

# Quality Control Indicators in Teacher Education

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## Abstract

The quality of teacher education affected the entire educational system of the country. As no nation can afford to provide poor quality education, it is necessary that we build a strong system of quality in teacher education - on which depends the quality of the teacher and ultimately the Nation's education. The political and socio-economic conditions set insurmountable dilemmas for quality assurance systems. The present standards for the teacher education programmes in most of the countries rests totally with Government agencies who have very little or no involvement and understanding of the profession. They are concerned only with the issues of growing teacher shortage and of ways and means to overcome the problem. It is high time we realize that it's not just the teacher shortage but the quality of 'so called' trained teachers that are primarily responsible for quality in the school system. The purpose of indicators is to "characterize a system through its components - how they are related and how they change over time". Effective indicators are those which quality indicators for teacher education directly measure system components. Curriculum Design and Planning • Curriculum Transaction and Evaluation • Student Support and Progression • Research, Development and Extension • Infrastructure and Learning Resources • Organisation and Management.

Today, the various nations spread across the Globe are networked more closely than they ever were. This has had a deep and profound effect upon the functioning of higher education sector and has literally transformed the way we look at all aspects of quality in higher education, particularly teacher education. The challenges faced by teacher education institutions raise pertinent questions for both the school systems and the governments. While, the school system has to grapple with the problems of teacher quality and the increasing student and societal expectations, the governments are struggling to provide the teacher education system an environment that fosters innovation and match the requirements of the school sector.

The quality of basic education provided to our children is largely influenced by the quality of our teachers in the schools. As no nation can afford to provide poor quality education, it is necessary that we build a strong system of quality teacher education - on which depends the quality of the teacher and ultimately the Nation's education. The present standards for the teacher education programmes in most of the Asian and African countries rests totally with Government agencies who have very little or no involvement and understanding of the profession. They are concerned only with the issues of growing teacher shortage and of ways and means to overcome the problem. It is high time we realize that it's not just the teacher shortage but the quality of 'so called' trained teachers that are primarily responsible for quality in the school system. Teacher shortage and teacher quality coupled with the poor quality of teacher education programmes, both pre service and in-service, have been negatively influencing the education systems of Nations, reversing years of investment. If we have to attend to the growing concern of teacher quality and teacher shortage, then it is crucial to examine the core of the problem that is the type of teacher preparation and training being provided. As a first step it is required that we identify the developmental needs of our schools, of our

teachers and the teacher educators. Secondly, a framework need to be evolved which would provide a systematic observation and recording tool which will help the institutions to ascertain and assure their quality provision. While much work has been done and documented on the first issue not much has been attempted on developing an assessment strategy for self introspection and continuous development by the teacher education institutions. Realizing that the quality of the teachers as long regarded is a professional responsibility rather than a policy issue, and the need to evolve a framework and evaluation tool to help institutions in quality assurance and continuous improvement.

The purpose of indicators is to "characterize a system through its components - how they are related and how they change over time. Effective indicators are those which directly measure system components; provide specific criterion- referenced information; are based on sound theoretical or empirical networks which relate the system's inputs, processes and outcomes.

Although these indicators do not focus totally on the quality improvement of the Teachers education, they provide focus on what institutions can do to improve teacher quality and the quality provision of the programme. The current indicator set thus represents a good selection, based on good practices and concentrates largely on the processes rather than on inputs and outcomes. However as the system is prone to constant change the indicators may be unstable, and it will be important to revisit these over time. Some aspects of quality indicators in teacher education are given as-

- Curriculum Design and Planning
- Curriculum Transaction and Evaluation
- Student Support and Progression
- Research, Development and Extension
- Infrastructure and Learning Resources
- Organisation and Management

## I. Curriculum Design and Planning

The institution has clearly laid down policies, regulations and committees for implementation of the programme. There exists a written policy, which is evolved and owned by the staff, students and management. The Policy is realistic and reflects the local and school contexts. Regulations are clearly laid down, they are comprehensive, and the mechanism for their implementation is articulated. The mechanism includes those of constitution, empowerment and renewal of committees with clearly laid down terms and conditions. The objectives of the programme are laid down clearly by the institute. The Programme document contains the objectives of the programme. It is clear in its statement and is made known to the staff and students. The level of attainment of content and pedagogical competencies is a function of the instructional time. Every component of the curriculum should have an appropriate time provided for its implementation. The institution implements the programme with enough flexibility to incorporate emerging concerns and expectations from a teacher. The programme has a scope for inputs such as field visits, special lectures, seminars and symposium that are aimed at extending the scope of the curriculum to provide an exposure on emerging issues and concerns in school education and develop attitudes and skills to address those issues and concerns.

