

## **Assessing and Managing the Quality of Teacher Education Institutions: Role of Leadership, Financial Governance and Infrastructural resources**

Fozia Roohi,  
Research Scholar  
Jamia Millia Islamia  
fozia.roohi@gmail.com

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### **Abstract**

Undoubtedly, education is the life line of any socio-, economic and political system of any nation and the building block for its global relationship, hence, intellectuals have been debating on assessing, improving and managing the quality of schools, teachers and teacher education institutions. Since last two decades Total Quality Management (TQM) as an institutional transformation philosophy has received wide acceptance of scholars and practitioners to manage the quality of teacher education institutions. But, quality management is not an overnight show. It has to be practiced step-by-step with conscious efforts. Large number of quality models, various quality parameters or quality indicators given by scholars, practitioners and quality assessment and accrediting agencies and SWOT technique for benchmarking proved to be effective in quality enhancement of teacher education. Present paper focuses on leadership, financial governance and infrastructural resources as human, financial and material resources as well as indicators of quality in teacher education institutions. The findings of the study highlight the existence of both aspects along with their weaknesses and call for improvement in leadership, financial governance and infrastructural resources for high quality maintenance of teacher education.

**Key Words:** Total Quality Management, Teacher Education, Leadership, Financial Governance, Infrastructural Resources.

## Introduction

Today, the world economy is experiencing an unprecedented change. New developments in science and technology, media revolution and internationalization of education and the ever expanding competitive environment are revolutionizing the scenario of education. Recent world is demanding for highly qualified and well trained workers. Economic development and demographic pressure cause a greater mobility of workers from less developed economies to more developed ones. Unfortunately most developing countries, due to inadequate resources and other internal problems, may not be able to meet the criteria for training the worker of the next century (Daniela, 2002). Hence, there is need for at least a minimal structure in maintaining quality in school and higher education. After independence, despite various challenges like globalization, financing, infrastructure facilities, quality management etc., there has been remarkable growth in the teacher education system of India. On the name of quality improvement and quality maintenance, major shifts have been observed from quality to quality control to quality assurance and now it is Total Quality Management (TQM). In this context, Total Quality Management (TQM) approach has received notable attention of quality seekers, thus, its role in quality education cannot be under estimated. Realizing this, Akhtar (2012) has pointed out that “applying total quality management in the educational context creates values for educational institutions, teachers and taught.” In fact, the best way for improving the quality of education lies in total quality management in teaching and learning process.

Quality management or institution- building must be based on sound understanding of the institution and strategic plan for its improvement. It begins with the vision- desired future position followed by mission- long term purpose of organization; objectives- concrete goals that an organization seeks to reach; internal and external analysis of environment of organization for the selection and implementation of suitable strategy to obtain competitive advantage. Such an institutional understanding and strategy based management helps to realize the strengths and weaknesses of organization and, in fact, quality enhancement. Hence, as a matter of strategy,

assessment of the institution is the first step of total quality management (TQM) initiative. In the words of Mukhopadhyay (2005), “besides indicating the relative strengths and weaknesses of an institution, here and now, the assessment also provide the baseline data on various aspects of the institution on which development could be built up.” In this sense, institutional assessment gives the institution the control and independence to rate their performance and the opportunity to device tools of improvement that will fit their institution. Institutional assessment can be seen as a mechanism ensuring quality and promoting reforms in any educational institutions through internal assessment or external peer review assessment, or a combination of both. Such a mechanism may help to overcome different constraints on reforms in education.

### **Teacher Education**

*As is the school, so is the society. And as is the teacher, so is the school (Mallison, et. Al, 1975).* The lines presented by the author prominently display the central role of teacher in shaping and grooming the learner- future citizen of the nation. Teacher education institutions not only train student-teachers in pedagogy but also create sensible and responsible prospective-teachers for a prosperous nation. Though, several policies and documents like- The Education Commission (1964-66), National Commission on Teachers (1983-85) National Policy on Education (1986) and POA (1992), NCFTE (2010) and recently available document Draft Report, NEP, 2019 and a wide range of literature on teacher education have drawn the attention of intellectuals to discuss the quality of teacher education still, “quality development is challenging issue before these teacher education institutions” (Singh, 2014).

