
INTERNATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TEACHER EDUCATION THROUGH ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Quratulain Rauf Khan

Ph.D. Scholar,
Department of Teacher Education, University of Karachi,
Sindh, Pakistan.
Email: quratulainrauf@uok.edu.pk

Imtiaz Ahmad

Assistant Professor,
Department of Teacher Education, University of Karachi,
Sindh, Pakistan.
Email: imtiazjam@uok.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

Effectiveness of Education System is dependent upon teacher education. National Education Policy (2009-2015) specifies the Planning Commission's Vision-2030' focusing on change of mindset which exhibit commitment to a new set of societal goals.. In Pakistan, there is an immense need to trace teacher education development and reform in terms of the major questions that have driven the field and the sometimes competing ways these questions have been constructed, debated, and enacted in research, policy, and practice. To ensure better quality and productivity, accreditation and licensing for teacher educators in Pakistan is extremely necessary. The impact of teachers' education on teacher learning, professional practice, and student learning is enormous. The present study is focused on analyzing the existing practices and inputs of accreditation and teacher licensing in Pakistan and worldwide with special reference to USA, Australia and Scotland. Moreover, the document analysis of UNESCO reports and guidelines has been done with critical lenses in order to provide ground for full length research. to inform designing Indigenous Framework for Quality Assurance in Teacher Education drawing upon International Perspectives on Policy and Practice. It will pave the way for introducing teacher licensing regime in Pakistan in order to establish uniform education system in Pakistan.

KEYWORDS

Teacher Education, Accreditation, Teacher Licensing, Quality Assurance, Policy and Practices

INTRODUCTION

For a nation to prosper, educating its people is essential. Teachers play an important role in the upbringing and development of future generations. But it is important that teachers themselves are trained and qualified enough to deliver lessons and content in an effective manner. Teachers play a crucial part in the success of educational systems. (Roth & Scott Swail, 2000) Even one incapable teacher can lead to the downfall of multiple students' futures. Therefore, teaching as a profession plays a significant role in how successful students and educational systems are all leading to how prosperous an entire nation is. For good teaching to occur, only theory-based knowledge is not enough; a teacher should have the skills and knowledge to deliver academic content in an effective manner all while managing student development and the learning process. In an ever-evolving world where many fields and professions have a systematic approach towards licensing, such as the medical field, law field, etc. Teacher education is vital for the establishment of educational systems in any country. (Van den Brule, 2008) When teachers are equipped with the necessary skills and resources to teach, they deliver better lessons to students, thus leading to economic prosperity, lower drop-out rate, and more scientific development and research. But when such a framework that can adequately accredit a teacher is not present, loopholes are created that lead to poor teacher education, lack of qualified teachers, and higher student drop-out rates.

National Education Policies and Quality of Teacher Education

Teacher Education has been major thrust area of National Education Policies in Pakistan. National Education Policy 2009-2015 (p.9) highlights overarching challenges and deficiencies of education system in Pakistan. The policy emphasizes the provision of Quality Education. Keeping in view the recent demographic transition, the working age population (Above 15 years and below 65 years) is expected to reach 61.7% by 2015. It poses enormous challenges for the government to manage the economy in such a way that demographic transition benefits Pakistan. In this perspective, thinking and acting strategically about human capital development and management is the life blood of most high performing business organizations. Public education of any nation should be no different. Principals and teacher's performance has more effect in students' achievement than any other factor. It is imperative to act on that knowledge and strengthen the education workforce to better serve students. Improving quality requires actions in the areas of teacher quality as the National Education Policy (NEP)-2009 highlights that there are six basic pillars of quality education: these are Quality Teachers, Curriculum, Textbooks and learning materials, the learning environment in an institution, student assessment and relevance of education to practical life/labor market. Thus the quality impact in teacher education becomes all the more important. As is the teacher, so is the nation. In fact, he/she is the top most academic and professional person in the educational pyramid. Teacher is the pivot around which all the educational programs rotate in so far as their

implementation is concerned.

