

Chapter 1

Teacher Education in India: An Overview



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Abstract Recently, India is encountering quick and sudden changes in teacher education. The one-year B.Ed. Program was converted into a two-year Program in 2015, and it was implemented abruptly and without much planning in the same year. While the stakeholders of teacher education are still busy in reflecting and debating the pros and cons of 2-year B.Ed. programme, NEP 2020 has declared that from 2030 the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) i.e the 4-Year Integrated B.Ed. Programme will be the lone teacher education programme in the country for preparing secondary education teachers. It appears that teacher education is in the midst of a significant transformation. Teacher educators, pupil-teachers, and all other stakeholders are unsure what will happen and, if implemented, how it will be carried out in B.Ed. colleges and universities' departments of teacher education. The vision and mission of teacher education, which directs and decides the fate of school education, must be crystal clear. This chapter attempts to revisit the development of teacher education in India, analyses current challenges, the prevailing curriculum framework, eligibility criteria for teacher educators, and forecasts some possible solutions to the issues and challenges confronting teacher education in the country.

Keywords Teacher education · NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) · ITEP (Integrated Teacher Education Programme) · School education

Background

The programmes of teacher education have been constantly molding to suit the present needs of the Indian education system and also to meet the global demands in the globalized world of the present time. When looking at the history of teacher education in India, it can be studied in two phases. In the first phase, we can study the

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development of teacher education in India during the pre-independence, beginning from the ancient education system to 1947. In the second phase, we can look into the history of the development of teacher education in India from 1947 to till date. The development and progress of any country totally depends upon the quality of its education system, which in turn depends upon the quality of its teachers. And for this reason, education in general and teacher education in particular needs special attention from the government, as it prepares teachers to run the school education and on whom the quality of teaching-learning depends at large. The National Policy on Education 1986 also emphasizes on the roles and importance of teachers in our society by mentioning “The status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society; it is said that no people can rise above the level of its teachers”. Rabindra Nath Tagore, the founder of Vishwa Bharti University and one of the greatest naturalists has emphasized the need of in-service training of teachers to update them for effective teaching duties in these words, “A teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame.” The profession of teaching has been one of the oldest and respected since ancient time and across the globe. Teachers’ roles, functions, competence, and professional training have been constantly changing from time to time depending upon the new demands of the society in general and education system in particular. This chapter attempt to analyse and elaborate the development and progress of teacher education in India since ancient to the present.

Teacher Education in India Through the Ages

For the purpose of a systematic and comparative view, the history of teacher education in India may be divided into five phases. These are: (i) Pre-Buddhist Ancient period (2500 B.C. to 500 B.C.), (ii) Buddhist Period (500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.), (iii) Muslim Period (1200 A.D. to 1700 A.D.), (iv) British Period (1700 A.D. to 1947 A.D.), and (v) Teacher education in independent India (1947 to till date).

Pre-Buddhist Ancient Period (2500 B.C. to 500 B.C.): During this period the education system, teaching and learning was based around Vedic literatures. The four Vedas were the main source of curriculum, content and process of education. There were four classes in the society namely Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vasyas and the Shudras. Previously, Brahmins served as community teachers, dedicated to acquiring, preserving, promoting and transmitting knowledge from generation to generation. As education was allowed only to Brahmins, so teachers and students both were Brahmins. In the Vedic period, teachers enjoyed a special status and position in the society. They were highly revered, respected and were enjoying the highest position in the social strata. Teachers were held in high esteem by the society owing to their learning and scholarship and also due to the sacred position of Brahmins as per the Vedic literature, which was the source of governance of the society. Teachers were called ‘Gurus’ and were an embodiment of good qualities, a fountain of knowledge

and an abode of spirituality. Teachers of high positions were known as ‘Rishis’ and all rishis were to impart the knowledge from the scriptures, which includes Vedas, Shruti and Smirti.

The children used to go to their ashrams (seat of learning/present day school) to get education. *Good students reflecting desired values were chosen and groomed by the Rishi to become a teacher in future after completing their education. The selection and preparation of teachers was done with a lot of rigor. There was a close proximity between the teacher and the pupils.* The ‘Mahabharata’ tells us about the numerous hermitages or students from far and wide flocked to get learning and instructions from famous teachers. Teaching of Upanishads was also done for the dissemination and diffusion of knowledge. Such an education system prevailed and continued till the Buddhist period (500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.).

According to Manu, the son of the teacher sometimes used to teach in place of his father. During this period individual or personal attention was given to every child. ‘Gurukula’ system prevailed in which there was an intimate relationship between the ‘Guru’-teacher’ and ‘Shishya’—pupil. The teacher was placed in the highest position in the society. Teachers were teaching with great faith and responsibility. It was the teacher or Guru who used to decide the curriculum, which was totally based on scriptures like Vedas, Upanishads, Manu Smirti etc. The system of discipline was highly strict and imposed by the guru to mold the personality of the learners into the right direction. Those breaking the set discipline repeatedly were de-registered from the Gurukula. The knowledge of reasoning, literature, astronomy, arithmetic and arms were provided to the pupils in Gurukula. A glimpse of such a system of education may be seen in the Bollywood film titled as ‘Mohabbatein’.

The literatures of this period do not indicate the establishment of any specialized institution of teacher training or teacher education. The selection of teachers was generally done by the Gurus or Rishis of the Gurukula and the society depending upon the academic achievements and values practiced by the individual.

Buddhist Period (500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.)

