

ISSN: 0974-2123

# INDIAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

International Biannual Refereed Open Access Journal

VOLUME 13

ISSUE-1

JANUARY-JUNE-2020



## STELLA MATUTINA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

ASHOK NAGAR, CHENNAI - 600083, TAMIL NADU, INDIA

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RESEARCHER**

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## EDITORIAL

It gives me great pleasure to present this issue of the Indian Educational Researcher, which brings together insightful articles addressing contemporary developments in education, technology, well-being, and policy. Each contribution in this volume reflects dedicated scholarship and a commitment to improving educational practice in diverse contexts.

The first article, “AI and the Future Educational System” by Dr. C. Bagyalakshmi, explores the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence in shaping teaching, learning, and assessment. The paper highlights how AI-driven tools are redefining educational environments and preparing learners for a rapidly evolving global landscape.

The second article, “The Role of Parental Mediation in Shaping Students’ Attitude Towards Electronic Media” by Mrs. Dafini Pinky F., examines how parental guidance influences children’s engagement with electronic media. This study, published in the Indian Educational Researcher (January–June 2020), provides valuable insights into responsible media use and digital citizenship.

The third article, “The Role of NEP 2020 in Reshaping Pre-Service Teacher Education: A Policy-Practice Perspective” by M. Merlin Therasa, offers a comprehensive analysis of how the National Education Policy 2020 is redefining teacher preparation. The author highlights reforms aimed at strengthening competencies, pedagogical innovation, and overall quality in pre-service teacher training.

The final article, “Role of Regular Exercise and Yoga in Managing Occupational Stress among Teachers” by Dr. J. Jain Shanthini, emphasizes the importance of physical activity and yogic practices in promoting the mental and emotional well-being of teachers. This work underscores the need for holistic wellness in professional life.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all the authors for their valuable contributions. I also thank the reviewers, the editorial team, and the management of Stella Matutina College of Education for their support in bringing out this issue. It is my hope that this edition will serve as a meaningful resource for educators, researchers, and students.

*Editorial Board*

Conceptual Article

## AI and the Future Educational System

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### Abstract

This piece explores the transformative impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the future of education. It highlights how AI is set to become an integral part of schooling, moving beyond traditional teaching methods to create more dynamic, personalised, and data-driven learning environments. The discussion brings forward key benefits, including increased student engagement and accessibility, streamlined administrative tasks for educators, and tailored learning experiences. At the same time, it addresses important challenges such as algorithmic bias, data privacy concerns, reduced human interaction, academic dishonesty, and the costs involved in training and implementation. Ultimately, the reflection emphasises that AI should be used to enhance, not replace, human capabilities. It calls for a thoughtful, ethical approach that prioritises the development of higher-order thinking skills and collaboration, aiming to build a more inclusive and empowered future for education.

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence (AI); Personalized Learning; Intelligent Tutoring Systems; Learning Analytics

### Algorithmic Bias: A Hidden Risk in AI-Powered Education

A major concern with using AI in education is the issue of algorithmic bias, when the technology makes unfair decisions because it has learned from biased or incomplete data. For instance, if an AI tool is trained mostly on information from students in wealthy, urban schools, it might wrongly assume that students from rural or low-income backgrounds are less capable, even when that's not the case.

In some situations, facial recognition systems used for taking attendance or monitoring exams have had difficulty accurately identifying students with darker skin tones, leading to false

absences or mistaken accusations of cheating. Likewise, AI-powered grading tools can misinterpret writing from students who speak in regional dialects or for whom English is a second language, unfairly lowering their scores due to language patterns rather than content quality.

These biases don't just distort the data, they can have real consequences for students, reinforcing existing inequalities and limiting opportunities. To avoid this, it's essential that AI systems are built using diverse, representative data and are regularly tested to ensure they're treating all learners fairly and equally.

### **Data Privacy Concerns: Who Owns and Protects Student Information?**

As AI becomes more integrated into education, concerns around data privacy have grown significantly. AI tools often rely on large volumes of student data, ranging from academic performance and behavioural patterns to location and biometric information, to function effectively. This raises critical questions about data ownership, consent, and security

For instance, many digital learning platforms track how long students spend on tasks, their engagement levels, and even the times of day they are most active. While this data helps personalise learning experiences, it also creates detailed digital profiles that could be vulnerable if mismanaged (Learning Sciences, *How Artificial Intelligence in Education is Transforming Classrooms*, n.d.). In one notable case, a major ed-tech company was criticised for sharing student data with third-party advertisers without proper user consent, exposing gaps in regulation and ethical oversight (University of Illinois, *AI in Schools: Pros and Cons*, n.d.). Similarly, the use of facial recognition in classrooms has sparked debates about surveillance and student rights, especially when students or parents aren't properly informed or given the option to opt out (The World Economic Forum, *5 Key Policy Ideas to Integrate AI in Education Effectively*, n.d.).

Without strong safeguards, such as transparent data practices, clear user consent, and strong encryption, there is a real risk that sensitive student information could be exposed, misused, or commercialised. Ensuring trust in AI systems requires that schools and tech providers place student privacy at the centre of design and policy (HP.com, n.d.; The World Economic Forum, n.d.).

## **Reduced Human Interaction: Is Technology Replacing the Human Touch?**

While AI can enhance many aspects of learning, one of the growing concerns is the reduction in meaningful human interaction between students and educators. As schools adopt AI tutors, chatbots, and automated feedback tools, there's a risk that students may rely more on machines than on real human connections for learning support.

