



Images from the Seminar



Curriculum for Excellence in Teacher Education

Seminar Report

*Organised by
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& Tata Institute of Social Sciences*

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-Dr. Jayashree Inbaraj (KKCE)

-Mr. Gopal Midha (TISS)

Panelists and Presenters

Dr. Jyotiben Trivedi

Dr. Shefali Pandya

Dr. Padma Sarangapani

Dr. Indu Garg

Mr. Gopal Midha

Ms. Avnita Bir

Ms. Nafisa Bhinderwala

Ms. Carol Rodrigues

Dr. Sthabir Khora

Ms. Elizabeth Mehta

Dr. Geeta Shetty

Ms. Kavita Anand

Dr. S. Parasuraman

Dr. Vandana Maheshwari

Dr. Sybil Thomas

Dr. V. Padmanabhan

Ms. Geeta Mahashabde

Ms. Rekha Vijaykar

Ms. Simantini Dhuru

Dr. Kalpana Modi

Ms. Subbalakshmi Kumar

Dr. Usha Borkar

Dr. Ritesh Khunyakari

Dr. Kalpana Kharade

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Chapter 1

Inauguration and Teacher Education Programmes in India - Key Issues and Challenges

Introduction:

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the change that we seek”.

- Barack Obama

“You must be the change you want to see in the world”.

- M.K Gandhi

This chapter contains the key points from the inauguration address and talks by Dr. Jyotiben, Prof Shefali Pandya, Prof. S. Parasuraman and Prof. Padma Sarangapani.

Change is universal and inevitable and a needed part of the Teacher Education system. This seminar is an attempt to bring the right changes in Teacher Education knowing that Teacher Education is an important aspect if one is looking for change in the educational scenario. With the current background of RTE and teacher reform, teacher educators, administrators and policy makers especially have to address the need of appropriately qualified and professionally trained teachers.

This is an effort to revisit and rethink issues in Teacher Education. We need to show and demonstrate that good Teacher Education can make good teachers. There is an urgent need in this country for those who believe in the importance of Teacher Education. The challenge is to design curricula which will enable us to demonstrate that in fact Teacher Education matters.

It is imperative that we bring back thinking and reflection in Teacher Education to ensure excellence and quality. The question of social justice and diversity is also central to this discussion. There is a need to bring the focus back on equality and social justice as the basis on which any system of excellence is build. Opening

up the discussion and reflecting on our own dissatisfaction with what we are doing today, will enable us to reconnect with the theme of excellence, which in turn will make our practice more vibrant, while also enabling us to squarely adjust and address issues of social justice and diversity that we observe in the class these days. It is crucial that we ourselves respond to the diversity of our Teacher Education (TE) classrooms thereby enabling our student-teachers to respond to the diversity of the classroom with which they are going to work.

In the present context, we have three major national efforts or achievement in the policy space. First, we have the NCF 2005 for school education which emphasises quality with relevance, inclusion, movement away from rote learning, and towards deepening of understanding as being the basis on which school education should be offered. Secondly, we have the Right to Education which emphasises inclusivity as its major principle and states that at least at elementary level, a trained qualified teacher must be present. In other words, RtE has made it very clear to the entire education system in India that unless we have qualified teachers we are not going to achieve the target of education for all. Finally, in the light of both these documents, we also have the NCF for Teacher Education 2009 which has tried to encourage the Teacher Education community to revisit boldly the fundamentals of Teacher Education.

There is a conservative spirit amongst us that though many of us have innovated in our practice; we have not innovated in the larger curriculum itself. In the 12th Plan Teacher Education review, it was found that in many Teacher Education colleges although they revised the curriculum 2-3 years ago, the same textbook was being used and the same

examination pattern was followed. So the question is what has changed if textbooks and examinations have not? Clearly, changes are mandated around us all the time, but we rarely give ourselves an opportunity to reflect and change in fundamental ways in our own professional practice. Maybe, this is an opportunity for us to actually plan to do that.

The 12th Plan for Teacher Education has made the renewal of Teacher Education its central focus. This unprecedented move is very welcome and we can say that we are at a very important juncture now. We might say that for almost 20 years Pre-Service Teacher Education was somewhat forgotten in the central government planning process and the entire effort and focus was on in-service Teacher Education. But we can all agree that Pre-Service Teacher Education is very important because that is where the professional identity of teachers is formed. And if we allow Pre-Service Teacher Education to weaken, it will have long term consequences of weakening the Teacher Education system as a whole. So the 12th plan is very important and is welcomed. It is supporting the revitalisation of the institutions, the DIET's, the colleges of Teacher Education and the Teacher Education system as a whole. Moreover, it signals us to revisit the quality of the pre-service Teacher Education curriculum at elementary and secondary levels. We need to think of the discipline of education as something which really encompasses all the levels of education at least in relation to school, right from pre-school to secondary education. When we articulate the concerns for the teacher, it should encompass pre-school education, elementary education and secondary Teacher Education.

Many people say that education entered into the university department wearing soft slippers when nobody was looking. There is a historical reason for this. During the British period, Teacher Education primarily happened in normal schools because there was a perception that Teacher

Education is basically 'practical' in nature. In other words, the approach they believed in was - 'skills' need to be given to teachers and these skills are best learnt by being in the school classroom.

Thus, the place and the role of the University for Teacher Education was very poorly conceptualised during the colonial period. And though Teacher Education entered into the university, for 20-30 years, nobody quite knew what role higher education could play in Teacher Education. Nobody knew what kind of research questions education departments could investigate. The nature of the discourse of education within higher education was poorly formulated. And most of the time, Teacher Education departments were very apologetic about their presence in the university and other departments in the university almost never took the education department seriously.

Very often, we sit tucked away in some corner of the university and people do not even notice that we are there. And when they look at our students it is almost like, “So you are going to be a teacher, what are you doing in University?” Today, as we revisit Teacher Education, we are also rethinking - 'Why do we want to be in the university?' Should we go back to being in school? We have a legitimate claim to being in the university but we need to define why we want to be in the university. And more importantly, what is the relationship we want to build with the school even though we continue to take a claim in the university. We can say with some confidence that while we have constantly emphasised internship, practice teaching and lesson planning, our relationship with schools is very uncomfortable and delinquent. So we need to revisit the relationship of the university with the schools as we conceptualise or reconceptualise Teacher Education.

Teacher Education programmes in India: Key Issues and Challenges

- 1. Privatisation of Teacher Education programmes:** The notion of higher the fees, the better will be the quality comes along with privatisation. However, what has happened is taking higher fees has not yet translated into better quality.
- 2. Inadequate teaching time:** Too many activities and task has led to a reduction in how much teaching time is actually available. This adversely affects the transaction of the curriculum. Developing a curriculum and transacting it at a curricular level needs to be coordinated well.
- 3. Delays and reduction in Internship period:** The internship period has been compressed. The control of the government in the admission process has sometimes resulted in delays which has also affected the internship period. If time is a constraint and even if we cannot extend the period of internship, an enhanced internship programme can be designed through the approach of the system of host teachers and lesson study.
- 4. Rigid and narrow mode of the Teacher Education programme:** The semester system has not been congruent with the large classroom size. Classrooms have become a place for evaluation rather than teaching and discussion for understanding. There is no space for learning that addresses rural education, gifted children, curriculum development and so on. For this, we can have a core curriculum as well as peripheral aspects in in-service programme if not in pre-service programmes, eg. a week long literacy programme, a programme on rural education (practical component), urban slum children, gifted children, international education, curriculum development cells in each school, etc. This kind of training can be given to our teachers in in-service programme. These are

some of the challenges we can meet by having short term programmes that would be flexible and would suit the timings of the teachers. This can make Teacher Education more relevant and comprehensive.

- 5. The deficit model of TE:** Existing TE models often examine a 'lack' – a lack of knowledge, skills and attitudes regarding how to teach. They seek to fulfill such needs through training programmes. There is an urgent need to shift the focus on the professional growth model of teachers rather than a deficit model.
- 6. Poor relationship between the sites of practice and theory:** Most of the schools don't welcome student teachers when they are sent to school for their internship. Secondly, we have not devised robust ways of bringing back into the university, the wisdom which the practising school teachers accumulate by being teachers. We have no channels by which school teachers can come into our university departments. So, we are not enabling professional knowledge to become a part of the discourse on Teacher Education. It depends on us if the university teachers and staff are not drawing upon the professional colleagues who are there in the school to strengthen the professionalization of knowledge. Hence the important question to ask is: What is the knowledge of the profession and how should this knowledge get articulated?

The way forward:

- 1. Build a relationship between site of practice and theory:** Typically in a university, the knowledge of profession gets articulated by writing and publishing in journals. But we all know that no teacher is going to read academic referee journals, even Teacher Educators barely do it. Can there be a space to create professionalization of knowledge which gets circulated between the school and

the university? So, as an education department, we could embark on an exciting and important adventure which no other department in the university has undertaken - to actively build a relationship between the site of practice which is the school and the site of the university department which is the higher education space.

2. Practising flexibility and professionalism:

We have to figure out how to build good synergistic relationship between these two spaces. We also need to think of how we can recognise professional colleagues in schools and in university and build more linkages between them. In fact, it is almost impossible for us in the university to take a one year sabbatical leave to teach in a school to renew our own professional knowledge. How can we strengthen our profession if we do not go back to the sites of practice? The revitalisation of our profession depends on our being able to boldly reconceptualise our relationship with schools. We do not have to see ourselves as below the school or above the school but we need to have a continuous relationship with these sites (schools).

3. Systematic articulation and understanding of theory:

We will have to think if we want to retain our space in the university and if we all believe that theory and theoretical knowledge is important then we will really have to think what is that theory we want our students to learn? And through the learning of that theory, what is it that we would want them to be able to do which they could not do without the theory? So, the systematic articulation and understanding of theory is something that we need to think about. It is a big task for Teacher Education because in India we missed the cognitive revolution bus. We missed it when the rest of the world in the 70's was moving from a skills based approach in Teacher Education towards a cognitive approach to think about human

understanding. In India we were almost stuck with competence and we did not move out of competence into understanding knowledge, belief of teachers and the formation of practice.