The formalized system of teachers’ training seems to have emerged during this period in the form of mentoring by the seniors. There were monks in the Buddhist era, generally known as ‘Bhikku’ who were placed under the mentorship of superiors, qualified persons called ‘Upadhyaya’. Hence, ‘Upadhyaya’ may be seen as a trainer and ‘Bhikku’ as trainees. This period is considered as strict in training of teachers which produced outstanding and hardworking teachers.

The monks were responsible for imparting education and training to pupils in monasteries. These monks were given formal teacher education and training to teach students. In the monastic system, every newly admitted novice (pupil) was placed under the supervision and guidance of a preceptor (Upadhyaya). Right to choose the upadhyaya was given to all students, and all pupils used to show their guru/upadhyaya

the utmost care and respect. The upadhyaya (teacher), on his part, had much responsibility to the novice (pupil). He has to look after the disciple fully. The basis of education was religion and scriptures. Teachers were supposed to promote learning in religion and scriptures among the disciples by teaching, by putting questions to him, by exhortation, by instruction, by oral recitation, by exposition, through debate and discussion, question–answer and by the use of stories and parables. During this period Nalanda and Takshila were the centers for higher education in India.

Muslim Period/The Medieval Period (1200 A.D. to 1700 A.D.)

The medieval or the Muslim period begins with the establishment of Delhi Sultanate followed by Mughal dynasties in India. During this period education was given in Maktabas and Madrasas by the teachers known as Molvis. Basic and elementary education was given at Maktabas whereas Madrasas were the seats of higher education. There was no formal system of teacher education or teacher training during this period.

According to the holy Quran, earning education is a duty of all human beings, not for Muslims only. Having faith in the first revealed verse of the holy Quran regarding education, is held in high esteem by the Muslim countries and by Muslim rulers. Education was public affairs in Muslim ruled lands. The Muslim rulers in India founded Maktabas (schools), Madrasas (colleges) and public libraries in their provinces. Maktabas were normally attached to the mosques wherein students were given basic education. The students were given instructions in the holy Quran. Along with the teachings of Quran, they were also trained in recitation, reading, writing and simple arithmetic. The medium of Instruction was Persian and Arabic was compulsory for all students.

The method of teaching was oral instructions, may be called as present days lecture method. Students were instructed and encouraged to consult more and more books. Practical and field works were also conducted in subjects like medicine. Analytical and inductive approach was also used in teaching–learning process.

Senior students having command on the subject, good communication and with proven skills and values were deputed to teach lower classes. Such senior students were generally inducted to the teaching profession at the end of their own education. Hence, like the ancient period during the medieval period too, the monitorial system was in practice for the preparation of prospective teachers. No separate institution was established for teacher education or training.

British Period (1700 A.D. to 1947 A.D.)

The history of teacher education in India began with the establishment of the British government in the country. The East India Company (British Government in India) constantly tried to modify the then existing system of education in India according to their own needs, aspirations and philosophy. Advanced system of education was incorporated. As English language is a foreign language for Indian teachers, so teacher education was originally intended to train Indian teachers in English language. It was formally started by several private institutions and societies such as the Native Education Society, the Calcutta School Society and the Madras School Society during the last decade of the eighteenth and early decades of the nineteenth century.

Teachers' Training Schools (1793): At Serampore in Bengal, India, the first formal teacher's training school was established. **Carey, Marshman, and Ward** established it in **1793** under the name "Normal School". Thereafter, for the improvement in teaching at Primary school the Native Education Society of Bombay also trained a number of teachers. The Calcutta School Society of Bengal pioneered teacher training work for native schools. For women teachers, the Ladies Society of Calcutta initiated a teachers' training class in the Calcutta Central School for Girls.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, a number of government teachers' training schools were also set up. Grants-in-aid were given to these training schools to train their teachers (NCTE, 1998, cited from 'National Archives of India, Educational Records, 1781–1839, Part 1, Chap. III, 1965'). Lord Moira's Minute on the judicial administration of the Presidency of Fort William from 1815, which supported the training requirements of school teachers, is the earliest evidence of state initiatives in teacher education (NCTE, 1998, cited from 'National Archives of India, Educational Records, 1781–1839, Part 1, Chap. III, 1965'). In 1826, the then Governor, Thomas Munro proposed to open school for teacher education, based on the recommendation given by the Committee of Madras School Book Society on 25th October 1824. The purpose was to expand school education system with low cost by utilizing 'native teachers'. He also proposed that training schools be established in each collectorate to ensure a steady supply of trained teachers. During this time, the Secretary of the Bombay Presidency made a similar request. All these initiatives resulted in funding for teacher education for the three private societies mentioned above. (Moira, Minute 1815 in *ibid*, p. 25).

Wood's Despatch (1854): The Wood's Despatch, popularly known as Magna Charta of English Education in India, recommended some significant suggestions to improve teacher education in India. It proposed that allowances be provided to persons who have an aptitude for teaching and are ready to dedicate themselves for the profession of teaching. The Despatch advocated for the development of training schools in India, as well as the implementation of the pupil-teacher system in teacher training schools on the lines of the system prevalent in England. It also urged for stipends for pupil-teachers and a little payment to the masters of the school to which pupil-teachers were

assigned. They were awarded certificates and offered employment after successfully completing their training. After Wood's Despatch, normal schools were founded in each Presidency, beginning with Madras, to train primary school teachers (1856). All trainees were given stipends in all the three Presidencies.