For instance, AI-powered platforms like intelligent tutoring systems can guide students through lessons without any involvement from a teacher. While efficient, this setup can leave little room for spontaneous discussions, emotional support, or the mentorship that comes from real teacher-student relationships. In fully online classrooms, students may interact more with algorithms than with peers or instructors, which can lead to feelings of isolation and disconnection. A 2024 survey by an educational nonprofit found that 61% of students using AI-based learning platforms reported feeling less motivated due to the lack of personal interaction (University of Illinois, College of Education, *n.d.*).

Although AI can make education more accessible and personalised, it can't fully replace the empathy, encouragement, and social bonding that human educators provide. To maintain a healthy balance, it's crucial to integrate AI in ways that support—not sideline—human relationships in the classroom.

## **Academic Dishonesty: New Challenges in the Age of AI**

While AI has the potential to enhance learning, it also introduces new avenues for academic dishonesty. Tools like AI-assisted writing platforms can be misused by students to generate essays, solve assignments, or answer exam questions, often without genuine understanding or original effort (Times of India, *AI, But Verify*, 2025). This blurs the line between support and plagiarism, making it difficult for educators to assess a student's true capabilities.

The rise of AI-generated content has already forced institutions to rethink traditional assessment methods. In some cases, students have submitted fully AI-written essays, raising concerns about authenticity and academic integrity. Even more concerning is the use of AI to bypass detection systems, as some advanced tools can paraphrase content to avoid plagiarism checkers.

Educators are now faced with the dual challenge of embracing AI for its benefits, such as personalised tutoring and real-time feedback—while also establishing clear policies and safeguards to prevent misuse. This may include redesigning assessments to focus more on critical thinking, in-person evaluations, or oral defenses, which are harder to fake with AI support (University of Illinois, *AI in Schools: Pros and Cons*, n.d.).

If left unaddressed, the misuse of AI could undermine the credibility of academic achievements, making it harder to distinguish between genuine learning and algorithmic output. Therefore, maintaining academic integrity in the AI era requires not only updated policies, but also ethical awareness and digital literacy among students (Netguru, *AI Impact on Education*, n.d.).

### **The Costs of Training and Implementing AI in Education**

While the benefits of integrating AI into education are widely acknowledged, the financial and logistical costs involved in its training and implementation pose significant challenges—especially for under-resourced institutions. The development, customisation, and maintenance of AI systems require substantial investment in both technology infrastructure and human expertise (Netguru, *AI Impact on Education*, n.d.). Schools must not only purchase or subscribe to AI tools, but also invest in secure data storage systems, high-speed internet, and compatible hardware.

Moreover, training educators and administrators to effectively use these tools adds to the cost burden. Many teachers are not adequately equipped to integrate AI into their teaching practices and require ongoing professional development (The World Economic Forum, *5 Key Policy Ideas to Integrate AI in Education Effectively*, n.d.). In countries or regions with limited digital infrastructure, these barriers are even more pronounced, leading to disparities in access and widening the digital divide (Dev Bhoomi Uttarakhand University, *How AI Is Transforming Education*, n.d.).

Another often-overlooked cost is the continuous updating and monitoring of AI systems to ensure ethical use, accuracy, and adaptability to curriculum changes. Without sustained investment, AI tools risk becoming obsolete or misaligned with educational goals. Therefore, while AI holds great promise, scaling it responsibly requires strategic funding, cross-sector

collaboration, and long-term commitment from policymakers and educational stakeholders (HP.com, *The Future of AI in Education*, n.d.).

## **Conclusion**

The future of education, increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, demands a fundamental reimagining of how we teach and learn. Rather than replacing human intelligence, AI should be seen as a powerful tool to augment human capabilities, supporting, not supplanting, the essential human elements of education. As such, the focus must shift towards nurturing skills that AI cannot easily replicate, such as critical thinking, creativity, emotional intelligence, ethical reasoning, and complex problem-solving.

Realising this vision responsibly will require collaboration across sectors, from policymakers and educators to technologists and communities. Clear ethical frameworks, investment in teacher training, and a forward-thinking curriculum are all essential. Students must not only learn to use AI tools but also understand their broader implications and harness them to create meaningful impact.

If these challenges are approached with care, foresight, and a commitment to equity, AI has the potential to democratise education, delivering high-quality, and personalised learning experiences to all learners, regardless of geography or background. Though the path forward may be complex, the possibilities for transforming education are profound. With thoughtful integration, AI can help create a system that is more inclusive, adaptive, and empowering than ever before, truly preparing the next generation for a rapidly changing world.

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Conceptual Article

## Teaching Through Art and Aesthetics

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### Abstract

Education today must go beyond textbooks and examinations to nurture creativity, empathy, and critical thinking. Integrating art and aesthetics into the teaching–learning process transforms classrooms into spaces of imagination and joy. Through music, dance, drama, painting, and storytelling, learners experience knowledge rather than merely receive it. Art helps them connect emotionally with concepts, visualize ideas, and retain learning for longer periods. It also encourages collaboration, reflection, and cultural appreciation, fostering holistic growth of the mind and heart. This paper explores how art integration enhances understanding and retention, the teacher’s pivotal role in facilitating such learning, and the lasting impact of aesthetic education in shaping compassionate and creative individuals.

