



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

“INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO OF TEACHER EDUCATION”

KEY WORDS:

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the international scenario of teacher education, drawing from the systems and practices prevalent in various countries of the world, including in Europe, North America, Japan, Latin America, and in India. It highlights how teacher education scenario and its priorities have evolved and changed over time, with changing perceptions of the role of the school teacher, the differing priorities attached to education (in general) and teacher education specifically by the various Governments across different points in time, and manner in which pre-service teacher education has metamorphized over time in terms of course content, course duration, role of Universities, the differing levels of autonomy to teacher education institutions, and how government policies have shaped teacher education systems. Of particular significance is the various phases and waves of teacher education which evolved over time across countries (particularly in Europe), the evolution of two models of teacher education – the Consecutive model and the Concurrent model and their adoption in different countries, the impact of education policy initiatives on teacher education systems, such as those in the USA, and how recommendations of the various commissions/committees on education shaped teacher education environment, as in India. The paper also discusses the heterogeneity of practices in terms of course duration, entry level qualifications, etc., both across countries and even within a country (such as in India, Japan, England, Latin America). The paper also highlights how changing perceptions of the quality of the teacher education institutions led to regulatory challenges and the statutory and other instrumentalities which were used to meet such challenges. In respect of India, the paper discusses in brief the recent developments impacting teacher education environment in the country, including the recommendations of the Justice Verma Commission on Teacher Education (August, 2012) and National Education Policy, 2020, the development of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), and how the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE), the statutory body on teacher education, has risen up to meet the expectations arising of these recommendations.

International Scenario OfTeacher Education

The widely accepted goal of teacher education is to support prospective teachers to enable them to develop abilities and attitudes which are considered essential for meeting the professional tasks of a school teacher (Bucherberger et al 2000). From the changing priority of teacher education across time, to the varying perception of a school teacher as an agent of change in lives of school children, to the role of Government as a facilitator and a regulator, to the concerns of quality of the teacher education system, to the status of teacher educators and school teachers, all these subjects have witnessed extensive studies, views, discussions and debates. In most democratic countries the primary role and responsibility of the Government in providing basic education to children has been well recognized. Teacher education, which feeds into the school education system, has accordingly been a matter of concern and responsibility of national and state Governments across a wide spectrum of countries, cutting across ideologies and beliefs, and subsuming within its fold the socio-cultural context and settings of the education system, the base levels of literacy, with focus on reaching the unreached, the marginalized and hitherto deprived and neglected.

A review of the international scenario on teacher education of the Asia Pacific Region, USA, UK, Europe, Latin America, and other countries, including India, shows important strands of understanding. The first is that teacher education cannot be viewed in isolation but as a sub-part of the overall education scenario prevalent at a given point in time, and the priorities attached thereto. Secondly, the focus on universalization of education which Governments in various countries underlined at different points in time significantly impacted the supply side of teacher education, thereby building capacities at historical pace to meet the growing demand for school teachers. Thirdly, the expansion of the supply side of teacher education brought along with huge challenges of quality, leading to the development of regulatory instruments

to manage such quality.

In Asia-Pacific Region as also in Europe and Latin America, distinct phases of teacher education evolved with time. Yin Cheong Cheng (2009) discusses three waves of teacher education, co-terminus with education reforms that took place during these waves in several countries of the **Asia Pacific Region**. The first wave (1980s-90s) saw the wide expansion of the educational systems to meet the requirements of national economic developments, witnessing the strengthening of the internal processes, especially teaching and learning in the educational institutions. Innovation in teacher education during this phase emphasized upon more effective use of ICT. The second wave of educational reforms in the Region (1990s) emphasized upon the interface effectiveness of educational institutions, encompassing education quality, stakeholders' satisfaction, and market competitiveness. Teacher Education in this phase accordingly emphasized upon enhancing stakeholders satisfaction. The third wave (2000s), marking the turn of the millennium, underlined the need to enable the young generation to meet the challenges of globalization and IT. Sustainable development was the *mantra*. The focus of pre-service teacher education was to develop teacher as facilitators in this interwoven globalized educational ecosphere.

