

CRISIS OF TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN WEST BENGAL DURING 2006: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Quality generally signifies the degree of excellence. In the educational context, quality is seen as a complex issue as education is concerned with human. With basic infrastructural facilities, development of necessary skills, values and attitudes of the trainees are desired as maximum output of how effectively the process of training is organized. Various agencies like NCTE, NAAC are established to assess and accredit the institutions and to improve the quality of education. The number of teacher education institutions were increasing in those days at a very fast rate due to privatization and liberalization of teacher education. Though the expansion had happened at large and rapid scale, maximum institutions were not duly recognized by NCTE. So, the crisis was exposed in front of Calcutta High Court. And the crisis was acute due to its multifoliate reasons. After going through a long battle and tensions between the then West Bengal government and Central government, a feasible solution had come out through the amendment of Parliament.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Privatization, Liberalization.



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I. INTRODUCTION

Introduction: The National Council for Teacher Education as a statutory body came into existence in pursuance of the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993(No. 73 of 1993) on the 17th August, 1995. The main purpose of the NCTE is to achieve planned and coordinated development of the teacher education system throughout the country, the regulation and proper maintenance of Norms and Standards in teacher education system and for matters connected therewith. The mandate given to the NCTE is very broad and covers the gamut of teacher education programs including research and training of persons for equipping them to teach at pre-primary, primary, secondary and senior secondary stages in schools, and non-formal education, part-time education, adult education and distance (correspondence) education courses.

One of the important mandates conferred on NCTE to recognize all the teacher education institutions based on its infrastructure, faculty members and well equipped laboratories, libraries, play ground etc. As an autonomous and statutory body NCTE has all the power to derecognize the teacher education institution due to unable to fulfill all the criteria as specified in the NCTE regulations, updated with due course.

Unfortunately, due to the huge expansion of teacher education institutions, the adequate infrastructure and all other quality assurance parameters were deteriorating miraculously day by day. Even, the individual private authority of the institutions was much reluctant to maintain the standards and procedures as specified by NCTE. And in most of the cases, the responsible authority wanted to ignore the rules which were treated as sheer violations rules and regulations as specified by NCTE. So, the crisis was partly formulated due to the privatization and liberalization of teacher education institutions in that time.

Statement of the Problem: In pursuance of the formation of the NCTE, one of the most unfortunate and shocking scenario was created in teacher education institution in West Bengal during 2006 session. Thus, the present study read as “Crisis of Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal during 2006: A Case Study”.

Objectives of the Study: Objectives of the present study were as follows:

1. To search the proper reasons behind the crisis of teacher education institutions in West Bengal during 2006.
2. To find out the process of recognition that was followed by the colleges at that time.
3. To know the cumulative amount that had been paid by the individual colleges (Govt., Private aided, Private unaided) as a penalty.
4. To highlight the faculty strength that had been present at that time.
5. To observe the intake capacity of the students in 2005-2006 academic session.

Significance of the Study: The present study was circulated with a case that was filed in Calcutta High Court regarding the NCTE recognition matter in 2005. After that, the grim reality was exposed before the court as well as to the NCTE. After analyzing all the facts, Chief Justice, S. S. Nijjar had given the verdict to stop the academic activities of all those colleges which have no NCTE recognition in April, 2006. There were near about 66 colleges including Govt., Govt. – aided and private was running at that time in West Bengal. Among them, almost 62 colleges had no NCTE recognition letter for continuing the course. So High Court had ordered these colleges strictly to stop their academic program. As a result likely

6000 to 6500 students' future was in vogue. On the basis of this fact the researchers wanted to investigate that what are the actual reasons behind this issue. That's why the present study plays a significant role in teacher education institutions in West Bengal.

II. METHODOLOGY

Method: The present study was planned to study the crisis of teacher education institution in W.B. during 2006. It was a survey type research, in which data were collected from Secretaries, Principals, Teachers and Librarians of these institutions.

Sample: The sample consisted of four teacher education institutions in which two were Govt. aided and other two were Private unaided selected randomly from Howrah and North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. The Secretary, Principal, Teacher and Librarian of these teacher education institutions were the respondent of this study. The sample also collected from Netaji Subhas Open University of West Bengal.

Tool: An unstructured questionnaire was used as a tool for this study. The tool was finalized by the help of Principal of Ramakrishna Mission Sikshanamandira, Belur Math, Howrah. This questionnaire was prepared exclusively for Secretary, Principal, Teacher and Librarian of the teacher education institutions.

