National Professional Standards for Teachers [NPST] and Quality Education: Opportunities and Challenges

***Romana Jabeen & **Prof. Md Faiz Ahmad**

*****Research Scholar, MANUU, College of Teacher Education, Darbhanga
******Principal MANUU, CTE, DBG, MANUU, College of Teacher Education, Darbhanga

Abstract

The quality of education is closely linked to the competence and professional growth of teachers. In India, the National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), introduced under the framework of NEP 2020, aims to provide clear guidelines on the knowledge, skills, values, and practices expected of teachers at different stages of their careers. These standards are meant to support teachers in becoming more professional, reflective, and effective in classrooms. At the same time, many teachers and institutions face challenges such as lack of awareness, limited training, shortage of resources, and difficulty in applying the standards in day-to-day teaching. This main purpose of the study aims to understand the opportunities and challenges of NPST in relation to quality education.The study used a descriptive survey methodology with a sample of 55 School Teachers and 49 Teacher educators from Bihar, selected through purposive sampling. The data was collected through google form and the link was shared through WhatsApp and email.

The finding of the study is expected to show how NPST can help in raising the quality of education by creating clear goals for teacher growth, while also identifying the practical problems that must be addressed for successful implementation. The findings will be useful for teachers, institutions, and policymakers who are working to improve teaching and learning in schools.

Key Terms: *National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), NEP 2020, Opportunities and Challenges, Teacher Awareness, Teacher Professional Development.*

Introduction:

Teachers are the core of quality education. The effectiveness of teaching depends not only on subject knowledge but also on professional values, classroom practices, and continuous self-improvement. In India, the National Education Policy (NEP 2020, P-20, and Para-5.20) emphasized that improving teacher quality is essential for achieving better student learning outcomes. To make this vision more practical, the policy introduced the(NPST)National Professional Standards for Teachers(NEP 2020, P-20, and Para-5.20)

According to the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE, 2021), NPST defines the nature of a teacher's work and creates guidelines for working and service conditions. It also focuses on reinventing teacher education programmes to meet current needs, enabling certification and registration of teachers, and promoting life-long learning with opportunities for career development. Further, NPST seeks to establish uniformity in teacher qualifications across

states, support teacher mobility, and provide clear mechanisms for evaluating teacher quality. The standards also encourage teacher motivation and accountability by setting professional expectations and duties.

The connection between teacher standards and quality education is very strong. Various studies from different countries show that when teachers are guided by professional standards, their teaching becomes more effective and student learning improves (Darling-Hammond, 2017). At the same time, teachers may also face difficulties in understanding and applying these standards. For example, lack of training, shortage of resources, and heavy workloads often create barriers (Bala, 2018).

In India, NPST is still in the early stages of implementation. While it offers opportunities for teacher professional growth, it also presents challenges related to awareness, training, and practical use in schools. This study explores both the opportunities and the challenges of NPST in relation to quality education. It focuses on the perceptions of teachers and teacher educators, because their voices are central in making these standards meaningful in classrooms.

Review of related Literature:

Teacher education has long been recognized as the foundation for improving the quality of schooling. Bala (2018) noted that teacher education in India faces several issues such as outdated curricula, lack of practical training, and limited use of technology. These challenges directly affect the quality of teachers entering schools, making reforms in professional standards a necessity.

Professional standards are seen worldwide as a way to raise the quality of teaching. Darling-Hammond (2017) explained that countries with well-developed teacher standards, such as Finland and Australia, have been able to strengthen both pre-service and in-service training. These standards provide a clear framework for what teachers should know and practice, ensuring consistency and accountability in the profession.

In the Indian context, Mohalik, Mohanty, and Mishra (2021) highlighted that professional standards not only define teacher roles but also create uniformity in teacher education. They argue that NPST can serve as a guiding document for improving the relevance and effectiveness of teacher preparation programmes. However, they also point out that the success of such standards depends on how well they are understood and practiced by teachers themselves.

The National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), introduced by the NCTE (2021), aim to bring about this clarity and uniformity. These standards focus on defining the nature of teachers' work, creating working and service conditions, ensuring lifelong learning opportunities, and evaluating teacher quality. At the same time, they highlight teacher motivation and accountability as central aspects of professionalism.