Since last two decades’ teacher education has received the attention of scholars and practitioners to manage the quality of these institutions and Total Quality Management (TQM) has gained wide acceptance in this sector. But, quality can’t be managed overnight. It has to be practiced step-by-step with conscious efforts. Thus, Total Quality Management approach too requires detailed and step wise planning and formulation of annual quality programs for successful accomplishment of the vision and goals of any organization. Experts and policy framers provided many useful ways to implement this theory into service sector like education. Large number of

quality models, various quality parameters or quality indicators given by scholars, practitioners and quality assessment and accrediting agencies and SWOT technique for benchmarking are now largely appreciated for quality enhancement of teacher education.

### **Leadership**

Leaders or the heads of educational institutions are responsible to manage, control and govern all processes and functions going inside or outside the educational institutions. A capable leader must possess certain qualities- high competence, open mindedness, ability to establish effective teamwork and good relationship with school and other educational institutions around it etc.

### **Financial Governance**

No institution can effectively function in the absence of sufficient funds and its effective utilization. Therefore, educational institution must ensure financial stability for smooth functioning of activities. It should maintain transparency and clear fee structures to avoid ambiguities. Availability of qualified auditors is another important aspect of financial governance for efficacious organization and management of teacher education.

### **Infrastructural Facilities**

Adequate and suitable infrastructural facilities are essential for effective transaction of theory and practice. The availability, accessibility and regular maintenance of different type of physical infrastructure, teaching- learning material, ICT facilities, laboratories and learning resource centre make a teacher education programme, a quality programme.

### **Need of the Study**

A teacher is a central figure in the formal teaching- learning set up who dispenses knowledge, frames the times schedule, selects reading materials, evaluates learning outcomes, and helps pupils to overcome their difficulties and personal problems. Hence, the role of such committed and dedicated teachers cannot be undermined who are trained in teacher education institutions. Teacher education institutes are responsible to create competent and effective teachers by providing effective curriculum transaction, infrastructural facilities applying good evaluation

procedure and other resources for effective and qualitative teaching- learning process. This is the reason why various Commissions, Committees and Policies showed their concern for reform in teacher education. But, when we look at the other side of coin, we find a heartbreaking quality diminishing situation of teacher education institutions in practice. NCFTE, 2010 presented severe criticism of the programmes for not addressing the needs of contemporary Indian schools and not preparing teachers who can impart quality education in schools. In this context, the statements of the Draft Report, NEP, 2019 are highly significant and relevant to express the current status and need for reform in teacher education in India, “heartbreakingly, the teacher education sector has been beleaguered with mediocrity as well as rampant corruption due to commercialization. Most institutions today providing teacher education are small colleges in the private sector that offer only a single narrow programme, and where there is a general lack of commitment to the need for rigour and quality in teacher preparation.” Beside policy perspectives, large amount of research studies also reported multi dimensional quality deteriorating issues before teacher education institutions like: theory oriented programme , isolated teacher education institutions from school and community, poor institutional climate of teacher education (Singh, 2014), curriculum updation, duration and quality of internship, poor in-service teacher education, lack of practical aspects, teacher education through distance mode (Kumar and Azad, 2016) and many more. It is clearly evident from the recommendations of studies and policy documents for teacher education that Indian Govt., research scholars and practitioners has made numerous efforts to enhance the quality of teachers and teacher education still quality development is a challenging issue before these teacher education institutions. Manivannan and Premila, (2008) pointed out in its study that quality assurance in teacher education reflects on the high profile of the institution and the competency of student-teachers, thereof, teacher education institutions should maintain the quality of the programme to ensure the academic excellence of trainees who come into the teaching profession and contribute in nation building. Assessment and management of the quality of educational institutions by following certain quality indicators provide concrete evidences for impressive performance of teacher education institutions. Hence, present study is an effort of developing an understanding about the

role of leadership, financial governance and infrastructural resources as significant quality indicators for improving and managing the quality of teacher education institutions.