Technique: A qualitative technique of unstructured interview schedule was used in this study for collection of data from the above resource persons. According to objectives of the study responses were captured from Secretary, Principal, Teacher and Librarian through this interview technique.

Procedure of Data Collection: Data were collected from each institution as per the guideline provided in the tool. Each institution was visited more than one time in a week to collect data from Secretary, Principal, Teacher and Librarian of the teacher education institutions.

III. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

After collection of responses from the above resource persons verbally and printed version mode, it were analyzed qualitatively and interpreted them properly according to their availability.

With Special Reference to Netaji Subhas Open University: Researchers conducted an interview with Dr. Atin Kr. Dey, the director of N.S.O.U. to collect the required information for analyzing the crisis in a very pragmatic way. Atin Babu briefly stated the matter in a very pithy way. He directly blamed the adamant and autocratic attitude of the Government of West Bengal at that time. The state government violated the NCTE Act which was passed in the

parliament. As a result, a serious crisis was formulated in the name of the validity of the students' degree and the existence of the teacher training institution.

He also said that after a long impasse, a feasible compromise and negotiation was done between NCTE and the state government of West Bengal. NCTE was agreed to validate the degrees in exchange of penalty money. And the penalty money was about 75 crore. After that the NCTE strictly instructed all the colleges to follow the standard, norms, procedure as specified. And the particular institute should be duly recognized by the NCTE.

In this way, eventually, the crisis was resolved. Atin Babu briefed the history due to his hectic schedule. According to the report of "The Gazette of India" of ministry of law and justice in 11 th September, 2006 of "The National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment and Validation) Ordinance, 2006, p. 2, it is said that – "No institution shall admit any student to a course or training in teacher education, unless the institution concerned has obtained recognition under section 14 or permission under section 15, as the case may be."

With Special Reference to Ramakrishna Mission Sikhshanamandira: Ramkrishna Mission Sikhshanamandira is one of the reputed Govt. aided teacher education institutions in West Bengal. It is enhancing its academic excellence under the monastic supervision. Though it is reputed institute in respect of maintaining proper rules and regulations as specified by NCTE, it was also suffering in the same crisis due to the faulty policy of the State Government. They got the recognition of NCTE for starting the B. Ed course of 1-year duration from the academic session 2003-2004 with an annual intake of 150 students with the assurance of at least 07 regular faculty members and 06 part time lecturers (N.C.T.E. order of ERC/7-35(ER-35.4.1)/2003/1047 in June 3, 2003).

But in 1993 the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993 (hereinafter referred to as the principal act) was passed in parliament. The act was enacted from the near 1995 onwards. As the R.K.M.S.M. got the recognition in 2003, so they also paid the penalty money for the near 1995 to 2002. The amount of the penalty money was 1907100/-. As per the enrollment of students the total amount was divided into different year.

As a result, one ordinance was published to validate the degree of students. This ordinance may be called the National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment and Validation) ordinance, 2006. In this way, the crisis was resolved through the proper negotiation of both the body.

With Special Reference to Gopal Chandra Memorial College of Education: Another survey was done at the Gopal Chandra Memorial College, Govt. aided teacher education institution in North 24 Parganas district under the University of Calcutta. This college was prayed for NCTE recognition in 2001. Consequently, an inspection team came from the NCTE eastern regional office to visit and inspected the college in 2002. After that it was recognized by the NCTE in June 03, 2003 (N.C.T.E. order of ERC/7-35(ER-35.6.2)/2003/1051 in June 03, 2003). Investigators were conducted an interview with Mr. Prasanta Kr. Mondal, librarian of this college. He told us lots of valuable information in this regard.

The total penalty money for this college was Rs 25,00,000 /-. That total money was granted by the State Government as a Grant - in - aid. In that time of academic session 2005-2006, the capacity of faculty was 08. Those were - Debasish Dhar, Madhumita Das, Swati Goswami, Paramita Benerjee, Hena Sengupta, Sambhunath Dey, Gobindapada Paul, Maya Sengupta. Librarian was Mr. Prasanta Kr. Mondal and the principal was Dr. Udayaditya Bhattacharya. At that time the total student capacity were - 120 (2003), 196 (2004) & 290 (2005).