Lord Stanley's Despatch (1859): Secretary of State for India, Lord Stanley, highly stressed on the training of teachers. He discouraged the convention of procuring teachers from England and put emphasis on the training of teachers locally for vernacular schools. The new grant-in-aid rules of 1859 mentioned that teachers with a certificate of teacher training should receive salary grants from schools. This policy gave impetus to the teachers' training programme in British India. By 1881–82, there were 106 normal schools (for training primary school teachers), with a total enrollment of 3886 students. It had 15 institutions that were solely for women. Training classes for secondary school teachers were added to (i) the Government Normal School in Madras (1856) and (ii) the Central Training School in Lahore (1877). For preparing secondary school teachers, the first training college was established in 1886 at Saidapet in Madras. In 1889, the Nagpur Training School's Secondary Department was established. There were just six secondary school teacher training colleges in India at the end of the nineteenth century.

The Indian Education Commission/the Hunter Commission (1882): Having observed the expansion and diversification of the education system in India, the Indian Education Commission (1882), given some concrete suggestions for boosting teacher education in India. The commission authorized elementary and secondary school teacher training programmes and recommended that a separate secondary school teacher training programme with examinations in teaching principles and practices be established. Passing this exam was made a requirement for permanent employment as a teacher in any government or aided secondary school (NCTE, 1998, cited from 'National Archives of India, Educational Records, 1781–1839, Part I, Chap. III, 1965'). As a result, for the first time, six independent training colleges were formed, one each in Allahabad, Jabalpur (founded in 1890), Kurseong, Lahore, Madras (founded in 1886), and Rajamundry (established in 1894). At the end of the training programme, these colleges used to offer a Licentiate in Teaching (LT), which was equivalent to a degree. There were 50 more training schools for secondary school teachers in addition to these six training colleges. By the end of the nineteenth century, the institutional framework of teacher education had diversified into normal schools, secondary training schools, and training colleges, all of which were run by both the state and private sector. As a result, teacher education became a significant structural set up in India.

Government of India Resolution on Education Policy (1904): Lord Curzon, India's new Viceroy (1902–05), took numerous significant initiatives to improve educational quality around the turn of the twentieth century. He passed 'Government of India Resolution of 1904' in which he expressed his concerns on quality education. For the first time, the resolution established standards for schools to receive grants and recognition, including the suitability of school teachers with regard to their qualifications,

number and character. It gave some significant recommendations to training colleges and schools in order to improve training quality and teaching–learning quality.

(a) **Training Colleges:** The resolution pronounced that the teachers should be trained in the art of teaching in order to improve Secondary Education. Following general principles of functioning of the training colleges were implemented for bringing quality in training and improving school education in general:

- Training colleges must have all of the necessary equipment.
- The training course for graduates must last one year, and the training course for undergraduates should last two years.
- Training courses must include theory and practice of teaching and must be closely linked with each other.
- To fulfill the above recommendations, one practicing school must be linked to each training college.
- To make sure pupil-teacher when start their career in school after leaving college will not neglect practice of the method which they have been taught, there must be a good linkage between training college and school.
- The course would culminate in a university degree or diploma.

(b) **Training Schools:** Establishing of more training schools especially in Bengal was recommended by the resolution of 1904. The majority of normal schools were boarding schools where students with vernacular education were admitted for training and stipends were provided. In addition to general education, they were given training in the methods of teaching and practice in teaching. Hence theory and practice of teaching were going side by side. The resolution recommended a minimum course of two years. The course was designed mainly to prepare teachers for rural schools.

The Government of India Resolution on Education Policy (1913): In 1913, through a Resolution on Education Policy, it was professed that “.....under the modern system of education no teacher should be allowed to teach without a certificate that he is qualified to do so” (Sir Thomas Munro’s Proposal, Point 5, March 10, 1826, in *ibid.* p. 74). The resolution proposed that (i) teachers be chosen from the class (society/community) of the students they will teach, (ii) teachers chosen must have passed the middle vernacular exams, and that (iii) they have completed a year of training. It suggested periodical revision of the course structure developed for the training of teachers. The resolution also urged that training college staff members exchange ideas on a regular basis and that they visit different teacher training colleges.

Calcutta University Commission (1917–19): Under the chairmanship of Dr. Sadler the Calcutta University Commission was established, which suggested that the University of Dacca and Calcutta establish a Department of Education and that ‘Education’ be added as an optional subject at the Intermediate, Undergraduate (B.A.), and Postgraduate (M.A.) levels. The Sadler Commission’s recommendations had a positive impact on teacher education programmes in India. In 1925, Mysore University established the Faculty of Education.

Non-cooperation Movement (1920–22) and its impact on Indian Education

System: The 1920–22 non-cooperation movement resulted in a slight rise in the number of educational institutions in the country. Based on the concept of a national education system, a considerable number of indigenous nationalist learning institutions were established. The expanding scale and resurgence of a parallel national education system, as well as the diminishing quality of education, disturbed the British government.

Several national institutions were established as a result of the Swadeshi Movement, which began as a protest to Bengal's partition in 1905, and Gandhi Ji's Non-cooperation Movement (1920–22). Jamia Millia Islamia, now a Central University in New Delhi, is an example. It was founded in 1920 at Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, by some of the students and faculty who supported Gandhi Ji's call; they left Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and established Jamia Millia Islamia inside the AMU campus. Later, in 1925, it was relocated to Karol Bagh (New Delhi) and from Karol Bagh to the present location, Okhla (New Delhi) in 1936. In 1937, Gandhi Ji convened a Basic Education Conference in Wardha (Maharashtra) and discussed his concept of indigenous basic education. He explained that Basic Education must be craft-based education which provided training in various crafts along with primary education to children, so students could begin their livelihood after finishing school. The concept of basic education was widely supported, but the key concern was how and who would train teachers for such schools. Dr. Zakir Husain, the then Principal of Jamia School, accepted the challenge, and Jamia Millia Islamia began Teachers Training for Basic Education in 1938, in its newly established Teachers College. In addition to Jamia Millia Islamia, work-based experiential training was provided in Wardha (Maharashtra) and Gandhi gram (Tamil Nadu). This was most likely the first attempt, via 'Buniyadi Shiksha' as 'Nai Taleem,' to streamline indigenous education toward nation building and social reconstruction of India. The primary goal of 'basic education' was the 'all-round development of children,' the development of secular values, nation-building leading to the development of nationalism, the use of the child's immediate environment and work as a source of knowledge, the integration of knowledge and work, the provision of experiential learning, and the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction and learning.