Sclafani (2008) considering Singapore as a Model for Teacher Development has highlighted the important issues namely: high standard for selecting teachers and administrators and deep support for them throughout their careers, serious career management from preparation to retirement, strong sense of professionalism -among teachers and strategic use of financial resources to attract and retain excellent teachers. National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) India in collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning (COL) Canada has framed Teacher Education has been major thrust area of National Education Policies in Pakistan. Pakistan - National Education Policy Framework -2018 denotes that approximately 40% of the country's population (ages 10 and above) lag behind in grade level reading. Although addressing quality in education requires that this must be tackled from all aspects including school infrastructure, curriculum, textbooks, assessments, financial efficiency of education budget, but the most important requirement is to address the quality of the 1.9 million teaching personnel across the country. Quality of Teacher Education is directly linked to the quality of instruction learner receive in the classroom from the teachers. Various reviews of the top-performing education systems across the world show that the quality of education systems is directly linked with the quality of its teachers. Although, there have been several reforms to improve in-service teacher training, pre-service teacher preparation programs and recruitment of teachers, these have yielded few results in improving student learning. The disparity in quality and skills of teachers in the three systems of schooling (Public, Private and Madrassa) is a major reason for the differences in achievement levels of children across Pakistan. National Education Policy 2009-2015 (p.9) highlights overarching challenges and deficiencies of education system in Pakistan According to the Education Sector Reform Action Plan (2001-2005), The Higher Education Commission (HEC) in Pakistan and the then Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (ACTE) came up with limited regulatory initiatives to support teacher education. But due to no authorities at regional levels, impactful work was very limited. Thus the need to develop an effective and practical framework to support teacher education programs and initiatives arises. This review, explores international policy and practices for quality assurance in teacher education. Quality Assurance Tool-kit for Teacher Education Institute (QATTEI) in which document 2 highlights Quality Indicators for Teacher Education. The key dimensions which reflect quality can be translated into indicators of quality serving two purposes of the institutions i.e. to measure the processes and their outcomes for making necessary adjustment and changes for quality improvement of the program and serving as an appropriate tool for monitoring the process for continuous learning and ongoing improvement. Astin (1993) pointed out four views on excellence in quality higher education: excellence in reputation, excellence in resources, excellence in content and

excellence in outcome. It has direct implications for quality assurance in-Teacher Education.

National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (NACTE) in Pakistan has formulated standards in terms of curriculum and instruction, Assessment and Evaluation system, physical infrastructure, academic facilities and learning resources, finance and management, human resources, research and scholarship and community links and out-reaches. It shows that teacher education in Pakistan is witnessing, a visible change and concerns for quality assurance and enhancement. Standard based education in general and teacher education in particular is part of global moment of quality assurance.

Quality Assurance in Teacher Education is the need of the hour as far as Pakistan is concerned. The crucial point is the need of fundamental reforms to improve the performance and sustainability of teacher education. Higher Education Commission (HEC) defines quality as follows:

“Quality is the means through which an institution can guarantee with the confidence and certainty that the standard of educational provisions are being maintained and enhanced”.

To keep pace with the march of civilization, Teacher Education System in Pakistan would have to assure quality in Teacher education. Higher Education Commission (HEC) defines the Quality Assurance in the following way:

“Quality in higher education is a dynamic entity which is the outcome of the interaction among many factors including inter-alia leadership, quality of faculty and students, infrastructure facilities, research and learning environment, governance, strategic planning, assessment procedure and market force”.

Currently, teacher education in Pakistan is passing through a transition as an innovation has been initiated by the Government of Pakistan with the support of USAID through their Pre-Service Teachers Education Program (Pre-STEP) project. This reform is attempted in order to improve the quality of teacher education by introducing different innovations.

In this regard, a new curriculum has been developed for pre-service programs such as a two-year Associate Degree in Education (ADE) and a four-year B.Ed. (Hons). Effort has been made to design the curriculum keeping in view the modern educational principle along with the contextual relevancy. These programs are gradually replacing the previous pre-service and in-service programs such as Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC), Certificate in Teaching (CT) and the one-year B.Ed. Program. In addition, an

effort is being made for the accreditation and standardization of teacher training institutions through this initiative.