**Keywords:** Art Integration, Aesthetic Education, Holistic Learning, Creativity, NEP 2020

### Introduction

Education has always been more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. It is a process that nurtures the whole person — body, mind, and spirit. Yet, in modern times, the educational journey often becomes a race for grades, leaving little room for imagination or self-expression. Art and aesthetics invite us to slow down, to reflect, and to experience learning as something deeply human.

A holistic approach to education embraces this broader vision. It recognizes that creativity and beauty are not optional extras but essential pathways through which learners discover meaning and joy. When art becomes part of the learning process, children begin to see connections between knowledge and life, intellect and emotion, self and society.

## Understanding Art and Aesthetics in Education

Art in education is not confined to painting or music classes. It is a language of thought, feeling, and perception — a way of seeing the world differently. Whether through rhythm in poetry, pattern in mathematics, or color in science experiments, art allows learners to experience the harmony underlying all learning.

Aesthetics goes beyond artistic skill. It is about cultivating an appreciation for beauty, balance, and harmony in daily life. When students learn to value beauty — in ideas, in nature, in relationships — they develop empathy, sensitivity, and awareness. Aesthetics turns education into an experience that touches the heart as well as the mind.

## Integrating Art into Education

Art integration means using art as a medium to understand, express, and connect knowledge across subjects. It makes learning active, participatory, and joyful.

For instance:

- In **science**, students can learn about balance and structure by sculpting models.
- In **mathematics**, geometric patterns in folk art or rangoli designs make abstract concepts tangible.
- In **social studies**, theatre and storytelling can bring history to life.
- In **languages**, poetry and drama enhance expression and creativity.

The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** strongly advocates *art-integrated learning* as a key pedagogical approach. It promotes the use of local art forms and cultural traditions to make education experiential and rooted in India's rich heritage. The **National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005)** also recognizes art as a means of “learning with joy,” not as an optional subject but as a central pillar of education.

## Holistic Development through Art and Aesthetic Education

Art-integrated learning contributes to holistic development in multiple dimensions:

- **Cognitive Development**

Art stimulates divergent thinking, problem-solving, and pattern recognition. Creating art helps learners conceptualize abstract ideas concretely and relate them to real-life experiences.

- **Emotional and Psychological Development**

Through art, learners express emotions they cannot verbalize, fostering self-awareness and emotional balance. Aesthetic experiences build empathy and emotional intelligence.

- **Social Development**

Collaborative art projects foster teamwork, communication, and respect for diverse perspectives. Performing arts, especially drama and dance, teach cooperation and collective creativity.

- **Cultural Development**

Art connects learners to their heritage and identity. Folk and indigenous art forms, when included in curricula, promote cultural pride and intercultural understanding.

- **Spiritual and Moral Growth**

Aesthetic education nurtures contemplation, gratitude, and ethical sensitivity. Experiencing beauty leads to a sense of unity with nature and humanity — essential for peace education.

### **Integrating Art into the Teaching–Learning Process**

Integrating art in education does not mean teaching art as a separate subject. It means using art as a *medium* to learn and express knowledge across disciplines. Art becomes both a tool and a language for learning.

#### **a) Visual Arts in Classroom Learning**

Visual arts — drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, or poster-making — help learners visualize abstract concepts.

- **In Science:** Students can draw the life cycle of a butterfly, create clay models of organs, or illustrate the food chain through creative posters.
- **In Mathematics:** Geometry can come alive through rangoli patterns, mandalas, or origami that explain symmetry and proportion.
- **In Commerce and Economics:** Students can create infographics showing business cycles, demand-supply curves, or charts on consumer behavior using colors and visuals.

When students *see and create*, they engage their visual memory, which strengthens conceptual clarity and retention. Art transforms invisible ideas into visible, memorable forms.

#### **b) Performing Arts in Learning**

The performing arts — drama, dance, and music — bring movement and expression into the learning space.

- **Drama:** Enacting a lesson helps learners internalize characters, events, and emotions. For instance, dramatizing *The Dandi March* in history allows learners to feel Gandhi's courage and conviction.
- **Dance:** Through rhythm and movement, even abstract ideas can be taught — such as the rotation of planets, the growth of a seed, or the functioning of the human heart.
- **Music:** Songs and rhythm aid memorization. A teacher explaining accounting principles might compose a simple jingle to help recall rules of debit and credit.

Performing arts involve the body, the voice, and the mind — turning passive learners into active participants.

### c) Literary Arts

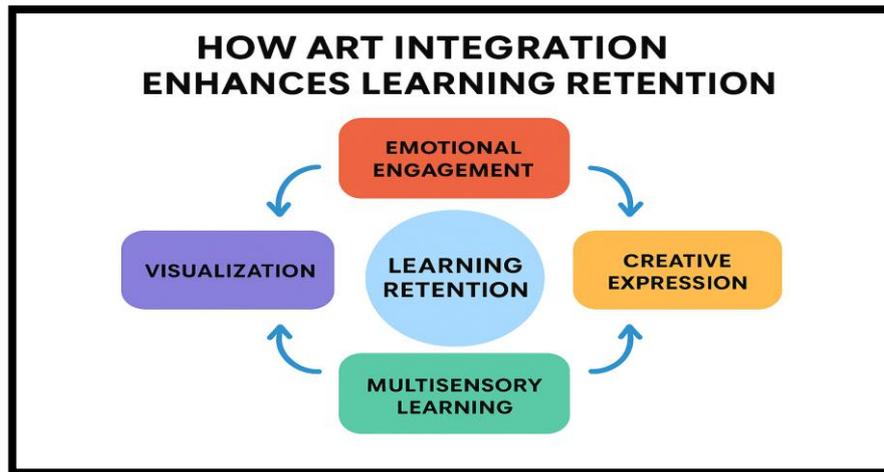
Words carry emotion, and literary arts — poetry, storytelling, and reflective writing — help learners think and express deeply.