Teacher education was acknowledged as a requirement for all levels of school education by the time of independence. It was now necessary to give it a more structured shape and make it more effective in producing skilled teachers in order to improve the quality of school education.

The Hartog Committee (1929): Owing to the non-cooperation movement and the opening up of a large number of indigenous schools and colleges in the country, the British government was alarmed. They were not ready to see such mushrooming of schools and colleges and that too with low quality. In 1929 Hartog Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Sir. Phillip Hartog, to look into the matter and to come up with the relevant suggestions. The Committee was formed primarily to investigate primary education, but it also provided broad suggestions for teacher education. It proposed that teachers for rural schools be chosen from among eligible people

who were close to rural society. This committee offered the following suggestions for primary school teacher training:

- (i) The duration of the training programme must be extended.
- (ii) There must be provision of adequate staffing for training institutions.
- (iii) To attract and retain better quality teachers, the quality of service conditions of primary school teachers must be improved.

On the basis of these recommendations, an in-service education programme for primary school teachers was established and time durations for different teacher training programmes was specified, which were adopted by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) in 1943. These were Pre-primary teachers (2 years), Junior basic (Primary) teachers (2 years), Senior basic (middle) teachers (3 years), Non-graduates in high school (2 year), and Graduates in high schools (1 year).

The Abbott-Wood Report (1937): This significant report in the realm of education was submitted in 1937. It largely examined the state of vocational education but also gave useful recommendations for teacher education. The report recommended that the duration of teacher training should be 3 years enabling the aspirants to continue with general education along with professional training of teachers (equivalent to present day integrated courses in teacher education). It further suggested a refresher course (equivalent to present in-service programmes) for the teachers so that they could get a wider experience and update their knowledge and skills.

The Sargent Report/Sargent Plan (1944): Following the Quit India Movement (1942), the British government established the Sargent Committee in 1944, which proposed the following recommendations on teacher education:

- (i) The committee approved the time duration of the different training programmes as recommended by Hartog Committee and approved by CABE.
- (ii) During the last two years of high school, suitable students for teaching jobs should be identified and recruited, and stipends for teacher training should be provided.
- (iii) Refresher courses should be held to offer regular teachers with in-service training.
- (iv) Teachers should have access to research facilities, and
- (v) Teaching practice should be improved.

Teacher Education in India After Independence

India's biggest challenge after gaining independence in 1947 was to enhance the country's indigenous education system. Education has the potential to bring about the required improvements in citizens' lives through social reconstruction. At that time, the three major goals were to expand pre-service teacher education, develop supplemental routes for clearing the backlog of untrained teachers, and stabilize and expand in-service teacher education. The expansion of pre-service teacher education

was admirable. From just 10 secondary teacher training colleges in 1948 to 50 in 1965, 633 in 1995, and 16,917 in 2023 (Source: <https://www.ncte.gov.in/website/statewiseTEI.aspx>, retrieved on 19.2.2023). The development of teacher education in the post-independent era may be analyzed and understood under the following heads:

University Education Commission (1948–49): The University Education Commission (1948–49) stated that the school experience programme, i.e. teaching practice, was given insufficient time and weightage. The commission declared school teaching to be inadequate. It was proposed that at least 12 weeks of supervised school teaching practice be included in a year's course, and that supervisors' attendance should not be expected throughout the 12 weeks. The commission also suggested that training colleges not admit too many students for whom they cannot provide adequate school teaching practice. It also proposed that teacher education programmes be flexible and adaptive to local conditions.

Secondary Education Commission (1952–53): The Secondary Education Commission (1952–53) proposed the following major recommendations in order to improve teacher education quality:

- (i) The minimal requirement for entry to the Primary Teacher Training Programme should be a High School diploma, and the training should last two years.
- (ii) The minimum eligibility criteria to become secondary school teachers must be undergraduate and training should last one year, with the possibility of being expanded to two years as long-term measures.
- (iii) A four-year integrated model of teacher education could be used as a novel experiment in RIEs (Regional Institute of Education) of NCERT (National Council for Educational Research and Training) to provide multipurpose orientation to school education.

The commission also proposed that graduate teachers be trained in at least two pedagogical subjects taught at the school level during their one year of training. The internship programme, or practical training, should include not only teaching practice, class observation, demonstration and criticism lessons, but also the development and administration of scholastic tests, the organization of supervised study and student societies, the conduct of library periods, and the maintenance of cumulative records.

In the light of the recommendation of SEC-1952–53 (iii-above), Kurukshetra University established the four-year integrated programme in July 1960 on the advice of Dr. A. C. Joshi, then-Vice Chancellor of Punjab University. This scheme was developed following the pattern of American Teachers College with an aim to generate 'quality teachers'. To inspire these bright and promising students, good incentives such as tuition fee exemption, monthly stipend granting, and certainty of service once training ended were provided. Later, in 1963, it was implemented at all four RIEs, and it is still in operational today.