Despite these opportunities, challenges remain. Kaur and Arora (2022) found that many teachers are still unaware of NPST and lack the necessary training to apply the standards effectively. Practical barriers such as workload, resource shortages, and limited professional development opportunities often reduce the impact of these reforms.

Overall, the literature shows that NPST has the potential to improve teacher professionalism and quality of education in India. However, its success will depend on addressing the challenges of awareness, training, and support systems for teachers at all levels.

Significance of the Study:

This study is important because teachers play the most crucial role in shaping the quality of education. The introduction of the National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) under NEP 2020 provides a new framework for improving teacher professionalism in India. However, for these standards to be effective, it is necessary to understand how teachers and teacher educators view them in practice.

The findings of this research will be useful in several ways. For teachers, it will show how NPST can support their professional growth and classroom practices. For teacher educators, it will provide insights into how teacher preparation programmes can be redesigned to match national standards. For policymakers and institutions, the study will highlight the opportunities as well as the challenges in implementing NPST, which can guide future decisions and reforms. Overall, the study contributes to the larger goal of improving the quality of education in India by examining how professional standards can be applied meaningfully in schools and teacher education programmes.

Research Objectives:

1) To study the awareness and understanding of NPST among School teachers and teacher educators.
2) To study the role of NPST in promoting collaboration among teachers for diverse learning opportunities.
3) To study the role of NPST in addressing diverse learning needs and achievements.
4) To Study difficulties in using varied teaching methods as per NPST.

Research Methodology

- **Research Design** - The study is based on the descriptivesurveymethod and makes use of a mixed-methodapproach.
- **Population of the study**- The Population of the study consists of the School Teachers and Teacher Educators private and government, inthe Institute of Bihar.
- **Sample of the Study –** The Sample of the Study consists of55School Teachers and 49 Teachereducators from Bihar.
- **Sampling Technique**- Simple random sampling technique was adopted to sample from the Population.
- **Tool of the Study**- A Self Prepared mixed questionnaire [open and closed ended] was developed to collect data by the researcher with the consultation of experts members including Domain 1 to 4 and constructing items based on each criteria

Table 1: Description of tools : Distribution of items across dimensions.

S. No.	Aspect	Open-Ended	Closed-Ended	Total No of Items.
1	Awareness of Treats all students and colleagues with respect and fairness	0	2	2
2	Collaborates with colleagues and other professionals in school to create diverse learning opportunities for students.	0	2	2
3	Addresses diverse needs in classrooms in terms for learning ability and achievements	1	1	2
4	Uses diverse strategies such as activities, stories, experiments etc. to teach concepts	1	1	2
Totals Items in Tool	2		6	8

- **Method of Data Collection**: The data were collected using a Google Form, and the form link was shared via WhatsApp and email.

Results, Findings and Discussions

Table 2: Regarding Demographic Information

S. NO.	**Gender**	**No**
1	Male	54
2	Female	48
3	Prefer not to say	2

Table 3: Regarding School Teachers and Teacher Educators information

S.No	**Types**	**No**
1	School Teachers	67
2	Teachers Educators	37
Total	104	

Objective 1: i, e to study the awareness and understanding of NPST among School teachers and teacher educators

To assess the level of awareness and understanding of NPST (National Professional Standards for Teachers) among school teachers and educators, responses were analyzed for the objective related to collaboration among students and colleagues (Item Nos. 1 and 2).

In response to Item 1, which examined whether teachers treat all students and colleagues with equal respect and fairness regardless of their background, abilities, or personal differences, the

findings showed that 25% of respondents emphasized the importance of respecting individual differences and maintaining fairness. Many respondents also suggested organizing online training programs to enhance teachers' awareness and understanding of NPST. About 12.5% of respondents reported that they had learned about these principles from official NPST documents, while another 25% confirmed that they consistently strive to treat everyone equally in their professional interactions. These results indicate a need for greater administrative attention towards strengthening teachers' understanding of NPST sub-domains and ensuring the fulfillment of its indicators. Additionally, 12.5% of teachers agreed that NPST should be more actively promoted, while 37.05% suggested that regular workshops be organized to increase familiarity and practical implementation.Regarding Item 2, which focused on how teachers learned about providing equal opportunities and efforts for all, the findings revealed that 37.5% of respondents had learned about these aspects through official documents, while 12.5% agreed that they personally ensure equal opportunities for everyone. Other respondents mentioned that they had gained awareness through training programs and social media platforms.