With Special Reference to Gangadharpur Sikshan Mandir: Gangadharpur Sikshan Mandir also was faced the same problem in that period. This college was established in 2nd May of 2005. In that time, Gangadharpur Sikshan Mandir was one of the reputed private unaided B.Ed. colleges in Howrah District under University of Calcutta. We took an interview from one of the resource persons of this college. His name was Mr. Sankar Kr. Khanra. According to him, insufficient faculty and lack of proper qualified teachers are another two reasons behind that crisis. He said that, State Govt. gave them loan of 20,36,000 /- for that penalty purpose. There was no time limit for repaying that amount of money to the State Govt. The first Rs 15,00,000 /- was made payment in 3 installments within 30/06/2012. Then for repaying the rest amount of Rs 5,36,000 /- the college was praying for allowing more time to the Certificate Officer, Howrah, Govt. of West Bengal. Thus, the college was paid the total loan amount within 7 years.

In that time of academic session i.e. 2005-2006, the total faculty capacity was 08 fulltime assistant professor and 01 principal. "Under Section 14(3)(a) of the NCTE Act, 1993, the Eastern Regional Committee hereby grants recognition to this institution for conducting B.Ed. course o one year duration from the academic session 2006-2007 with an annual intake

of 100 students” (N.C.T.E. order of Code No. APE00561, ERC/7-69.7.6/2006/3507 in October 03, 2006).

With Special Reference to Surendralal Das Teachers’ Training College (B.Ed.): In this crisis period, Surendralal Das Teachers’ Training College, Bally, Howrah, 711227 was also facing the same problem. It was a private unaided B.Ed college in Howrah district under the University of Calcutta. Mr. Bishnupada Das, the honorable secretary of this college was interviewed by the researchers. He gave the all valuable information in this regards.

He said that this college was started their first admission procedure in B.Ed course in 2005-2006 session. Total 107 numbers of students were admitted in that 2005-2006 academic sessions. After that the college got NCTE recognition in 5th March, 2007 (N.C.T.E. order of Code No. APE00628, ERC/7-74.7(1)11/2007/6795 in March 05, 2007).

In that circumstance, the college also had to pay the penalty money to the NCTE through getting a loan for that reason from the State Government for going on the current academic session of 2005-2006. The penalty money was Rs 18,19,000 /-. That amount of penalty money was paid by the college to the NCTE for getting permission of holding final B.Ed examination for the session 2005-2006 smoothly. Then the college was applied for recognition to the NCTE in January 2006 and got recognition in March 2007. The application fees for post recognition was Rs 30,000 /-. Thus the college had to stop for admission procedure in the academic session of 2006-2007. After that it was running without facing any disturbance.

IV. FINDINGS & CONCLUSION

Major Findings: Main objective of the study is to identify the causes behind the crisis of Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal during 2006. Many other objectives are present in this study. Major findings of these objectives were as follows:

- **Causes behind that Crisis:**

- 1) The main cause behind this crisis was the adamant attitude of the government of west Bengal and conscious negligence to follow the NCTE act which was passed in the Parliament of India. It is treated as the sheer violation of NCTE act which was categorically condemned by the Calcutta high court and simultaneously the court had suggested some fruitful suggestions to the state government to obey the NCTE act honestly and to validate all the teacher education institutions under west Bengal in the academic session 2005 – 2006.

2) Basically this crisis was originated due to the conflict between the two B. Ed. Colleges in North Bengal, namely Balurghat B.Ed. college and Deben Mahato B. Ed. College, regarding NCTE recognition matter in 2005.

3) Maximum number of B.Ed. colleges (Govt., private (Govt. aided), private aided, private - unaided) did not seek and draw their recognition from the NCTE since 1995 to till the origin of the issue was found.

4) The proper procedure for attaining the recognition according to NCTE is that at first the institution will bound to take the recognition from NCTE, after that they will proceed further to collect the no objection certificate from the State Govt. and then they will take the affiliation of the concerned University for the smooth conduction of the course. The process of getting recognition is as follow:

Recognition from NCTE → No objection certificate from the competent authority of concerned State Govt. → Affiliation from the recognized University.

But in West Bengal maximum number of B.Ed. colleges followed the procedure reversely. At first B.Ed. colleges are established then getting permission from State Govt. and recognition from NCTE issue comes one after another. That's why the crisis was acute to the NCTE during that time.