Ford Foundation Team (1954): In 1954, the Government of India established an international team of eight experts, in collaboration with the Ford Foundation, to analyse in greater detail the significant recommendations of the Secondary Education Commission and to suggest future courses of action to strengthen teacher education. After studying, the team proposed that training institutions arrange and execute demonstrations at laboratory schools where curriculum construction experiments and progressive teaching approaches are examined for their impact on teaching, learning, and student achievement.

Education Commission (1964–66) and National Policy on Education (1968): The Indian Education Commission, widely known as the ‘Kothari Commission,’ advocated the establishment of supplemental routes to clear the backlog and train the enormous number of untrained teachers. Summer courses, part-time courses, correspondence-cum-contact courses, and vacation courses were established as a result. The issue of sustaining quality in teacher education occurred. An intentional attempt was made to bring all teacher educators together for more intensive attention at all levels of teacher education programmes. The commission’s recommendation (1964–66) to establish comprehensive colleges of education was a significant step in this direction.

Establishment of National Council for Teacher Education (1973): The Government of India founded the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in 1973 as an advisory body to the government at the Center and the State on teacher education issues. It looks after and accredits teacher education colleges in the country. Its main purpose has been to maintain the quality of teachers produced in India for school education system. In these efforts, NCTE brought National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) in 1978, 1988, 1998 and in 2009, the last one which came out with a specific term of producing humane teacher. Every time it came after the announcement of National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) with a purpose to modify the existing teacher education curriculum so that it may suit to the new school education curriculum and objectives may be achieved through the preparation of teachers with needed quality and skills. (*For details on NCFTEs, refer Chapter-6 of this book*).

National Commission on Teachers (1983–85): The Government of India appointed a commission in 1983, chaired by Prof. D. P. Chattopadhyay, to study and guide the government on educational concerns. The commission submitted its report in 1985. With regard to improvement in the quality of teacher education, it recommended some important aspects to be taken care of while inducting the best talent into the teaching profession and to improve teacher education. These aspects were good physique, linguistic ability and communication skills, a fair degree of general mental ability, general awareness of the world, a positive outlook on life, and quality of candidates on good human relations (Rao, 1998, pp. 209). The commission also recommended that the selection process should consist of a combination of objective type test, rating scale, group discussion and personal interview. The commission also recommended that the curriculum for the preparation of professionals in teaching

should have (i) study of education as a discipline with educational psychology, educational philosophy and sociology of education, (ii) practice teaching based on content-cum-methodology, (iii) learning of a variety of skills required by the teachers including educational technology and development and use of educational software. The commission also suggested a four-year training course after senior secondary, or, a five-year course leading to graduation and teacher training together.

The National Policy on Education (NPE-1986): Based on the research studies conducted by the government and the recommendations of Chattopadhyay commission, the government came out with the National Policy on Education 1986. It was a comprehensive policy touching every level and aspects of the Indian Education system. With regard to teacher education, the policy opined that teacher education is a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components are inseparable. The Policy and accompanying Programme of Action (1992) made a strong suggestion to improve teacher education since it was regarded to be a necessity for enhancing school education quality. The policy recommended that (i) District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) be established in each district, (ii) 250 colleges of education be upgraded to Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs), (iii) 50 Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs) be established, and (iv) the State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) be strengthened.

The National Policy on Education (1986) and its Programme of Action (1992) asserts, “The status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society; it is said that no people can rise above the level of the teachers”. With this insight, the committee extend the idea that education in general and teacher education in specific needed the highest priority by the government in terms of fare recruitment and selection of teachers, expenditure on education, educational process, assessment and placement of the pupil-teachers. Teacher education and the school education system should not be threatened, and they should not be managed and organised by persons of low calibre, low morale, and no vision.

The Acharya Ramamurthi Committee (1990): A committee was appointed to review the NPE-1986 by the government under the chairmanship of Acharya Ramamurthi. It proposed in its observation report that an internship model for teacher training be implemented because “.....the internship model is firmly based on the primary value of actual field experience in a realistic situation, on the development of teaching skills by practice over a period of time.” The committee also proposed that in-service programmes i.e. refresher courses for updating the knowledge and skills of in-service teachers should be according to the individual requirements of teachers, and that evaluation and follow-up should be included as a part of these programmes.

Yashpal Committee (1993): The Yashpal committee pointed out that the inadequate Programme of teacher preparation leads to unsatisfactory quality of learning in schools. Based on the recommendations of this committee the general B.Ed. programme was split to provide specialized training in B.Ed. (Secondary), B.Ed. (Elementary) and B.Ed. (Nursery). The committee suggested the duration of B.Ed. programme of 1 year after graduation and 4 years after higher secondary. The

curriculum was restructured to ensure its relevance to the changing needs of the school education. Much emphasis was given on the acquisition of the ability and skills for self-learning, independent thinking and teaching skills of the trainees. At the end of 1998–99, there were 45 DIETs, 76 CTEs, and 34 IASEs in the country. The statutory body regulating teacher education (NCTE) came out with a Curriculum Framework-1998 to provide guidelines for restructuring teacher education for qualitative improvement. As a result, many universities and state governments revised the courses of teacher education.

Justice Verma Committee (2012): Due to the country's deteriorating teacher education standards, the Justice Verma Committee (JVC) was constituted, and its report titled "Vision of Teacher Education in India: Quality and Regulatory Perspective" was submitted in August 2012. It proposed several reforms to ensure the planned and coordinated development of teacher education in India. Among the most important recommendations were:

- The government must increase its funding in teacher education institutions.
- The institutional capacity for teacher training must be enhanced, particularly in deficit areas such as the country's eastern and north-eastern states.
- Teacher education should be integrated into the higher education system.
- As per the Kothari commission (1964–66) recommendation, the duration of the teacher education programme must be extended.
- Each pre-service teacher education institution should have a designated school that serves as a laboratory for pupil-teachers to observe, experiment, discover new ideas, reflect, and refine their abilities in order to become reflective practitioners.