The problem of quality assurance in teacher education is highly prevalent, and many factors contribute to its absence. Teacher education means educating teachers and equipping them with the skills and resources they need to be qualified to teach in a classroom. But many obstacles in their way hinder them from being able to do so. Licensure tests that certify an individual to be a teacher are only one factor that attributes to the development of new teachers. (Testing Teacher Candidates, 2001) The quality of new teachers depends on multiple different factors like recruitment, teacher salary, labor force, etc. To understand how innovative measures can be utilized to develop teacher competencies in order to enhance teacher education and assure quality, several new frameworks use various different ways and tests to determine a prospective teacher's skills and knowledge. This assessment is directly related to the professional development of prospective teachers leading to better teachers.

Global Perspectives on Teacher Licensing

Literature suggests that there are two main models that can assure quality in teacher education and are used around the world. (Van den Brule, 2008)

University Affiliation Model

In the university affiliation model, standards and procedures for teacher accreditation. This allows community colleges to be associated with a university to deliver teacher education programs. However, this model has been evaluated by external authorities and many are shifting to the model of accreditation by an independent authority.

Accreditation by Independent Authority Model:

In this model, national and local bodies evaluate teacher education programs based on national and local standards. Through a 3 step process that includes students, staff, and externals, teacher education programs are evaluated in such a way as to ensure transparency.

The staff of the program or institution submit self-evaluation reports

Cross peer reviews who submit assessment reports

Examination of both staff self-evaluation reports and cross peer assessment reports are held by external and independent authorities leading to licensing recognition status

To understand what teacher licensing looks like in different countries, literature on teacher licensing has been reviewed with special reference to Australia, Scotland United States of America (USA) and Australian context:-

The development of teacher education accreditation procedures in Australia is well

developed in universities and colleges. (Ingvarson & Teaching Australia, 2006) Certain processes set in place to ensure the quality of courses meets the standards including endorsement and approval from state-based departments. In states where such departments and authorities are not present, the process is practiced and reviewed internally.

With any model, comes room for further improvement. As in the case of the licensing procedure in Australia, new initiatives are focusing on developing an approval process based on standards and outcomes while also retaining the key inputs in the existing process. With future plans for assessing teacher education programs, it is envisioned that Australia will focus on developing processes for reporting and benchmarking.

South Australia

The teacher licensure program in South Australia has a process called endorsement to assure quality in their program. (Ingvarson & Teaching Australia, 2006) Like any other program, course endorsement is mainly connected with course registration. The existing process results in course approval of the teacher licensure program after the approval of accreditable documents. Although new policies have yet been developed to assure quality in teacher education programs. Currently, the teacher education boards in South Australia are working to establish proper procedures and standards for teacher licensing that are also in line with their national framework. Such measures will be helpful for guiding, reviewing, and assessing teacher education programs transparently while ensuring their quality and credibility.

Tasmania

In Tasmania, an island state in Australia, the teacher licensing accreditation program under the Teachers Registration Act 2000 states that only provisionally registered teachers can be employed to teach in governmental and non-governmental schools in Tasmania. (Ingvarson & Teaching Australia, 2006) For an individual to be registered as a teacher, he or she is required to fulfill the requirements and provide a satisfactory response to the board that overlooks the process in terms of how capable they are to deliver in the classroom. The Act although does not mention accreditation of teacher education programs as a requirement but has the power to perform according to the situation. As we know that teacher registration is directly linked with the completion of a Board-approved course, the Board can directly play a part in the accreditation of programs in this way.

Scotland

In Scotland, the teacher education system comprises of previous and existing policies among which the 2001 Teacher's Agreement has notable influence to the system. (Menter et al., 2010) The 'Curriculum for Excellence' that was implemented in the

country in August 2010 has had a high impact on teacher education programs, challenging the development of teacher education programs to identify enrichment opportunities in the existing framework.

With further advancements into the 19th & 20th centuries, teacher education programs in Scotland have become more developed and give prospective teachers the opportunity for postgrad. Alongside, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) credits were introduced to aid the teacher education programs and involve companies to broaden the number of opportunities available for teachers to avail as part of the teacher education programs in Scotland.