- **Storytelling** can make even complex subjects relatable. A commerce teacher can narrate a story about a young entrepreneur to explain business ethics.
- **Poetry writing** helps students synthesize learning creatively; for instance, composing a short verse on photosynthesis or economic freedom.
- **Reflective journaling** after a lesson encourages learners to express how they understood a topic and how it relates to their lives.

Such activities nurture empathy, imagination, and critical reflection — essential elements of holistic growth.

### Learning Retention through Art Integration

Learning becomes meaningful only when it stays with the learner — not just for an exam, but for life. One of the biggest challenges teachers face is helping students retain what they learn in a way that feels personal, relevant, and lasting. Art integration offers a powerful solution, because art connects learning with emotion, imagination, and experience — the very elements that make memories endure.



### 1. Engaging the Senses and the Mind

Art speaks to the senses. When a teacher allows students to paint a scene from a poem, create a rhythm to remember a scientific process, or dramatize an event from history, learning becomes more than words on a page. It becomes something students can *see, touch, and feel*. Engaging multiple senses strengthens memory because the brain stores information through different pathways — visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. A child who sings a multiplication song or draws a food chain diagram will remember it far longer than one who simply reads it from a textbook. In this way, art gives ideas a shape, a rhythm, and a voice that sticks in the learner’s memory.

### 2. Learning that Touches the Heart

We remember best what touches us emotionally. Art makes learning emotional — it makes it *human*. When students paint about pollution, act out freedom struggles, or write a poem about kindness, they are not just recalling facts; they are *feeling* them.

These emotional experiences anchor knowledge deep within the heart. Neuroscientists have found that emotional engagement strengthens memory formation, and teachers experience this every day — when a class performance, a story, or a drawing makes a lesson suddenly “click” for a student.

### 3. Seeing Ideas, Not Just Reading Them

Visualization is one of the most natural ways the mind remembers. Art allows students to “see” concepts that might otherwise remain abstract. A simple activity like creating a mind map of economic systems, a collage about climate change, or geometric patterns in art can make

complex ideas tangible. When learners visualize, they build mental pictures that stay long after the lesson is over.

#### **4. Learning by Doing and Feeling**

Art transforms classrooms into spaces of experience. When students *do* — when they paint, act, design, or build — they understand lessons with their hands and hearts, not just their heads. Imagine a commerce class where students create advertisements to understand consumer psychology, or a science class where they design models to demonstrate energy conservation. These experiences are active, fun, and memorable. They allow learners to *own* their knowledge — and ownership leads to retention.

#### **5. The Power of Shared Creativity**

Collaborative art projects also help knowledge stick. When students work together on a play, mural, or musical piece, they form emotional bonds around what they're learning. They remember not only the topic but also the joy of teamwork, laughter, and shared discovery. Learning becomes a social experience, rich with meaning and memory.

#### **6. Reflection through Creativity**

Art invites reflection — one of the most powerful tools for deep learning. When students keep art journals, sketch their understanding of a concept, or create personal reflections through poetry or doodles, they revisit what they've learned in their own way. Reflection through art helps learners connect knowledge with their personal stories. It encourages them to ask: *What does this mean to me?* And when something has personal meaning, it becomes unforgettable.

#### **7. Lifelong Retention through Imagination**

Art doesn't just help students remember facts; it helps them remember how to *think*. A learner who has experienced art-integrated lessons develops imagination, empathy, and the ability to see patterns — skills that support lifelong learning. Such students grow into adults who not only recall what they learned but also apply it creatively in real life. In that sense, art doesn't just help with retention; it nurtures wisdom.

## **The Role of the Teacher in Integrating Art and Aesthetics**

Teachers are the bridge between curriculum and creativity. Their role extends beyond transmitting knowledge — they are facilitators of imagination, architects of meaningful experiences, and curators of aesthetic sensitivity in learners. In the context of art-integrated education, teachers inspire curiosity, provide creative freedom, and help students discover connections between art and academics.

### **1. Facilitators of Experiential Learning**

Teachers who integrate art in their teaching use multiple sensory channels to enhance comprehension. A science teacher might guide students to express a concept like “photosynthesis” through mural art or drama, enabling them to visualize and emotionally connect with the process. Similarly, a commerce teacher could use role-play to help students internalize market principles, while a mathematics teacher might explore geometry through design and pattern-making. Such experiential strategies move learning from rote memorization to meaningful understanding.

### **2. Designers of Aesthetic Learning Spaces**

Aesthetically enriched classrooms foster engagement and joy. Teachers can cultivate such environments through colorful displays of student artwork, thematic bulletin boards, use of natural light, soothing music during creative tasks, and an inviting layout that encourages collaboration. When students feel emotionally safe and visually inspired, they are more likely to engage deeply and retain knowledge effectively. The environment itself becomes a silent teacher, reinforcing the aesthetic principles of harmony, balance, and beauty.