NCTE Regulations 2014 and Some Pertinent Issues

During the last quarter of 2014, NCTE came out with its New NCTE Regulations 2014, through which B.Ed. and M.Ed. was transformed into a two years programme. All Indian universities were engaged to design their two-year B.Ed. and two-year M.Ed. curriculum within a short span of time to implement them in the session 2015–2016. This way the long pending and needed step was taken in the field of teacher education with the purpose of bringing qualitative improvement in teacher education to prepare quality teachers to further improve school education in general.

Uniformity in 'Teacher Education Curriculum'

Curriculum and course structure differ amongst universities. Some universities provide it on a yearly basis mode (2-year course), while others offer it on a semester basis (4 Semester Course). NCTE may strictly set the criteria for running the course either annual basis or semester basis, and all universities should adhere to them.

NCTE has developed a model Course of Study or Syllabus for several teacher education programmes such as B.Ed., M.Ed., D. El. Ed. and so on. These are suggestive in nature and are not binding on the universities and colleges of teacher education to follow as it is. They are free to develop their own curriculum based on this model curriculum. If NCTE would have provided the core component whose inclusion would have been necessary and the others were just suggestive in nature, it would have aided in achieving a better degree of curriculum uniformity. In this regard, the RCI (Rehabilitation Council of India) curriculum framework for B.Ed. Special Education and M.Ed. Special Education is worth noting, as the complete curriculum is designed and provided by the RCI. Special education universities and colleges are required to follow and implement them. In B.Ed. and D. El. Ed., various universities and SCERTs have varying numbers and combinations of core, pedagogy, and elective courses in different semesters/years, reflecting a wide range of variation in the curriculum, course structure, course focus, nature and extent of field work, etc. The provision of courses and the evaluation of theory papers also says volumes about the lack of uniformity in teacher education curriculum and its transaction. The number of papers recommended ranges from 7 to 23, with evaluation weightages ranging from 1450 to 4000 points and internal assessment of obligatory papers ranging from 20 to 50 to 100%. The NCTE only fixed 1350 marks for the two-year B.Ed. course (NCTE Regulation, 2014) in its model curriculum.

Duration of the Course

Since 2015, D.El.Ed., B.Ed., and M.Ed. have all been transformed into two-year programmes. D.El.Ed. is a diploma; B.Ed. is an undergraduate and M.Ed. is a post-graduate course. We must consider the logic behind the identical duration of all courses. To make it more justified, the duration of courses should vary throughout all three levels.

Previous commissions and committees advocated increasing course duration. Based on these recommendations, NCTE made it a two-year programme with effect from the session 2015. It was implemented on an immediate basis and the universities were given no choice but to comply.

The first batch of two-year B.Ed. and M.Ed. passed in 2017. Teacher educators, teacher education colleges, schools offering school internship programmes to student-teachers, and other stakeholders are in a bind. Most self-financed/private institutions are unable to fill even their most basic seats. Colleges are forced to operate B.Ed. courses in understaffed conditions due to poor revenue from low admittance. In other circumstances, only two teachers are teaching all of the papers, and only 19 students are admitted out of 50 available seats. This is a common occurrence.

Theory Components: Past and Present

There were core papers in the former teacher education curriculum to build and develop prospective teachers' grasp of the three main roots of education-educational psychology, educational philosophy, and educational sociology. The key papers have been diluted in the current curriculum. There is no core paper that is solely founded on psychological, philosophical, or social foundations. All of them have been blended, allowing teacher educators with no specific training in these areas to be assigned to teach these papers. Educational foundations must be considered. The core papers should be retained intact and should have a strong foundation in the three disciplines mentioned above.

Language Across Curriculum

'Language across Curriculum' is a key theory paper introduced in the two-year B.Ed. curriculum that has been in place since 2015. The philosophy underlying the introduction of this paper, as envisioned by the NCTE Curriculum Framework and Curriculum Design Committee, 2014, is to help pupil teachers understand language in general, as well as language of all school teaching subjects such as language of Science, language of Maths, language of History, and so on. This paper is generally allotted to language teachers, and the professors who teach it believe they are not doing the subject justice. They, too, are unable to comprehend what they are meant to teach. In this paper, they generally teach language education and other aspects of language teaching. The very fundamental objectives of introducing this paper are most likely not fulfilled.

For the appointment of teachers in all subject areas, we have general and specific requirements. The qualifications for teaching this course have not been determined. A teacher of a single language or subject is unlikely to be able to teach or do justice to this paper. The circumstance revealed that the choice was made in haste, and it is leading to additional confusion, weakening rather than boosting teacher preparation programmes.

Gender and Society

In 2015, a new paper titled 'Gender and Society' was introduced. Previously, the subject content of this paper was taught in one of the core papers which was designated as 'Sociological and Philosophical Foundations of Education'. It should have been integrated as the core value in every paper, but instead a new paper was created, which not only loaded the curriculum, but also offered the possibility of overlapping

the information in multiple papers. It should be taught, deliberated on, and addressed as a key component of every paper in an integrated manner.