Similar phases or waves of teacher education were witnessed in Norway, Netherland, South Africa and several Latin American countries. According to Trippestad Tom Are et al (2017) there were three waves of reforms in these countries. The first wave came from the 1960s through the 1980s, during which the needs of mass education shaped reforms in teacher education, and was mainly focused on internal processes, making it more coherent and effective in relation to its functions. The beginning of the eighties saw the second wave of reforms in teacher education, with assessment studies, especially Programme for International Student Assessment

(PISA) reports, indicating insufficiency in the quality of (especially) the state-supported school systems. In many nation states, the insufficient academic qualification of teachers and poor quality of teacher educators became issues of focus, along with an increasing trend towards accountability of teacher education. This led to a shift from the erstwhile autonomy of the teacher education system to more standardised form, method and content of teacher education programs, as a significant international trend. The turn of the millennium saw the third wave of teacher education reform along with a host of assessment studies, such as PISA, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), comparisons of public expenditure on education. Internationally, colleges and Universities initiated the processing of revamping the teacher education programs, opening new ones, closing down old ones, and radically changing most of them. Education reforms initiated by national governments with emphasis on accountability and developing standards thereof for teacher education institutions put pressure on the existing systems.

International experience shows that initial teacher preparation has largely revolved around two models. *Giorgio Ostinelli (2009)* discusses the prevalence of these models in Europe (as also in other countries of the world). The Consecutive model, in which students received a degree in a particular subject or branch of study and at the near end of the program are enrolled in a programme of initial professional training for becoming a teacher. In the Concurrent model, the program from the outset combines general education in one or more subjects with theoretical and practical professional teacher training. Post reform of education curricula in June, 1999, **Italy** adopted the 5-year curriculum for the primary school (leading to a bachelor's degree), and three year 'disciplinary' bachelor followed by two 'professionalising' years (Master's degree in education) for secondary school. In **Germany**, each of the 14 *Land* (or federal state) has the responsibility of teacher training, which follows the 'simultaneous' model. In **England** there are multiple types of programme. The undergraduate programme (B.Ed) which is a 3-4 years programme leading to QTS (Qualified Teacher Status). The BA and BSc programs leading to QTS, which are similar to B.Ed but with greater rigour towards disciplinary subjects. The Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) is a one year course after graduation, with the aim to develop teaching skills, mainly for secondary schools. School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) is a one year programme offered to graduate students who wish to complete their education in an educational setting, in which teaching is imparted by experienced teachers, ultimately leading to QTS. **Sweden** reformed its teacher education system in 2001 with a graduate program composed of general education (pedagogical, relational and interdisciplinary topics), orientation area (disciplinary and inter-disciplinary topics relevant to the age groups), and specialization area (deepening of existing knowledge and competencies). **Finland** has a 4-5 year program for primary school, composed of major in educational studies, minor in combination of school subjects, a master thesis in education, teaching practice and language and communication courses as optional. For secondary schools, the teacher education programme is of 5 years duration, composed of major in different school subjects, minor in one or two other subjects, a master thesis in academic subjects, teaching practice and language and communication as optional courses.

USA provides amongst the best examples of how policy initiatives in the field of education impacted teacher education. According to *Tattoo (2021)* the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) sought to professionalize school teaching by developing teaching standards in terms of teacher competencies and knowledge, backed by performance based assessment of teachers for

certification. This majorly impacted the teacher education programmes in mid-1980s and 1990s. The launch of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2009 by the state leaders of 48 of the 50 States, in a way led to centralization of the K-12 system of assessment and evaluation in several core subjects, also facilitated by the legislation of 2001 known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Further reforms were initiated post 2015, including creation of a single accreditation organization, the Council for the Accreditation of Educational Preparation (CAEP), leading to revision and updation of existing standards.

France underwent similar changes in the system of teacher education (*Cornu 2015*). Prior to 1990, primary teachers were trained in *Ecoles Normales*, or institutions of higher education. In the late 1980s, primary teachers received 4 years of post-bachelor training. Secondary teachers were trained at the University; first a license (bachelor degree) in the subject had to be obtained, and then in the University for preparing to give the State competitive examination for recruitment as a teacher. After recruitment they would receive professional preparation in the Regional Pedagogical Centres (CPR). The orientation law on education of July 1989 led to creation IUFMs (University Institutes of Teacher Education) which were in-charge of initial teacher preparation, and contributed to both in-service teacher training and educational research, bringing along with uniformity in teacher preparation system - 3-years degree program at the University level, followed by 2 years at IUFM. In 2005, the Government decided to integrate IUFMs into the University system, in sync with the international trend of teacher training becoming part of the university system. The third kink came in 2013, when on 1st September 2013, the IUFMs were cancelled and replaced by new institutions : ESPEs (*Ecoles Superieures du Professorat et de l'Education*), being internal schools within Universities, one each in the 32 *academie*. The ESPEs were to offer professional training for 2 years, after acquiring the Bachelor's degree, leading to a Master's degree MEEF, which combines academic courses with practice in schools.