5) At that time, the college was going on with insufficient faculties.

6) There were anomalies regarding the intake capacity of students.

- **Calcutta High Court Order:**

After exercising the pros and cons of the NCTE act, the High Court had given the verdict in favor of the students to secure their future. Firstly, the students will be repaid their admission fees and secondly, each and every student will be paid at a time 5000 rupees as penalty money by the concerned colleges.

- **Way to Overcome that Crisis:**

In that critical situation, the colleges intimated about the problem duly to the State Government. The State Govt. consequently initiated a movement to overcome this problem. At that time, after comprehending the situation, the education minister of West Bengal, Sudarshan Roychowdhury and higher education minister, Satyasadhan Chakraborty jointly conveyed about this serious issue to the Central Govt. – UPA 1. In this connection, in favour of the students future, a special ordinance was enacted by the former president of India, A.P.J.Abdul Kalam in October, 2006. The validity of that ordinance was 6 month. The

ordinance directed to the NCTE to revalidate the degree of the students in exchange of the required amount pay by the colleges to the NCTE as fine instead of paying this amount by the colleges to the student as earlier said. The amount of the penalty money was different in respect of different colleges. Actually the amount was huge, so the colleges were completely unable to pay the amount at a time. So the colleges prayed to the West Bengal Govt. to take necessary steps accordingly. And the Director of Public Instruction of West Bengal Govt. decided to grant the amount as loan in case of private B.Ed colleges and the Government was totally responsible to pay the penalty amount as Grant-in-aid in case of Govt. or Govt. aided B.Ed. colleges.

• **List of Colleges Still Running and Recognized in 2005-2006 Session in West Bengal:**

All the following listed colleges in West Bengal were still running and recognized by NCTE in that crisis period during 2006. One of them i.e. Balurghat B.Ed. College got recognition one year back from their application i.e. in 2006-2007 academic session. They got back their recognition of 2005-2006 sessions by getting the revised order from the NCTE. According to NCTE order of ERC/7-55.6(7)/2005/1269 in April 20, 2005; ERC/7-55.6(9)/2005/1266 in April 20, 2005; ERC/7-58.6.1/2005/2390 in July 22, 2005; ERC/7-58.6.4/2005/2351 in July 19, 2005 and ERC/7-58.6.3/2005/2358 in July 20, 2005 respectively the following list of college's validation was retained in that crisis period during 2006.

Sl. No.	Name & Address of the colleges	Management	Affiliating Body
1.	Mohanananda College, Nadia, Burdwan, Durgapur, West Bengal-713201	Private (unaided)	University of Burdwan
2.	Institute of Education, Haldia, Amlat, Po-Sutahata, Mouza-Amlat, Vill- Amlat, Dist.- Purba Medinipur, Haldia, West Bengal-721635	Private (unaided)	Vidyasagar University
3.	Siliguri B.Ed. College, Baramohan Singh Jote, Sibmandir, Kadamtala, Darjeeling, West Bengal – 734433	Private (aided)	University of North Bengal
4.	Balurghat B.Ed. College, Plot No. 98, 276 & 517 (P), Vill-Mongalpur, P.O. Balurghat, Tehsil/Taluka-Mongalpur, Town/City- Balurghat, Dist.Dakshin Dinajpur, West Bengal -733101	Private (unaided)	University of North Bengal
5.	Shimurali Sachinandan College of Education, Shimurali, Nadia, West Bengal	Private (aided)	University of Kalyani

- **Present Status of the Recognition Procedure:**

The crisis was completely resolved from the academic session 2006-2007. The present status of the teacher education institutions is very promising, healthy and pleasing. Now, the recognition process is going on according to the strict rules of NCTE. The current B.Ed. college recognition procedure is - **Recognition from NCTE → No objection certificate from the competent authority of concerned State Govt. → Affiliation from the recognized University.**

Conclusion: From all the above analysis and findings of the study it is concluded that the crisis was formed due to the obstinacy of the state govt. as well as the unethical and mercantile motive of the B.Ed. colleges. However, the crisis was totally resolved through the amendment of NCTE Act and hearty negotiation at the proper level. Now, the overall picture of B.Ed. colleges in West Bengal is satisfactory to the NCTE. All the colleges are strictly following the rules and regulations of NCTE. So, the B.Ed. course is also running in a very smoothly and fair way in West Bengal.

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