Internship Programme: Then and Now

The one-year B.Ed. had one-month's School Experience Programme (SEP). The two-year B.Ed. has a provision of five months (twenty weeks) School Internship Programme (SIP); four weeks of school observation in Ist Year and sixteen weeks SIP in the IInd Year. Previously, the ratio of programme duration to SEP duration was 12:1. (in terms of months). This ratio in two-year B.Ed. is now 24:5, or approximately 5:1. Hence the weightage of SIP duration has increased by nearly 250%. Furthermore, the practical concerns of the availability of schools for SIP were not taken into account. It would have been preferable if NCTE had included the DOE (Directorate of Education) of each state as a party to this reform and finalized this component in collaboration with them. It would have made the process of getting schools for school internship programmes easier. Schools should also be provided clear guidance on their roles in SIP, which must be supervised by higher-ups in the school education system. After all, these teachers are being trained to work at these schools in the future. The more they coordinate and guide the pupil-teachers, the better teachers they will be when they enter the system.

There is also no regularity in the administration of the school internship programme. Some do it in the second semester, some in the third, and some choose to do it in the final semester; possibly there is no agreement among specialists about the internship programme as to how and when it should be implemented during the course. The nature of internship programmes also varies, such as the number of lessons to be delivered by each pupil-teacher in each teaching subject and overall, during the term of the internship.

All other professional programmes where trainees perform internships, such as medical, engineering, and law, do it mostly at the end of the term. In all such programmes, the organisation where the trainee is undertaking internship is responsible for offering quality training and supervise the internship activities. In teacher education, the situation is exactly the opposite. Teacher educators as supervisors are given extra responsibility for guiding and assessing interns in this situation. This process must be addressed appropriately, and the role of the school teacher/mentor must be expanded. During school internship programmes, the roles and responsibilities of teacher educators as supervisors and school teachers as mentors may be reversed.

Most Needed Innovation in School Internship Programme (SIP)

Considering the need for well-trained teachers who have all of the experiences of school activities that regular teachers do on a daily basis, prospective teachers should be given the experience of the complete session, from admission to the announcement of final results. This necessitates training of pupil teachers for the duration of the session. It may be argued that the first year should be totally theoretical. The DOE should place them in school for SIP in the second year according to their needs and school vacancies. These pupil teachers should also be compensated in the form of a stipend. This initiative may assist DOE in meeting the demands of teachers in schools while also reducing the financial burden that they bear for guest teachers, as this strategy will lessen the need for guest teachers in schools. Thus, DOE, teacher Education Colleges, Schools as well as Pupil-teachers may find this useful. NCTE may finalize the other SIP mechanisms in coordination with the DOEs of all states and the Education Departments of Universities and Colleges of Teacher Education.

Enhancing Professional Capacities

The inclusion of courses on EPC (Enhancing Professional Capacities) such as 'Understanding the Self,' 'Reading and Reflection on Texts,' and so on is a notable aspect of the 2-year B.Ed. curriculum as per the regulation 2014. However, there appears to be some uncertainty over the CEPC (Courses on Enhancing Professional Capacities). Some universities incorporate some of these papers into core courses, while others classify them as electives. The addition of these courses has a long-term positive impact if they are conducted in the proper way and spirit, which is probably lacking everywhere.

Four-Year Integrated B.Ed. Programme

In the light of NEP-2020, the Government of India, through NCTE is going to implement a four-year integrated B.Ed. programme across India in phased manner. By 2030, the four-year integrated B.Ed. will be the sole teacher education programme for preparing secondary school teachers.

In the first three years following the launch of four-year integrated teacher education programmes, the two-year B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes may be maintained to meet the expectations of individuals who have already completed or are in the process of completing their undergraduate and postgraduate courses. In other words, for individuals who have previously been admitted to three-year B.Sc., B.A., or B.

Com programmes and wish to pursue B.Ed. after graduation, the doors to B.Ed. should always be open.

Drawing the Best Talent to Teaching

To attract the best talent to the teaching profession, a well-designed process is essential. Teaching should be made a lucrative employment for people who are high achievers, have a passion for teaching, and want to join the profession out of choice rather than need. The following provisions could be considered and tested:

1. Only the freshers, with no more than a two-year gap, should be allowed to enter the teacher education programme after meeting the basic eligibility requirements (qualification).
2. There should be multi-level screening and entrance exams to choose candidates for admission to teacher education programmes, such as:
 - a. A criterion of 60% or higher in aggregate and in the relevant subjects in the qualifying exams.
 - b. A score of 60% or above in the entrance exam.
 - c. Along with the presentation, candidates should be interviewed to assess their verbal and written communication skills.
 - d. Overall behaviour of the applicants, including values and ethics, morals, and conduct in previous institutions as evidenced by their school grade point averages (X and XII). Grade 'A' should be preferred, followed by 'B'. Other graded candidates on morality should be made ineligible to apply, as the job of teacher necessitates very high levels of the aforementioned behavioural components.
3. Monitoring, supervision, or inspection of Teacher Education Colleges should be undertaken at random, without prior notifying the institution, in order to observe the actual status of teaching–learning/training and available infrastructure. The NCTE should assemble a devoted, skilled, and trustworthy team of observers for this purpose. NCTE itself needs to be headed by a person who is not guided by other centers of power, but looks only to the future of the nation which is shaped by teachers in its classroom.
4. Non-performing and Norms-ignoring colleges of teacher education should be punished, shut down and blacklisted.
5. Stipend should be provided to pupil-teachers during the school internship programme.
6. Ensuring the appointment/placement of bright candidates after a thorough selection and training process can boost their morale and help to assure excellence in school education.

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and Teacher Education

Looking at the National Education Policy (2020), it clearly indicates that the objective in the area of teacher education is to ensure that all students at all stages of schooling are taught by teachers who are passionate, motivated, highly qualified, professionally trained, and well equipped.