4. To build understanding of skills and competencies:

About our work we say we are building skills and competencies and rarely do we say we are building understanding. Most of the students want to know why, and do not question how. “Why” questions are coming out of theory. While student teachers want to know how, they also want to know why. And that's an indication to us that theory is not irrelevant to the profession but how theory becomes relevant is something which we as a community need to think a lot more about. It is not enough to give students to read but to discuss and talk about what we have read and experienced. In other words whatever experiences we give to our student teachers in the course of Teacher Education programme, somehow have to actually connect with the person of the student teacher. It has to connect with their thinking or their experience in a concrete way. We should want them to know that they know something today which they did not know yesterday.

5. Enhanced internship programme:

Creating system of host teachers and lesson study would be beneficial in an internship programme. Getting a group of teachers to regularly meet and discuss their lesson plans would be useful.

6. Need for diversification of the Teacher Education programme:

For this, we should have a core curriculum and then focus on the peripheral aspects in the in-service programme if not in the pre service training.

7. Person centric approach:

We are working with a “person” called the student teacher.

This person centric approach is a central feature of Teacher Education and we must understand how to strengthen this person centric approach. We need not make it sentimental; it is not about celebrating the individual but actually taking on the challenge of working with every individual who is with us. What is the biography each of our students are bringing into the classroom which we need to work? As teacher educators we all are concerned by how do we reach out and touch the persons with whom we are working. The centrality of the person is important.

8. Content and pedagogy of the curricula:

Initially Teacher Education was almost obsessively preoccupied with the disciplines and its transactions. And now we are only thinking about the methods as if methods get applied on disciplines and some pedagogy flows out. But today the thinking on how method and discipline interact to produce pedagogy has really changed. Today there is a lot more understanding that even method arises out of deep knowledge of the discipline. And to teach pedagogy, we need to also engage with content. All of us have experienced it. Most of the time when our student teachers do not seem to know what to say, we often think that they do not know the content. As a result, we are very frustrated that the student teachers would graduate without enough confidence on what they want to teach. Thus, we in Teacher Education want to constantly go back and revisit content knowledge. Now in the field there are many more robust ideas on the relationship of content knowledge with pedagogy especially in the idea of “pedagogic content knowledge” and we need to think about that a lot more. When we revisit Teacher Education curricula, we have to see how we are going to reposition content in our curricula and how are we going to make the relationship of pedagogy with content more

vibrant and bring in the content questions into Teacher Education itself.

9. Flexibility and varied ways of teaching:

There is never only one way of teaching well, there are several. We want our student teachers to think and reflect and form their own basis of practical judgement and discover their own genius for teaching. We are not trying to shape all of them in one mould. In fact, the varieties and the ways in which people teach are very important for students as experiences. So we are much more interested that our student teachers have to understand and reflect, figure out what works for them. And our work with them is really to enable them discover their own genius in being a teacher.

10. Teaching as a relational activity:

Teaching is a relational activity and Teacher Education is all the more a relational activity. This relational activity requires time because we are focussed on reflection, formation of judgement, opportunities to observe each other, reflect on what we are seeing, opportunities to look at classrooms (good and bad) and talk about what we have seen together as a professional group, undergo a range of experiences in the course of our teacher preparation and also opportunities to re-socialise because very often we are coming from schooling experiences and we do not want our student teachers to reproduce those experiences that we do not want our student teachers to reproduce. We want to change the way they think about the school itself and this requires time. Teacher Education needs time. And when we have time, we are able to work with our students more effectively. Unfortunately, most often we do not have time, which is the situation which most B.Ed programmes at least are in. We still try to have one on one conversation with our students. When we have contractual faculty in our institution and they are there only for 4 months, how are relationships going to get

built and how are we going to have time to revisit conversations we have had in order to move our student teachers from where they are to where we want them to be?

We in education are in some ways at much more advantage than other university disciplines. We

just have to stop being conservative and take bolder and logical steps in order to arrive at a kind of Teacher Education programme that we want to have. I think when we feel more bold about our own professional identities, we will have the inner confidence and determination that this must be done.

Chapter 2

Reflective Engagement In Teacher Education

'Learning from experience is enriched by reflecting upon experience. (Dewey, 1933)'

Background and Rationale: Ability to engage reflectively is critical for teachers. Self reflection enables pre-service teachers to construct meaning from their work in the classroom (Costa & Kallick, 2000). The reflective engagement facilitated by the teacher educators, co-learners and mentors help student teachers in relating theory to practice and in improving their decisions about what to teach and how to teach. Reflective engagement helps pre-service teachers to actively consider and reconsider beliefs and practices that allow them to move towards meta-cognition in teaching (Moon, 2004).

Reflection has not yet become a spontaneous activity in the profession of Teacher Education. There is a need to encourage not only students but teacher educators as well to engage reflectively with their work. Engaging reflectively with one's teaching is necessary to develop a sense of responsibility to students, to knowledge and to society.

Key Ideas for Reflective Engagement

1. **Meaning of reflective engagement:** There are various definitions of reflective engagement in academic literature and little consensus in teacher educators' use of the phrase.

John Dewey defined reflective engagement as "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge" (Dewey, 1933). To engage reflectively means to become aware and consciously respond to what is happening.

The term reflective engagement or reflective practice tends to be assigned multiple meanings. "For some, reflective practice simply refers to adopting a thinking approach

to practice. Others see it as self-indulgent navel gazing. For others still, it involves carefully structured and crafted approaches towards being reflective about one's experiences in practice" (Finlay, 2008).

However, self observation and awareness of what guides one's actions seem to be critical to the practice of reflective engagement.

Schön identifies two kinds of reflection- *reflection-on-action* and *reflection-in-action*. The former involves professionals to "consciously review, describe, analyze and evaluate their past practice with a view to gain insight to improve future practice". During reflection-in-action, "professionals are seen as examining their experiences and responses as they occur". However in both kinds of reflection, professionals "try to connect to their feelings and attend to relevant theory" (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Therefore it is necessary to train teachers to be reflective about their performance as a teacher, as it will help them to become more proficient in learning from theory and its application.

2. **Creating time and space:** The Teacher Education programs provide student teachers with an opportunity to engage in practice teaching in few specified schools. However, there is a lack of synchronization between the schools in which student teachers conduct the practice sessions and the Teacher Education institutions where they study. Therefore internship programs are generally not designed by reserving space and time to reflect over the teaching sessions soon after they happen. If this space is created, the senior teachers from the schools who mentor the student teachers as well as the faculty at the Teacher Education colleges can help student teachers to reflect upon their

practice.

3. Organization of TE course and pedagogy: Due to specific pattern of course organization, student teachers are exposed to parts of theory and practice at different times. As a result, they lack the opportunity to look at their own practice teaching sessions from a theoretical perspective. The teaching sessions are usually followed by feedback sessions. However, it mainly consists of expressing observations of the teaching practice rather than reflecting upon these observations.

4. Linking reflection to work outcomes: As far as the role played by Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) and student teachers is concerned, TEIs do not usually refer to recent research which could form the basis of their reflection. There is a tendency among teacher educators to consider that making contributions to research is not a part of their job. Thus the routine of linking theory with the practice has not become a part of the work culture in Teacher Education institutions. Similarly student teachers also have very low expectations from the course. They tend to focus more on acquiring the necessary skills and completing their degree.

5. Strategies for strengthening the practice of reflective engagement in the Teacher Education:

- a. The practice of engaging reflectively with experiences and thoughts needs to gain esteem in our daily lives.
- b. The program structure of present one year B.Ed course needs to be changed in terms of duration, synchronization of theory and practice, allotment of time and space to allow for reflective engagement.

6. Tools for reflective engagement:

- a. Focused group conversations.
- b. Journal writings coupled with practice teaching.

- c. Reflection oriented discussions
- d. Reflective diaries maintained by the students as well as the research guides during the course of their study
- e. Written assignments

7. Reflective Engagement in Theory: According to the theoretical tradition (Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1991) the main pillars of reflective engagement are as follows:

- a. Academic tradition: Where the main focus of reflection lies on looking on the role of subject matter in transforming students.
- b. Social efficacy: Where the focus of reflection lies on looking at important skills used during the practice teaching.
- c. Developmentalist tradition: Where the focus of reflection lies on observing the link between instruction and developmental stages of different learners in the classroom.
- d. Social reconstructionist tradition: Where the focus of reflection lies on looking at the link between use of skills that one has and the content that one is teaching with its potential to bring about social change.

8. Reflective Engagement in Practice: In a study conducted with a few student teachers in the area of reflective engagement, the following stages of reflection in practice were identified:

- a. Pre-reflective thinking: In order to emphasize the importance of engaging reflectively with practice, it is necessary to first enable student teachers to appreciate that knowledge is not something given or static but an evolving process. Here the emphasis is on trying to develop a quality of open-mindedness among student teachers.
- b. Practice of engaging in *reflection on action*: It is necessary to develop inner strength to be true to oneself by engaging reflectively on the details of the teaching by asking following questions:
'What' question: To be sensitive in the context of one's own classrooms and reflect upon its reality.

'How' question: To reflect upon the processes involved in teaching learning situations in their classrooms.

'Why' question: Reflecting upon the reason or rationale behind the action.

- c. Understanding the cyclical nature of the process of reflective engagement: Practice teaching sessions of student teachers are attended by peers and teachers. Student teachers are questioned on various aspects like the objectives of the lesson taught. These questions further aim to penetrate into the beliefs, attitudes and perception of student teachers thereby facilitating greater reflection.
- d. Understanding that reflective engagement is a continuous process and one has to be involved in the process of continuous evaluation while the teaching is going on and after it is over.

9. The role of reflective engagement in the life of a Teacher Education Institution:

Institutional mirroring is necessary to gauge how well they perform their work. In order to evaluate the institutions' performance the following factors could be taken into consideration:

- a. Whether they have worked in collaboration with foreign universities.
- b. What factors have they incorporated into their curriculum to address the needs of international schools?
- c. Are they competent enough to become consultants on matters related to school education?
- d. Have they organized conferences or created platforms to discuss about their instructional practices?
- e. Have they reflected upon the feedback given by the schools where student teachers of their institution were placed?

This could prove helpful in suggesting necessary

improvements.