United States of American

Teacher licensing practices in Colorado, a state in the United States of America, dating back to the early 1980's as a major reform in educational systems. (Salleh et al., n.d.) The teacher education programs that led to teacher licensing focused on credits and supervised teaching practices also known as practicums to determine the skills of a candidate fit enough to be licensed as a teacher.

Need for Teacher Licensing in Pakistan

Teacher licensing globally focuses on different ways that institutions and authorities credify individuals as teachers. To understand why teacher licensing is needed in Pakistan, we will explore some of the current challenges faced in teacher education in Pakistan.

If we take a look at cross-border programs that enable teachers to practice teaching at different institutions, we can see that cross-border licensing procedures at international institutions focus on delivering programs that are registered and licensed at both ends to ensure quality assurance and accreditation. (Arif et al., 2019)

But due to political issues and lack of capacity, many of such programs are not evaluated under quality assurance frameworks. The same can be observed in Pakistan as well. The HEC sets parameters for internalization and cross-border programs along with ensuring quality assurance in teacher licensing. But due to the lack of regional authorities, quality assurance is difficult.

For any education system, the quality of teacher education matters. (Memon, 2007) The current quality of teacher accreditation programs in Pakistan suffers from a lack of competent teachers, limited opportunities for teaching practices, and the absence of authorities to overlook the accreditation system results in even the possession of a trivial certificate substantial enough for one to become a teacher.

There are many challenges that are posed in the field of teacher education. According to interviews held with Ministry officials, there are multiple issues to be taken into account to understand the most pressing problems that are posed in teacher education.

Many factors are held into consideration. The most important problem that was identified was the clear need of crafting quality-based standards for curriculum development. When developing, it is necessary to always include the user and implement their feedback and views to achieve more inclusive development. One important thing to keep in mind while developing standards is that rural teachers have different views as compared to teachers residing in urban areas. The significant difference in the circumstances both lies in means that the standards developed should vary as well.

The present teacher education landscape in Pakistan is encountering multiple reforms to mitigate the currently posed challenges. (Van den Brule, 2008) Development of teacher training institutes for professional development, development of new frameworks to support recruitment, and more are being taken. But despite all these efforts, there is still the need to address the existing gap in the system.

Why Accreditation: Linkages between Accreditation and Quality of Teacher Education

According to *Importance of Accreditation in Education Programs*, MC Online, (2017) 'Accreditation' is a process where field professionals review teacher education programs by higher education institutions to determine whether they meet the set standards developed based on research. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in the United States defines accreditation as a seal of approval indicating that those who have completed the program leading to accreditation can be professional educators whether they be teachers, administrators, specialists, etc. To receive accreditation, an institution goes through a review process by NCATE which consists of teacher education programs and unit-based evaluations.

Relationship of Accreditation & Teacher Licensing

Accreditation offers educational quality assurance to students, governments, ministries, and society (CHEA, 2016; Hendel and Lewis, 2005). To explore what can and cannot be realistically accomplished through accreditation, Eric Holmboe from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education led a large-group discussion about potential trade-offs for accreditation, asking whether accreditation actually improves quality of education and health care and if so, how would that be recognized by accrediting bodies? For the accredited body, this recognition serves the purpose of instilling public confidence in the program, institution, or organization (CHEA, 2010). Directly involving patients, families, and communities in the accreditation process

could further strengthen the public's confidence in the current and future health workforce (Alexander, 2015; Standards Council of Canada, 2003). The purpose of accreditation is to build a competent health workforce by ensuring the quality of training taking place within those institutions that have met certain criteria (WHO, 2013). It is the combination of institution or program accreditation with individual licensure—for confirming practitioner competence—that governments and professions use to reassure the public of the capability of its health workforce (IOM, 2003). Accreditation offers educational quality assurance to students, governments, ministries, and society. For the accredited body, this recognition serves the purpose of instilling public confidence in the program, institution, or organization.

Teacher accreditation is considered to be one of the prime ways to enhance the overall quality of the teaching profession. Seefeldt, C. (1988). For ensuring an effective and responsive teaching system, both program accreditation and teacher certification hold significant importance in the teaching profession. If we are to see significant reforms in the teaching profession then accreditation and licensing are to be considered primary to the success of teachers' teaching quality and performance.