Experiences and research from India and around the world demonstrate that there are a few important attributes of teachers and teacher educators that need to be nurtured in them for effective teaching–learning and conducive school culture that enables and ensures exceptional teachers and teaching. These are:

- Teachers must be enthusiastic, motivated, highly competent, and professionally trained in the theory and practice of teaching and learning.
- It is essential that teachers connect with their learners and are invested in the communities in which they work.
- Teachers must be recognized, supported, and respected in order to perform well. Teachers and students who are joyful contribute to effective teaching and learning. Teachers and students must work in a safe, pleasant, and inviting setting on a daily basis.
- Teachers, as well as their schools, school complexes, and classrooms, must have access to the learning resources they require for quality teaching. Teachers should also be competent and skilled to create, disseminate, and use open educational resources from various platforms.
- Teachers should not be overworked, particularly with non-teaching tasks or teaching subjects outside of their area of competence.
- Teachers must be given the autonomy to innovate and teach in the manner that is most suitable for them and their students.
- Teachers must have many opportunities for Continuous Professional Development (CPD), as well as access to the most recent innovations and ideas in both pedagogy and subject matter.
- Teachers must feel a sense of belonging to a vibrant professional community.
- Teachers must work in schools that have a caring, collaborative, and inclusive culture that promotes excellence, curiosity, empathy, and equity. School principals, school complex leaders, and School Management Committees (SMCs) and School Complex Management Committees (SCMCs) must set a big part of this school culture.
- Finally, teacher career management and advancement (including promotion/salary structure, as well as the selection of school and school complex leadership posts) must be based on outstanding performance and merit, with defined standards for evaluation.

NEP-2020 gives the opening of three types of B.Ed. programmes; the first one being the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) in which students may get admission after XII and pursue B.Sc. B.Ed. or B.A. B.Ed. The

present two-year B.Ed. programme will also be continued for those who have already completed the undergraduate degree in school subject. The one-year B.Ed. will also be available to those who have already completed their Master degree. But the latter two programmes will be offered only by those colleges of teacher education or universities where ITEP is available. By the year 2030 the 4-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme will have only eligibility to become teachers at secondary level and will be provided only by the multidisciplinary colleges and universities. All standalone B.Ed. colleges will have to convert them into multidisciplinary colleges by 2030 or they will have to close offering B.Ed. programmes.

The NEP-2020 also provides guidelines for preparation of teachers for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), also known as pre-primary or Nursery education which are provided at Anganwadi, Kindergarten schools, Nursery schools or Pre-primary schools. This level of school education has been made an integral part of the 5 + 3 + 3 + 4 system of school education for the first time in the history of Indian education. There is a provision of providing a six months Certificate Programme in Teaching to those ECCE teachers who are XII class passed. And those teachers of ECCE who have less qualification will be provided one-year Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education (DECCE). The aspirants who want to become teachers at this level may have such training in face-to-face mode or through distance mode by any university departments or colleges accredited by the relevant agencies.

To draw best talents in the field of teaching the policy talks of providing scholarships to meritorious students and students coming from rural areas. There is also a provision of offering bonuses to those teachers who are appointed and serve in rural areas and give their services to the Socio-economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs).

The policy provides guidelines to have a special shorter local teacher-education programme by BITEs (Block Institute of Teacher Education) and DIETs (District Institute of Education and Training) for the 'Master Instructors' with a purpose of promoting local profession or craft or vocation and inviting them to give some time to teach at local schools and make the children introduced with their crafts and develop their skills in them. Shorter Post-B.Ed. certification course for more specialization is also envisaged by the policy such as in the field of leadership and management, inclusive education for vertical and horizontal mobility of teachers depending upon their qualification and interest.

The programmes in teacher education must offer student-teachers many opportunities to explore various aspects of being a teacher in various fields. Practical components like school readiness programs, self-development workshops, theatre in education, physical education and internships provide a ground to go deeper into the nuances of becoming a teacher. There are various theoretical subjects like psychology, sociology, philosophy which work towards the improvement of a teacher in the profession and as a person too. It helps in holistic development of a teacher which is ultimately beneficial for the holistic development of students as teachers are the bridge between the child and the society and it is utmost important for a teacher to be proficient in his/her profession as they deal with the budding future of the nation. Enhancing the quality of teacher education paves a path for other students to enter

this noble profession and also it helps in maintaining the dignity of the profession of teaching. As it is mentioned in National Education Policy (2020) that “*The high respect for teachers and the high status of the teaching profession must be revived and restored for the very best to be inspired to enter the profession.*”

Conclusion

The responsibility of teacher education is to prepare quality teachers to mould the future of the new generation, which in turn shapes the fate of the nation. If teacher educators are good, they will prepare quality school teachers, who will ultimately mould the young minds that will construct the country’s future. There is no room for lapse or compromise at any level, if it is permitted, the nation will pay the price. The country’s current educational scenario as a whole, and teacher education in particular, demonstrates patterns of continuing degradation in educational quality. There are numerous concerns and challenges confronting teacher education and school education that must be handled immediately, but in a well-planned and long-term manner. The deterioration of teacher education quality, dwindling morality and values among teachers and students, induction of people of low academic caliber in teaching, a lack of passion for teaching, a lack of dedication, sincerity, and essential teaching skills among teachers are some of the pressing issues and challenges we face today. These issues must be addressed as soon as possible in order to get school education back on track. The government and the regulatory authority must take the necessary efforts to eliminate any irregularities and achieve the highest possible and desired level of quality, stability, and uniformity in teacher education.

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