Movies made of the teaching practices of students teachers and teachers of the institute could be used as a reference point for discussing the pros and cons of the teaching practice. Social networking sites could also be used as a platform for engaging in such discussions.

10. Student teacher's role in facilitating the practice of reflective engagement:

In order to ensure active participation of student-teachers in the practice of reflective engagement, the following factors could be taken into consideration:

- a. Providing student teachers with self reflection sheets after every practice session.
- b. Undertaking a performance appraisal of teacher educators by student teachers.
- c. Program evaluation by student teachers after the course is over.

11. Teacher educator's role in facilitating the practice of reflective engagement:

The teacher educators could consider the following factors to ensure effective reflective engagement in their classroom:

- a. Conducting a SWOC analysis (Strength, weakness, opportunities and challenges) at the beginning of the session
- b. Planning to achieve a goal that they have not achieved previously
- c. Self appraisal
- d. Engaging in research
- e. Engaging in extension work in order to reach out to the community at large in order to know about their views on matters related to school education. Community work can also act to sensitize students on various issues.

12. **Theories of action:** Argyris and Schon (1978) argue that people have mental maps about how to act in different situations. These maps guide their actions and not the theories they espouse. People generally hold two different theories of action about effective behavior- Espoused Theory and the Theory in Use.

Espoused theory can be explained as the words we use to convey what we do or we like others to think we do. The espoused theory of action for a particular situation is the answer one usually gives when he/she is asked about how she/he would behave under certain circumstances. However, the theory that actually governs one's action is the theory-in-use. As part of reflection, the teacher could look at her action and see how her espoused theory compares to her theory in action and then take a more informed decision about the class room practice. If educators are to increase their knowledge of teaching and of themselves as learners, they need to make explicit their espoused theories and theories in use and discover any inconsistencies between the two.

In Teacher Education, we could bring this reflection to critical components like the practice feedback session. For example, when a teacher educator questions the student teacher about why she didn't explain the meaning of the difficult words to the students while reading the chapter, it would be important for the teacher educator to reflect and find out if this is driven by her espoused theory of 'unless I tell them, how will they ever learn' or a deeper underlying need to point out errors in students' work to gain respect.

Reflection is difficult and it takes time to arrive at an introspective and honest response to situations. Therefore it is usually difficult to get an authentic, thoughtful and reflective answer by simply asking people about their reasons for doing something.

13. **Demystifying Single and Double loop learning for TE:** Each theory in use has a model. According to Argyris and Schon there are 3 things in the model:

- Governing variables (dimensions one wants to keep in control)
- Strategy (how one wants to act)
- Consequences of action

Every action has governing variables. These are the dimensions, which people are willing to keep in acceptable limits. There are intended and unintended consequences of an action. When consequences of an action are intended, that is when they match with the actor's expectations and the theory in use is confirmed. There can be a mismatch between action and intended consequences of an action. An action can also have unintended consequences. Argyris and Schon suggest two responses to such a mismatch.

The first response: When there is a mismatch between action and intended consequences, people look for another strategy that will work within their governing variables. Chosen or given goals are not questioned but they are operationalized by using another strategy. Argyris and Schon call it single loop learning. In this case, reflection upon action is directed towards making the strategy more effective.

The second response: When there is a mismatch between action and intended consequences, an alternate response to choosing another strategy is of questioning governing variables and of subjecting them to critical scrutiny. This is described as double loop learning. This may lead to an alteration in the governing variables and shift in the way strategies and consequences are framed. Reflection here is more fundamental. The basic assumptions behind actions are confronted. Processes involved in double loop learning can be discomfoting as hypotheses are publicly tested. The teachers involved in double loop learning will look at their governing variables. They will ask themselves questions like, 'What decides the way I teach?' 'What am I really teaching for?'

Both single loop and double loop learning have their own place of relevance. But perhaps double loop learning needs a larger voice as it brings to light hidden assumptions and guides one's own practice of teaching.

In order to make their reflections more authentic, after their teaching, the teachers could undergo an exercise of thinking systematically about what was going in the

class room and what was going on within their own minds. This will help them to consider the reasons for choosing a particular action in the classroom and later think about the relevance of this reason to effective learning and teaching. This two column approach is illustrated as follows:

Box 2.1: Two column approach	
What was happening in the classroom?	What was happening within you? (Thoughts & Feelings)

Summary: Key ideas in reflective engagement:

1. TE programs need to provide space for reflective practices.
2. Reflective exercises play a crucial role in bridging theory and practice
3. The routine of linking theory with practice needs to become part of the TE and school culture
4. Teacher educators need to be well versed with the reflective engagement proess.
5. Teacher educators can become more aware of how they reflect-in-action and reflect-on-action.
6. Self assessment can become a core component of reflection in TE.
7. Double loop learning is essential to bring out the hidden assumptions and beliefs that teacher educators and student teachers have about teaching-learning.
8. Using tools like the two-column approach can be beneficial.

Chapter 3

Assessments in Teacher Education

“Teach, mark, and move on: that's the old paradigm. Today's classrooms have changed. It is important to show the students where they are, how to improve, and where to go from here... It's no longer about “this is your mark and that's the end of the story”.

-a Secondary School Teacher

Background and Rationale: Assessments are a vital part of education. Teachers are constantly evaluating students comparing between what was intended (learning, progress, behavior) and what was achieved. They value assessments because it shows the growth in the student. Further, teachers today must be comfortable in teaching a diverse student population with increasing expectations from the government and the community. They must be able to assess with increasing accuracy the effectiveness of their own teaching. With the advent of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), they also need to have rich documentation by which they can track student learning. Hence, the increased responsibility on Teacher Education programs in India to prepare such competent and caring teachers.

However, poor assessment practices within Teacher Education programs can reinforce outdated ideas. Student teachers need to experience valid and reliable assessments being practised within the programs so that they can meet the challenges that await them. Unfortunately, current assessments in Teacher Education are very information oriented and often lack validity and authenticity. Hence, a discussion on how to strengthen such assessments is important.

Key ideas for Assessments in Teacher Education:

1. **Defining assessment:** One of the key points made during the session related to the definition of assessment. Usually, we define

assessment in terms of a visible output; say a mark sheet or report. However, assessments could also be really viewed as processes. Some of the definitions shared were:

- The process of collecting, synthesizing, and interpreting information to aid the teacher in decision making (Airasian, 1994)
- Systematic and ongoing process of gathering, analyzing and using information from multiple sources to draw inferences about the characteristics of students, programs of an institution for the purposes of making informed decisions to improve the learning process (Linn & Miller, 2005)

Thus focus on the process of assessment is what would help the student teachers see it as ever evolving and a continuing action. It would also help center their attention towards different sub-processes within this series of continuing steps. It would also help reduce the importance of grades/marks that are considered as the only purpose of all learning activity and which lead to more mastery oriented approach (Ames, 1995).

2. **Current assessments in Teacher Education are low on validity and reliability:** NCFTE (2010) describes how Teacher Education programs need a systematic evaluation of all the facets of professional training - knowledge and understanding of educational theory, practical field skills and competencies, professional attitudes and values, curriculum transaction and evaluation of learning. However, most speakers felt that Teacher Education programmes are theory based rather than process based and have short-term goals. They emphasized that the Teacher Education programmes are just one year long and further cut short by delayed admissions. Hence most colleges are in a hurry to do just the basic and use traditional assessment techniques that are

already prescribed in the syllabus, which hardly measure the students' creativity and learning. The B.Ed course is heavily scheduled and packed by teacher-directed activities with little opportunity for reflection and self study.

The Justice Verma Report (2012) states that Teacher Education colleges should shift their perspectives and practices with various parameters linked to assessment. The report indicates that current assessment practices are judgmental, conducted through competitive tests for ranking students on narrow measures of action leading to stress and anxiety. In contrast, assessment should be for learning and self assessment to enhance motivation through conscious non-threatening processes to record progress over time.

The speakers mentioned that unless there is provision for freedom, space, engagement and reflection on theory and practice within the TE program, assessment practices too will largely be constrained. Hence, the Teacher Education program requires a structure that can fit such assessment practices. Only when the structure is right can the direction of assessments change. They identified several weaknesses in the current system.

Box 3.1: Weaknesses in the current system of assessments in Teacher Education

- Obsession with grades
- Insufficient time for assessments
- Poor development process for different assessment techniques
- Less trust in students
- Little communication with the student on aspects one wants them to develop
- Poor accountability on the part of the teacher
- Low risk taking among educators to try new assessments
- Poor collaboration on the part of students and teachers to make assessments authentic
- Terminal summative exams are not challenging and undermine the entire effort of the year

3. Increasing Trust in TE assessments

Assessments can be more trustworthy if they are authentic and evidence-based. An authentic assessment usually involves a task for students to perform and a shared rubric by which their performance on the task will be evaluated. Authentic assessment measures and samples the actual knowledge, skills and dispositions required of teachers as they are used in diverse teaching and learning contexts.

<i>Box 3.2: Comparing Assessments</i>	
Traditional Assessment	Authentic Assessment
Selecting a response	Performing a task
Contrived	Real life
Recall/ recognition	Construction/ Application
Teacher structured	Learner structured
Indirect evidence	Direct evidence

According to Wiggins (1990), “Authentic tasks involve "ill-structured" challenges and roles that help students rehearse for the complex ambiguities of the "game" of adult and professional life. Traditional tests are more like drills, assessing static and too-often arbitrarily discrete or simplistic elements of those activities.”

Bringing more trust to assessments in Teacher Education can be done in multiple ways. First, they must be broad enough to integrate multiple kinds of knowledge and skill and also bridge theory and practice. They must also involve multiple sources of evidence about competence. It is important that the assessment covers the process of learning over a period. Finally, sharing explicit criteria through which the student teachers would be assessed may be tried.

4. Using Rubrics in TE Assessments

Wiggins (1990) uses the term 'educative assessment' to describe techniques that should aim mainly to improve, rather than to audit, student performance. His message is that the nature of assessment influences what is learned and the degree of meaningful

engagement by students in the learning process. Wiggins contends that assessments should be authentic, with feedback and opportunities for revision to improve rather than simply audit learning.