**Research Questions:** In what way leadership, financial governance and infrastructural facilities support quality management of teacher education as quality indicators?

**Objectives:** For the present paper, following objectives were framed by the researcher:

- To study the perception of teachers about quality management in teacher education institutions.
- To study and compare the perception of teachers about leadership, financial governance and infrastructural facilities.
- To explore quality assessment and management strategies adopted by teacher education institutions.

### **Research Methodology**

With the aim of exploring the role of leadership, financial governance and infrastructural resources in quality management in teacher education institutions, survey type was conducted.

### **Research Design**

The primary aim of this study was to identify strengths and weaknesses of the various institutions on the basis of leadership, financial governance and infrastructural facilities as quality indicators. Hence, descriptive and survey method were employed for the present study.

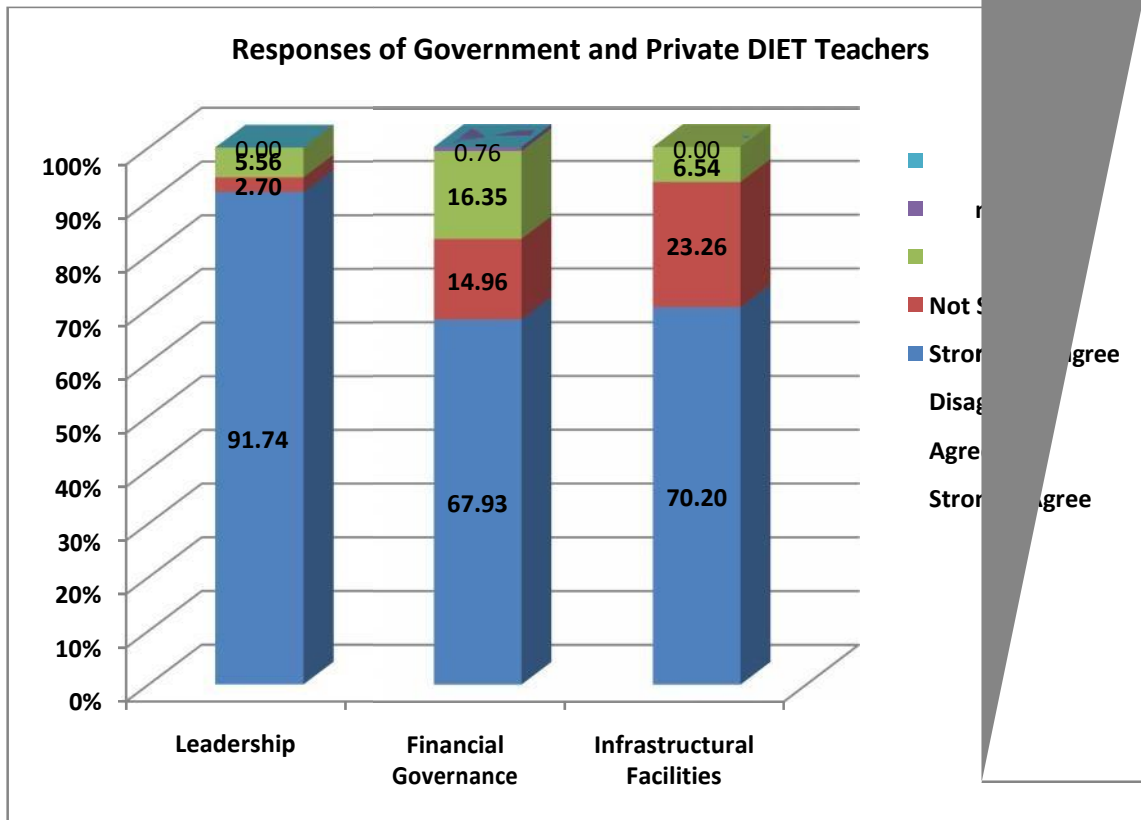
### **Tools used**

For the present study, investigator constructed two research tool- questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedule for assessing the correctness of responses. The questionnaire consisted 20 items which were responded by teachers on a five point scale – Not Sure, Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree and Strongly Agree ranging from 0-4. Reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by employing Chronbach's Alpha method which was measure as 0.929.