The institution has a clear-cut allocation of time for theory and its allocation in the timetable is based on a process of deliberations. There exists a timetable for the theory, which is evolved in consultation with the staff before its implementation. It is made available to the staff as well as the students. The institution provides comprehensive inputs by incorporating the required experiences for achieving the stated objectives and realizes the vision. The institution provides various inputs, activities and experiences that are well planned and not organized incidentally or accidentally. The basis for curriculum revision emerges from the need to achieve stated objectives effectively. The institution undertakes curriculum revision on a regular basis. A curriculum review meeting is held at least once in a year and the curriculum is revised at least once in three years.

## II. Curriculum Transaction and Evaluation

The entry requirements for admission are made known in advance and are adhered to in admitting students. The admission announcement is made well in advance and is widely published. There exists a clear-cut policy of admission and is implemented by a committee. The process followed for admission is transparent and scope for redressal, if any, is available. The freshers are oriented to the institution and the programme, and the Orientation incorporates all aspects comprehensively. The institution has an orientation programme for the new entrants and is held immediately after admission procedures are completed. The orientation addresses all concerns and needs of the new entrants and is given by staff from both the institution and the practice teaching schools. The institution emphasizes that the faculty members use interactive and participatory approach in the transaction of curriculum. The teacher educators employ interactive and participatory approach in the teaching of theory and foundation courses. Explanations and Justifications are developed with the help of students and not 'taught' to them. The staff and students exhibit a high level of motivation for access to information and use of technology. The staff and students are not complacent with their knowledge base. They are found seeking new information and revising existing ones and employ information technology in doing so. The readiness in terms of preparation and planning for implementing practical experiences is comprehensive. All skills and competencies to be developed in a student are viewed as essential and various experiences for developing them are planned and implemented with sufficient preparations.

## III. Student Support and Progression

The pass percentage of the programme is satisfactory and consistent. No student teacher has to repeat the programme for want of instructional inputs and the results of the programme indicate that the pass percentage over years is high. The reasons for dropout are acceptable and the dropout percentage of the programme is well within the expected limits. The students who drop out of the programme do so due to reasons other than dissatisfaction with the staff, facilities or quality of inputs provided in the programme. Also, very few students drop out after taking admission or migrate to other institutions of teacher education. The institution shows concern for placement and a high percentage of products are employed in teaching. The institution has a placement cell and provides placement related inputs and guidance for students. There exists a record of placements made by the institution and the wait period after completion. The institution values feedback and a comprehensive feedback system are in place. Relevant data/information is collected for feedback. Feedback given is based on

data obtained from more than one source. Institution has a well structured, organised, proactive guidance and counseling unit. The institution has guidance and counseling service, which is one of the student support services provided by the institute. Students are aware of and benefits from the service. The institution has qualified staff and faculty for providing guidance and counseling services. The institution recognizes that guidance and counseling is a specialized service and it has on its roll persons who are qualified and trained for providing guidance and counseling. The admission notification of the programme is given wide publicity. The admission notification reaches all aspirants through a means that is easily accessible to them

## IV. Research, Development and Extension

### A. Research

The faculty undertakes and uses research output. Individual and team researches are undertaken by the faculty on a regular basis, and the results outcome is shared formally and reported for use by the faculty. The institution encourages and makes provisions for innovative practice. Unique and homegrown practices are found in the programme that has evolved through a process of research and inquiry and over a period of time.

### B. Development

The faculty undertakes development of instructional material. The faculty has received training and has competence in development of Instructional Material, including those using ICT. The instructional materials developed are employed in transacting the programme inputs and are institutionalized. Various types of instructional material for teacher education as well as school education are used in the implementation of the programme. The faculty extensively employs technology in developing such institutional material.