### **3. Promoters of Emotional and Cultural Intelligence**

Teachers act as mediators of emotion and culture through art-based pedagogy. Incorporating folk art, local music, and traditional crafts connects students to their heritage while nurturing pride in cultural identity. In discussing these art forms, teachers open pathways for empathy, cultural dialogue, and inclusion. By allowing students to express emotions through artistic media—painting, poetry, or storytelling—teachers nurture emotional literacy, a key component of holistic education.

#### 4. Encouragers of Reflection and Self-Expression

A teacher's encouragement of self-expression through creative tasks allows students to explore their inner world. Reflective art journals, sketch-based note-taking, or creative summaries of lessons not only deepen understanding but also make content personally meaningful. Teachers who model self-reflection—by sharing their own creative experiences or challenges—help students appreciate learning as a lifelong, humanizing process.

#### 5. Integrators of Art across the Curriculum

Teachers play a critical role in connecting art to core subjects. For instance:

- **Language Arts:** Drama and poetry can enhance comprehension and empathy.
- **History:** Historical reenactments or collage-making can strengthen retention.
- **Mathematics:** Mandala patterns and tessellations make abstract ideas tangible.
- **Science:** Diagram-based illustrations and creative experiments improve conceptual clarity.
- **Economics and Commerce:** Infographics, advertisements, and short skits on consumer behavior help internalize concepts practically.

These approaches turn classrooms into living laboratories of creativity, where learning is active and memorable.

#### 6. Guides for Lifelong Learning

A teacher's attitude toward art has a profound influence on learners. When teachers display openness to creativity, humility in exploration, and enthusiasm in experimentation, students internalize these qualities as lifelong habits. Teachers thus model the aesthetic values of observation, patience, and appreciation — shaping learners who approach knowledge not merely as data, but as experience.

#### 7. Professional Development and Reflective Practice

To successfully integrate art, teachers require sustained professional development. Workshops on art-based pedagogies, creative thinking, and mindfulness can strengthen their instructional design. Reflective practice—journaling about what worked and what didn't—enables teachers to refine their approach. Collaboration among teachers across disciplines fosters an interdisciplinary ethos that sustains aesthetic learning communities.

**Conclusion**

Art and aesthetics bring life and meaning to education. They turn learning from memorization into experience — something students can feel, create, and remember. When teachers integrate art into lessons, they open the door to imagination, empathy, and deep understanding. Such learning stays longer because it connects both heart and mind. Art makes education holistic, joyful, and human — shaping learners who think creatively and live thoughtfully.

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Conceptual Article

## Role of Regular Exercise and Yoga in Managing Occupational Stress among Teachers

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### Abstract

Occupational stress is a prevalent issue among teachers, affecting their physical health, mental well-being, emotional balance, and overall job performance. The profession demands constant multitasking, emotional engagement, and effective interaction with students, colleagues, and school management. These pressures often lead to burnout, fatigue, and diminished job satisfaction. This study examines how regular physical exercise and yoga can serve as effective tools to manage and reduce occupational stress among teachers. Physical activity, including aerobic exercises, is shown to enhance cardiovascular fitness, increase energy levels, and stimulate endorphin production, which collectively alleviate physical symptoms of stress. Yoga, incorporating asanas (postures), pranayama (breath control), and meditation, promotes mental clarity, emotional regulation, and inner calm—skills essential for coping with the challenges of the teaching profession. Drawing on a review of current research and observational evidence, this study highlights the significant improvements in emotional stability, stress tolerance, and interpersonal relationships among teachers who regularly practice exercise and yoga. Participants reported greater patience, improved communication with students and peers, and a stronger sense of professional fulfillment. The findings support the integration of structured wellness programs into schools, emphasizing the dual benefits of physical and mental rejuvenation. Encouraging educators to adopt these practices not only enhances individual health but also contributes to a more balanced, resilient, and productive educational environment.

**Keywords:** Occupational stress, teachers, physical exercise, yoga, mental well-being, emotional balance, wellness programs, educator health

## Introduction

The teaching profession is widely acknowledged as one of the most demanding and emotionally taxing occupations. Unlike many other professions, teaching entails a combination of cognitive, emotional, and physical responsibilities. Teachers not only deliver academic content but also nurture student development, manage classroom dynamics, communicate with parents, and meet institutional expectations. These responsibilities often extend beyond standard working hours, resulting in prolonged stress and reduced personal time.

Occupational stress in the education sector arises from various factors, including workload pressure, student behavior issues, curriculum demands, administrative tasks, role ambiguity, and lack of institutional support. Over time, these stressors can contribute to burnout—a state of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment. Burnout among teachers has far-reaching consequences, not only affecting their physical and psychological health but also undermining the quality of education they provide.

Chronic stress, if unaddressed, may lead to numerous health issues such as hypertension, cardiovascular disease, digestive disorders, insomnia, anxiety, and depression. Furthermore, teachers under stress may struggle with irritability, disengagement, and interpersonal conflicts, both at work and at home. The cumulative impact of stress can erode a teacher's motivation, creativity, and effectiveness in the classroom. Among the various strategies available, physical exercise and yoga have emerged as highly effective, evidence-based practices for stress management and overall well-being. These interventions are not only cost-effective but also adaptable to different physical abilities and time constraints. This paper aims to examine the role of physical exercise and yoga in managing occupational stress among teachers.