The purpose of using accreditation as a process for teacher licensing is to ensure that all teacher education programs adhere to the quality standards set by authorities. (Roy et al., 2020) Due to the accreditation process being expensive and difficult, identifying the direct benefits of it on teacher education programs can be complex to understand due to the difference in multiple accreditation systems that exist. Accreditation programs are directly linked to how well licensing exam outcomes are, and whether different factors affect the outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Insights drawn from international practices of quality assurances in Teacher Education inform that Pakistan needs sector wide reforms for developing quality workforce operating as reflective practitioners in 21st century class room. The most fundamental reform may be of making accreditation mandatory for the teacher education institutes and the colleges affiliated with universities across the board. The compliance to accreditation standards of National Accreditation Council for teacher Education (NACTE) will improve professional teacher qualification offering as the said standards range from conceptual framework and program ethos to quality curriculum, robust physical infrastructure, Operationalized assessments and evaluation system and quality of human resources deployed to implement teacher education. The quality of teacher educators has been considered prime in this context. . Thus accreditation leading to teacher licensing across the board will help assuring quality of teacher education in Pakistan.

RECOMENDACTIONS

- 1-Accreditation be made mandatory on the pattern of professions other than Teaching
- 2- The candidates earning degrees from accredited teacher education institute only be eligible for Teacher Licensing.
- 3- Teacher Licensing regime is required to be introduced across the board to ensure implementation of recruitment rules.

REFERENCES

- Arif, S., Liaqat, Z., & Afzal, A. (2019). Quality Assurance & Accreditation of Teacher Education in Pakistan: Scope for Internationalization. *UMT Education Review*, 02(01), 01–21. <https://doi.org/10.32350/uer.21.01>
- Importance of Accreditation in Education Programs | MC Online. (2017, May 22). Mississippi College Online. <https://online.mc.edu/degrees/education/accreditation-in-education-programs/>
- Ingvarson, L., & Teaching Australia (Eds.). (2006). *Teacher education accreditation: A review of national and international trends and practices*. Teaching Australia. IOM (Institute of Medicine). Health professions education: A bridge to quality. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press; 2003. [PubMed]
- Memon, G. R. (2007). Education in Pakistan: The Key Issues, Problems and The New Challenges. 3(1), 9.
- Menter, I., Hulme, M., Elliot, D., & Lewin, J. (2010). Literature Review on Teacher Education in the 21st Century. 104.
- Ministry of Education (2009a), 'National Education Policy'. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.
- Ministry of Education (2009b), 'National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan'. Policy and Planning Wing, Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.
- Roth, D., & Scott Swail, W. (2000). *Certification and Teacher Preparation in the United States*.
- Roy, M., Wood, T., Blouin, D., & Eva, K. (2020). The Relationship Between Accreditation Cycle and Licensing Examination Scores: A National Look. *Academic Medicine, Publish Ahead of Print*. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000003632>
- Salleh, K. M., Sulaiman, N. L., & Frederiksen, H. (n.d.). Comparison of teacher licensing between the United States of America and Malaysia: Implementation and practical implication. *Education Journal*, 6.
- Seefeldt, C. (1988). Teacher Certification and Program Accreditation in Early Childhood Education. *The Elementary School Journal*, 89(2), 241–251. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1001928>
- Siddiqui, S. (2010). *Rethinking Education in Pakistan*. Karachi: Paramount Publishing Enterprise
- STEP/USAID (2009) Directory of Teacher Education Institutions of Pakistan, STEP and Policy and Planning Wing, Islamabad, Pakistan, Ministry of Education
- UNESCO (2006). *Strengthening Teacher Education in Pakistan- Situation Analysis of Teacher Education: Towards a Strategic Framework for Teacher Education and Professional*

Development

Testing Teacher Candidates: The Role of Licensure Tests in Improving Teacher Quality (p. 17). (2001). National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/10090>

Van den Brule, J. (2008). *Good Practices and International Trends of Teacher Accreditation and Certification with Analysis and Recommendations for Pakistan under the Strengthening Teacher Education in Pakistan (STEP) Programme*. WHO (World Health Organization). Transforming and scaling up health professional education and training: Policy brief on accreditation of institutions for health professional education. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO; 2013.