### C. Extension

The extension activities are need based and meet societal needs. The institution has a close linkage with the society of which it is a part and it undertakes extension activities in areas of its strength to meet some of the needs of the society. There exists a preparedness for and incidence of extending service to other academic institutions. The teacher education institution provides academic leadership to the institutions around it and there exists a keenness to respond to the requests for help and guidance. The faculty undertakes and uses research output. The institution encourages and makes provisions for innovative practice. The faculty undertakes development of instructional material. The instructional materials developed are employed in transacting the programme inputs and are institutionalized.

## V. Infrastructure and Learning Resource

The physical infrastructure of the institute is suitable and adequate for effectively implementing the programme. The physical infrastructure is designed to implement all components of the programme effectively and is strengthened regularly keeping in view, the requirements of staff and students. The institution has sufficient resources for regular upkeep of the physical infrastructure. Specially appointed trained staff maintains the physical infrastructure and the facilities of the institution. Schedule needed for maintenance is available and followed. There exists a mechanism to monitor maintenance and the procedures for upkeep and undertaking repairs are decentralized and simplified. The teaching-learning material, ICT facilities, laboratories and learning

resource centre necessary for implementing the programme are available and utilized on a regular basis. The teaching - learning material, ICT facilities, laboratories and learning resource centre necessary for implementing the programme are available in the institute. They are well maintained and strengthened from time to time by making available necessary finances and human resources. They are accessible and utilized by the staff and students on a regular basis. The staff has the professional competency required for implementing the programme. Suitably trained and professionally competent staff provides different course inputs. Wherever necessary, the institution has policy for training and re-training of the staff and to encourage specialized professional training. The faculty and resources are accessible to the students for guidance and consultation. Students feel confident in approaching the staff for guidance and consultation and perceive that there exists no institutional barrier that restricts them from meeting the staff or from utilizing the institutional resources when they need them. There exists a concern and initiative for up gradation of professional skills and competency of staff. Both the staff and the administration recognize that professional development is a continuous process and both show interest and concern in seeking professional development. The teacher educators do not feel that they are restricted from achieving professional development.

#### VI. Organization and Management

The institution clearly defines the objectives of activities, roles and functions of staff involved and they are made known to all concerned. The institution develops an activity chart at the beginning of the year and assigns them to different staff. There exists no role confusion in the assigned functions. The functions are assigned based on the competency and in agreement with the concerned staff. The activities are regularly monitored at different levels by the concerned. Meetings for stock taking, discussion and decision - making are held with the concerned staff and the student groups; the staff team; and the staff and management to plan, review and report on the activities. The institution has an academic calendar that reflects all the activities of the programme. There exists an agreement between the annual academic calendar and the annual report in so far as the activities planned and organized are concerned. The institution follows a selection procedure that is clear and transparent. The faculty recruitment is made by the institution in accordance with laid down procedure and attracts and appoints competent and qualified persons. The fee structure for the programme is transparent with least unexpected add-on expenditure to be incurred by the students. The recruited staff has a pay and reward system that is at par with that of other institutions and as per government norms. The pay and wages offered are the same as those stated in the recruitment notification. It compares favorably with that of other institutions and adheres to the existing norms attracting highly qualified and motivated staff.

#### VII. Conclusions

Over the years much data has been collected on the indicators for administrative purposes. Unfortunately it has neither been used for the purpose of quality improvement nor has been rigorously assessed for various dimensions of data quality such as accuracy, reliability and reproducibility. It is therefore essential that a formal process of acting on results be in place. Consideration of these recommended indicators by the institutions with a serious intention for quality improvement might result in good practices resulting in improved Teacher Quality.

Although the recommended indicators represent a good set of measures, it is important to recognize that these indicators will require considerable refinement over time and lot of contextualizing. In a way these indicators are the beginning of the benchmarking process - an identification of the aspects and processes to be addressed. On self-Assessment by the institutions, these would highlight the perceived strengths and weaknesses. The institution undertakes curriculum revision on a regular basis. The institution emphasizes that the faculty members use interactive and participatory approach in the transaction of curriculum. The institution has guidance and counseling service, which is one of the student support services provided by the institute. The staff has the professional competency required for implementing the programme. The faculty recruitment is made by the institution in accordance with laid down procedure and attracts and appoints competent and qualified persons. External assessors can use these indicators and the good practices in evaluating the institutions and the assessment agencies to develop a good practice database and establish benchmarks.

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