## Review of Related Literature

Research on stress management has increasingly focused on holistic and preventive approaches. **Kumar and Singh (2022)** integrated yoga and aerobic exercises into a single wellness program for teachers. Their findings suggested that this combination not only reduced stress but also improved emotional intelligence—a key factor in classroom management and

interpersonal communication. **Nagendra et al. (2021)** conducted a study titled *Yoga for Teachers: A Study on Stress Management*, which demonstrated significant reductions in perceived stress and anxiety levels among school teachers who participated in an eight-week structured yoga program. Participants reported improved concentration, emotional balance, and physical energy. **Sharma and Rani (2020)** examined the relationship between regular physical activity and symptoms of burnout among educators. Their research found that those who engaged in aerobic exercise three to five times per week reported lower levels of emotional exhaustion, increased vitality, and greater professional efficacy. **Ross and Thomas (2018)** provided a comparative review of yoga and traditional exercise programs, concluding that yoga often matched or exceeded the benefits of conventional exercise in improving mental health, particularly in reducing anxiety and enhancing mood. The findings of these studies collectively highlight a growing recognition of mind-body interventions in educational settings. They advocate for institutional support in promoting wellness programs that include yoga and physical activity as part of teacher development and workplace well-being strategies.

### **Types of Physical Activity, Exercise, and Yoga Practices**

To effectively manage occupational stress, teachers can incorporate a variety of physical and mind-body practices into their routines. These can be broadly categorized into physical activities, structured exercise routines, and yoga-based interventions.

**Physical Activities:** Physical activity encompasses any movement that increases energy expenditure and elevates heart rate. It need not be intense or strenuous to be beneficial. Consistent engagement in moderate physical activity can contribute significantly to stress relief.

- **Walking or Brisk Walking:** One of the simplest forms of physical activity, brisk walking for 30 minutes a day improves cardiovascular health, reduces mental fatigue, and clears the mind.
- **Jogging:** An accessible aerobic activity that enhances endurance and releases endorphins, which leads to a sense of calm and positivity.
- **Swimming:** A low-impact full-body workout that improves muscle tone, relieves joint stress, and promotes a meditative state due to rhythmic breathing.

- **Dance or Zumba:** Combining music and movement, dance-based workouts are enjoyable and effective for increasing physical activity and lifting mood.

**Exercise Routines:** Structured exercise programs provide more focused benefits. When combined with a proper routine, these exercises can significantly enhance both physical and mental health.

- **Strength Training:** Using resistance bands or light dumbbells can improve muscle strength, posture, and bone density—important for teachers who spend long hours standing.
- **Aerobic Workouts:** Activities such as cycling, skipping, or circuit training (lasting 20–40 minutes) improve cardiovascular efficiency, reduce body fat, and boost mental alertness.
- **Stretching and Flexibility Routines:** Regular stretching prevents stiffness, enhances mobility, and releases muscle tension built up due to prolonged sitting or standing during teaching.

**Yoga Practices:** Yoga is a comprehensive discipline that integrates physical postures (asanas), breath regulation (pranayama), and meditation. Unlike conventional exercise, yoga emphasizes inner awareness and holistic health.

- **Tadasana (Mountain Pose):** Improves posture, strengthens thighs and ankles, and brings awareness to body alignment.
- **Trikonasana (Triangle Pose):** Enhances flexibility in the spine and relieves backaches—a common complaint among teachers.
- **Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose):** Opens the chest, improves spinal strength, and combats fatigue and anxiety.
- **Balasana (Child’s Pose):** Encourages rest and deep breathing, relieving tension in the back and shoulders.
- **Shavasana (Corpse Pose):** Induces deep relaxation, reduces stress hormones, and calms the nervous system.

## Pranayama (Breathing Techniques)

- **Nadi Shodhana (Alternate Nostril Breathing):** Balances the nervous system and promotes mental clarity.
- **Bhramari (Humming Bee Breath):** Soothes the mind and reduces anger, agitation, and frustration.
- **Kapalabhati (Skull-Shining Breath):** Energizes the mind, detoxifies the body, and improves respiratory function.

## How to Practice

To derive maximum benefit, it is recommended to follow a structured routine:

- Practice **3 to 5 times per week**, with sessions lasting **30 to 60 minutes**.
- Start with **gentle warm-up exercises or stretches** to prepare the body.
- Follow a flow from **breathing (pranayama) → asanas (postures) → meditation**.
- Create a **quiet, clean, and well-ventilated space**, ideally practicing in the morning for better energy regulation throughout the day.
- Ensure that the practice is **adapted to individual health conditions**, preferably under professional guidance.

## Benefits of Exercise and Yoga for Teachers

Incorporating exercise and yoga into daily life provides multi-dimensional benefits, especially for educators who encounter unique stressors in their profession.

### A. Physical Health

- Improves cardiovascular fitness and muscular strength.
- Enhances stamina and energy levels, reducing the feeling of exhaustion after long teaching hours.
- Encourages better posture, thereby reducing musculoskeletal problems such as back pain and neck strain.
- Boosts immune function, reducing susceptibility to illness.

**B. Mental Health**

- Reduces symptoms of anxiety, depression, and mood swings.
- Enhances cognitive function, including memory, attention, and decision-making.
- Promotes better sleep, essential for restoring mental and physical health.
- Regulates the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, reducing cortisol levels and preventing chronic stress accumulation.