### Analysis of Data

The percentage scores of respondents were measured on five point Likert type scale for each aspect, i. e. leadership, financial governance and infrastructural facilities. The responses obtained against Agree and Strongly Agree was assumed as strong areas and the responses against Disagree, Strongly Disagree and Not Sure as weaker area of each aspect. The data was interpreted qualitatively.

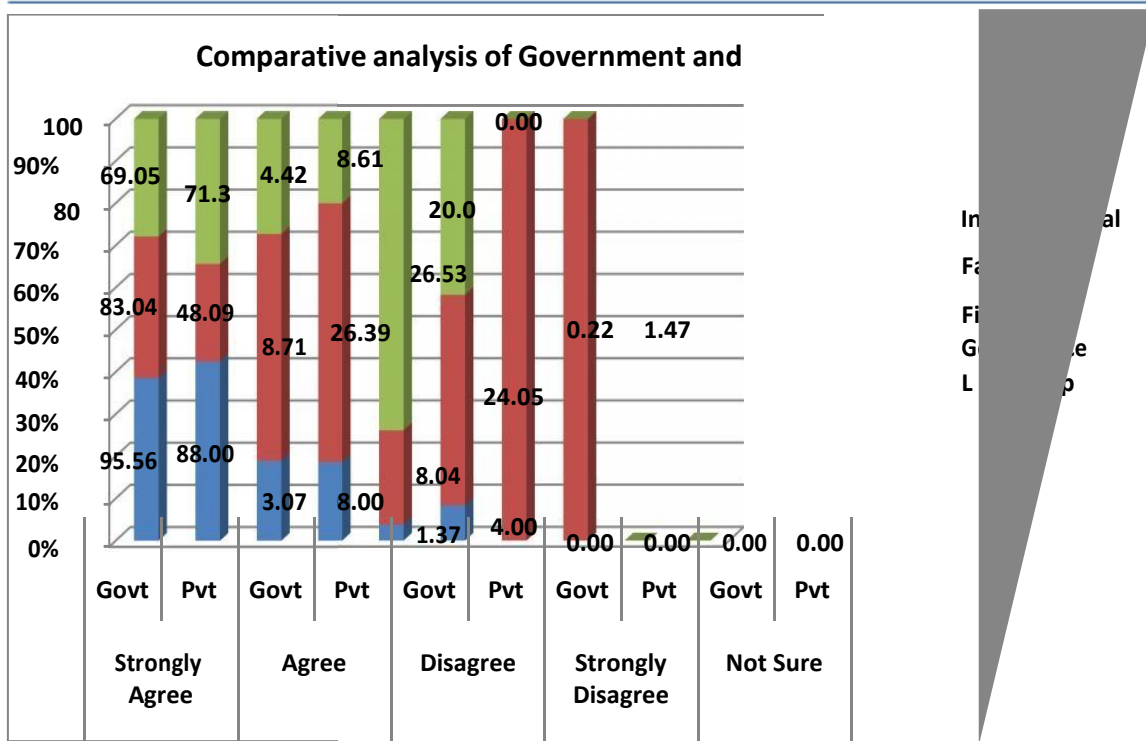
Quality Indicators	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Not Sure %
Leadership	91.74	2.70	5.56	0.00	0.00
Financial Governance	67.93	14.96	16.35	0.76	0.00
Infrastructural Facilities	70.20	23.26	6.54	0.00	0.00



Quality Indicators	Leadership		Financial Governance		Infrastructural Facilities	
	Government	Private	Government	Private	Government	Private
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	95.56	88.00	83.04	48.09	69.05	71.31
<b>Agree</b>	3.07	8.00	8.71	26.39	4.42	8.61
<b>Disagree</b>	1.37	4.00	8.04	24.05	26.53	20.08
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	0.00	0.00	0.22	1.47	0.00	0.00
<b>Not Sure</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

**Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Government and Private DIET Teachers**





## Results

After analyzing the data, following results were drawn in terms of leadership, infrastructural resources and financial governance:

**Infrastructural Resources:** Though, availability of infrastructural resources and facilities like laboratory, library, books, projectors audio- visual aids and instructional material and organization of co- curricular activities etc. was found in both type of institutions but respondents also showed them as weaker areas of institutions due to insufficiency and non-functioning of human, material and financial resources.