Finland, which received international attention for topping the PISA surveys, went through similar transitions in the field of teacher education (*Hannele Niemi and Ritva Jakkuri-Sihvonen 2011*). Since 1970s, teacher education programs were arranged in Universities (as against teacher training colleges in earlier years). Since 1979, basic qualification for teachers (both primary and secondary) was a 5-year programme leading to a Master's degree. From August 2005 onwards, it moved to a two-tier Bologna degree system – combination of three-years Bachelor's degree and a two-year Master's degree in appropriate subjects. Admission to the teacher education programs (especially secondary teacher education) is very restricted, often not more than 15% of the applicants.

Canada has 56 teacher education institutions, all University based, with B.Ed or its equivalent as the basic credential (*Robert Crocker and David Dibbon 2008*). The teacher education programs vary in size, from less than 100 to more than 4,000 and about 30 to more than 1,200 graduates per year. On an average, these institutions prepare approximately 18,000 new teachers every year. The programs offered are either concurrent or consecutive, with the former being offered in 33 institutions.

Japan on the other hand has a variety of teacher education programs (*Hirotohi Yamasaki 2016*) – Schools of Teacher Education at Universities, 'semi' schools of teacher education, graduate schools of education, professional schools (departments) of education, other schools/colleges, junior colleges, advanced program to be completed after a bachelor's or junior college program, and teacher education programs of specialized college, recognized by the Ministry of Education Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

(MEXT). Japan has an institutional system of Teaching Certification, the qualifications and number of credits required varying for different levels of the program.

Latin America as a continent, has a heterogeneity of practices and program durations of teacher education (Perry 2006). In Bolivia, Peru and Paraguay, teacher education takes place in post-secondary teacher training institutes and as well as at the University level, which is pre dominant in Costa Rica and Cuba. Responsibility of teacher education also varies across countries, with Ministry of Education taking the responsibility in countries such as Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, to Universities administering it in Chile, to an independent agency under the Ministry of Education, as prevails in Uruguay. Initial teacher education curriculum underwent certain reforms on the turn of the millennium, with greater exposure to classrooms, training in pedagogic theory, and in-service professional teacher training. Some countries (such as St. Kitts, Antigua and Barbuda and Mexico) have national level standards to guide the initial teacher education programs, while some other countries have developed national accreditation centres, while some other have laws mandating evaluation and accreditation. Qualifications for teacher educators also varies across countries, from a professional degree along with five years of school teaching experience, five years of study and a passing grade in that study course (as in Peru) to just a bachelor's degree with a specialization (as in Columbia and Costa Rica).

State of Teacher Education in India

In India, teacher education has undergone transformative changes with time, largely influenced by the recommendations of the various commissions/committees on education. Balwaria and Gupta (2014) give a historical perspective of teacher education in India. The University Education Commission (1948-49) or Radhakrishnan Commission was of the view that teacher training colleges need to re-orient to focus on the essentials, with the course curriculum having theory and practice supporting each other, so that prospective teachers before entering school have some hands-on experience of school teaching. The Secondary Education Commission, (1952-53) also known as the Mudaliar Commission, recommended setting up graduation teacher training institutions affiliated to the universities as a degree course, which led to the opening up of many extension services centres. The Review Committee on Education (1960) made major recommendations about post-graduate studies in education and research, education of administrators and qualifications of teacher educators. Resultantly, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) was established in 1961 to improve quality of school education, which also established four Regional Colleges of Education, one each at Ajmer, Bhubaneswar, Bhopal and Mysore.

The Education Commission (1964-66), also known as Kothari Commission, underlined the need for a sound programme of professional education for teachers to meet the requirements of the national system of education. Based on its recommendations, the Government of India set up the National Policy Statement on Education (1968) as regards status, emoluments and education to teachers. The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) was set up in 1973 as an advisory body for teacher education. The National Commission on Teachers (1983) under the leadership of Prof. D. P. Chattopadhyay suggested several measures to strengthen teacher education.

