

Paradigms of Teacher Education: A Research Analysis

Dr. Rishika Verma

*Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy HNB Garhwal University Srinagar Garhwal Uttarakhand
a Central University*

doi.org/10.64643/IJIRTV13I4-208653-459

Abstract—Teacher education is the backbone of the education system. It not only provides teachers with knowledge but also shapes society's values, culture, and future direction. Paradigms of teacher education are rapidly changing today. There is a transition from traditional behaviorist models to constructivist, critical, and digitally inclusive paradigms. Kenneth M. Zeichner (1983) presented a classification of four major paradigms—behaviorist, traditional-skills, personal-humanistic, and inquiry-oriented. In India, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)'s National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education-2009 (NCFTE-2009) and the National Education Policy-2020 (NEP-2020) have redefined these paradigms.

This research paper analyzes the historical development of teacher education, its major paradigms, the Indian context, challenges, and future directions. In conclusion, it can be said that teacher education needs to be pluralistic, reflective, and inclusive so that 21st-century teachers can address diversity, technology, and social justice. The article uses 15 key references.

Index Terms—Paradigm, Teacher Education, technology, teachers, new education policy

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher education is not simply training, but a holistic process in which prospective teachers develop knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and thinking abilities. The term "paradigm" is derived from the theory of Thomas Kuhn (1962), meaning a set of beliefs, assumptions, and practices prevalent in a field that guides behavior. Paradigms in teacher education define the nature of teaching, the role of the teacher, the sources of knowledge, and the relationship to society.

Historically, teacher education began with an apprenticeship model, where students learned from experienced teachers. The behaviorist paradigm emerged in the 19th century with the Industrial

Revolution. In the 20th century, humanistic and constructivist ideologies gained influence. Today, the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), globalization, and the digital age have given rise to new paradigms.

In India, after independence, the Kaga Committee (1948), the Mudaliar Commission (1952-53), the Kothari Commission (1964-66), and the NCTE (1995) attempted to strengthen teacher education. The NCFTE-2009 clearly introduced the concept of a constructivist and reflective teacher. The NEP-2020 adopted a multidisciplinary and professional approach by mandating a four-year integrated B.Ed. program.

Current challenges include uneven quality, the theoretical-practical gap, the digital divide, and socio-economic diversity. This article provides a thorough analysis of these paradigms and suggests solutions.

Historical Evolution of Teacher Education Models

Teacher education models evolved over time. In ancient India, the Gurukul system was a skill-based model based on the guru-disciple relationship. In Europe, church-controlled training prevailed during the Middle Ages.

Formal training institutions were established in the 19th century through the efforts of normal schools in Germany and Horace Mann in the United States. In the early 20th century, John Dewey's progressive education emphasized experience-based learning. After World War II, behaviorist psychology (Skinner, Pavlov) gave rise to Competency-Based Teacher Education (CBTE).

In the 1960s and 70s, humanistic psychology (Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow) emphasized personal development. After the 1980s, Donald Schon's (1983) 'Reflective Practitioner' model and Paulo Freire's Critical Pedagogy strengthened the critical paradigm. In the 21st century, connectivism (Simmons, 2005) and constructivist theories (Piaget, Vygotsky) incorporated digital and collaborative learning. In

India, the 2009 NCFTE placed the 'reflective teacher' at the center. NEP-2020 promoted a multidisciplinary, research-oriented, and inclusive paradigm.

This development clearly shows that paradigms are influenced by the needs of society—skill in the agricultural age, efficiency in the industrial age, thinking in the knowledge age, and innovation in the information age.

II. MAIN PARADIGMS

1. Behaviorist Paradigm: This model is based on behaviorism. It views teaching as a stimulus-response process. Teacher education involves teaching predetermined skills (competencies) that are measured through observable behavior. According to Zeichner (1983), the learner is a passive recipient.

Examples: CBTE programs, microteaching, performance-based assessment. Advantages: Clear objectives, easy evaluation, skill development. Limitations: Loss of creativity, disregard for context, treating the teacher as a tool.

This was prevalent in initial training programs in India, but NCFTE 2009 limited it.

2. Traditional-Craft Paradigm: This is an apprenticeship model. Skills are acquired from an experienced teacher. Knowledge is tacit. According to Zeichner, the master-apprentice relationship is key.

Example: Student-teaching (internship). Advantages: Practical knowledge, practice in real situations. Limitations: Lack of critical thinking, repetition of old methods. This is observed in Gurukuls and Normal Schools in India.

3. Personalistic/Humanistic Paradigm: It focuses on the learner's personal development, self-realization, and emotional maturity. According to Coombs (1974), behavior change occurs through a change in perceptions.

Examples: Humanistic Teacher Education, Self-Reflection Journal. Benefits: Overall personality development of the teacher, motivation. Limitations: Ambiguity of objectives, difficult evaluation. In India, it is influenced by the NCFTE-2009 "Humanistic Teacher."

4. Inquiry-Oriented/Critical Paradigm: This approach views the teacher as a "reflective practitioner" and a

"transformative intellectual." According to Freire, Schön, and Zeichner, the teacher examines social justice, equity, and context.

Examples: Action research, case study, critical pedagogy. Benefits: Reflection, social change. Limitations: Time-consuming, institutional resistance. This is a modern trend.