On the basis of the above interpretationit may be said that, some teachers possess basic awareness of NPST and its principles of equality and collaboration, but there remains a significant need for capacity-building programs, workshops, and online training to improve understanding and implementation across schools and Institution.

Objective 2: i**,** e to study the role of NPST in promoting collaboration among teachers for diverse learning opportunities.

In response to item no -3regarding keeping student information private and sharing it only with authorized persons when necessary for educational or administrative purposes,25%, 12.5%, 12.5%, and 50% of respondents gave their responses. These Findings indicate that only a small portion of teachers consistently maintain student confidentiality, while many are unsure about how and when to share student information appropriately. This highlights the need for greater awareness and guidance on confidentiality practices as outlined in NPST & suggested that schools organize training and awareness programsto help teachers handle student information responsibly and follow proper procedures for sharing it. In reply to item no-4,the summary of the respondent showed that teachers are careful not to disclose students' personal or academic details to others unless officially required. The responses were 50%, 37.5%, and 12.5%. This findings indicates that most teachers are careful and aware of maintaining confidentiality, though some are still uncertain about proper practices. It is recommended that training sessions and workshops be conducted to ensure teachers to follow correct procedures and maintain student privacy responsibly.

Objective 3: i, e to study the role of NPST in addressing diverse learning needs and achievements

In response to item no-5 regarding how well they understand actively try to make students aware of unity, social responsibility, and pride in the nation and its diverse cultural heritage**,** the

responses were37.5%, 25%, 12.5%, and 25%.These percentages indicate that a majority of teachers (37.5% and 25%) consistently make efforts to teach these values, while a smaller portion (12.5%) do not focus on this aspect, and 25% are uncertain or inconsistent in their approach. This suggests that while there is awareness among teachers, more structured guidance is needed to ensure all students benefit from values Education. It suggested that schools should organize workshops, training sessions, and provide teaching resources to help teachers effectively integrate lessons on fraternity, responsibility, and national pride into their teaching practices. In reply to item no 6 (Open ended)- The responses showed that teachers want to integrate examples from our nation's history, culture, and traditions to respect diversity and foster a sense of national unity and integrity. However, teachers displayed different needs and levels of understanding. This finding indicates that while some teachers use examples effectively, others are unsure which examples to include or how to teach them. Respondents suggested that schools and institutions would benefit if the administration provided sample lesson plans, organized workshops, and created a shared resource repositoryto help teachers teach national values more effectively.

Objective 4: i ,e To Study difficulties in using varied teaching methods as per NPST.

The objective of this item was to investigate the extent to which teachers and educators are using teaching methods according to the requirements of the topic and the learners' needs**.** In response to Item No. 7**,** which asked whether they are using a proper variety of teaching methods, 70% of respondents indicated agreement**,** 17.5% agreed moderately**,** and12.5% preferred not to respond**.** This finding indicates that teachers face challenges related to the curriculum, limited resources, lack of collaboration, and workload. It findings highlighted the need to prioritize NPST-based activities such as conferences, seminars, workshops, and subject-specific training. Teachers and educators also require a proper guiding framework for assessment and evaluation to improve teaching practices. In response to Item No. 8 (open-ended), the summary of respondents' suggestions indicates that for NPST to be effective, it should first be implemented successfully with proper organization by the administration according to teachers' skills**.** They also emphasized the importance ofcreating a healthy work environment, providing facilities like CCTV to monitor teaching–learning processes for improvement, increasing salaries based on performance, ensuring teacher autonomy, promoting research, and training in new ICT innovations**.**

Major findings:

Awareness of Treats all students and colleagues regarding NPST: The findings of study showed that while some teachers (25%) emphasize respecting individual differences and maintaining fairness, and 25% consistently treat everyone equally, a smaller portion (12.5%) learned about these principles from official NPST documents. Regarding providing equal opportunities, 37.5% of teachers gained awareness through official documents, while 12.5% personally ensure equal opportunities for all students; others learned through training programs

and social media. Overall, the results highlight a need for greater administrative support to strengthen teachers' understanding of NPST sub-domains and ensure proper implementation. Respondents suggested organizing online training programs, workshops, and actively promoting NPST to enhance teachers' awareness and practical application.

DiversestudentlearningopportunitiesinNPST: The findings regarding confidentiality indicate that in response to keeping student information private and sharing it only with authorized persons, 25%, 12.5%, 12.5%, and 50% of respondents provided their responses. This shows that only a small portion of teachers consistently maintain confidentiality, while many are unsure about proper procedures. Regarding being careful not to disclose students' personal or academic details unless officially required, 50%, 37.5%, and 12.5% of respondentsindicated their practices, showing that most teachers are careful and aware, though some remain uncertain. Overall, these results highlight the need for greater awareness and guidance on confidentiality practices as outlined in NPST. Respondents suggested that schools conduct training sessions, workshops, and awareness programs to help teachers handle student information responsibly and follow proper procedures.

Challenges of diverse learning regarding NPST: findings of the study showed several key areas of challengesregarding teachers actively making students aware of unity, social responsibility, and national pride, the responses were 37.5%, 25%, 12.5%, and 25%**.** This shows that most teachers consistently focus on these values, while some do not or are uncertain. Respondents suggested workshops, training sessions, and teaching resources to better integrate these values into classroom practices, also teachers expressed a desire to use examples from history, culture, and traditions to promote diversity and national unity. Responses indicated varying levels of understanding, with some unsure about which examples to use. It was suggested that administration provide sample lesson plans, organize workshops, and create a shared resource repositoryto support effective teaching of national values.

Perception of different Strategies According to NPST standard: finding of the Study showed 70% of teachers use appropriate teaching methods, 17.5% moderately, and 12.5% did not respond. Challenges include curriculum limits, lack of resources, collaboration issues, and workload. And suggest a need for NPST-based activities, workshops, training, and assessment frameworks. Also recommended that administration organize tasks according to teachers' skills, provide a healthy work environment, monitor teaching, increase performance-based salaries, ensure autonomy, promote research, and offer ICT training to support effective NPST implementation.

Conclusions:

The Study reveals that while teachers show awareness of NPST, its practical implementation remains limited. About 25% of teachers emphasized treating all students and colleagues equally, and 37**.**05% suggested regular workshops to improve understanding. Regarding confidentiality, 50% maintained student privacy, though 25% were unsure of proper procedures. In promoting national values, 37**.**5% actively taught unity and pride, while 25%

showed uncertainty. Moreover, 70% of teachers reported using diverse teaching methods, but many faced challenges like limited resources and heavy workload. Overall, the results highlight the need for strong administrative support, regular NPST-based workshops, and professional development programs to strengthen teachers' skills, ethical practices, and collaborative efforts for improving quality of education.

References:

Bala, I. (2018). *Issues and Challenges in Teacher Education*. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*, 6(1), [page numbers]. https://www.ijcrt.org/papers/IJPUB1801344.pdf

Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher education around the world: What can we learn from international practice? *European Journal of Teacher Education, 40*(3), 291-309. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2017.1315399

Kaur, G., & Arora, S. (2022). Awareness and challenges in implementing NPST among Indian teachers. *Journal of Education and Practice, 13*(4), 45-52.

Mohalik, R., Mohanty, P., & Mishra, S. (2021). National Professional Standards for Teachers: A framework for quality education in India. *Indian Journal of Teacher Education, 12*(2), 56-65.

National Council for Teacher Education. (2021). *National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST).* Ministry of Education, Government of India https://ncte.gov.in/website/NPST/NPSTOverview.aspx

*National Education Policy 2020.*https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf