

Rethinking Teacher Education: Key Issues & Concerns

Author: Dr. Vikesh Kumar Sharma
Principal, Dogra College of Education

Abstract

Education plays a vital role in shaping individuals to their fullest potential, ultimately nurturing responsible and capable citizens. It is a lifelong process that remains incomplete without the guidance of a teacher. Teacher preparation has long been a topic of concern and discussion across all levels—from government officials and regulatory bodies to schools and educators themselves. No nation can progress beyond the quality of its education system, which, in turn, is largely dependent on the competence of its teachers.

However, several challenges continue to affect the teacher education system. Therefore, teachers must be equipped with appropriate tools during and after their training, ranging from strong content knowledge and practical skills to effective teaching methodologies, so they can perform their roles professionally and effectively.

This paper highlights the key issues facing teacher education and offers practical suggestions for addressing them. These recommendations aim to assist educationists, policymakers, universities, and colleges in enhancing the quality and standards of teacher education.

Keywords: Education, Teacher Education, Challenges, Suggestions, Quality Improvement

Introduction

“No society can raise above the standard above of its teachers”.

National Policy on Education (1986) emphasized the crucial role of teachers in the education system. As highlighted by the NCTE (1998) in *Quality Concerns in Secondary Teacher Education*, “The teacher is the most important element in any education programme. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for the implementation of the educational process at any stage.” This underscores the urgent need to invest in quality teacher preparation to ensure a secure and progressive future for the nation.

Teacher education is a program aimed at developing the proficiency and competence of educators, empowering them to meet the demands of the teaching profession and effectively tackle its challenges. It is rightly said that a teacher is the builder of the nation, and the quality of teachers determines the quality of a country's future.

As the saying goes, “The destiny of India is being shaped in its classrooms.” With the growing population and expanding demand for education, the role of the teacher becomes increasingly vital. Teachers serve as the key agents in transmitting knowledge, skills, and values to students at all levels of education. It is their responsibility

to instill essential values in learners and contribute to the development of an informed, responsible, and learning-oriented society through the provision of lifelong education.

Meaning of Teacher Education

Indian education system is biggest one in the world. Education is the key factor that contributes in the progress of a country. The social and economic development of a nation is determined by the educational development of that country. Each nation develops and upgrades its education system to promote and preserve its cultural identity, society, economic growth, and to face the issues and challenges in the future. A country can progress only when its educational foundation is strong and provides quality education to its citizens. The government of India and educational institutions are working to improve the existing model of education. But the success of the educational system is directly related to the teachers, their knowledge, values, various skills, personality, and attitude. Producing such teachers who are equipped with dedication and sincerity, knowledge, creativity, professional commitment and motivation are the major challenge in the country.



According to NCTE, “Teacher Education is a programme of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher education level.”

According to R. N. Tagore, “A teacher can never truly teach unless he continues to learn.”

According to the Goods Dictionary of Education, “Teacher education means all the formal and non-formal activities and experiences that help to qualify a person to assume responsibilities of a member of the educational profession or to discharge his responsibilities more effectively.”

Knowledge is increasing every day, so the jobs of teachers are becoming more challenging in the light of globalization, changing psychology of children, social needs, and new innovative teaching methods. Ensuring quality education and effective teacher training requires focus on appropriate methods, relevant content, and practical pedagogies. However, the current teacher education system is hindered by several issues, such as an outdated curriculum, insufficient teaching practice, limited duration of training programs, and poor-quality internships, all of which affect the overall effectiveness of teacher preparation. So it is vital to pay attention

on teacher training institutes to secure the future of the nation. The teacher education program should be capable of fulfilling the following aims & objectives:

1. Professional Development of Teachers through Training Programs

Continuous training programs help teachers update their knowledge, learn new teaching methods, and improve their overall effectiveness in the classroom. Such programs ensure teachers stay current with educational trends and best practices.

2. Organization of Seminars, Conferences, Workshops for In-Service Teachers

These platforms provide opportunities for practicing teachers to engage with experts, share experiences, and gain exposure to innovative ideas and research. This ongoing professional learning supports their growth and keeps them motivated.

3. Helping Learners Integrate Technology with Traditional Teaching Methods

Teacher education should focus on blending modern technology (like digital tools and online resources) with traditional instructional methods to create a balanced and engaging learning environment.

4. Equipping Teachers with Teaching and Technological Skills and Use of Various Tools and Software

Teachers need to be trained not only in subject content but also in using educational technologies—such as multimedia presentations, learning management systems, and interactive software—to enhance student learning.

5. Developing Pedagogical Skills in Teachers

Pedagogical skills refer to the art and science of teaching. This includes lesson planning, instructional strategies, assessment techniques, and classroom interaction, all essential for effective teaching.

6. Enabling Teachers to Understand Child Psychology

Understanding how children think, learn, and behave allows teachers to tailor their teaching strategies to meet the developmental and emotional needs of students, creating a supportive learning atmosphere.

7. Promoting Proper Attitude, Self-Confidence, Dedication, Motivation, and Sincerity

Teacher education should foster positive qualities and professional ethics among future educators, encouraging them to be committed, motivated, and responsible in their roles.

8. Enabling Teachers to Make Proper Use of Instructional Facilities

Teachers should be trained to effectively use all available instructional resources—such as labs, libraries, audio-visual aids—to enhance student engagement and understanding.

9. Effective Classroom Management Skills

Managing a classroom well involves maintaining discipline, organizing activities smoothly, and creating an environment conducive to learning. Teachers need skills to handle diverse classroom situations efficiently.

10. Effective Use of Communication Skills

Communication is key in teaching. Teachers must be able to clearly convey concepts, listen actively, provide feedback, and interact positively with students, parents, and colleagues.

Present Scenario/ Status of Teacher Education

The whole teacher education system depends on its structure, design, curriculum and organization. In the last decade teaching learning has gone through dramatic changes. The curriculum of teacher education was criticized in all over the country and its weaknesses were discussed on various platforms. In the curriculum, which is followed

currently, there is no focus or very little focus on new innovative techniques, trends and need of research in the area of teacher education. These are on the papers only. Teacher education institutes do not have sufficient infrastructure and facilities in terms of technology and qualified faculty to train the learners. These institutions are running in an unplanned manner increasing degree holder unemployment, commercialization of education, teacher burn out, lower quality education and many more. Quality in teacher education has become critical. How to prepare good teachers has become a burning topic of discussion at all levels, universities, schools, colleges, regulatory bodies, community and to teachers themselves. Numerous of private B.ED colleges are being run in buildings on rent without facilities like schools for teaching practice or laboratory, library, ICT and other equipment, software, wi-fi facility necessary for a good teacher education institute. Some of the major problems are:

- ❖ **Unavailability of Qualified Teachers** - Unavailability of qualified teachers to teach student teachers as faculty members are appointed only for few months just to continue affiliation.
- ❖ **Fee Structure** - In some states fee structure is very less so the financial condition of the colleges is not good.
- ❖ **Teaching Practices** – Teaching Practices are not conducted properly as there are no adequate facilities for teaching practice. Private schools as well as government schools do not accommodate pupil teachers for teaching practice.
- ❖ **Academic Background** - Most of faculties do not have the essential motivation and an academic background for a well-deserved entry in the teaching profession.
- ❖ **Negative attitude** – Negative attitude of college managements towards teaching and non-teaching staff.
- ❖ **Lack of dedication** – Lack of dedication among teachers towards their profession.
- ❖ **Measures of Affiliation** - The measures for affiliation of colleges are not followed strictly by the authorities visiting team and they are on papers only.
- ❖ **Norms of NCTE** - Teacher training institutes are not following the prescribed norms of NCTE regarding infrastructure, eligibility criteria in selection of faculty, regular presence of students, and time table, etc.
- ❖ **Autonomy** - The association of private B.Ed. Colleges has their autonomy in running their colleges in their way.
- ❖ **Unemployment** - There is a considerable gap between the demand and supply of teachers. This has created the problems of unemployment and underemployment.
- ❖ **Salary issues** - The salary of teacher educators in private education institutions is very low.
- ❖ **Inadequate Professional Development** – Limited opportunities for continuous professional development for teacher educators, leading to outdated teaching methods and knowledge.
- ❖ **Poor Infrastructure** – Many teacher education institutions lack basic infrastructure, such as well-equipped classrooms, libraries, and laboratories necessary for effective learning.
- ❖ **Lack of Accountability** – Weak accountability mechanisms for teacher educators and management, resulting in poor performance and negligence in duties.
- ❖ **Insufficient Research Culture** – Minimal emphasis on research and innovation within teacher education institutions, hindering the growth and improvement of teaching practices.

Major Problems of the Present System of Teacher Education

The present system of teacher education faces numerous challenges and issues. Teacher preparation has been a topic of widespread concern and debate across all levels—from government officials and ministers to regulatory bodies, educational institutions, and teachers themselves.

Some of the problems concerning Teacher education are discussed below:

1. Small time frame given for Teacher Education

In Comparison to other countries like the USA, UK, the time frame for a teacher training program in India is very small. In India, B.Ed., D.El.Ed and D.Ed., the period of training is for only two

years, and internship program is less than one year. The main objective of the teacher education program is building of value-based education, an attitude regarding teaching and learning which is impossible during the short time frame.

2. Biased selection procedure

Biased selection procedure for both student and faculty members is one of the biggest challenges in teacher training in India. Here, self-financed teacher training colleges or private teacher education colleges are controlled by a Governing body or chairperson, who are biased and think for individual perspective and benefits. They try to select those candidates who agree to work for a low salary. They do what they want to do in the selection procedure. They utilize their power not only to obtain affiliation but also they have create such a teaching learning system which might be very curtail to spoil a healthy environment in teacher education institutes.

3. Incompetent pre-service Teacher Training Program

The examples of pre-service teacher training programs are B.Ed, D.Ed, D.El.Ed, M.Ed., etc. But unfortunately, the present system of pre-service teacher training programs does not provide the right opportunity to develop the competency level of the student-teacher. Here, self-financed teacher training institutions play a determinant role as a number of private teacher training colleges is much higher than government-aided colleges But non- attending students (less than 50 percent attendance or pretend regular students but absent from regular program) get a degree of B.Ed., D.El.Ed, D.Ed, and even M.Ed easily in lieu of money in these private colleges. Due to this, students are lacking in competencies, skills as well as moral and ethical values.

4. Lack of Teaching Skills among Faculty Members

Due to poor infrastructure in terms of technology, library, internet facilities, laboratories, and lack of content knowledge and innovative teaching methods, teacher educators are unable to develop appropriate teaching skills in pupil teachers. In India, self-financed teacher training colleges are not able to inject the above teaching skills because they have incompetent teaching and non-teaching staff.

5. Shortage of Good Teacher Educators

Self-financed teacher education institutions or private teacher training colleges not have an adequate number of faculty members as per the requirement given by NCTE in its regulations. The main reason behind inadequate faculty members is that these teacher education institutions are being run for profit. Due to insufficient opportunity for development, low salary structure, and lack of other facilities, competent and efficient teacher educators are not available for teaching as teacher educators. That's why several teachers and non-teaching staff are inadequate as per the requirement.

6. Remuneration of Teacher Educator

Remuneration of teacher educators (obviously self-financed teacher training institutions) is very low as compared to the government or full-time aided faculty of degree colleges. According to the university education commission and National Policy on Education (NPE 1986), private colleges do not pay remuneration as well as other facilities like house rent allowances to the teachers. Therefore for competent teachers do not apply to these colleges and prefer other sectors for their careers.

7. Unsystematic Internship Program

According to the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) regulation 2014, the time duration of the teacher education program, especially for B.Ed and M.Ed, is two years. Classroom management skills, how to use teaching aids, visit to special schools, deal with special children, etc, are an integral part of the School Internship. But fortunately, the school internship program is neglected by the self-financed teacher training institutions.

8. Unrealistic Curriculum for Teacher Education Program

Broadly, curricula mean syllabi as well as other activities which are related to achieving holistic development or optimal development of student teachers. Therefore, the curriculum should be life-centric, democratic, and

realistic. But the current curriculum has many drawbacks and it is more focused on old and outdated theories which student teachers cannot associate with their practical life problems, and there are very few opportunities for skill development in the curriculum. In the curriculum focus is on theory instead of practical or different co-curricular activities.

9. Lack of ICT

In most of the institutions, there are no proper ICT labs. This is the reason that pupil teachers are not given any training in use of these technologies in classroom teaching. But if we focus on the current scenario when all teaching is done online due to the corona virus, there is no survival without technological skills in the field of education. It is a major challenge that the teacher fraternity is facing these days.

10. Lack of innovative teaching strategies

Most of the teachers are using the conventional method of teaching in classrooms, which are not as effective for students as they are teacher teacher-centered and does not provide the facilities for interaction and work in collaboration. There are so many new methods like cooperative learning, blended mode of teaching, or flipped classrooms which should be used to cater to the needs of the students because each student is unique and dynamic. These are the reasons that the quality of teacher education institutes is very low, and hence the quality of teachers. A critical evaluation

of the teacher education program is required to know its strong points and weak points so that it can be reframed. We have huge prospects for ensuring teacher quality well into the 21st century if we select quality people into the teaching profession and provide them the highest quality preparation and training". Teacher education needs to focus on building holistic teachers.

Suggestions:

1. **Strict Regulation and Control:**
NCTE and other regulatory bodies must ensure a healthy and ideal teaching-learning environment in educational institutions through strict regulation and control.
2. **Regular Inspection and Monitoring:**
Conduct regular inspections and assessments of colleges to monitor progress and overall development. Take strict action against any discrepancies found.
3. **Faculty Demand and Supply Management:**
Regulatory bodies should ensure a proper balance in the demand and supply of faculty members in teacher education institutions.
4. **Promotion of Innovative Pedagogical Approaches:**
Emphasize the use of innovative teaching and learning methods to enhance content delivery and skill development.
5. **Fair Selection Procedure for Teacher Educators:**
Teacher educator selection should be fair and based on interviews, group discussions, entrance examinations, etc., ensuring the recruitment of capable candidates.
6. **In-Service Teacher Education Programs:**
Organize seminars, conferences, and workshops for the professional development of teacher educators. Ensure that these programs genuinely focus on development, not just for promotions.
7. **Focus on Soft Skills Development:**
Include the development of soft skills in teacher education programs, which are often overlooked.
8. **Curriculum Revision and Practical Work Emphasis:**
The current curriculum is overly focused on theory. Revise it regularly to meet societal needs, ensuring a balance of theory and practical work. Clear guidelines for internship programs should be provided.
9. **Standardized Remuneration and Facilities:**
Ensure that remuneration and facilities for teacher educators comply with NCTE and state government norms.

10. **Use of Technology in Teacher Education:**
Encourage the integration of modern technology and digital tools in teacher training programs to enhance learning experiences and prepare educators for tech-savvy classrooms.
11. **Enhanced Research Opportunities:**
Promote and support research activities among teacher educators and students to foster innovation and evidence-based teaching practices.
12. **Community Engagement and Social Responsibility:**
Incorporate community engagement initiatives and social responsibility projects into the curriculum to make teacher education socially relevant and impactful.

Conclusion

Privatization is good, but institutions should understand their accountability and responsibility in producing quality teachers, as the future of a nation depends on teachers. So there should be no compromise in maintaining the standards of these institutions on the part of the government, regulatory bodies, and the managements. A teacher is a person who shapes the future of a student and has a lasting impact on students. As stated by NCTE (1998) in Quality Concerns in Secondary Teacher Education, "The teacher is the most important element in any educational program. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for the implementation of the educational process at any stage." This makes it necessary to prepare good teachers to secure the nation's future.

Despite numerous challenges in the teacher education program, various government bodies such as NCERT, NCTE, NAAC, and NUEPA are actively working to address these issues through periodic inspections and evaluations of teacher education institutions. It is now mandatory for every such institution to obtain accreditation from NAAC; failure to do so will result in the cancellation of their affiliation.

The Kothari Commission aptly stated, "The destiny of India is being shaped in its classrooms." Indeed, education plays a crucial role in national development, and the quality of education largely depends on the quality of teachers. Recognizing this, significant efforts have been made—and continue to be made—to enhance the standard of teacher education in the country.

References

1. Aggarwal, J.C. (1996). *Essentials of Educational Technology*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House..
2. CABE Committee. (2005). *Girls' Education and the Common School System*. New Delhi: MHRD.
3. Google. (2019). *Google search*. Retrieved from: <https://www.mybib.com/tools/apa-citation-generator>.
4. Himmat, D. (2017). *Challenges and remedies of Teacher Education*. *Global Science Research Journal*, 5(1), 077-081¹
5. Kuma, P., & Azad, S. (2016). *Teacher education in India: Some Policy issues and Challenges*. *International Journal of Advanced Research and Innovative Ideas in Education*, 2(6), 1217-1224¹
6. Nagoba, B.S., & Mantri, S.B. (2015) Role of Teachers in Quality Enhancement in Higher Education, *The Journal of Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences University*, 4(1), 177-182. Retrieved from publisher@jkimsu.com.
7. Naseem, S. and Anas, N. (2011). *Problems Of teacher Education in India*, *International Referred Research Journal*, 2, 19, 187-188.
8. National Council for Teacher Education. (2020). *Bachelor of education programme leading to Bachelor of Education(B.Ed.) degree*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncte.gov.in/Web>

site/ActandRegulation.aspx.

9. National Council for Teacher Education. (2020). *Diploma in early childhood education programme leading to Diploma in preschool Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncte.gov.in/Website/ActandRegulation.aspx>.

10. National Council for Teacher Education. (2020). *Master of education programme leading to Master of Education (M.Ed.). degree*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncte.gov.in/Website/Act>

And Regulation.aspx.

11. Sain, S.K., & Kaware, S.S. (2014) The Challenges and Quality of Teacher Education in India at Present in Indian Educational Scenario. *Journal of Education & Social Policy*, 1(1), 13-17. Retrieved from www.jespnet.com.

12. School Education in India: A Handbook. (2015). An introduction to the Indian education system, India.

13. Singh, L., & Shakir, M. (2019) Teacher Education: Issues and Concerns in Current Scenario. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR)*, 6(2), 1082-1090.

Retrieved from www.ijrar.org

14. Sodhganga. (2019). Uploaded thesis and dissertation. Retrieved from <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in>.

15. Google. (n.d.). *Google Search Engine*. Retrieved from <https://www.google.com>

16. OpenAI. (2024). *ChatGPT*. Retrieved from <https://chat.openai.com>

17. Association of Indian Universities. (n.d.). *University News*. Retrieved from <https://www.aiu.ac.in>

18. <http://www.globalscienceresearchjournals.org/gjses/110320171477.pdf>

19. <https://aarhat.com/download-article/2960/>

20. <https://www.multidisciplinaryjournals.in/assets/archives/2020/vol5issue5/5-6-12-850.pdf>

21. <http://www.aiirjournal.com/uploads/Articles/1679236035115%20Final%20file.pdf>

22. <https://www.scribd.com/document/99484728/Teacher-Education-IV>

23. <http://www.journaledudev.in/journal/Vol-11%20Dec%202021.pdf>

24. http://ijrar.com/uploads/conference/ijrar_58.pdf

25. <https://ijfmr.com/papers/2024/2/17579.pdf>