5. Constructivist Paradigm: Based on Vygotsky and Piaget. Knowledge is constructed by the learner through experience and collaboration. The teacher is the facilitator.

Advantages: Active learning, problem-solving. In India, it is included in the NCF-2005 and NCFTE-2009.

6. Contemporary Paradigm: Digital, Inclusive, and Multidisciplinary: NEP-2020 includes 4IR, AI, ICT, Inclusive Education, and a Multidisciplinary Approach. Connectivism and Open Education Resources (OER) are included.

Paradigms of Teacher Education in the Indian Context Teacher education in India evolved through the NPE-1986, POA-1992, NCF-2005, NCFTE-2009, and NEP-2020. NCFTE-2009 adopted a "constructivist, reflective, and inclusive" paradigm. It called teachers "reflective practitioners." School internships were made mandatory for 16-20 weeks.

NEP-2020 introduced revolutionary changes—a four-year integrated B.Ed., training in multidisciplinary institutions, 50 hours of CPD (Continuous Professional Development) annually, and a one-year B.Ed. option after a four-year multidisciplinary bachelor's degree. NCTE issued new regulations in 2021.

Indian Knowledge System (IKS), Yoga, Value Education, and local languages were included. Challenges: Over 90% of B.Ed. colleges are private, quality is uneven, and there is a shortage of trained teachers (ASER report). NCFTE-2009 aims to make teacher education "connected with society." NEP-2020 considers teachers as "nation builders."

III. CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Key challenges: Theory-practical gap, digital divide, managing diversity, outdated assessment methods, quality of teacher education institutions.

Future: AI-based simulation training, virtual reality, global collaboration, research-based teacher education, inclusive policies. India should strengthen the NCTE and implement national standards.

IV. CONCLUSION

The paradigms of teacher education are constantly evolving. A shift from behaviorism to a critical and constructivist one is essential. India can become a global leader through NEP-2020. What is needed is a pluralistic approach that harmonizes all paradigms. True progress lies in empowering teachers, being reflective, and inclusive. The four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) proposed by NEP-2020 is a quantum leap from the traditional two-year B.Ed. program. This program integrates subject knowledge, teaching skills, practical experience, and reflective practice. This enables teachers to become not only subject matter experts but also adopt a multidisciplinary approach, essential to address the complex challenges of the 21st century—such as climate change, the digital divide, social inequality, and the impact of artificial intelligence. The policy defines the teacher as a 'reflective practitioner' and a 'transformative intellectual', inspired by the ideas of Zeichner and Schön.

This paradigm shift is particularly important in the Indian context, as the country's educational diversity—linguistic, cultural, economic, and geographic—is unprecedented. NEP-2020 has contextualized teacher education by mainstreaming Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), local languages, yoga, value education, and inclusive education. This allows teachers to no longer simply teach textbooks, but to provide education that balances students' cultural backgrounds, local needs, and global perspectives.

Nevertheless, the success of this transformation depends on several challenges. The biggest challenge is implementation. Nearly 90% of teacher education institutions in the country are in the private sector, where quality is uneven. Strict adherence to NCTE standards, continuous capacity development (CPD) of teachers, equitable access to digital resources, and the development of a research culture remain incomplete. ASER and other reports indicate that many teachers are still stuck in old paradigms. The success of NEP-

2020 will be ensured only if these institutional reforms are implemented on the ground.

Ultimately, paradigms in teacher education are not merely technical or theoretical changes; they reflect society's values, aspirations, and visions for the future. NEP-2020 has given India the opportunity to build a teacher cadre that not only imparts knowledge but also embodies the values of justice, equality, creativity, and humanity. If we can realize this vision, not only the education system but the entire nation will reach new heights. The future of teacher education is bright—provided we don't stop, but instead move forward with constant reflection, innovation, and commitment. Because what teachers learn reaches students; and what students learn becomes a nation.

REFERENCE

- [1] Zeichner, K.M. (1983). Alternative Paradigms of Teacher Education. 'Journal of Teacher Education', 34(3), 3-9.
- [2] National Council for Teacher Education. (2009). 'National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education'. NCTE, New Delhi.
- [3] Ministry of Education, Government of India. (2020). 'National Education Policy 2020'.
- [4] Agarwal, A. (2018). Paradigms of Teacher Education. 'Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Education', 3(4).
- [5] Schön, D.A. (1983). 'The Reflective Practitioner'. Basic Books.
- [6] Freire, P. (1970). 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed'. Continuum.
- [7] Combs, A.W. et al. (1974). 'The Professional Education of Teachers'. Allyn & Bacon.
- [8] Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). 'Mind in Society'. Harvard University Press.
- [9] Siemens, G. (2005). Connectivism: A Learning Theory for the Digital Age. 'International Journal of Instructional Technology & Distance Learning'.
- [10] NCTE. (2021). Regulations for Teacher Education Programmes.
- [11] Kuhn, T.S. (1962). 'The Structure of Scientific Revolutions'. University of Chicago Press.
- [12] ASER Centre. (2023). Annual Status of Education Report.
- [13] Government of India. (1966). Kothari Commission Report.

- [14] Dewey, J. (1904). The Relation of Theory to Practice in Education.
- [15] Popkewitz, T.S., Tabachnick, B.R., & Zeichner, K.M. (1979). Dulling the Senses. 'Journal of Teacher Education'.