

# Inclusion of New Professional Standards in Teacher Education in India: Towards a Quality Teacher Education Ecosystem for Nation Building

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## ABSTRACT:

Indian teacher education system is at a pivotal point where national priorities of cultural rootedness, equity, and constitutional principles collide with global imperatives of standardization, accountability, and market competitiveness. Through the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Program, the placement of teacher education in multidisciplinary higher education institutions, and the creation of new professional standards, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions a fundamental reconceptualization of teacher preparation. This change takes place in a global setting marked by transnational teacher mobility, worldwide benchmarking of teacher quality, and the framing of teaching within international trade frameworks. However, fragmentation, the growth of subpar teacher education institutions, and a weak connection between theory and classroom practice continue to characterize the Indian teacher education environment. In the Indian context, this study investigates the conflict between "national" imperatives of nation-building and "global" professional standards. It examines how markets, cultures, and globalization influence modern changes using policy papers, national reports, and empirical research. Four enduring issues in teacher education are the subject of this study: curriculum emphasis, pedagogical motivation, assessment validity, and school practicum quality. It contends that India must construct a tenable theory of teacher education that is both responsive to global developments and rooted in its multilingual, heterogeneous, and unequal school realities rather than blindly importing global

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models of teacher standards. The study concludes that in order to restore the moral and intellectual authority of teaching as a profession essential to nation building, systemic deficiencies in teacher educator capacity must be addressed, and new professional standards must be co-constructed with teachers.

**Keywords:** Teacher Education, NEP 2020, Professional Standards, Globalization, Glocalization, Nation Building, India

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## Introduction

Due to data that links teacher quality to student learning outcomes and the growth of worldwide comparative assessments that evaluate education systems on teacher-related metrics, teacher preparation has once again become a major policy concern on a global scale (OECD, 2019). "Teachers truly shape the future of our children and, therefore, the future of our nation," according to India's National Education Policy 2020, which places teacher education at the centre of systemic transformation (MHRD, 2020, p. 20). According to NEP 2020, all standalone Teacher Education Institutions must either close or convert to multidisciplinary HEIs by 2030, and the minimum degree requirement for school teachers will be a four-year Integrated Teacher Education Program in multidisciplinary institutions (MHRD, 2020). This signifies a clear intention to connect Indian teacher education with worldwide trends towards university-based, research-informed, professional models and is the most ambitious reform of teacher training since independence.

Reform is long overdue. In 2011, the Supreme Court of India established the Justice Verma Commission, which noted that teacher education in India was experiencing a "crisis" mentioned by "mushrooming of sub-standard TEIs, malpractices, and erosion of values" (Government of India, 2012, p. 3). The Commission also observed that the private sector accounted for more than 90% of TEIs, many of which operated as commercial businesses with minimal academic rigor. The scope of the issue is confirmed by later data from the All India Survey on Higher Education, which shows that a sizable percentage of the 17,503 institutions offering teacher education programs in 2021–2022 do not

meet the fundamental NCTE requirements on faculty, infrastructure, and school linkage (AISHE, 2023). Regulation has turned into "a mechanical exercise" that is unrelated to quality, according to the National Council for Teacher Education itself (NCTE, 2015).

The global backdrop for teacher education is shifting as this local crisis takes place. First, there is the emergence of "global education policy fields," where teaching is defined as a technical, quantifiable, and globally comparable activity by the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey, UNESCO's teacher standards frameworks, and World Bank policy recommendations (Sahlberg, 2011; Robertson, 2012). Second, by placing teaching in a global market, the General Agreement on commerce in Services has created opportunities for cross-border commerce in educational services, such as teacher recruitment and teacher education programs (Verger et al., 2016). Third, international curriculum like IB and Cambridge are imported by India for its elite schools, and transnational teacher migration has produced new flows. Indian instructors are now heavily represented in schools around the Gulf, the UK, and North America (Batra, 2014).

In India, these global pressures create a dual challenge. On one hand, the country must respond to international benchmarks to ensure its teachers and students are not left behind in a knowledge economy. The NEP 2020 explicitly links teacher reform to India's aspirations to become a "global knowledge superpower" (MHRD, 2020, p. 3). On the other hand, teacher education is inseparable from nation building. Teachers are expected to transmit constitutional values, foster social cohesion in a diverse society, and address deep educational inequalities of

caste, gender, region, and language (Kumar, 2005). The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education 2009 had foregrounded this civic purpose, stating that teacher education must develop teachers who can “engage with the social context of education” and “act as agents of social transformation” (NCTE, 2009, p. 6).

The concern between global standards and national purpose is evident in four persistent problems that plague Indian teacher education. The first is the issue of curriculum concentration; B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. programs are still disjointed, with poor content, pedagogy, and practice integration, and no room for liberal arts, Indian knowledge systems, or modern issues like digital literacy and climate change (Nawani, 2017). The issue of instructional motivation comes in second. Teacher educators themselves frequently lack exposure to constructivist or dialogic techniques, and lecture and rote methods continue to dominate teacher education pedagogy (Sarangapani, 2010). The issue of assessment validity comes in third. End-of-semester exams and teacher eligibility tests assess fragmented information but do not measure classroom performance, moral character, or reflective ability (Batra, 2015). The fourth issue is the practicum. In TEIs, the required 20-week school internship is often reduced to token visits, with poor mentorship and no teacher research culture (Yadav, 2019).

By moving teacher education into interdisciplinary institutions, implementing ITEP, reorganizing NCTE as a Professional Standard Setting Body, and suggesting merit-based scholarships and a national entrance exam, NEP 2020 aims to address these issues through structural changes (MHRD, 2020). However, the goal behind a policy does not always translate into reality on the ground. The ability and motivation of state governments, academic institutions, and private TEIs to carry out these modifications varies. Global models of “professional standards” are unable to alleviate route dependencies caused by the legacy of commercialization, teacher shortages, and the poor standing of teaching as a profession (Majumdar & Mooij, 2011).

This paper, therefore, examines teacher education in India through the lens of “globalisation” the process by which global ideas are adapted, resisted, and indigenized in local contexts (Ball, 2012). It asks, Can India develop new professional standards for teachers that meet global benchmarks of quality while serving the project of democratic nation building? The subsequent sections analyze markets and cultures in the global village, new accountabilities, the myth and reality of a global market for teachers, the role of tradition, and the reforms needed to build a defensible theory of teacher education for India.

### **Markets, Culture, and Education in a Global Village**

The metaphor of the “global village” entered educational discourse through Marshall McLuhan’s argument that electronic media were collapsing space and time, creating a single interdependent community (McLuhan, 1964).

The complex web comprising cross-national policy borrowing, market logics, cultural flows, and new accountabilities makes teacher education a global village. Although this interaction is not novel, but it affects countries like India. The production of colonial education in global circuits and post-independence nation-building was largely influenced by the selective appropriation of the Soviet, Gandhi, and Dewey models (Kumar, 2005). The uniqueness of modern era is not only because of the pace, scale, and market mediation of these processes, but also the way they transform the goals of teacher education from civic formation to human capital creation.

### **The Marketization of Teacher Education**

The two processes, namely liberalization of provision and the portrayal of teaching as a tradable service, were promoted by teacher education around the world, including India, from the 1990s. With the support of the General Agreement on Trade in Services, the education sector was opened to foreign agencies, particularly teacher training, within international trade regulations (Verger et al., 2016). Although India has not committed to GATS in higher

education, the implementation of the National Council for Teacher Education Act of 1993 highlighted the beginning of the de facto liberalization of Teacher Education Institutions. Rapid private expansion was made possible by the lack of robust regulatory capability. The number of TEIs increased from 3,199 to over 16,000 between 2000 and 2012, with over 90% of them operating in the private, self-financed sector (Government of India, 2012).

As a B.Ed. degree was required for government teaching positions, teacher education became a low-risk, high-demand commodity. This rise illustrates what Ball (2012) refers to as "education as business." The Justice Verma Commission found evidence of rampant unethical practices: According to the Government of India (2012), TEIs are selling degrees without giving education to the students enrolled in the program, just like any other shopping center where things are available on a payment basis. Majumdar and Mooij (2011) also discussed it as a market where low-income students receive subpar private TE, rather than quality or innovation, known as "differentiated citizenship." Globally accepted credentials are availed by exceptional candidates.

To overcome this issue of marketing of TE degrees NEP 2020 mandates that all teacher education be transferred to multidisciplinary universities and colleges by 2030 (MHRD, 2020). The countries that excel in the education sector, like Finland, Singapore, and Canada, showed that multidisciplinary institutions are far better than standalone institutions, where they focus more on research-based training for better teacher training programs (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012). To overcome the problem, now private institutions are trying hard to transform into ITEP, an online certification by EdTech companies, adding another level of commodification (Muralidharan et al., 2023).

### Flows and Contestation

The disjuncture between local and global cultural processes is visible in Indian teacher education and also creates difficulty for the market to become standardized, Appadurai (1996). These cultural divergences are present in three different

forms, such as the mismatch between the Indian Knowledge System and global competency frameworks. UNESCO's teacher competency profiles and OECD's TALIS (OECD, 2019) highlighted digital literacy, socioemotional learning and skills of 21<sup>st</sup> century as essential components of teacher training. These components were imported in NEP 2020, which says that educators should be "skilled in pedagogy, inclusive education, and technology" (MHRD, 2020, p. 21). Simultaneously, the same policy mandates inclusion of "Indian knowledge systems" and the guru-shishya parampara in teacher preparation. Teacher educators report confusion: are they to produce constructivist facilitators or cultural custodians (Batra, 2015)? The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education 2009 had warned against "de-contextualized" of global models, arguing that teacher education must engage with India's multilingualism, caste, and rural realities (NCTE, 2009).

The second is the question of language. The global village privileges English as the language of academic mobility and EdTech. Yet 87% of elementary school children in India study in Indian languages (UDISE+, 2022). NEP 2020's three-language formula and emphasis on mother-tongue instruction create demand for teachers who can negotiate between global English and local languages. Teacher education curricula, however, remain largely English-centric, especially in private TEIs, creating a linguistic disconnect between teachers and classrooms (Saragapani, 2010).

Third is the culture of accountability. Global policy networks promote data-driven performance management of teachers through learning outcomes, value-added models, and test-based appraisal (Robertson, 2012). In India, this has translated into increased emphasis on NAS, TET, and NIRF rankings of TEIs. While accountability is necessary, the cultural meaning of teaching in India has historically been moral and relational rather than technical (Kumar, 2013). The shift from "guru" to "service provider" risks eroding the ethical core of teaching. As Sahlberg (2011) notes from the

Finnish case, high professional status depends on trust, not surveillance. Building accountability without undermining teachers' cultural validity is India's issue.

### **Education as Nation Building in a Globalizing Context**

The idea that education is still a national endeavor is frequently hidden by the global village discourse. Nation-states manage variety, create citizens, and transmit collective memory through education and teacher preparation (Green, 1990). This role is crucial for postcolonial nations like India. The Kothari Commission (1966) described education as a "tool of social change," and NCFTE 2009 reaffirmed that educators must cultivate a "secular outlook" and "constitutional values" (NCTE, 2009).

This undertaking is complicated by globalization in three ways. First, through IB, Cambridge, and global citizenship education programs in prestigious Indian institutions, curriculum globalization adds outside information. As a result, there are two tracks: one for "international" schools and another for "government" institutions (Batra, 2014). Second, nation-building becomes porous due to teacher mobility. In addition to sending money home, more than 25,000 Indian-trained educators work in the US, UK, and Gulf, causing a "brain drain" of skilled students from government institutions (Choudaha, 2017). Third, teacher education is being pulled away from community participation as a result of pressure from worldwide rankings on Indian HEIs and TEIs to put research production ahead of social engagement (Hazelkorn, 2015).

A "glocal" synthesis is attempted in NEP 2020. It demands educators who are both "rooted in Indian ethos" and "globally competent" (MHRD, 2020, p. 6). Although they were created by Indian organizations, the proposed National Professional Standards for Teachers will be compared to international best practices. Resolving structural inconsistencies is essential to the success of this synthesis. Teachers for government schools are trained by DIETs and SCERTs, which are still underfunded and

disconnected from universities. "Global standards" will exacerbate educational apartheid unless the resource gap between TEIs for the elite and TEIs for the people is bridged (Tilak, 2018).

### **Towards a Critical Glocalization**

The global village is a requirement, not an option. Both nativism and commercial globalism cannot be absorbed by Indian teacher education. Three shifts are needed for a critical glocalization. Regulation as public stewardship comes first. Focusing on being an overabundance of the market, the marketization of TEIs was a state failure. The ability to terminate subpar institutions and assist public TEIs is necessary to support NCTE's future function as a standard-setting agency under NEP 2020 (Nawani, 2017). Curriculum as discussion comes in second. Teacher education curricula should facilitate discussions between Piaget and Tagore, between coding and storytelling, between constitutional morality and global citizenship, rather than selecting between global skills and Indian traditions. If not reduced to a checkbox, the liberal arts core of the ITEP offers room for this (NCFTE, 2023 Draft). Third, educators as thinkers. Regimes of global accountability run the risk of turning educators into technicians. What Giroux (1988) referred to as "transformative intellectuals" teachers who comprehend both local injustices and global forces are necessary for nation development. This necessitates professional autonomy, action research in schools, and funding for teacher educators. No educational system is an island in the global village. However, the best navigators are islands that are aware of their location, currents, and anchors. The constitutional guarantees of justice, equality, and fraternity serve as India's compass. Global markets, technologies, and standards are the currents. Building vessels teachers that can sail without being shipwrecked is the goal of teacher education.

### **Comparisons, Competition and Positioning: New Accountabilities for Teacher Education in India**

Measurable performance has replaced professional trust as the primary form of accountability in education. In the global village, international rankings, comparative surveys, and market signals that place teacher education schools within hierarchies of quality and prestige are used to evaluate them in addition to national regulators. This "comparative turn" has resulted in a new accountability system for India that is based on three tools: individual certification through the Teacher Eligibility Test, ranking through the National Institutional Ranking Framework, and accreditation through the National Assessment and Accreditation Council. Collectively, they provide what Lingard and Sellar (2013) refer to as "data infrastructures," which enable the visibility, comparability, and governance of teacher education. However, these techniques' consequences in the Indian setting are inconsistent, disputed, and frequently at odds with the objective of establishing a new professional norm.

### **The Global Logic of Comparison**

There are worldwide roots to the growth of comparison as a form of governance. According to Grek (2009), the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment and Teaching and Learning International Survey established a policy space wherein nations use teacher quality from other countries to explain their educational performance. Although India only took part in Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, PISA 2009 caused a "PISA shock" that was used to support improvements in teacher education (Dhankar, 2016). In a similar vein, the World Bank's Systems Approach for Better Education Results—Teachers framework puts pressure on national systems to match teacher standards with "global best practices" by benchmarking nations on ten policy levers (World Bank, 2013).

This comparative logic is predicated on the idea that quality is transportable, quantifiable, and universal. It shifts accountability from NCTE's input-based regulation to performance measurements based on output. Such international comparisons result in "policy as numbers," where statistical commensuration

becomes a technology of government, according to Rizvi and Lingard (2010). This global reasoning has been selectively translated in India. After 2009, India withdrew from PISA because to cultural prejudice, but it adopted domestic alternatives that reflect the same comparison impulse: TET for people and NIRF for institutions.

### **NAAC Accreditation: Quality as Compliance**

Since its founding in 1994, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council has served as the main organization for quality control in higher education, including TEIs. Curriculum, teaching-learning, research, infrastructure, student assistance, governance, and institutional values are the seven criteria used by NAAC to evaluate institutions (NAAC, 2019). The NCTE Regulations of 2014 mandated accreditation for TEIs in order to maintain their recognition.

Theoretically, NAAC was supposed to replace NCTE's minimum-norms approach to quality assurance with a performance-based model. In reality, it has resulted in what Batra (2015) refers to as "compliance culture." Only 38% of the 1,823 TEIs that applied for NAAC in 2023 received an A grade or higher, 41% received a B or C grade, and 21% were not accredited, according to the data (NAAC, 2023). The majority of private stand-alone TEIs lack the ICT infrastructure, research output, and qualified professors necessary to achieve high NAAC scores. In order to achieve what Kingdon (2020) refers to as "isomorphic mimicry" without meaningful change, they turn to documentation theatrics during peer team visits.

Furthermore, small TEIs do not mesh well with NAAC's framework, which was created for interdisciplinary universities. Institutions whose main goal is professional preparation rather than knowledge production are disadvantaged by criteria like "research publications in UGC CARE journals" or "patents" (Nawani, 2017). The outcome is a hierarchy, with DIETs and self-financed institutions grouped at the bottom and university departments of education scoring higher. Instead of increasing system-wide

capacity, this perpetuates inequalities in the TEI sector. In recognition of this, NEP 2020 suggests that accreditation be carried out by an impartial organization and be "binary: accredited or not accredited" (MHRD, 2020, p. 48). Although the goal is to lessen grade gaming, the fundamental conflict between variation and standardization has not been addressed.

### **NIRF Rankings: Competition for Prestige**

The National Institutional Ranking Framework, which was introduced in 2015, expanded the comparative reasoning to include yearly public rankings. Teaching, Learning and Resources, Research and Professional Practice, Graduation Outcomes, Outreach and Inclusivity, and Perception are the five criteria used by NIRF to rank institutions (NIRF, 2024). There is no single ranking for TEIs, even though NIRF has a separate "Colleges" category. Since departments of education are part of universities, they are not visible in the national conversation about quality.

NIRF makes the competition more intense, encompassing not only the completion of degree programs but also placement, teacher-pupil ratio, qualified teachers, and their academic growth during their service. This all enhances the quality indicators and the pedagogical competency (Kumar, 2018). The second factor is the marginalization of institutions with rural and tribal populations. Global rankings create "reputational hierarchies" that shift resources from equity to excellence, according to Hazelkorn (2015). DIETs remain in a constant deficit, while a small number of central universities and prestigious private schools become "world-class," increasing the risk of NIRF repeating similar patterns.

### **TET and the Individualization of Accountability**

As like NAAC and NIRF hold organizations accountable, the Teacher Eligibility Test holds people accountable which is a qualifying exam for getting job in government schools for grades I to VIII, made compulsory by the Right to Education Act 2009 and NCTE. States administer their own TETs, but CBSE administers CTETs, as it is a standardized test that will guarantee a minimum

level of teacher competency and prevent recruiting bias (Govinda, 2011).

There is contradictory data also there which present a picture of low rates of passed students in TET as for example Paper-I and Paper-II pass rates for CTET December 2023 were 17.6% and 15.3%, respectively (CBSE, 2024). These results show that the test conducted still need modification for its well-alignment with classroom reality and that pre-service training was of poor quality. TET's detractors claim that it assesses specific content knowledge but not pedagogical reasoning, classroom management, or ethical disposition (Batra, 2015). The such competitive exams give a space for coaching business, which transfers responsibilities from TEIs to candidates who pay for private test preparation. TET individualizes a systemic failure, as Sarangapani (2010) points out: the candidates are considered ineligible but the TEI who made him or her the candidate is not blamed for the failure of the candidates in TETs.

TET also produces distorted incentives. TEIs are now teaching to the exam, entirely focussed on multiple-choice recall while ignoring inclusive education, practicum, and reflection from students' perspective (Yadav, 2019). Other factor which is neglected in TETs are like local language proficiency and topic combination which is a major issue even for TET-qualified candidates (Jha et al., 2020). NEP 2020 suggests a uniform aptitude test for teacher recruitment and a National Testing Agency test for ITEP admission, but these could replicate TET's shortcomings if they keep on testing the candidates in the same format and neglecting the teaching competencies required for a teacher of today

### **The Politics of Positioning**

Comparison done on the basis of NAAC grades, NIRF ranks and TET scores only position the institutions and so the candidates from those institutions. This impacts funding, student selection and faculty morale. TEIs having influence of elite class due to ratings from high NAAC grades allow them to levy differential fees while low grade institutions are caught in a

vicious cycle of poor intake outcomes (Tilak, 2018). The NIRF perception scores tend to favour institutions with a legacy and location, that create adverse effect on the new universities in aspirational districts. Media uses TET results to declare “teacher quality crisis”, further eroding public trust in government schools (Dhankar, 2016). This positioning has cultural implications. As Ball (2003) contends, “performativity” requires organizations and individuals to compute themselves against metrics. Principals in Indian TEIs devote more time to NAAC paperwork than to mentoring faculty (Sarin, 2022) and B.Ed students prefer CTET guides to lesson planning. The moral objective of teacher education to generate reflective, empathetic professionals although is replaced by the technical purpose of scoring well.

### **Towards Democratic Accountability**

On the terms of equity and quality accountability of government institutions should be clearly mentioned. Accountability to whom, for what, and through what methods is the question to answered. Although accountability to schools, communities and children is present now in Indian system of education, which is mostly upward accountability to markets and regulators (Dreze & Sen, 2013). Needs which has to be fulfilled on an urgent basis are as shift from capability to compliance is the foremost need for the professional growth of teacher, NAAC and NIRF should also assess quality of school relationships, student-teacher feedback, evidence of classroom impact, and the ability to practice inclusively and binary accreditation is to be connected for the developmental help rather than merely punitive closure.

Second, from portfolio to testing. As in countries like Finland and Singapore, a multi-phase licensing procedure that include competency demonstration, a portfolio of teaching artifacts, and supervised internship assessment need to be developed (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Instead of focusing on test scores, this would match professional judgment with personal accountability. Third, the approach to be shifted from rivalry to cooperation. India need

"improvement networks" in which private TEIs and DIETs are mentored by top-performing university departments, sharing practicum sites, faculty, and curricula. To enhance the effort of it funding may be provided by NCTE's planned National Mission for Mentoring (MHRD, 2020).

Country like India with diversity and multilingualism has to avoid comparisons done globally and should work on evaluation criteria of its own focussing on diverse, multilingual, and dedicated to social justice or on terms that are imported and encourage homogeneity. Every institution irrespective of its status of either being block-level DIETs or central universities, should try hard and make possible to become hub for nation-building and professional standards.

### **A Global Market: Teacher Education, Mobility, and the Commodification of Teachers**

In teacher education, the concept of a "global market" implies that training programs, certifications, and instructors are traded internationally like commodities that are influenced by supply, demand, and price signals. Trade agreements, hiring procedures, and policy discourses that present teacher education as an export sector and teaching as a tradable service all incorporate this market logic. India's place in this market—as a supplier of educators, a consumer of international credentials, and a site of debate over what constitutes "professional" in a transnational field—is more important than whether or not such a market exists. Three aspects of the global market are examined in this section: the growth of EdTech-mediated markets, the trade in teacher education programs and credentials, and international teacher migration. It contends that although market pressures exist, any straightforward idea of a free market in education is complicated by state policies, cultural values, and unequal geographies of power.

### **International Teacher Migration: India as Exporter**

Teacher migration is also a prominent issue in the world. Due to shortage of teachers from Global North due to aging workforces, unfavorable

working circumstances, and de-professionalization, teachers from abroad are in high demand (Appleton et al., 2006). Along with South Africa, Philippines, and Jamaica, India has also become a significant provider of teachers to other countries. Nearly 25,000 Indian-trained educators are thought to be employed in schools across the Gulf Cooperation Council, with sufficient numbers also found in the US, UK, Canada, and Australia (Batra, 2014; Choudaha, 2017).

The reason for the migration is both institutional and economic. Let us see the case of a primary teacher in Kerala, who might make Rs. 40,000 a month, in Dubai, the same qualification is worth 8,000 AED, or around Rs. 1.8 lakh (MHRD, 2019). Many recruitment firms are consistently seeking B.Ed. graduates from Punjab, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, promising "international teaching experience" as a career path. India was added to the list of nations whose teacher qualifications are accepted for Qualified Teacher Status without further training when the UK's Department for Education reopened hiring for foreign educators in 2023 (DfE, 2023).

For India, this migration has conflicting impacts. Remittances and returnee knowledge are a "brain gain," on the one hand. The schools in India get upgraded about pedagogical approaches, ICT expertise, and international networks that returning teachers bring with them (Batra, 2014). However, the exodus causes a "brain drain" from government schools, particularly in science and English, where there are already plenty of open positions. Study done by Nawani in 2017 reflected that DIETs in Kerala, the public system that trained its top graduates is being undermined by their preference for Gulf jobs over state recruitment. Thus, despite externalizing the costs of shortages, India's governmental investment in teacher education give advantage to international market.

The state's reaction has been conflicted. NEP 2020 suggests that ITEP graduates be ready for "global opportunities" and celebrates the concept of Indian teachers gaining "global recognition" (MHRD, 2020, p. 22) without taking care of any

bilateral agreement to control agency fees, implying regulation on ethical hiring, and creating system to prevent migration from depleting underprivileged areas. Unlike the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, which inspite of being a state-run organization, negotiates terms and safeguards teachers working overseas (Siddiqui, 2012). Individual teachers in India are susceptible to contract substitution and deskilling due to the country's laissez-faire policies, as many B.Ed. Degree owners wind up working as assistant instructors or shadow teachers (George, 2021).

### **The Trade in Credentials and Programmes**

The international trading of teacher education programs and certificates is a second aspect of the global market. Foreign institutions may provide teacher education degrees to Indian students through branch campuses or online delivery under GATS Mode 2, consumption abroad, and Mode 3, commercial presence (Verger et al., 2016). Although India has not committed to GATS in higher education, foreign cooperation has increased through EdTech partnerships and "twinning programs."

There are several clear tendencies. First, premium international schools in India, connected to IB or Cambridge, employ instructors with foreign credentials and give in-service training through UK or Australian providers. Teachers in foreign schools receive three to five times the government salary and are used to the global professional norms of inquiry-based learning and assessment, which results in a segmented labor market (Hayden & Thompson, 2013). Second, Indian educators looking to advance or relocate are promoted online master's degrees in education from US and UK universities. A parallel economy of credentials results from these programs, which cost between Rs. 8 and Rs. 15 lakhs yet are not accepted by NCTE for government jobs (Tilak, 2018). Third, Indian organizations that are exporters. Teachers in Bangladesh and Nepal can take courses from Azim Premji University, while students from 43 countries can participate in IGNOU's B.Ed program (IGNOU, 2023). Exporting teacher

education as soft power is specifically part of NEP 2020's objective of making India a "Vishwaguru" (MHRD, 2020).

There are complicated outcomes for professional norms. Exposure to international curriculum brings action research, inclusive education frameworks, and constructivist approach in pedagogy to Indian debate. But, it runs the risk of what Steiner-Khamsi (2004) refers to as "policy borrowing without understanding," where foreign curricula are incorporated without taking into account administrative limitations, large number of students in class along with more number of classes for every grade, or multilingual classrooms in India. According to NCTE's 2014 standards, foreign degrees must be "equivalent" for employment; yet, returnee teachers are disadvantaged by the time consuming and not transparent equivalency process (NCTE, 2014). Therefore, national regulatory regimes that decide what knowledge matters act as a connecting link in the global market for credentials.

### **EdTech and the Platformization of Teacher Education**

Inclusion of technology in teacher education is the new picture in the market where micro-credentials, AI-powered tutoring services, and Massive Open Online Courses all promise to explore and liberate teacher education from academic institutions to skill enhancement programme and provide it on demand around the world (Williamson, 2019).. Platforms like Coursera, Swayam, and DIKSHA became essential to teacher professional development under COVID-19. NEP 2020 supports the use of virtual labs and NISHTHA for teacher training (MHRD, 2020). International teacher training modules are sold by organizations including Teach For All, Relay Graduate School of Education, and Finland's New Nordic School. EdTech companies in India, such as Byju's, upGrad, and Teachmint, provide "teacher certification" programs that guarantee global capabilities within six months. These are promoted as affordable, adaptable substitutes for

B.Ed., particularly for women returning to the workforce.

Basic concerns regarding professional standards are brought up by the platformization of teacher education. De-professionalization comes first. Teaching is implied to be a collection of isolated abilities rather than a whole, moral practice when teacher education is divided into micro-credentials (Zeichner, 2014). Datafication comes in second. Platforms gather detailed information on teacher performance, resulting in new types of algorithmic management and surveillance (Selwyn, 2019). Equity comes in third. Despite EdTech's claims to democratize access, teachers in remote locations who lack connectivity or fluency in English are left out due to the digital divide. Reach is limited because just 28% of schools have working computers, according to UDISE+ 2022 (UDISE+, 2022).

However, EdTech also give opportunities like peer learning across states is made possible with tools like DIKSHA, India's national platform, which offers more than 4,000 teacher courses in 30 languages (MHRD, 2023). Professional preparation is upgraded with these digital content when it is collaborated with university-based ITEP and backed by mentors. Therefore, state stewardship is necessary in the global EdTech industry to assure that interest of public is to be considered before any profit.

### **The Limits of the Market Metaphor**

Despite these flows, three invisible facts are there when teacher education is referred to as a "global market." Primarily, the state is still at the center of the system of teacher education. Visas govern immigration, NCTE regulate qualification recognition, and 60% of teachers are still employed by the government (AISHE, 2023). National policy operates in the background of markets. Second, teaching is not a commodity that is usable or consumed. Standardization is resisted by the relational, ethical, and cultural aspects of teaching. Because pedagogy is contextually ingrained, for example a teacher trained for London will not always succeed in rural Bihar (Kumar, 2013). Third, there is an imbalance in power. India imports standards

while exporting teachers. "Global best practice" is defined by the OECD, not the NCTE. Colonial hierarchies of knowledge, in which Euro-American models are the standard and Indian practices are "cases," shape the global market (Connell, 2007). Thus, deliberate action is necessary to realize NEP 2020's vision of India as a leader and player in the global economy. First, bilateral agreements on teacher mobility that guarantee skill circulation, safeguard rights, and stop poaching from underprivileged areas. Second, reciprocal recognition of credentials with a few chosen nations, supported by quality control, to make ITEP globally transferable without weakening national goals. Third, funding public TEIs to prevent India from importing EdTech solutions for its own schools while exporting instructors. Although there is a worldwide teacher market, it is a political construct rather than an inherent reality. Engaging with this market without compromising the moral and civic foundation of education is necessary for nation-building in the twenty-first century. Professional standards ought to be defensible in Samastipur and Kalahandi as well as Singapore and Finland. We now address that globalization difficulty.

### **Culture and Tradition in Teacher Education: Negotiating the Guru, the Professional, and the Global**

There is no cultural vacuum in which teacher education takes place. It is ingrained in moral frameworks, historical narratives, and societal imaginaries that specify what a "teacher" is and ought to be. The guru, a personification of knowledge, power, and selfless devotion, is the predominant cultural archetype in India. Since the 20th century, the professional—a technically proficient, independent, certified expert who is held to standards—has been the predominant archetype on a global scale (Labaree, 1992). Thus, NEP 2020's demand for "new professional standards" falls inside a contentious cultural domain where tradition and modernity, *swadeshi* and *videshi*, gurus and professionals, cohabit and clash. This section looks at how Indian teacher education is shaped by culture and tradition, how global models challenge them, and what a

negotiated synthesis can look like for nation-building.

### **The Guru-Shishya Parampara as Cultural Substrate**

The guru-shishya parampara is a civilizational ideal that views learning as discipleship and teaching as a sacred responsibility. It is more than just a pedagogical approach. From the Upanishads to Tirukkural, ancient writings praise the guru as a "dispeller of darkness" and place the relationship in ashramas where character, knowledge, and life were intertwined (Mookerji, 1947). This concept was not eliminated by colonial and postcolonial education. Gandhi's Nai Talim reinterpreted the guru as a village-based, craft-oriented acharya who would produce independent citizens (Gandhi, 1951). No educational system can surpass the caliber of its instructors, according to the Kothari Commission (1966), which used the phrase "teacher as nation builder" in overtly moral terms.

Three persistent aspects of Indian teacher education are produced by this cultural substrate. First, moral superiority over technological proficiency. According to surveys of teacher educators, when describing an ideal teacher, "values," "dedication," and "role model" are more important than "subject knowledge" or "pedagogic skill" (Sarangapani et al., 2018). The second residential training approach is the ashram model. In contrast to the credit-based, semesterized university model, DIETs and Gandhian Basic Training Colleges maintain aspects of community life, prayer, and manual labor as part of teacher preparation (NCTE, 2009). Respect for hierarchy comes in third. The guru is an elder with epistemic weight, not a "facilitator" among equals. Constructivist pedagogies, which see the instructor as a co-learner, are at odds with this (Kumar, 2013).

### **Tradition Under Pressure: Global Professionalism**

A different cultural model has been supported by global policy networks since the 1990s: teaching as a "profession" with standards, licensing, and career ladders, similar to medicine or law

(Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Through competences, evidence-based practice, and ongoing professional development, the OECD's Teachers Matter and UNESCO's Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards define teacher quality (OECD, 2005; UNESCO, 2019). This model is global, technical, and secular. It is predicated on the idea that effective instruction can be defined, evaluated, and used in various circumstances.

There were three ways that this international professionalism made its way to India. First, borrowing policies. The terms "professional standards," "competencies," and "career progression" are taken from international treaties and used in NCFTE 2009 and NEP 2020 (NCTE, 2009; MHRD, 2020). Second, international schools. IB and Cambridge schools require teachers to be trained in inquiry, differentiation, and assessment rubrics, creating a cadre socialized into global professional norms (Hayden & Thompson, 2013). Third, multilateral projects. DPEP, SSA, and STARS programmes brought in World Bank and DFID consultants who introduced teacher performance standards and classroom observation tools (Ramachandran et al., 2018).

The encounter produces cultural dissonance. Teacher educators trained in the guru tradition experience "role conflict" when asked to become clinical supervisors who give criterion-referenced feedback (Batra, 2015). Student-teachers from rural backgrounds report alienation when <http://B.Ed> curricula dismiss their reverence for teachers as "non-scientific" (Majumdar & Mooij, 2011). The global professional model, with its emphasis on individual autonomy, also sits uneasily with the collectivist, caste-stratified realities of Indian schools where a teacher's authority may derive from social location rather than credentials (Nambissan, 2009).

### **Multilingualism and Cultural Diversity as Tradition**

If the guru is one tradition, India's multilingual, plural society is another. The Constitutional commitment to diversity makes cultural responsiveness a non-negotiable feature of

teacher education. India has 22 scheduled languages, 121 languages with over 10,000 speakers, and thousands of dialects (Census, 2011). NCF 2005 and NCFTE 2009 therefore positioned multilingualism, social context, and inclusive education at the core of teacher preparation (NCERT, 2005; NCTE, 2009).

Global competency frameworks tend to flatten this diversity. TALIS questionnaires and OECD standards assume a monolingual, culturally homogeneous classroom that does not exist in India (Schleicher, 2018). NEP 2020's three-language formula and emphasis on mother-tongue medium attempt to reassert tradition, mandating that teachers be prepared to teach in home language at least till Grade 5 (MHRD, 2020). Yet TEIs are unprepared. Most <http://B.Ed> programmes are offered in English or the state's dominant language, with little space for Adivasi languages, Urdu, or minority dialects (Pattanayak, 2017). The "global" teacher of 21st-century skills is often monolingual; the "national" teacher must be multilingual.

What is taught is also influenced by culture. Conflicts about whose tradition matters are reflected in discussions about Indian knowledge systems, sex education, and history textbooks. In an effort to decolonize the curriculum, NEP 2020 incorporates IKS into teacher education; yet, teacher educators are unable to transact Vedic mathematics, Ayurveda, or tribal epistemologies without reducing them to stereotypes (Nawani, 2022). Therefore, tradition is a location of political contestation that teacher education must negotiate rather than a static heritage.

### **Gender, Caste, and the Cultural Politics of Teaching**

In India, social status and tradition are inextricably linked. In the past, teaching was a male, Brahminical profession that was connected to textual authority and ritual purity (Kumar, 2005). After independence, it became bureaucratized and feminized at the elementary level, with women and members of lower castes entering through reservations but concentrated in low-status, rural schools (Nambissan, 2009).

As a result, the cultural perception of a teacher varies: "madam" in an urban government school, "masterji" in a rural, and "sir" at a private English-medium school.

Global professional standards are gender-blind and caste-neutral, assuming a universal teacher identity. This erases the specific cultural work women teachers do in negotiating safety, mobility, and respectability, and the discrimination Dalit and Adivasi teachers face from communities and colleagues (Paik, 2014). NCFTE 2009 made gender, caste, and social exclusion a cross-cutting theme, requiring TEIs to address bias and power (NCTE, 2009). Yet studies show that <http://B.Ed> textbooks either ignore caste or treat it as a "problem" external to schooling, rather than as a structure that shapes pedagogy (Velaskar, 2016).

Any new professional standard must therefore be intersectional. It cannot adopt global rubrics that measure lesson planning but not social empathy, or that value "classroom management" without asking who is silenced in that management. The tradition of savarna guru authority must be critiqued, and the tradition of Phule-Ambedkar's satya shodhak teacher-activist must be recovered (Rege, 2010).

### **Towards a Negotiated Professionalism: The 'Acharya' Model**

The binary of guru versus professional is false. India needs what could be called an acharya model: a teacher who combines the ethical gravitas of the guru with the critical, research-informed competence of the professional. The acharya is envisioned in NEP 2020 as a teacher who is "rooted in Indian ethos" and "globally competent" (MHRD, 2020, p. 6). Operationalizing this requires four moves.

First, curriculum as dialogue between traditions. ITEP's liberal arts core should juxtapose Dewey with Tagore, Vygotsky with Gandhi, and feminist pedagogy with stree-shakti traditions. NCFTE 2023 draft provides space for this, but TEIs need resource material and faculty development (NCERT, 2023).

Second, pedagogy of cultural humility. Instead of treating tradition as content to be "covered," teacher education should cultivate the disposition to learn from community knowledge holders. This is indicated by the "community immersion" approach used in some DIETs, where student-teachers reside in rural areas (Yadav, 2019).

Third, evaluation that prioritizes ethical and relational aspects. TET scores do not constitute a professional standard. Reflections on gender and caste in the classroom, proof of concern, and comments from kids and parents should all be included in portfolios. Finland's trust-based model and New Zealand's Tātaiako cultural competencies offer examples of standards that include relational values (Sahlberg, 2011; Ministry of Education NZ, 2011). Fourth, institutional culture. TEIs themselves must model the professionalism they preach. If teacher educators are contract faculty with no academic freedom, they cannot produce autonomous acharyas. NEP 2020's move to multidisciplinary HEIs is an opportunity to break the isolation of TEIs and bring them into conversation with sociology, literature, and science departments (MHRD, 2020).

Culture and tradition are not obstacles to professional standards; they are the soil in which standards must be rooted. A global market may price a teacher's skill, but it cannot price her credibility in a village, her ability to interpret a child's silence, or her courage to teach Constitution in a polarized community. Nation building in the global village depends on teachers who are not deracinated technicians but culturally located intellectuals. The next section examines how "glocalisation" might provide a framework for such teacher education.

### **Glocalisation and the Reform of Teacher Education: Between Global Scripts and Local Realities**

Glocalization is the process through which local histories, institutions, and agency actively adapt, reject, and re-make global policies, ideas, and practices rather than merely imposing them on local contexts (Robertson, 1995; Ball, 2012). Glocalization in teacher education encapsulates

the central issue of NEP 2020: how to create a system that is both "rooted in Indian ethos" and "globally benchmarked" (MHRD, 2020, p. 6). Glocalization is examined in this section as a reform method as well as a prerequisite. In addition to identifying the structural, cultural, and political mediators that influence whether glocalization results in transformational reform or cosmetic copying, it looks at how global scripts of quality, standards, and university-based preparation are being localized in India.

### Global Scripts: The Convergence Thesis

A international policy consensus around the definition of "quality" teacher education has developed during the 1990s. According to Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012), the fundamental components are: prolonged clinical practice, competency-based standards, research-informed curriculum, location at universities as opposed to independent colleges, and ongoing professional development. This script is disseminated through international accreditation organizations, UNESCO frameworks, World Bank policy recommendations, and the OECD's TALIS. It is predicated on the idea that, similar to medicine, teacher preparation ought to be grounded on a universal body of scientific knowledge that cuts across cultural boundaries.

This script is specifically mentioned in India's recent reforms. The four-year Integrated Teacher Education Program will be the standard by 2030, all teacher education must take place in multidisciplinary institutions, and a National Professional Standards for Teachers must be created "in consultation with NCERT, SCERTs, teachers, and experts from across the country and benchmarked with international best practices" (MHRD, 2020, p. 22). The Justice Verma Commission (2012) had previously advocated for "professionalization" in the lines of Finland and Singapore, suggesting research-led pedagogy and university-based education. The worldwide model has been directly adopted by central universities, IITs, and NITs through the closure of independent B.Ed. institutions and the transition to ITEP (UGC, 2021).

### Local Mediations: The Indian Terrain

Global scripts don't start from scratch. India's political economy of education, cultural logics of teaching, and federal structure all act as mediators. There are four crucial mediations. First, Federalism and Capacity Imbalance. Education is on Concurrent List but teacher education is regulated by NCTE which is a central body and DIETs, SCERTs and state universities are under state governments. Ramachandran et al. (2018) note that states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Delhi have strong SCERTs and DIETs with the capacity to renew the curriculum, but states like Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh are plagued with severe shortages of faculty and deficits in governance. The outcome is divergent outcomes from a uniform global script of "university-based ITEP": Delhi University can integrate liberal arts and research, but a new state university in Bundelkhand might simply rename its B.Ed to ITEP without changing faculty or practice.

Second, the politics of the economy of privatisation. Over 85% of TEIs are privately owned and self-financed (AISHE, 2023). For such institutions glocalisation is a matter of market survival rather than academic ideals. Many have rechristened themselves as 'multidisciplinary' by adding a B.A. or B.Sc. course on paper to meet the NCTE norms, but still functioning as teaching shops (Kingdon, 2020). Hence the global script of quality is "localized" as compliance documentation for NAAC and NCTE without changing the pedagogic core.

Third, cultural logics of hierarchy. The global model assumes a flat, collegial culture of co-inquiring student-teachers. However, Indian TEIs are located in caste, gender and linguistic hierarchies that shape who speaks, who is heard and whose knowledge counts (Velaskar, 2016). A lesson plan style adopted from the US may be meaningless if a Dalit woman student-teacher cannot assert authority in a classroom dominated by dominant-caste boys. Glocalisation demands not only translating standards but transforming social relations in TEIs.

Fourth, diversity of language and knowledge. The global script is English-speaking and privileges Western educational psychology. The counter-script of “Indian knowledge systems” and mother-tongue instruction in NEP 2020 (MHRD, 2020) requires a different epistemic base. However, there is little research capacity in TEIs to develop pedagogy for Tulu, Gondi or Bhili medium classrooms, or to integrate Ayurveda or Nyaya philosophy into science education without tokenism (Nawani, 2022).

### **Sites of Glocalisation**

Here Glocalisation is visible in three domains such as Policy, Curriculum, and Practice.

#### **Policy architecture: From NCTE to NPST**

The NCTE's regulatory role will be replaced by a new role as a Professional Standard Setting Body under a General Education Council in NEP 2020. (MHRD, 2020) The National Professional Standards for Teachers to be proposed will be “developed by all stakeholders” and “benchmarked with international best practices.” This is a classic glocal move: taking the global technology of standards, but claiming local ownership. The danger is what Steiner-Khamsi (2004) calls ‘decontextualized borrowing’ in which standards are a list of competencies unrelated to Indian classroom realities of multigrade teaching, mid-day meals and administrative burdens. For glocalisation to be substantive, NPST needs to include domains such as “navigating diversity”, “community engagement”, and “ethical responsiveness to inequality” that are missing in OECD frameworks, but are at the core of India (Batra, 2015).

#### **Curriculum: ITEP and the Liberal Arts Turn**

The four-year ITEP, which has a liberal arts and education core, is based on US and Finnish programs that combine pedagogy and content over a long period of time (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Its localization varies throughout India. ITEP, which approximates the universal script, incorporates sociology, philosophy, and field immersion at Azim Premji University and IIT Madras. Without integration, mentor teachers, or

school collaborations, ITEP is an add-on of education courses to current B.A./B.Sc. programs at various state institutions (NCTE, 2023). According to Sarangapani (2010), curriculum frameworks thus become “hybrid texts,” where local practices of lecturing and dictation coexist with global terminology like “constructivism.”

The practicum is a crucial location for negotiating. Extended clinical practice lasting 20–30 weeks with progressive responsibility is the standard worldwide (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Strong school linkage is required by NEP 2020, but DIETs say that private schools charge placement fees and government schools are hesitant to host interns because of teacher shortages (Yadav, 2019). Here, “glocalization” refers to reimagining the practicum for Indian contexts, such as using community schools as sites, school complexes as clusters, and teacher educators as co-teachers rather than merely supervisors.

#### **Practice: NISHTHA and Digital Glocalisation**

The largest teacher training program in India is the National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement, which provides online and in-person modules to 4.2 million teachers (MHRD, 2023). NISHTHA is glocal in design; learning outcomes and competency-based education modules are taught in 11 Indian languages using examples from local settings and NCERT textbooks, but also reflecting global priorities. Gujarat's Mission Schools of Excellence and Tamil Nadu's Ennum Ezhuthum can coexist alongside national modules thanks to the DIKSHA portal, which hosts content from states. Scale and local adaptation are made possible by this “platform glocalization” (Venkatesh, 2022). However, research indicates that due to a lack of school support, instructors finish modules for certificates with limited use in the classroom (Jha et al., 2022). While technology can disseminate content worldwide, it cannot take the place of the local professional collaboration culture.

### Risks of 'Thin' Glocalisation

Both "thick" and "thin" glocalization are possible. Thin glocalization is merely cosmetic; it involves adopting buzzwords, changing names, and checking boxes without changing pedagogy or power dynamics. Evidence points to a considerable danger. First, isomorphic mimicry: in order to preserve financing and credibility, TEIs adopt the structure of ITEP, NAAC, and NPST without the purpose of quality improvement (Pritchett, 2013). Second, elite capture: although DIETs and block resource centers, which train 60% of teachers, continue to get inadequate funding, resources for glocal transformation go to central universities and private institutions (Dhankar, 2016). Third, epistemic dependency: TEIs marginalize practitioner and community knowledge by using frameworks created in the Global North to define what constitutes "research" or "evidence," even when "Indianizing" content (Connell, 2007).

### Towards Thick Glocalisation: Principles for Reform

Thick glocalization necessitates using the global as a tool for local problem-solving rather than as a blueprint. There are four fundamental principles. Contextualize standards first. Iterative field testing in a variety of Indian classrooms, including multigrade schools, urban unaided schools, and tribal residential schools, should be used to create NPST. Rather than merely citing UNESCO recommendations, standards for "inclusive practice" must outline how a teacher in Kalahandi manages a class including Kui, Odia, and Hindi speakers. Second, make meso-level organizations stronger. Strong universities are a prerequisite for global reform. The foundation of teacher education for government schools in India is comprised of SCERTs and DIETs. Instead of eschewing ITEP and NISHTHA in favor of central institutes, glocalization must invest in their faculty, research capability, and autonomy to adapt them to state contexts (Ramachandran et al., 2018). Third, establish lateral networks in addition to vertical responsibility. Establish state-level consortiums

where universities, DIETs, and schools collaborate on curriculum and practicum design rather than TEIs vying for NIRF rankings. Emergent models include the Samagra Shiksha-TEI relationship in Karnataka and the Delhi SCERT-University collaboration on ITEP (Sarin, 2022). Fourth, make the creation of knowledge more accessible. Surveys and imported scales dominate research on teacher education in India. Funding is required for action research, classroom ethnographies, and teacher innovation documentation in Indian languages for glocalization. A specific vertical for teacher education that prioritizes practitioner knowledge should be included in the planned National Research Foundation (MHRD, 2020).

Therefore, glocalization is a creative process that makes teacher education both world-class and relevant to India, rather than a compromise between global and local. It necessitates accepting that the "new professional standard" cannot be created or imported separately. In Indian schools, where a teacher is simultaneously a subject matter expert, a community worker, a protector of the constitution, and a global citizen, it must be negotiated in a complex, pluralistic, and unequal environment.

### A Defensible Theory of Teacher Education: Curriculum, Pedagogy, Assessment, and Practicum

A pedagogically sound, culturally appropriate, and philosophically sound theory of teacher education is one that can be defended. It provides answers to three questions: What knowledge and skills should educators possess? How do they discover this? How can we be certain that they are prepared to instruct? This section suggests an integrated framework, organized around four domains: curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and practicum, that combines international best practices with Indian priorities. It contends that teacher education needs to be rethought as a whole process of becoming a teacher-intellectual—a practitioner who is thoughtful, flexible, and dedicated to social justice—rather than as a collection of separate abilities.

### **Curriculum: Knowledge, Context, and the Teacher as Intellectual**

Three knowledge areas should be integrated into the teacher education curriculum: contextual knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge. The subject matter that educators will teach is referred to as content knowledge. NEP 2020 places a strong emphasis on multidisciplinary foundations, suggesting that educators possess a thorough comprehension of topics like physics, math, or language as well as the capacity to relate them to practical issues (MHRD, 2020). The liberal arts core of the ITEP is a step in the right direction, but TEIs need to make sure that the content is connected to pedagogical problems rather than being reduced to "coverage." How do kids learn this? What social ramifications does it have? Theories of learning, classroom management, and assessment are all included in pedagogical knowledge. Although the OECD's "teaching and learning international survey" and Shulman's (1987) "pedagogical content knowledge" offer helpful categories, Indian TEIs must adapt them. For instance, knowing scaffolding in Indian multilingual classrooms when teachers code-switch between their native tongue and English enhances Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" (Sarangapani, 2003).

Given the diversity and inequality of India's society, contextual knowledge is essential. Teachers must comprehend how language, gender, and caste affect educational opportunities and how to modify their methods for students who are marginalized, tribal, or live in rural areas. The context—local knowledge, community customs, and vernacular ways of knowing—is a teaching tool rather than a "challenge" to be overcome (Batra, 2015). Therefore, a defensible curriculum incorporates these areas through approaches like case studies, action research, and community participation, as well as topics like inclusive education, technology integration, and environmental sustainability. The objective is to develop educators who can critically evaluate curriculum, methodology, and policy rather than just imparting knowledge.

### **Pedagogy: Dialogic, Experiential, and Critical**

The pedagogy of teacher education should model the practices we want teachers to use in schools: dialogic, experiential, and critical. Dialogic pedagogy treats student-teachers as co-constructors of knowledge. Instead of offering lectures on "constructivism," TEIs ought to establish forums where educators may discuss, challenge, and jointly construct meaning. In a Nai Talim session, for instance, student-teachers might create a lesson plan centered around a regional craft, connecting theory to practice (Kumar, 2013). A key component of NCFTE 2009's emphasis on learning by doing is experiential learning. Real classroom observations, microteaching, and simulations should all be used by student-teachers. But experience on its own is insufficient; critical thinking is required as a mediator. One question for a practicum reflection session would be, "Whose voices were heard in the classroom?" What effects did power relations have on participation? Nawani (2017). Teachers who use critical pedagogy are more able to challenge prevailing narratives. Teachers must learn to recognize and confront casteist, sexist, or communal language in textbooks and classrooms in a nation with strong social structures. Critical incident analysis is one tool that TEIs can employ to help instructors reflect on instances of bias or exclusion (Rege, 2010). Therefore, a defensible pedagogy views student-teachers as knowledge producers who can act with agency, adapt to various circumstances, and theorize from practice rather than as "empty vessels."

### **Assessment: Competency-Based, Authentic, and Developmental**

In teacher education, assessment ought to be developmental, authentic, and competency-based. The focus of a competency-based assessment is on instructors' abilities rather than merely their knowledge. Competencies like "uses data to improve teaching" and "designs inclusive lessons" should be defined in the planned National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) and evaluated using rubrics (MHRD,

2020). Teachers are assessed in authentic or artificial environments. Student-teachers could submit a teaching portfolio comprising lesson plans, instructional videos, and reflections on student learning in place of written tests on "teaching methods" (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Formative in nature, developmental assessment offers constructive criticism. TEIs ought to employ clinical supervision, in which mentors watch instruction, offer targeted criticism, and encourage cycles of progress (NCTE, 2009). Thus, a defensible assessment system treats teachers as professionals who are capable of self-evaluation and growth, moving from testing to development.

### **Practicum: Extended, Integrated, and Community-Embedded**

The core of teacher education is the practicum. The focus of NEP 2020 on "extended internship" and "strong school linkage" is consistent with international best practices (MHRD, 2020). Three characteristics make a practicum defensible:

- **Extended:** A minimum of 30 weeks of classroom experience and a progressive rise in responsibility should be part of the four-year ITEP (NCTE, 2023).
- **Integrated:** Rather than being an add-on, practicum should be incorporated into coursework. For instance, student instructors could create and test a rubric in classrooms as part of a module on "assessment" (Batra, 2015).
- **Community-embedded:** Teachers should be taught to view schools not as ivory towers but as members of communities. Teachers can learn about social contexts through community immersion programs, anganwadi visits, or collaborations with neighbourhood organizations (Yadav, 2019).

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Thus, teaching is viewed as a relational activity rather than a technical competence in a justifiable practicum. It produces educators who are change makers in their communities in addition to being skilled educators.

### **Making Teacher as Intellectual**

**Keeping in view the changing needs of today's learner, the teacher now is to be prepared on 3 aspects viz-**

- Know– have deep content, pedagogic, and contextual knowledge.
- Do – can design, enact, and reflect on teaching.
- Be – are committed to equity, inclusion, and social justice.

This synthesis is also reflected in NEP 2020's vision of teachers as "transformative agents" (MHRD, 2020, p. 6). It is grounded in India's constitutional values and responsive to global best practices.

### **Conclusion**

The reform of teacher education in India is not merely a technical exercise in updating curricula or extending internships. It is a moral and political project of defining what kind of teachers the nation needs for its 26 crore schoolchildren, and what kind of society we aspire to be. NEP 2020's call for "new professional standards" (MHRD, 2020, p. 22) is an invitation to reimagine the teacher as a transformative agent rooted in Indian ethos, responsive to global flows, and committed to equity and excellence. Hence, Teacher education is a mirror of society. If we want a nation that is just, plural, and humane, we must invest in teachers who embody those ideals. The acharya is not a mythic figure; she/he is us, in classrooms, staffrooms, and communities, shaping the India of tomorrow.

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