The National Policy of Education (NPE), in 1986 and its Programme of Action (1992) made a strong case for improving the quality of teacher education as a prerequisite to improve the quality of school education. Some teacher training schools were upgraded to District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) from late 1980s and some

training colleges were upgraded to Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs). DIETs, CTEs and IASEs were institutions with innovation, as they combined pre-service with in-service, enabling cross-learning in the path of continuous professional development of school teachers, other than becoming a resource hub for school teachers and teacher educators.

The National Council of Teacher Education was given a statutory status on 17th August, 1995 under the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) Act, 1993 with a view to achieve planned and coordinated development of teacher education throughout the country. In order to undertake its main functions, four Regional Committees were constituted – the Northern Regional Committee (NRC), the Southern Regional Committee (SRC), the Western Regional Committee (WRC) and the Eastern Regional Committee (ERC) which were empowered under the NCTE Act to grant recognition to institutions in their respective physical jurisdiction to undertake programs of teacher education. According to the Annual Report of NCTE (2022-23), as on 31st March, 2023, there were 15,896 recognized teacher education institutions, offering 22,706 recognized teacher education programmes with approved intake capacity of 19.90 lakh student-teachers.

The High Powered Commission on Teacher Education (Report of August, 2012) under the Chairmanship of Justice JS Verma, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was constituted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India at the behest of the Supreme Court (which was hearing SLP Nos. 4247 & 4248/2011) 'to examine the entire gamut of issues which have a bearing on improving the quality of teacher education as well as improving the regulatory functions of NCTE'. Some of the major recommendations of the Commission were : (i) Increased investment by Government for establishing teacher education institutions and increase institutional capacity of teacher preparation; (ii) Explore possibility of a pre-entry test for admission into teacher education programmes; (iii) Teacher education should be part of the higher education system; (iv) Teacher education institutions may be located in multi- and inter-disciplinary academic environment; (v) The teacher education programmes may be re-designed keeping in view the recommendations of NCFTE, 2009; and (vi) NCTE should review the existing norms and standards of the teacher education programmes, develop a new framework for undertaking inspection of the teacher education institutions, and set up a Teacher Education Assessment and Accreditation Centre (TEAAC), and prepare a comprehensive framework for accreditation.

The National Policy on Education, 2020 devoted a separate chapter on Teacher Education, and observed that “*Teacher education is vital in creating a pool of schoolteachers that will shape the next generation. Teacher preparation is an activity that requires multidisciplinary perspectives and knowledge, formation of dispositions and values, and development of practice under the best mentors.*”

The recommendations of the Justice Verma Commission and of the National Policy on Education, 2020 is now shaping the future of the teacher education environment in the country. The NCTE has taken significant steps in revitalizing and reforming its regulatory regime, through the new systems of online inspection, mandatory submission of Performance Appraisal Reports (PAR) by every recognized teacher education institution, and closing down of sub-standard institutions. On the curriculum front, the four-year integrated programme (ITEP) has been introduced. In 2022, the NCTE developed a curriculum framework for the 4-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP). The ITEP is a dual degree programme – the first is a Major in Education and second is a Major in an opted Discipline with Stage Specific

Specialisation – (a) Foundational Stage Specialisation for teaching in pre-school and grades 1 & 2 of schools; (b) Preparatory Stage specialization for teaching children of Grades 3-5; (c) Middle Stage specialization for teaching children of Grades 6, 7 and 8; and (d) Secondary Stage Specialisation for teaching children of grades 9, 10, 11 & 12. The NCTE notified the Norms and Standards of the ITEP vide its Regulation dated 22nd October, 2021, and 42 TEIs across the country were given approval for commencing the ITEP from academic session 2023-24 in respect of 79 ITEP courses (38 for B.A.B.Ed, 10 for B.Sc.B.Ed and 31 for B.Com.B.Ed).

Hence, as in other countries, India has also observed significant metamorphosis of its teacher education framework over time. In this process, there has been learnings from past experience as also from the good practices of other countries, along with need to benchmark norms and standards with global standards on one hand and need/requirement of TEIs on the other. As theorized by *Yin Cheong Cheng (2009)*, the concept of 'triplization of education', an integrative process of globalization, localization and individualization in education, has to be put in place : (a) Globalised – content should be world class, drawing from the pool of world class materials and designs for learning and teaching; (b) Localized – Use of local resources, materials and concerns to ensure local relevance and community involvement; and (c) Individualized – the curriculum is flexible and adaptable to meet the developmental needs of individual teachers, and thereby facilitate their self-learning and actualization.

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