Rubrics can be a very useful detailed tool which can describe different aspects of the task and go into the depth of the activity that is being assessed. It is a tool which gives the teachers and the students a way to work together within a broad structure. The nature of a TE program can allow rich interactions to take place between adult student teachers and teacher educators through co-developing and using a rubric. Further, a rubric can also expose the student teachers to their strengths and to areas where improvement could be sought. The general idea that emerged very strongly from teacher participants is that the use of rubrics helps to bring marked improvement in student learning and performance more consistently, reliably and efficiently.

Box 3.3: Focus on Improvement, not comparison

At an NGO in Mumbai that trains teachers from the community, evaluation is carried out with the objective of improvement and not merely to grade. The teacher educators use a rubric to track the journey of learning for the student teacher. The tracking is seen from level one to level four. There are descriptors for each level of progress on the scale of teaching. So one can have a teacher at level 1 who believes that learning is a product of teaching and that learners are passive but with training and experience may move her to level 4 where the teacher may begin to understand that the approach of learning should be constructive and learners can construct their own knowledge.

Although rubrics are often used by teachers to

grade student work many authors argue that they can serve another, more important, role as well: When used by students as part of a formative assessment of their works in progress, rubrics can teach as well as evaluate (Arter and McTighe 2001; Stiggins 2001). In the era of self-directed learning such formative assessments can be very effective in TE programs.

Box 3.4: Rubrics and academic performance

The linkage between rubrics and learning has been explored by several researchers, with results generally suggesting higher achievement and deeper learning by students who have rubrics to guide their work. Petkov and Petkova (2006) examined the final grades for a short-term project in a post-graduate level course entitled Management of Business Information. The two-group post-test design involved assigning a similar project to two classrooms with 20 students each. The students in one of the classrooms were provided with the project rubric at the beginning of the semester. Comparison of the project grades attained by students in the two classrooms showed that the mean percentage grade for the section using rubrics was significantly higher than the control group of students.

5. Bringing novelty and flexibility in TE assessments

Assessments may get very monotonous and routine and cease to provide quality feedback to the teacher. Further, insistence on only one kind of assessment makes them invalid to gauge student progress. Hence, there is a need to use diverse forms of assessment and understand the different kinds of assessments (norm-referenced, criterion referenced) and their impact on student learning. Further, a focus on self-assessment tests also called as the Ipsative tests which means self comparison either in same domain over time or to other domains for the same student would be a good

tool to use in Teacher Education.

Box 3.5: Defining Ipsative Assessments

Ipsative derives from Latin, and means of the self. An ipsative assessment in an education/learning context compares a test-taker's results against his or her previous results. Ipsative assessment can be used for objective measures (e.g. did I get a better score?) and also for more subjective measures (e.g. am I more confident about something?). This is how I measure myself at the practice teaching – I am pleased that I am doing better than I have before. I'm not worried if this meets some external criteria or if I'm better or worse than other people. Ipsative assessment is used in everyday life, and features heavily in physical education and also in computer games.

Encouraging pupils to beat their previous scores can take peer pressure out of situations and eliminates the competitive element associated with norm-based referencing. It can be particularly useful for children with learning disabilities and can improve motivation.

The speakers shared that ipsative measures are hardly used to improve learning and have great potential to be used in Teacher Education. Self reflection is now being included in colleges of education but whether it is being used as a useful and valid tool to bring improvement in the learning of the student is still not clear.

A strong case was made for using Portfolios as an interesting and creative assessment technique. Portfolios are personalized, long term documentation of student mastery of course material. An essential element of portfolios is student reflection on their own learning and progression towards the mastery of the material documented in the portfolio. According to Jon Mueller a portfolio is “a collection of a student's work specifically selected to tell a particular story

about the student”.

As such, portfolios are windows of the meta-cognitive process of students. Another comprehensive definition: student portfolios are a collection of evidence, prepared by the student and evaluated by the faculty member, to demonstrate mastery, comprehension, application, and synthesis of a given set of concepts.

Box 3.6: Portfolios as Useful Assessments

Portfolio assessment strategies provide a structure for long-duration, in-depth assignments. The use of portfolios transfers much of the responsibility of demonstrating mastery of concepts from the professor to the student. Timothy Slater has given an interesting analysis of the characteristics of a Portfolio.

Instructor Preparation Time: Minimal, after the course learning objectives have been clearly identified.

Preparing Your Students: Clear expectations must be communicated to students at the beginning of the course.

Class Time: None.

Disciplines: Appropriate for all.

Class Size: Most applicable in small classes (n <30); possible in large classes with pre-existing infrastructure.

Special Classroom/Technical

Requirements: None.

Individual or Group Involvement: Individual.

Analyzing Results: Intense and requires a scoring rubric.

Other Things to Consider: Materials are presented in the natural language of the student and will vary widely within one class.

To create a high quality portfolio, students must organize, synthesize, and clearly describe their achievements and effectively communicate what

they have learned. Portfolios offer the teacher and student an in-depth knowledge of the student as a learner. This means that the teacher can individualize instruction for the student. Weak areas can be strengthened and areas of mastery built. Learners are involved in this process of tracking their learning and can take control of their learning.

An E-portfolio can be seen as a type of learning record that provides actual evidence of achievement. E-portfolios help to foster an independent and autonomous way of thinking, according to Strivens J. This is in large part because people must focus on their collective work; think about how it will be portrayed, and what the work says about them as an individual. The individual is then in charge of their learning and the choice of where to demonstrate their proficiency. People are also forced to reflect on what they have learned and how they plan to build and improve in the future. This helps people to become more critical thinkers and helps them to develop their writing and multimedia skills. Results of a comparative research, by M. van Wesel and Prop, between paper based portfolios and electronic portfolios in the same setting, suggest that use of an electronic portfolio leads to better learning outcomes.

Many speakers felt that the potential of using the Portfolio as an assessment tool to document teacher professional competencies by reflecting on the artifacts of their teaching practice needs to be explored as it is a robust evidence of teacher competencies and can be a very versatile tool. In fact one of the ideas that emerged is that we should not look for neat submissions as final outputs. Rough ideas, notes and chits that student teachers would put that shows the efforts the students have made towards understanding their own learning could be valuable.

Further, equal importance needs to be paid to the process as well as the output.

Box 3.7: Flexibility in assessments

Production - Process

Tests
Drawings
Write-ups
Concept maps
Context maps
Venn diagrams
Portfolios/E portfolios

Product - Outcomes

Artifacts
Models -Static or dynamic
Reports
Records of achievement
Interview/questionnaires

6. Rules of Evidence

Assessment must be based on what is sometimes termed the 'rules of evidence' - validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility. This is also a good teaching and assessment practice and ensures the best learning outcomes for students.

Box 3.8: Principles of assessment:

- Validity means that the evidence relates to the unit competency, addresses essential skills and knowledge, dimensions of competency and employability skills.
- Reliability means that the assessment tool and process will produce consistent outcomes when applied by a range of assessors in a range of contexts.
- Fairness means that the assessment will not disadvantage any person and will take into account the characteristics of the person being assessed.
- Flexibility means that the assessment tool and process allow for assessment in a range of assessment contexts.
- Sufficiency relates to the quality and quantity of evidence assessed. It requires collection of enough appropriate evidence to ensure that all aspects of competency have been satisfied repeatedly.

Teacher education colleges need to ensure their assessment and evaluation fits the basic standards and then move towards bringing in novelty in assessments.

7. Bridging the theory - Practice gap Through assessments

The NCFTE 2010 suggests that theory courses must be designed and conducted such that they provide greater space to generate a deep understanding of linkages between knowledge, learner, learning and methods of teaching.

There was a general consensus about assessments in Teacher Education being separate for theory and practicum. Hence, it is very often treated as if they are two entirely different aspects. Most speakers stressed the need to bridge this divide. For instance, understanding learners is a part of psychology theory and could be easily integrated with practice.

For instance, student teachers can observe children as part of their training and write their observations and questions linking it to theory. The active interaction between the teacher educator and the student teacher would bring these two aspects closer.

There was a feeling amongst speakers as well as participants that practical aspects of the teaching course needs more rigorous assessments than what is done now. Several interesting ideas to make assessment of internship more meaningful were shared.

Some questions still remain. How does one assess reflections? What would count as a good reflection? How does one keep the costs low for engaging school teachers in student teacher mentoring and evaluation for as long as three weeks?

Box 3.9: Some interesting ideas at a University in Mumbai

- Increasing the time span for internship to three weeks – leading to longer and more intensive assessments
- Student teachers can carry out a case study on one school student
- Partnering with schools to involve in-service teachers to collaborate and participate in the assessment and providing remuneration
- Comprehensive assessment during internship on various aspects like handling administrative responsibilities, academic responsibilities, co curricular activities, etc.
- Self reflections for their practice lessons to be written in three phases- before the lesson, during the lesson and after the delivery of the lesson.

8. Peer assessments in Teacher Education

There were different views on Peer assessment. One view point was that peer reviews cannot be a valid assessment method as it is highly subjective and students generally tend to give good remarks to each other. They are unlikely to be objective for the fear of being marked poorly.

On the other hand, peer review can be very useful to the growth of the student teacher during the course and has immense value. One of the ways in which students internalize the characteristics of quality work is by evaluating the work of their peers. Peer assessments or peer evaluation can help to raise the bar by exposing learners to the process of assessing the work of their peers in an objective manner.

Hence, even if peer assessment has drawbacks in terms of students overrating their peers, the benefits outweigh the negatives. And if the weightage to the activity is less than one or two percent of the entire course then it does not really skew results. The process of experiencing peer feedback is very important in the teacher

training program.

Box 3.10: Peer Assessments

Vu and Alba's (2007) study on university students in Australia indicated that peer assessment had a positive effect on students' learning experiences with most students acknowledging learning from both, the process and from their peers. Their study claims that peer assessment is beneficial to students' learning and development as professionals. The researchers however enumerate several conditions for the successful implementation of the peer assessment process. These conditions were:- 1. Provide adequate and appropriate preparation for the successful implementation of peer assessment; 2. Specify the objectives of the course as well as the purpose of peer assessment; 3. Determine the degree of teachers' assistance given during the peer assessment process; and 4. Teachers' handling of fruitful discussion periods following peer assessment.