**C. Emotional Stability**

- Cultivates emotional awareness and regulation, critical for managing classroom situations and interpersonal dynamics.
- Improves patience, empathy, and optimism—essential traits for effective teaching.
- Increases self-esteem and resilience, helping teachers manage criticism and setbacks constructively.

**D. Workplace Relations**

- Encourages positive interactions with students, colleagues, and parents.
- Enhances communication skills, active listening, and empathy.
- Fosters a collaborative and supportive school environment by reducing irritability and emotional reactivity.

**E. Job Satisfaction and Professional Growth**

- Reduces absenteeism and the risk of burnout.
- Increases motivation, enthusiasm, and sense of purpose in teaching.
- Supports long-term career sustainability by promoting work-life balance and self-care.
- Inspires teachers to serve as role models for student wellness.

**Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative approach, relying on thematic analysis of secondary data obtained from a variety of credible sources. The methodology includes:

## Data Sources

- Peer-reviewed journal articles from 2015 to 2024 related to occupational stress, physical health, and wellness among teachers.
- Case studies and survey data from wellness programs implemented in educational institutions across India and abroad.
- Interviews and anecdotal reports from teachers who have adopted regular physical activity and yoga as part of their lifestyle.
- Expert insights from certified yoga instructors, physical trainers, and mental health professionals.

## Analytical Approach

The collected data were thematically analyzed to identify common stressors among teachers, the efficacy of exercise and yoga practices, and best practices for implementation. The findings were then categorized under the core themes discussed above, with supporting evidence cited from published research.

## Conclusion

The teaching profession, though noble and rewarding, is marked by unique occupational challenges that contribute to chronic stress and burnout. This paper has highlighted the growing concern over teacher well-being and emphasized the need for effective, sustainable solutions.

Physical exercise and yoga emerge as powerful tools to combat occupational stress, improve health outcomes, and foster emotional resilience. These practices not only mitigate the physical and psychological effects of stress but also enhance professional performance and job satisfaction. By investing in teacher wellness, educational institutions stand to benefit from more engaged, motivated, and healthy staff.

To maximize impact, it is crucial for schools and colleges to formally integrate wellness initiatives—such as yoga sessions, fitness programs, and mindfulness workshops—into their professional development and daily schedules. Future research may explore the role of digital yoga platforms, app-based meditation programs, and hybrid fitness models to reach a wider

population of educators. Ultimately, empowering teachers with the tools to care for their own well-being is a step toward nurturing a more resilient and compassionate education system.

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Conceptual Article

## The Role of NEP 2020 in Reshaping Pre-Service Teacher Education: A Policy-Practice Perspective

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### ABSTRACT

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) represents a landmark reform in India's education paradigm, signalling a transformational shift in preservice teacher education. The article examines the policy's major thrusts such as restructuring teacher preparation, emphasizing foundational pedagogies, promoting technology integration, and nurturing inclusive practices and analyses how these are being translated into practice. Drawing from the policy document, recent implementation reports, and emerging practices across teacher education institutions, the study assesses the successes, challenges, and prospects. Key findings reveal that while NEP 2020's comprehensive vision promises to elevate preservice teacher quality, systemic bottlenecks like faculty readiness, infrastructural constraints, curriculum redesign pace, and stakeholder alignment constraint effective realization. The paper offers strategic recommendations to close the gap between policy and practice, while recognizing NEP 2020's promise to shape a future where teacher education is dynamic, grounded in research, responsive to local contexts, and centred on equity.

**Keywords:** National Education Policy 2020, Perspective Teacher Education, Policy-Practice

### INTRODUCTION

Pre-service teacher education stands at the heart of educational transformation. It shapes the outlook, skills, and pedagogical efficacy of future teachers who, in turn, shape generations of learners. Recognizing this, the Government of India introduced the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) the first comprehensive education policy of the 21st

century to overhaul all education levels from foundational to higher education. A foundational pillar of NEP 2020 is its emphasis on revamping teacher education to ensure high-quality, equitable, and future-ready schooling across the nation. Historical models rooted in rote learning, rigid curricula, and theory-heavy programs have long constrained teacher readiness. NEP 2020 rejects such legacy structures, favouring integrated pedagogical studies, early clinical practice, critical reflection, and use of technology in both teaching and administration. The policy also underlines continuous professional development, autonomy of teacher education institutions, and alignment with global and local needs through research, diversity, and inclusive pedagogy. The article explores how NEP 2020 reimagines pre-service teacher education (policy), how these reforms are being implemented (practice), what challenges persist, and what strategic measures may help bridge the policy-practice divide.

## **NEP 2020: VISION AND PRINCIPLES FOR PRESERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION**

### **❖ Integrated Pathways & Holistic Pedagogy**

NEP 2020 proposes a four-year integrated Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree, replacing the traditional two-year model. This integrated model encourages embedding teacher preparation within broader undergraduate study, enabling deeper pedagogical grounding, subject mastery, and reflective practices across multiple disciplines.

### **❖ Foundational Pedagogies: Praktik and Reflective Practice**

NEP mandates early and continuous **clinical internships** in real classroom contexts. These experiential components—teaching under supervision, reflective journaling, peer collaboration—are essential to develop adaptive pedagogical judgement, “praktik” oriented skills, and context-specific strategies.

