tools that can significantly enhance the quality and reach of teacher education programmes in the state.

**Institutional Integration:** NEP-2020's focus on multidisciplinary and holistic education has prompted Assam's universities to move toward institutional integration, fostering collaboration across diverse academic disciplines. Departments such as Education, Psychology, Sociology, and Languages are now working more closely to design teacher education curricula that address both cognitive and socio-emotional dimensions of learning. This collaborative framework enables teacher trainees to develop broader perspectives on learner diversity, inclusive pedagogy, and social dynamics affecting education. For instance, integrating sociological insights helps educators understand community structures and equity issues, while psychological knowledge supports child-centered teaching approaches. Such cross-disciplinary engagement enriches both the theoretical and practical components of teacher education, aligning them with NEP-2020's goal of nurturing creative, ethical, and socially responsive teachers.

**Community Engagement:** A significant opportunity lies in the enhanced community-based learning components within teacher education programmes. NEP-2020 encourages localized practicum, field-based learning, and school internships that promote real-world engagement. For Assam, a state known for its cultural and linguistic diversity, community participation is a crucial element in building culturally responsive teachers. Teacher trainees engaging with local schools, communities, and NGOs can better understand the socio-economic realities and learning needs of children in varied contexts. Field-based experiences also foster empathy, problem-solving, and adaptability—qualities essential for inclusive teaching. By embedding community engagement into the teacher education curriculum, institutions in Assam can ensure that teacher preparation remains contextually relevant and socially grounded, while also promoting education as a vehicle for community development.

**Policy Innovation:** One of the most promising aspects of NEP-2020 implementation in Assam is its flexible policy framework, which allows the state to adapt national reforms to its unique regional needs. The policy's decentralized approach encourages institutions to innovate within their local contexts while maintaining alignment with national standards. This flexibility supports experimentation in

curriculum design, assessment methods, and teaching practices. For instance, teacher education institutions in Assam can develop localized modules that reflect indigenous knowledge systems, environmental education related to the Brahmaputra ecosystem, and multilingual pedagogy suited to the state's linguistic diversity. Moreover, the establishment of new regulatory and accreditation mechanisms under NEP-2020 provides opportunities to enhance institutional accountability and quality assurance. Such policy adaptability ensures that teacher education in Assam remains dynamic, inclusive, and future-oriented.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

The implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP-2020) represents a transformative turning point for teacher education in Assam, especially within the higher education sector. The policy's vision of integrating innovation, technology, and inclusivity into educational practice has redefined the objectives of teacher preparation in India. In the context of Assam, the study reveals that although there are infrastructural, administrative, and capacity-related challenges, there is also a rich landscape of opportunity for reimagining teacher education to be more holistic, practice-oriented, and responsive to local realities.

Under the first objective, the study finds that innovation in Assam's higher education is increasingly visible through digital integration, reflective teaching methods, experiential learning, and multidisciplinary curriculum reforms. Teacher education institutions have begun adopting blended learning, microteaching, and project-based pedagogies aligned with NEP-2020's focus on learner-centric approaches. The expansion of technology-enabled teaching platforms, such as SWAYAM and DIKSHA, has broadened access to pedagogical training for pre-service and in-service teachers. Furthermore, the introduction of the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) offers a more coherent pathway to professional development, integrating general education with pedagogical theory and practice. These innovations indicate that Assam is gradually aligning with global standards of teacher preparation that prioritize creativity, critical thinking, and adaptability.

The second objective highlights significant progress in the state's higher education system. Assam's universities, in collaboration with the Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC) and the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), have been at the forefront of teacher capacity building. Initiatives such as refresher courses, short-term workshops, and research-based training programmes have contributed to professional growth and the adoption of innovative pedagogies. Policy frameworks at the state level have also encouraged institutional autonomy, curriculum flexibility, and interdisciplinary collaboration. These developments align with NEP-2020's vision of fostering teacher professionalism, inclusivity, and ethical leadership. Moreover, the emphasis on multilingual and culturally responsive pedagogy has encouraged institutions to contextualize education to Assam's unique socio-cultural and linguistic diversity.

The third objective underscores the dual nature of Assam's reform landscape. On one hand, the state faces persistent challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, uneven digital access, faculty shortages, and limited research engagement. Many teacher education colleges still lack the technological infrastructure or trained personnel necessary to integrate

innovation effectively. However, these limitations coexist with remarkable prospects for transformation. NEP-2020 provides an enabling policy framework that encourages local adaptation, decentralization, and creative experimentation in curriculum and pedagogy. Opportunities such as digital expansion, capacity building, and community-based learning have the potential to strengthen both access and quality in teacher education. The integration of indigenous knowledge, regional languages, and community engagement can make education more inclusive and locally relevant, while also nurturing teachers as agents of social change.

In summary, the study concludes that teacher education in Assam is at a critical juncture poised between traditional practices and modern innovation. NEP-2020 acts as a catalyst for reform by encouraging institutions to adopt a forward-looking approach rooted in holistic, multidisciplinary, and learner-centered principles. If effectively implemented, the policy can transform teacher education institutions into hubs of excellence, where research, innovation, and practice intersect to produce educators capable of meeting 21st-century challenges.

Based on the findings and analysis of the three objectives, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen the implementation of innovative teacher education practices in Assam under NEP-2020:

**Strengthen Institutional Infrastructure and Technological Readiness:** For innovation to take root, teacher education institutions must have adequate physical and digital infrastructure. The government should prioritize funding for upgrading laboratories, libraries, and ICT-enabled classrooms. Rural institutions in particular need targeted digital connectivity and access to e-resources to bridge the urban-rural divide. Establishing technology support units within universities can ensure regular training for faculty in digital pedagogy, online assessment, and educational content development.

**Institutionalize Continuous Professional Development (CPD):** Teacher educators require ongoing exposure to new pedagogical models, research methodologies, and educational technologies. It is recommended that Assam's HRDC and SCERT collaborate to create a structured CPD framework involving periodic workshops, online modules, and mentorship programmes. Universities should incentivize participation in these programmes through recognition, certification, and academic credit. Such a framework would ensure that faculty development becomes an integral, continuous part of institutional culture.

**Promote Interdisciplinary and Collaborative Curriculum Design:** To align with NEP-2020's holistic vision, institutions should encourage collaboration across departments such as Education, Sociology, Psychology, and Languages. Joint curriculum design can ensure that teacher trainees develop an integrated understanding of pedagogy, learner diversity, and social context. Interdisciplinary projects and field-based research should be embedded into coursework to strengthen experiential learning. Universities should also explore partnerships with schools, NGOs, and local communities to bridge theory and practice.

**Foster Research and Innovation in Teacher Education:** A culture of innovation must be supported by systematic

research. The state government and higher education authorities should establish dedicated research funds and innovation hubs for teacher education institutions. Encouraging action research, classroom-based experiments, and community engagement projects can help generate local knowledge and best practices. Additionally, developing research journals and collaborative research networks can enhance visibility and contribute to national-level educational discourse.

**Enhance Local Relevance through Contextualized Curriculum:** Curricula should be rooted in the socio-cultural realities of Assam. Teacher education programmes must include components on local heritage, indigenous knowledge systems, environmental sustainability, and regional languages. Incorporating Assamese and other local languages as mediums of instruction and research can enhance inclusivity and accessibility. Moreover, community-based practicum should be expanded to ensure that teacher trainees engage meaningfully with diverse learners in real-world contexts.

**Strengthen Monitoring, Evaluation, and Policy Implementation:** Effective implementation requires robust monitoring mechanisms. The state's Department of Higher Education, in collaboration with NCTE and UGC, should establish a digital monitoring framework to track institutional progress, curriculum reforms, and student outcomes in real time. Regular assessment reports and policy reviews will ensure accountability and evidence-based decision-making. Feedback from educators and trainees should also be incorporated to make implementation more participatory and dynamic.

**Encourage Public-Private and Inter-Institutional Partnerships:** Collaborations between government institutions, private universities, and international organizations can provide access to resources, expertise, and innovation models. Partnerships with ed-tech companies can accelerate digital transformation, while collaborations with research institutions can strengthen knowledge exchange. Inter-institutional cooperation within Assam can also help share best practices and create networks for professional growth and innovation diffusion.

**Promote Inclusive and Equitable Teacher Education:** NEP-2020 emphasizes inclusivity as a core principle of education. Assam's teacher education institutions should adopt inclusive admission policies, gender-sensitive pedagogy, and flexible learning pathways for marginalized groups. Special initiatives must focus on enhancing opportunities for tribal, rural, and differently-abled learners to participate in teacher education programmes. By promoting equity and access, Assam can ensure that its teaching force reflects the diversity and richness of its society.

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