In a TEI in Mumbai, the practice of having peer assessment lessons in small groups was piloted after training. Overall, the results suggested that student teachers had a positive view towards peer assessment. They stated several benefits such as learning from each other, opportunity to take responsibility for giving and receiving feedback on a given criteria. There did seem to be some instances of higher rating of scores in general. For instance, student teachers would have given an above average score when an average score was more appropriate. Also a tendency was noticed to avoid low marks although qualitatively they wrote constructive

negative criticism quite comfortably. 93% felt peer assessment improved their skills of giving feedback. 20% felt more involvement of the teacher educators was required. Teacher educators felt the benefits of collaborative learning, learning to rate a peer, learning to give and receive feedback is more important than the marking. So some part of learning should be evaluated through peer assessments.

Summary: Key points for assessment in Teacher Education

1. Formal system of education struggling to deal with changed concept of assessment.
2. Teacher education has seen changes in developing skills but no improvements in assessment.
3. Perceived pattern of assessment drives the performance of trainees. How far is peer assessment desirable?
4. Difficulty in aligning with expectations of society that has not understood the changed nature of assessments.
5. Current assessments in Teacher Education lacks validity and authenticity.
6. Peer assessments have a valuable role in Teacher Education and training.
7. Teaching process today emphasizes constructivist learning but the assessments are very traditional and rigid.
8. Assessments are still seen as judgmental with a grading system and not as a helping and developing process.
9. Use rubrics which can be designed for the evaluation of a specific task.
10. Use descriptors rather than judgments.
11. Undue importance to one single terminal assessment, mostly theoretical.
12. Lack of scientific teacher developed rubrics.

Chapter 4

Bridging The Gap- Schools and Teacher Education Institutes

“Are we training teachers to really teach? What is that teaching that we are talking about? What relation does Piaget have with what I am doing in the classroom? None! I have in no case any understanding of what scaffolding means or what Vygotsky is all about. Forget talking about constructivism. So that is a huge gap. If there is no community between schools and teacher educators then what is it that we are doing together I honestly wonder whether we are even beginning to look at what is the meaning of teaching and what is the meaning of learning”.

- a speaker at the seminar.

Background and Rationale

Teacher Education and school education have a symbiotic relationship. Developments in both these sectors mutually reinforce the concerns necessary for the qualitative improvement of the entire spectrum of education. Thus the Teacher Education curriculum needs to be in consonance with the school education curriculum and a teacher needs to be prepared in relation to the needs and demands arising out of the changing school context. The expectations of the school system from a teacher change from time to time, with the changing social, economic and political contexts. The issue of Teacher Education accordingly has to be discussed in the much wider and changing context and demands of school education.

“Professional development, if it is to be focused on student learning, at some point must be tailored to address the difficulties encountered by real students in real classrooms as well as broader systemic objectives” (Elmore, 2002). In order to address these issues and prepare teachers for the dynamic school environment, it is important that schools and Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) work closely with each other.

Key Ideas for Bridging The Gap Between Schools And Teacher Education Institutes

1. **Teacher-preparedness for dynamic school environment remains a challenge:** One of the key issues in bridging the gap between schools and Teacher Education Institutes is of teacher preparedness for dynamic school environment. Most of the speakers were of the opinion that although this issue is widely recognized and experienced, it is left only as a topic of conversation and little dialogue and action. School education is no more restricted to textbook knowledge. New dimensions are being continuously added to it, leading to a more dynamic environment. However, the main problem faced by schools is the unavailability of teachers who can adapt to such a dynamic environment. As far as the student teachers are concerned, they find it increasingly difficult to adapt to such an environment mainly because there is a disconnect between teacher preparedness and the reality of school classrooms.

Therefore, it is necessary to have a strong alliance between Teacher Education Institutes and schools to work hand in hand to resolve this issue of teacher preparedness and bridge the gap between them.

2. **Trouble in getting actual subject periods for practice teaching in schools:** Practice teaching sessions in schools are a key area of strong TE but remain ineffectively managed. There seem to be issues that plague practice teaching from the perspective of the TEI for which they hold the school responsible and vice-versa. Heads of the Teacher Education Institutions expressed their concerns regarding the problems experienced while

accommodating practice teaching program in the school timetable. Most of the times, the schools seemed to allot only the drawing/ P.T classes to the practising teacher. Students during these classes are not in a frame of mind to compromise on their co-curricular activities. At times, the practice teaching sessions might even be a repetition of a unit already taught to them. This leads to a general environment of indiscipline prevalent in the classrooms. It thus becomes a struggle for a practising teacher to manage a class at its lowest motivation level and at the same time focus on the lesson.

Schools, on the other hand, tend to have certain levels of expectations from TEIs and practicing teachers while permitting them for their practice teaching program. However, these expectations are usually not adequately met. The student-teachers tend to restrict their knowledge to what has to be taught in a particular practice session. Hence they are seen as poor on content knowledge. Schools also felt that student-teachers have less grasp on technology which makes it more difficult for them to adapt in the tech savvy “twenty-first century classrooms”. Educating student-teachers on ICT (Information and Communications Technology) gains relevance in this context. Neither TE colleges nor schools can be held solely responsible to bridge the gap between these institutions. However, issues aside, there are infrequent conversations between schools and TEIs. Hence, it is important to create time and space for such dialoguing so that both the institutions can understand each other well.

- 3. Action points to help schools and TEIs collaborate:** The frequent interactions between the school and the TEI could look at the critical factors that influence school functioning and teacher preparation.

To begin with, it has been largely identified

that a huge gap exists between the school curriculum and TE curriculum. *Active involvement of experienced school teachers* in the formulation of TE curriculum could prove to be a useful solution.

Parents and management are critical stakeholders in the way schools function. Hence, *internships and practice teacher programs will need to take into consideration the demands that are placed on schools* by these stakeholders. The technology being used by the schools and that by the TEI *needs to be in sync*.

Finally, current teachers in schools could play a more active role in guiding and mentoring the student teachers during the school experience sessions. Student teachers hence could work more in collaboration with existing school teachers. For example, if student teachers and school teachers sit together and work on a lesson plan well ahead of time, it might be possible for student teachers to teach certain units during subject period itself. Also, instead of width (sessions with different classrooms), the practice teaching could explore depth (a few sessions with the same classroom for the student teacher so that she may form the connections and have a sense of continuity).

Theory and practice need to be closely linked in teacher preparation. One of the main problems faced by student teachers was the difficulty they faced in adapting to actual classroom situations and in finding a link between the theory they have learned and what happens in schools. Hence, from the TEI perspective, the focus should be on more pragmatic content, building opportunities to draw out the links between theory and practice and improving the micro-teaching skills of student-teachers. An apprenticeship with a senior teacher could also prove helpful. Workshops could be conducted regularly, where student-teachers could share their reflections (different from feedback) during the

apprenticeship period. It could also be helpful in learning new methodologies and pedagogies. Later, one could return to the same schools for practice teacher sessions as well.

Feedbacks is also an important area of Teacher Education. When done reflectively by the student teacher herself, it helps assess her growth as a teacher. Feedback by a school headmaster or a school teacher along with the teacher educator is important too to get a more theoretically and experientially informed perspective. Similarly on the part of teacher educators, it is important to look into the extent to which they themselves observe and experience school classrooms. This is crucial because it will allow the teacher educators to alter and update their methods of training the student teachers according to changing classroom scenarios.

Finally, *entering government schools for Teacher Education* could be useful. These are large sites of internship opportunities for student-teachers and could offer a mutually beneficial solution for schools that are in search of teaching support. However, one should also be careful to take into consideration the differences in contexts while bridging the gap between government schools and TE institutes. It might be useful to think through on how to bring rural schools within the purview of teacher education. In order to ensure greater inclusivity in the nature of Teacher Education, it is important for TE colleges and schools to work hand in hand.

Benefits of bridging the gap

If the gap between the schools and Teacher Education institutes is bridged, its benefits will be manifold. As far as schools are concerned, collaboration with TEIs would give them an opportunity to be involved in the education of new teachers. It could also prove helpful for in-service development of staff within the school.

Above all, it “increases the school's capacity of innovation and knowledge development through support from teacher educators and through student teachers' development and research activities” (European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2007). TE institutions, on the other hand have the opportunity to relate the curriculum of Teacher Education more closely to the complex reality within the school. This would provide student teachers the required exposure to a more realistic learning environment.

This collaboration is particularly important for student teachers because they are the main stakeholders involved in the activity. The students will get a more realistic view of the profession, allowing them to better reflect on the “breadth of the profession”. It would also prove helpful in reducing the 'practice shock' which many student-teachers tend to experience towards the end of their course. Even at the system level, such collaborations prove to be useful in “moving towards a more coherent and integrated approach to Teacher Education that links initial education to induction and continuous professional development”.

Summary: Key points for inclusive education

1. Teacher Education and school education have a symbiotic relationship.
2. Professional Teacher Education needs to address the real issues of classroom learning.
3. Teacher preparedness is a major challenge for schools
4. TEIs need more empathy and support from schools.
5. Expectation gap between schools and TEIs needs to be bridged.
6. Partnership models between TEIs and schools are beneficial to the school, student teacher and the TEIs.

Chapter 5

Autonomy Of The Learner in Teacher Education

Background and Rationale:

The shift from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered curriculum has resulted in the idea of learner autonomy and independence. This reshaping of teacher and learner roles has brought about a radical change in the distribution of power and authority that plagues traditional classrooms. Learners today are said to have the 'capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action' (Little, 1991). Autonomous learners are expected to assume great responsibility and take charge of their own learning. However, learner autonomy does not mean that the role of the teacher becomes redundant and she/he abdicates his/her control over the learning process.

To what extent is learner autonomy being practised in teacher education? How comfortable are both student teachers and teacher educators with the idea of learner autonomy? What are the effective means through which learner autonomy could be achieved? How do we maintain a balance between learner autonomy and teacher responsibility? These are critical questions that teacher education needs to address.

Key Ideas for learner autonomy in Teacher Education

1. Meaning of learner autonomy: Holec defines learner autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Little, 1994). According to him, this ability is not inborn and hence has to be achieved either through natural means or through formal learning in a 'systematic and deliberate way'. "Learner autonomy requires the learner's full involvement in planning, monitoring and evaluating his or her learning. Such involvement in turn requires the development

of explicit skills of reflection and analysis." (Little, 2004). According to Little, this definition talks about how to learn 'intentionally'.

On a more general note, the term autonomy has come to be used in at least five ways (Benson & Voller, 1997):

- a. For situations in which learners study entirely on their own.
- b. For a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning.
- c. For an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education.
- d. For the exercise of learners' responsibility for their own learning.
- e. For the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning.

2. Importance of learner autonomy: It is argued that learner autonomy is capable of solving two persistent educational problems. The first of these problems is lack of motivation (Little, 2004). According to a large body of empirical research in social psychology, autonomy is a "feeling free and volitional in one's actions" and is a basic human need. It is nourished by and in turn nourishes, our intrinsic motivation, our proactive interest in the world around us" (Deci, 1995). This explains how learner autonomy solves the problem of learner motivation. Autonomous learners draw on their intrinsic motivation when they accept responsibility for their own learning and commit themselves to develop the skills of reflective self-management in learning and this success in learning strengthens their intrinsic motivation.

The second problem is that of the gulf that exists between the learner and the content of learning. (Little, 2004). Provision of learner

autonomy can solve this problem because autonomous learners' “very engagement with the content and process of learning means that what they learn becomes part of what they are”. Usually, autonomous learners are motivated and reflective and hence their learning is efficient and effective.

3. **Perceptions of learner autonomy:** Adamson, Wilkinson and Alderheim have theorized that cultural contexts and educational context influence learner autonomy. The following two studies described below reflect the perception of student teachers and teacher educators.

4. **A Study on student teachers' preferences:** An exploratory research conducted to study the perceptions of student teachers towards their learning in a B.Ed. college in Mumbai was shared by a teacher educator. The study identified four main aspects of learning:

- a. Aspects for which only teachers were responsible
- b. Aspects for which only students were responsible
- c. Aspects for which both students and teachers were equally responsible
- d. Aspects of learner autonomy in different facets of the B.Ed. course like teaching of theory, teaching practice and research projects

The main findings of the study are as follows.

Student teachers want Autonomy in:

- a. Choice of courses and their combinations
- b. Theory learning: theory to be uploaded in a common forum for the purpose of self study.
- c. Classroom discussion to focus on actual problem solving.
- d. Greater flexibility with regard to research projects and action Research Projects.
- e. Self assessment.
- f. Greater flexibility in lesson planning.
- g. Greater flexibility in assessments.

5. **A Study on Teacher Educators' Preference:**

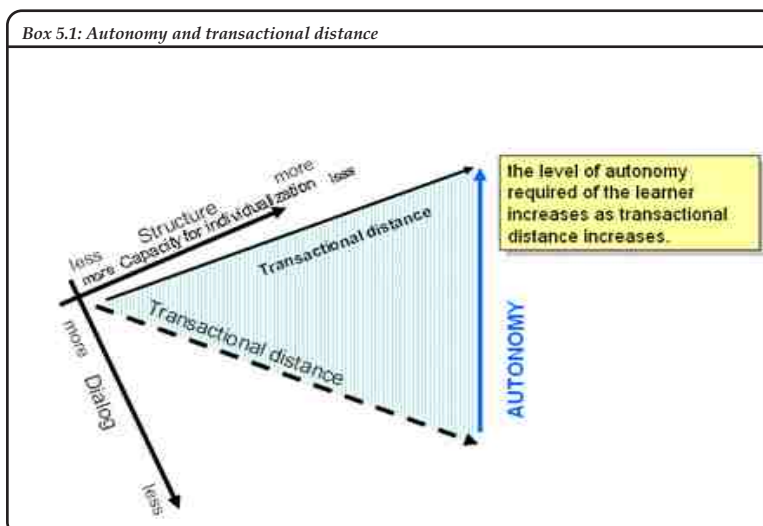
This study is based on a survey of teacher educators. The aim of the study is to understand the views of Teacher Educators towards giving autonomy to the learner. In general, Teacher Educators showed no opposition to learner autonomy, the reaction was rather mixed. There were certain areas where the teachers felt providing learner autonomy was necessary and at the same time, there were certain areas where they strongly resisted learner autonomy. There were several reasons that emerged in this study for resisting learner autonomy:

- a. Students not capable of taking up the responsibility which comes with greater autonomy.
- b. Lack of trust in their capability to deal with autonomy productively.
- c. Fear of loss of control and inability to meet the demands of the class with greater autonomy.
- d. Managing big classrooms requires the teacher to exercise some amount of control for its functioning.

6. **Practicing Learner Autonomy in Teacher Education:**

According to Moore's Theory of transactional distance, transactional distance is a “psychological and communication space to be crossed, a space of potential misunderstanding between the inputs of instructor and those of the learner” (Moore, 1991). It is a function of two variables: dialogue and structure. Transactional distance increases when there is a decrease in structure and dialogue. With an increasing transactional distance, there is a simultaneous increase in learner autonomy as well.

The choice of having more structure and dialogue in other words more transactional distance increases learner autonomy. The amount of transactional distance one wants to provide to student teachers depends on the teacher. While there is a lot of apprehension



surrounding provision of greater learner autonomy, there have also been a few attempts made by teacher educators to promote learner autonomy. For instance in one of the Mumbai based college of Education the 'Tiffin box' concept was adopted wherein pre-decided and pre-recorded lectures were played for a week during recess. There was no compulsion with regard to attendance in these classes. However, it was noticed that student teachers voluntarily attended these classes. A quiz was given at the end of the lecture which was also answered collaboratively.

Such experiments help to measure the response of students to such methods aimed at providing greater autonomy is a positive action. A strong concern that emerged is whether students are ready and there is preparedness to be responsible for their own autonomy. Many teacher educators were of the opinion that sometimes, learners tend to take their capabilities for granted. The general feeling was that learners should be responsible before they are granted autonomy.

Four major features were identified which were considered essential for achieving learner autonomy:

- Active engagement
- Constant and conscious reflection
- Greater accountability
- Trust in the learners

One of the ways of ensuring accountability on the part of learners is to train them in making their own learning design. A learning design is a plan of action that a learner implements to monitor his/her own learning at every stage of the instruction. It ensures life-long learning skills. A learning design with carefully structured reflective exercises would serve to develop meta-cognitive knowledge among learners. One of the ideas that emerged was The PACE model.

The PACE model needs to be practiced on learners prior to joining the course, during the course and after the course in order to ensure productive use of their autonomy.

Box 5.2: Learner Autonomy

- a. Pedagogy of choice: Provide different approaches and activities to address the different learning styles as well as intelligences. As student teachers experience these, they will be in a better position to use it later in their own school.
- b. Pedagogy of time: Encourage an environment where errors are tolerated. Give students opportunities to take their time to answer.
- c. Pedagogy of cooperation: It involves exchange of ideas, information among the learners.
- d. Pedagogy of resources: Encourage students to utilize all resources provided by the institution to the maximum on their own.

<i>Box 5.3: PACE model</i>		
P	Profile analysis	personal details, demographic details and psychological tendencies
A	Apperceptive Mass Analysis	entry behavior, prior knowledge about self goals, motivation and subject knowledge
C	Contribution Analysis	Contributions during the course
E	Evaluation Analysis	students themselves assess their own learning, significance of their learning and analyze their performance and the final reflection

The above ideas can be supported by several activities like collaborative sharing, self learning for skills and assessment free participation. The teacher is to act as a facilitator and co-partner in learning.

Use of ICT in bringing in autonomy for learners seemed to be a strong suggestion from the speakers. An innovative idea called CLEN (Cooperative Learning Electronic Network) which is a virtual network model that facilitates teaching-learning was introduced.

Simultaneously a social networking site was also launched using free software called 'Ning'. This platform mainly aimed at promoting greater interaction among students and teachers. The idea is still in an evolutionary stage but teacher educators report that the student teachers' response towards this initiative was positive.

Conclusion

Learner autonomy “is the belief that 'in order to help learners to assume greater control over their own learning it is important to help them to become aware of and identify the strategies that they already use or could potentially use” (Holmes & Ramos, 1991, cited in Thanasoulas, 2000). Hence, it is necessary that teacher educators and student teachers jointly work towards achieving greater autonomy in teacher education. Although students are the most crucial factor in ensuring learner autonomy, autonomous learners cannot be created without autonomous teachers and that requires

institutional autonomy. Also, in the Indian context, it is necessary to formalize a definition of autonomy and theorize it by actually implementing some of the ideas/practices in teacher education so as to get better conceptual clarity regarding learner autonomy. Lack of understanding of the concept among educators can be detrimental to the whole process of education. Also any number of programs in autonomy will only work if principally educators believe in autonomy and are able to instill accountability in students along with autonomy.

Summary: Key points for learner autonomy

1. Choice based Credit system (designing a range of small courses and making more options available to the learners to choose as per their aptitudes and attitudes).
2. Peer review in teacher education programs.
3. Pedagogy of collaboration (faculty exchange program).
4. Accumulation in credit (by developing network with different teacher education institutions and introducing flexibility in timetable so as to ensure student mobility).
5. Credit transfers from different courses ECCEd., D.Ed, B.A.(Ed) etc.
6. Orientation towards group activity and collaboration and use of Constructivism
7. Assessment through portfolios, rubrics, graphical representation of student performance.
8. On demand assessment (Flexibility in exam dates, extension of the course, etc.)

9. Forming B. Ed college network: flexibility in choice of courses, time table, student mobility, student exchange and interaction.
10. Credit based system: flexibility in credit accumulation and transfer.
11. Add on courses: sign language, Braille, international education etc.
12. Zero lecture approach: cooperative learning, constructivist approach, shift in internship pattern
13. Assessment: students make own portfolios, more freedom of learning and choice, opportunities for self assessment and use of rubrics to make assessment easy and objective.

Chapter 6

Inclusive Education

Background and Rationale

"I live in a cocoon of social making Peeping out at the world from behind a curtain"

-Asha Hans (Hans & Patri, 2003: 5)

The International Community is becoming increasingly aware of the different models of education for children with disabilities. Among the three basic models - segregated, integrated and inclusive education, an overwhelming support is being shown by human rights activists, nonprofit governmental organizations, governments and international agencies, in favor of inclusive education as the most beneficial type of education for people for all levels of ability.

The Government of India has created numerous policies around Special Education since independence in 1947. But, their implementation efforts have not resulted in an inclusive system of education, nor have they reached their goal of "education for all" across the country.

What is Inclusive Education?

It is the implementation of the "policy and process" that ensures all children participate in all the programs.

"Policy" mandates that differently abled children be accepted without any restrictions in all the educational programs meant for other children. It denotes equality, and accepts every child with his own unique capabilities.

The "process" of inclusion denotes the ways in which the system makes itself welcoming to all. In terms of inclusion of differently abled children, it indicates a shift in services from care of such children to their "education and personal development".

Inclusive education is about "making the program for disabled children an integral part of the general educational system rather than a

system within general education".

Why Inclusive Education?

Inclusive education strengthens the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners. It involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in schools so that they can respond to the diversity of students. For a school to be inclusive, the attitudes of everyone in the school - administrators, teachers and other students should be positive towards students with disabilities. All children, regardless of their ability level, are included in a mainstream classroom, or in the most appropriate or Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), students of all ability levels are taught as equals and teachers adjust their curriculum and teaching methodologies so that all students benefit. This avoids wasting resources, and "shattered hopes," which often occurs in classrooms that are "one size fits all".

Studies have shown that systems that are truly inclusive reduce drop-out rates and repetition of grades, and have higher average levels of achievement compared to systems that are not inclusive. People who believe in inclusive education believe that it is the education system that is the impediment to learning for a child, and that every child is capable of learning.

Key ideas for Inclusive Education in TE

Although the session was with specific reference to encouraging inclusive education within the TE curriculum, most participants found it a good forum to delve into issues of inclusion within school education and the life of a teacher. Hence, some of the key ideas proposed were more focused on inclusive and equity education in schools.

1. **Kinds of exclusion in schools:** Marginalization in education is manifold; some of which is veiled and often goes unnoticed. First

and foremost is to be able to identify students with special needs. The session and the group work which followed helped identify that the inclusion of the following groups is essential:

a. **Children with physical disability:** Physical disabilities are often irreversible. Children with such impairments do learn to live with their disability, but it becomes their own personal fight (at best a family's fight) against an education system meant for the so called 'normal' children. Schools lack basic infrastructure for such students. So the first need is to provide infrastructural arrangements - lifts for commuting within the institution, seating arrangements, ramps, hearing aids, text to speech software, etc.

b. **Children with mental disability:** Generally, people with a mental disability are discriminated against and marginalized more than people with physical disabilities. In terms of disability, people with Intellectual Disabilities (Mental Retardation) have the lowest enrollment rates in schools. There are lesser services available for children with intellectual disabilities, partly because educators have to make changes to the curriculum to accommodate these students (whereas students with physical or loco motor disabilities are often able to learn the same material as quickly as able students). In addition, due to social stigma, parents and families are more likely to keep their children with intellectual disabilities at home, hiding these family members. As a result, almost three fourths of people with “severe” disabilities are illiterate, whereas one-half of people with “moderate” or “mild” disabilities are illiterate.

c. **Socially and Culturally Disabled Children:** Socially and culturally marginalised students need to be given more attention since they are the ones usually under the radar of policy makers and hence most ignored. People,

especially teachers dealing with these students, need to be tolerant, provide them encouragement and create a better fit between their needs and the learning environment. It is important to create and share a knowledge base of local history and cultures so that these students can relate to their own history and find their voice within a larger context.

In the context of TE, not only is this understanding important to prepare a competent and caring teacher professional, but also within TE, institutions have to be open to admit of such kinds of exclusion policies and root them out.

There are several fallacies and incorrect notions about inclusion. Since the term inclusion is wide and needs deep understanding TEI programs need to translate the correct meaning of inclusion in terms of the concept and also in terms of deliverables in the classroom. Therefore, clarity on what Inclusion is not, is just as important.

2. Inclusion is NOT about

- a. Providing services to small segregated groups.
- b. All students having to learn the same thing at the same pace at the same time.
- c. Trying to change the learner; but fitting the learner in the lesson plan.
- d. A lesser education; watering down of the curriculum.
- e. Dumping students in classrooms without supports and structures.
- f. Applicable only to special education students; but includes all students.

3. Inclusion is a move towards:

- a. Learning together.
- b. Appropriate Placement model (age appropriate - this is critical for peer support).
- c. Providing supports and services (administrative, teacher support, peer support)
- d. Individualized education programs (graphics, aids, etc.)

Box 6.1: Are we in the trap of circular fallacy?

"Still, the apparent dream is that students with disabilities, despite being identified as not doing well (actually failing) in general education, must be placed in general education so they will do better. Why? Didn't these students just come from general education where they were performing poorly? Is this not a circular fallacy? Students with learning disabilities don't do well in this setting, so they must remain in that setting and they will do better? **Nancy Larson.**

4. Education should be 'Equitable' rather than

'Inclusive': One strong notion that emerged was the term 'inclusive' shows a position of privilege and a patronizing attitude of most towards those who are not in such a position and hence need to be included. So they are already seen to be at some disadvantage. Since education is a fundamental right for every child, it has to be seen as 'basic and inevitable'. Hence, the term 'Equitable' should be preferred over 'Inclusive'. This is an interesting and crucial debate to have. This report document uses the term Inclusive to reflect the language used in the seminar rather than an endorsement of the possible hierarchical connotations it has.

5. Current Issues with the TE curriculum: The participants reflected on some of the issues which do not support inclusive education in the TE curriculum.

Current text-book led education creates alienation. Some books and articles perpetuate incorrect notions. Students from diverse cultures or socio-economic backgrounds can not identify with school education. They find school and higher education far removed from the context of their survival.

6. Building empathy in TE programs: Social integration of children with differential needs has to be addressed. It is important that TE programs prepare teachers in a way that they

can identify such students and be empathetic towards them. An inclusive teacher has to recognize individual differences and implement learning strategies for all, few or one. A strong notion that emerged was TE colleges need to understand the problem from a larger context. They need to understand how marginalization happens. Teachers need to be trained to engage with critical content in way children can understand a richer, more complex, yet flexible approach to life. They need to engage with key questions such as Why education?, or What is education for?

There needs to be an awareness of and discussions on how globalisation, trade and international connectivity impact cultures and the need to increase esteem so that change is seen without sacrificing traditional cultures.

The concept of 'value added education' in terms of what value has been added to each student-teacher by the B.Ed program may be a more appropriate form of evaluation. Social inclusion as a concept needs to be addressed in teacher education. There is a need to develop appropriate set-ups for catering to the marginalised groups in classrooms. Subjects with high social and community content may need to be included.

'Every child should have an opportunity to participate in my class.' This is the kind of orientation that TE colleges need to impart to student teachers. Instructional flexibility and emphasis on process rather product is very important. Innovative experiments like Co teaching, differentiated lesson plans and recognition for such practices need to be explicitly seen in the TE syllabus

Further, inclusion is no longer a choice. It is a need. A teacher's skills are to be enhanced to work effectively in an inclusive classroom. Practice teaching has to be more meaningful with thinking through inclusive education

practices in lesson planning and delivery.

Box 6.2: The Co-teaching experiment

Teacher Educators at a college in Mumbai often saw their students struggle with class when placed in an inclusive set up. The student teachers would ignore the needs of students with special needs and hardly realised the need to do something. For instance a visually impaired child would be sitting quietly throughout their lesson because the student teacher has not included him in her plan. And rightly so, as the teacher education course didn't really prepare student teachers to handle such diverse needs in an appropriate manner.

The college tried an innovative experiment to pool in the skills of a general B.Ed. student teacher with a Special Ed. student teacher. The student teachers from the general college of education co-taught with their partners from the Special Education department. They worked in pairs and collaborated to design their differentiated lesson-plans in partnership and took lessons in an inclusive school. A different format of lesson plan was designed which forced them to think differently from the usual generic lesson plan.

The principal researchers involved in the experiment report that the co-teaching experience was engaging and holds tremendous promise as a training model in Teacher Education for inclusive classrooms. On the whole, the experience made student-teachers more sensitive to the special needs of children and highlighted the need to collaborate with experts in Special Education.

Student teachers need hands-on experience. TEI colleges need to understand that lip service to the term and exam oriented effort to learning about inclusion and its underlying ideology is not

going to equip student teachers for an inclusive classroom. Practical training in this area should become an integral component of the teacher education program. This could be facilitated through regular collaboration of special educators with general educators.

7. Using technology smartly: There was a general agreement that technology can help, but it is not being used to its optimum. There is a need for ongoing orientations and inputs to train educators. For e.g. Translator softwares are available which can be used for students with language difficulties. Audio visual possibilities through ICT can make teaching more learner friendly and cater to differing needs.

Technology can be a boon. It can make learning simple and fun for regular as well as differently abled students. Hence, continuing hands-on training programs for teachers on the various developments in technology is critical.

8. Teacher Expectations and building self esteem: The notions of ‘Self esteem’ was an important point emerging from various speakers. One of the speakers emphasized the teacher expectation theory and said it plays a critical role in determining how the students see themselves. Reflecting on students' perspective and other measures to co-build self esteem in students was seen as an important way of making different groups feel inclusive.

Course content in psychology, educational management and pedagogy needs to stress on the theory of teacher expectation and the self-fulfilling prophecy. Placement and internship, community outreach work in different schools and set ups can actually show the workings of the Pygmalion effect and the Golem effect in real situations. This vicarious experience is required to sensitize student teachers to self-

esteem as an important component of mainstreaming marginalized groups.

Box 6.3: Influencing Self Esteem

The Pygmalion effect or Rosenthal effect, is the phenomenon in which the greater the expectation placed upon people, the better they perform. The corollary of the Pygmalion effect is the Golem effect where low expectations lead to a decrease in performance. The Pygmalion effect and the Golem effect are forms of self-fulfilling prophecy, in this respect, people will internalize their positive labels, and those with positive labels succeed accordingly. Within sociology the effect is often cited with regard to education and social class. As social psychologist Robert Rosenthal puts it, “that what one person expects of another can come to serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy.” Rosenthal and others have found that higher expectations lead teachers (or other authority figures) to act differently with regard to the learner, in four very specific ways:

- a. They create a warmer “socio-emotional climate” for the learners they regard as high-potential, often conveying this warmth through non-verbal signals: a nod, an encouraging smile, a touch on the shoulder.
- b. They teach more material, and more difficult material, to learners they see as especially promising.
- c. They give upcoming learners more opportunities to contribute, including additional time to respond to questions.
- d. They offer their “special” learners feedback on performance that is more detailed and more personalized – not just a generic “Good job.”

If more schools are becoming inclusive then teacher education colleges need to change their old ways of training. Inclusive Lesson planning, collaboration with such schools, internship for practical learning in such schools, modules in

handling special needs should be provided to equip teachers with skills to become truly inclusive teachers.

Further, besides modules to facilitate learning for those with disability, the TE could also provide modules of training for student teachers to understand the problems faced by those who are intellectually sharper than other students. Different kinds of assignments and pedagogy would be useful for pre-service teachers to engage them and keep such students productively occupied and feel nurtured to excel.

Box 6.4: Inclusive Assessment

The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) has identified essential principles of inclusive assessment and accountability systems. Six core principles of inclusive assessment and accountability systems with brief description that reflect each principle are given below:

Principle 1: All students with disabilities are included in the assessment system.

Principle 2: Decisions about how students with disabilities participate in the assessment system are the result of clearly articulated participation, accommodations, and alternate assessment decision-making processes.

Principle 3: All students with disabilities are included when student scores are publicly reported, in the same frequency and format as all other students, whether they participate with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment.

Principle 4: The assessment performance of students with disabilities has the same impact on the final accountability index as the performance of other students, regardless of how the students participate in the assessment system (i.e., with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment).

contd. on next page

Box 6.4 Contd.

Principle 5: There is improvement of both the assessment system and the accountability system over time, through the processes of formal monitoring, ongoing evaluation, and systematic training in the context of emerging research and best practice.

Principle 6: Every policy and practice reflects the belief that all students must be included in state and district assessment and accountability systems.

Assessment structure should take care of varied student groups in the classroom and should be made sensitive for students with special educational needs. Training teachers in this area is essential. Unless, student teachers are trained to use a differentiated lesson plan where he consciously plans assessment for the special needs children in the plan, he or she is not going to realize the need to do so. Training for school based practice teaching needs to be sensitive to the demands of an inclusive classroom.

9. Systemic Issues/Challenges for Inclusive Education in TE

- a. Attitudes of teachers in regular classrooms to allow for inclusion.
- b. Sprucing up of training at all levels – pre-service, in service, etc. – an ongoing

endeavor.

- c. Developing a good continuous professional development (CPD) programme.
- d. Instructional flexibility
- e. Environmental barriers (which include infrastructural facilities)
- f. Need for Parental education and involvement because parents are the first advocates of the child
- g. Supports and services (visual aids, student-teacher ratio, administrative and infrastructural support, para professionals like speech therapists, textbooks, etc.)
- h. Tracking the progress of differently abled students
- I. Catering to student apprehensions

Summary: Key points for bridging the gap between school and TEIs

1. TEIs need to align themselves for inclusion.
2. Training and integration for inclusion is a primary responsibility of Teacher Education.
3. Building empathy in TE programs through critical content is a crucial component for inclusion.
4. Teacher expectations matter and helping build self esteem in marginalised groups is an essential aspect for success of inclusion.
5. Co-teaching is an innovative training model and has good potential for equipping and sensitizing teachers to inclusive classroom.

Chapter 7

Concluding Session

By Prof. Padma.M. Sarangapani

There is a need for us as a professional community of teacher educators to continue to meet and while we can take up many ideas as discussed in this seminar at individual levels, we are individuals within the professional community of teacher educators. I have always regarded teacher education as one of the most complex areas of education to theorize. In fact, even today we are barely able to unravel theoretical basis and assumptions of how we organize our practice in teacher education. Although we are deeply embedded in our practice and we do many things intuitively, but we as teacher educators don't have a way of talking about what we do adequately. I think that a grounded theory approach is probably needed for us to evolve a culturally relevant way of speaking about teacher education within the Indian context. It is very contextually dependent because we are working with teachers who are not from a global elite but from a regionally located context. To that extent, our theorizing is even more contextually dependent and I think that is really an exciting aspect of theorizing, which we as a community can undertake.

The themes, which we have discussed during the seminar, are the basis on which our professional practice will get theorized. I am using the word theorize not because we all should aspire to be theorists. In fact, we are effective as teacher educators because we have a strong practice and not because we have a strong theory. But never the less, the clarity with which we will communicate with each other will be strengthened as we clarify or find for ourselves the vocabulary and concepts, which enable us to do what we do and to shape the work that we want to do better.

This clarity is required more so as today teacher education is faced with very big challenges. On the one hand there is definite policy space

lobbying to delegitimize the role of pre-service teacher education, which is a very massive challenge. Everybody knows that the cost of teacher education can be cut down only if the cost of teachers' salaries is cut down. And that depends on the extent to which such lobbying can de-professionalize the work of teachers itself. So, it is a political debate and we must raise our voice as a community of professional teacher educators. It is a great need for us to communicate our views strongly to the government even if they disagree and even if they do things differently, it should not be because we did not speak or voice our views. We have an obligation as professionals to articulate our concerns very forcefully in the space of policy and also in the space of newspapers, as we can see every day how teachers are getting delegitimized on these platforms.

Recently, while reviewing the interviews that few of my students had conducted with teacher educators, one of them said in relation to the Teaching Eligibility Test (TET), 'So what is so surprising that 98% of teachers failed in the TET. May be they should have failed in that TET. Who looked at that TET, whether it was actually a valid test for teaching?'

None of us have even looked at the TET question papers ourselves to comment in the public space about it being a meaningful way of assessing teachers or not. We all as a forum and community of teacher educators should look at these kind of measures which are entering into the public sphere. We should not hesitate when we have formulated a point of view to share with others and present it in the public space as a joint representation or as a joint opinion. We should be united as a teacher education forum to take these issues forward.

It is very important because a lot rides on the extent to which we are able to establish the validity of teacher education programs as a meaningful pursuit in the academic domain. We have to make it work in authentic ways and if today we are talking about learner autonomy, reflection, it is because at some level in our own experience, we know that most of our work has become routinized and ritualistic and not very meaningful. We all want to recover meaning in our work. In other words, we should be quite confident to give up the practices, which are not very meaningful and move to practices that are meaningful. Because unless our students are themselves convinced about the intellectual value of the experiences that they went through with us for one year, they are not going to be strong advocates of teacher education going forward.

It is a good opportunity for us to review our own work as professionals and go forward. The way in which the seminar got constructed has been very useful. The most useful part in the seminar has been the experiences that were shared about what was tried and done, as it helped in grounding things. I certainly hope that when we meet again, we would have tried out some of the ideas that we have talked about in this seminar and we will probably try out ideas, which we have not talked about but we will talk about when we meet again. So I think the extent to which we are going to share things that we have tried and how we have thought about things and thought through them, is the extent to which our own discourse is going to become more rigorous and enriching. We really have to understand the meaning of the word autonomy to bring it into the practice and figure out where it doesn't work and when we talk about personal, professional autonomy, we need to understand what it really means. Is it academic freedom or agency that we are talking about? In reflection, is it feedback that we are talking about, or is it reflectiveness or meta-cognition? What is it that we mean by these terms that are entering into our discourse? We

clearly need much more conceptual clarity on these terms and it would also be a valuable contribution going forward if some of us choose to study some of these terms and come back as a community and explicate terms for each other. We should probably invest in making some of these kinds of discussions happen.

I think it is possible for us as a community to become much more self aware of our pedagogies and to be able to talk about the various types of things that we do with our student teachers. We do many kinds of activities with our student teachers and provide them with many kinds of experiences. So we should be able to describe and speak about our pedagogies with more clarity and in pedagogical terms like the discussions that open up, tools that are used etc. We also need to be able to begin to talk about what our students learn when they go into the live space of the schools or any other area of their lives outside of the teacher education college that contributes in the formation of them as teachers. If we try to push our ability to describe these experiences, we would be able to talk about our curriculum with much more confidence.

The teacher education curriculum as it exists in India today with one exception of the B.El.Ed, most of it is the accretion or the modification of the British curriculum. Nobody has taken the curriculum and started making the curriculum as if it is a blank slate. We have an accepted curriculum with which we have been working through different ways. So it's really a historical accretion, which we have not completely theorized. The way in which teacher formation is thought about has radically changed from British period to today. Those days it used to be observational learning which was a way of theorizing adult learning and today we have much more cognitive approaches for thinking about it. So, we have to enable our own ability to think and theorize teacher formation for ourselves. Theorizing in this context is not referred to as high theory. Rather it is finding a

consistent framework that is authentically grounded in understanding of cognition, psychology, sociology within which we can speak about the practice itself.

In our discussions, three types of forums have been talked about. One is this forum itself, which is the community of teacher educators, other is a pressure group forum to persuade government to change its view and the third is the forum between the teacher education colleges and the schools, which I think is a very important forum that has been raised. The extent, to which we as teacher education institutions can establish systematic, meaningful and long term relationships with schools, is the extent to which our own professional practice as teacher educators will become more meaningful. We should be able to imagine long term arrangements with schools lasting for example for ten years or fifteen years. That is the kind of time on which we should be able to think and visualize a very fruitful relationship between our institutions and schools. We should explore the possibilities of such forums coming into being.

The idea a pressure group is really important not because we have to work with governments, but also to work with our universities to bring about important changes in terms of pedagogy and assessments. It is very clear that if we don't change assessments nothing is going to change the curriculum or the pedagogy. We have to grab the assessment handle and work on it. It is going to be very difficult because there are entrenched interests in the policy space but still it is important to keep trying to make that happen.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the two days have actually demonstrated the value of this community of teacher educators where we are not talking at each other with experts speaking to everybody else. But we have been talking to each other and most importantly we have asked difficult questions from each other in order to clarify and raise concerns. It has been an honor for both KKCE and TISS to host this first forum and we look forward to how these things will move in future.

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