### **❖ Technology-Enabled Teacher Preparation**

With digital tools now indispensably woven into modern learning, NEP underscores technology integration: from using ICT in teaching methods courses, to providing access to digital content, to training preservice teachers in e-pedagogy, blended learning, and EdTech tools.

### ❖ **Continuous Professional Development and Licensure**

NEP envisages **Teacher Eligibility Tests (TETs)** integrating with continuous professional development checkpoints. An envisaged **professional regulatory framework** would ensure quality through accreditation, tracking, and teacher performance systems.

### ❖ **Inclusion, Equity, and Multilingualism**

Consistent with NEP's broader thrust on equity, pre-service curricula must infuse **inclusive education** training addressing needs of children with disabilities, regional and linguistic diversity, gender sensitivity, and socio-economic disparities.

### ❖ **Research, Autonomy, and Institutional Strengthening**

Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) under NEP 2020 are encouraged to gain autonomy in academic design, governance, and finances, while strengthening internal **research and innovation** capacity to inform practices, monitor outcomes, and adapt locally.

## **TRANSLATING POLICY INTO PRACTICE: EMERGING TRENDS**

### **1. Pilot Rollout of Integrated B.Ed. Programs**

Some universities and state governments have initiated the four-year integrated B.Ed., often in collaboration with National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE). These programs are structured to integrate subject knowledge with pedagogical, psychological, and sociocultural domains, rather than isolating them in discrete semesters.

### **2. Clinical Practice and Internships**

TEIs are establishing **school partnerships** to facilitate practicum. This includes extended school immersions, peer-teaching, microteaching laboratories, and lesson reflections though extent and quality vary across urban and rural settings.

### **3. ICT in Curriculum and Delivery**

Adoption of online platforms, digitized resources, simulation tools, and hybrid teaching approaches is rising especially post-pandemic. Some institutions offer modules in digital pedagogy, resource creation, and flipped classroom strategies; yet disparities exist in access to devices and connectivity, particularly in remote regions.

#### **4. Capacity Building and Faculty Development**

State education departments, SCERTs, and NCERT have begun orienting teacher educators in NEP 2020's new mandates. Workshops, MOOCs, and refresher courses target shifts in pedagogy, assessment, technology, and inclusion. However, these trainings are often **one-off and variable in depth**.

#### **5. Accreditation and Quality Assurance**

NCTE is working to revise its norms and standards to align with NEP's integrated B.Ed., promoting peer review, outcome-based evaluation, and performance metrics. Yet institutional **autonomy** and implementation timelines remain uneven.

#### **6. Inclusive and Multilingual Pedagogy**

Some TEIs now include modules on **multi-lingual education**, local languages, barrier-free instructional design, and sensitivity training for disabilities—especially in states promoting mother-tongue instruction. However, uniform coverage across the diverse nation is patchy.

### **STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN NEP 2020 IMPLEMENTATION IN PRESERVICE EDUCATION**

#### **1. Infrastructure Enhancement and Resource Mobilization**

Allocate grants to upgrade physical and digital infrastructure—model schools, pedagogy labs, EdTech studios, inclusive learning centers. Encourage PPPs (public–private partnerships) to augment resources where state capacities are limited.

#### **2. Sustained Faculty Development Ecosystem**

Design multi-tiered, ongoing professional learning programs for teacher educators—blending in-person workshops, peer observation, communities of practice, MOOC modules, and micro-credentials in pedagogy, inclusion, assessment, and technology.

#### **3. Curriculum Co-creation and Localization**

Promote participatory curriculum design—engaging faculty, schools, local communities and students. Emphasize locally relevant content—regional languages, community histories, and inclusive examples— alongside foundational pedagogical theories.

#### **4. Digital Equity Initiatives**

Distribute devices/tablets to pre-service cohorts from underserved backgrounds, subsidize affordable internet, build offline digital repositories, and train students in digital literacy to ensure equitable EdTech access. Use low-bandwidth tools adapted for remote contexts.

#### **5. Governance Alignment and Policy Synergy**

Foster joint task forces across NCTE, NCERT, UGC, state SCERTs, and university bodies to synchronize curriculum guidelines, accreditation norms, funding cycles, and evaluation frameworks. Set clear milestones and timelines for integrated B.Ed. rollout.

#### **6. Monitoring, Research, and Continuous Improvement**

Institutionalize feedback loops student performance tracking, graduate outcomes, employer satisfaction, mentor reports, community input. Establish research units in TEIs to conduct action research, document classroom innovations, assess interventions, and iterate practices.

#### **7. Promoting Equity and Inclusion**

Mandate dedicated credits in programs for disability studies, gender sensitivity, multilingual practice, and social equity. Facilitate field placements in diverse schools including those serving marginalized communities to deepen pre-service exposure.

### **CONCLUSION**

NEP 2020 sets forth a transformative vision for pre-service teacher education in India one rooted in integration, reflective practice, technology, inclusion, autonomy, and research. Its potential to elevate teaching standards and prepare adaptive, empathetic, and skilled educators is immense. However, success requires bridging distinct challenges from infrastructure deficiencies and faculty readiness to governance coordination and digital inequities. Achieving the envisioned outcomes demands not only policy clarity but also pragmatic, locally contextualized strategies, sustained investment, capacity building, and systemic alignment across institutions and stakeholders. If effectively enacted, NEP 2020 can catalyse a new generation of reflective, research-oriented, and inclusive teachers equipped to nurture India's diverse learners in the rapidly evolving educational landscape.

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