**Leadership:** Looking at the central role of Principal in successful accomplishment of routine activities and seeking and providing support and co-operation for the same, respondents assumed leadership as strong aspect of their institution. On the other hand, they showed dissatisfaction towards leadership style and leadership as weaker aspect of their respective institutions. Perceived



**Financial Governance:** Regarding financial governance, respondents showed satisfactory responses in terms of financial management and allocation of yearly and required budget for developmental activities, but, it was also indicated as weaker aspect of teacher education due to insufficiency of funds, unclear and faulty financial affairs and it was demanded for more fair and transparent financial transactions. ■ e

When compared, almost similar opinions were observed given by the respondents of both types of institutions for the quality indicators- leadership and infrastructural resources. Diverse responses were obtained from Government and Private DIETs regarding financial governance. Government institution teachers were noticed more satisfied due to stability and transparency in financial resources and their utilization and it was taken as strength of these institutions. Contrary to this, insufficient funds for developmental activities and unclear and non-transparent financial affairs proved this aspect as a weaker area of private institutions.

### **Findings and Recommendations**

Keeping a track of continuous change and improvement as per the need of hour is not only essential for the manufactures of goods and tangible items but highly essential for the producers of teachers. Hence, quality of teacher education institutions, its regular assessment and management for continuous improvement cannot be ignored. The findings of study are presented in terms of Leadership, financial governance and infrastructural resources:

- Shortage, non-availability and improper/ non-functioning of human, material and financial resources in teacher education institutions create hurdle in practicing theoretical components in real setting.
- Beside satisfactory response towards leaders/ principals, more competent behavior is simultaneously demanded by both types of institutions for creating quality culture, team work and congenial environment in these institutions.
- Due to insufficient funds, staff and infrastructural facilities, different co-curricular activities remain bound with specific occasions or ceremonies.



- Beside high transparency in financial governance, late reimbursement of expenses was proclaimed by Government institutions' teachers.
- The study revealed some ambiguities on the part of self- financing institutions in terms of financial governance like: insufficiency of funds, unclear fees structure of students admitting through management quota, illegible and non- transparent income- expenditure sources.

### **Recommendations**

The study provided following suggestions and recommendations for improvement:

- Improving all kinds of infrastructural resources of teacher education institutions by making them functionally equipped with good facilities and quality instructional material for effective accomplishment of activities and aims. Therefore, it is recommended that physical infrastructure and instructional facilities must be improved.
- As leaders play central role in quality management, so, despite professionalism, they need to be trained in creating quality culture and congenial environment in the institution for seeking cooperation from all stakeholders.
- Beside paper work, some cross- check way need to be evolved to make financial governance more transparent in self- financing institutions for financial gratification of teachers and pupil- teachers.

### **Conclusion**

The contribution of education in developing excellence and expertise in socio- political and economic life of a nation cannot be undermined as it leads to overall development and quality life of its people. School education has shown considerable growth in terms of infrastructure and universal access has been observed but the demand for well qualified and professionally sound teachers is still need to be addressed in large. Identification and assessment of quality indicators largely determine the status or performance of teacher education institutions. A long list of quality indicators has been provided by scholars and quality gurus still accreditation agencies suggest to evolve them to meet the demands of changing scenario. Leadership, infrastructural resources and financial governance have been taken as quality indicators in terms of human,



material and financial resources. The study revealed them as effective indicators of quality in teacher education with few but major drawbacks. Efforts on the part of governing body and practitioners in holistic manner may bring appreciable results.

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