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Status of Teacher Educators in Saarc Countries with Special Reference to Secondary Teacher Education

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Abstract

*The areas of education are immensely influenced by Globalisation which has an all-round unique effect on economy, culture and information system around the world. Education today is facing several challenges as well as experiencing a range of opportunities due to Globalisation. Re-engineering of the entire system of education is thus becoming obligatory which depend upon number of factors out of which the most pivotal is quality-teachers. The teacher-educators can only bring success in preparing quality teachers by developing their skills to identify different teaching objectives, attitude and patterns of teaching behaviours through quality teacher education programmes. The South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) was framed on December 8, 1985 with **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka** (later **Afghanistan** joined the group in April, 2007) towards strengthening regional co-operation in promoting the socio-economic-cultural-educational progress of the region. In all the SAARC nations, Secondary Teacher Education Programmes are responsive fully to the Secondary Education Policies of respective countries and at the same time to the modern global trends. This paper is an attempt to make a methodical and comparative study on the status of teacher-educators in SAARC countries with respect to the secondary teacher education programmes. The method employed for the present study is comparative, interpretative, and analytical in nature.*

Key words: *Teacher-educators, SAARC secondary teacher education.*

1. Introduction: Teacher Education is neither mere pedagogy nor acquisition of a training qualification only. It is a process of shaping of young persons for multisided development. It is inculcation of commitment and generation of a strong will to contribute at the highest

level of efficiency through a value based approach. ¹ Dr. Sarvepally Radha Krishnan aptly said “Until and unless we have dedicated and committed teachers, who can take teaching as a mission in their lives, we cannot have a good educational system. Teachers should be the best minds of the country”

The South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) is an economic and political organisation of eight countries in Southern Asia. It (SAARC) was formally established on December 8, 1985 with **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka** in order to strengthen regional co-operation and to promote the socio-economic development in the region. In terms of combined population of its member states (almost 1.5 billion), it is the largest among all regional organisations. ² At last in April, 2007, **Afghanistan** became the eighth member of the consortium.

The secondary teachers of SAARC member countries are experiencing changing situations and they are thinking globally from their local context. In all the SAARC nations, Secondary Teacher Education Programmes are responsive fully to the Secondary Education Policies of respective countries and at the same time to the modern global trends. This article is an attempt to make a methodical and comparative study over the present position of teacher-educators in neighbouring countries of this zone with respect to their selection, eligibility, social status, salary status etc.

2. Background of the Study: Good teaching depends upon some factors like reflective orientation to practice, an orientation which stresses on knowledge, disposition and analytic skills for controlling the complex classroom situation. Goodlad in his recent ‘Study of the Education of Educators’, has found fault with teacher education programmes for not relating the curriculum to a conception of what teachers do and should do.³ Teacher preparation programmes of all the nations of SAARC region need to be strengthened so that the entity of teachers may come forth as a supportive, encouraging and humane facilitator in teaching-learning situations who can bring out the inner talents of the learners, can realise their physical and intellectual potentialities, can develop character and desirable social and human values and can act as responsible citizens.

- Quality of teacher education programme depends upon the efficiencies of the teacher educators of the institutions which can be assessed during the training session. The teacher educators should possess subject knowledge and competencies to implement them. They should be accustomed with respective national culture and should possess personality integrated with politeness, empathy and ethics. Teachers should rise above

¹ Venkataiah, N. (2009) (editor), *Teacher Education*, New Delhi, A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, p-2

² Chauhan, C.P.S. (2008), Higher Education: Current status and future possibilities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, *Analytical Reports in International Education*, 2(1), pp 29-48.

³ Goodlad, J. (1990), Better Teacher for our Nation’s Schools, *Phi Delta Kappan*, 72(3), pp 185-194. Volume-IV, Issue-I July 2017

the prevailing political, geographic boundaries and differentiations with respect to religions, castes, creeds, languages, gender disparities, social mores, cultural traditions and forms and should treat their students without any biasness. Finally, teachers should utilise their acquired competencies in real classroom situation.

- In SAARC countries universalisation of secondary education is the new target after achieving a considerable success in basic education. The countries have also identified the importance of curricular changes in the secondary teacher education programmes in accordance with the changing scenario of secondary education in the region. Accordingly, the educationists of SAARC countries have adopted a three-dimensional concept in making secondary teacher education curriculum considering the needs of the society. They should stress upon developing academic and professional attitudes rather acquiring of knowledge only. They have considered curriculum reforms as obligatory part of Teacher Education Programmes.
- Teacher-educators attached to secondary teacher education in SAARC region also have to realise that ICT-based education is indispensable now and they have to change their role altogether. They now have to learn how to use computers in their classrooms, how to be familiar with internet access and how to use the hardware and software to enhance the teaching-learning process. Although one objective of the B.Ed. curriculum is to prepare student-teachers to apply ICT in teaching-learning activities.
- A debate within the domain of teacher education on the supremacy of ‘content-knowledge’ over ‘learning-related knowledge’ is continuing for last fifty years. Learning related knowledge has to do with classroom management, pedagogy, and evaluation. It is revealed that achievement of students depend largely on learning related knowledge than content knowledge.

3. Status of Teacher-Educators in SAARC Countries:

3.1 Afghanistan: The National Teacher Education Academy in **Afghanistan** was established in 2007 to train teacher educators of Teacher Training College. Two rounds of four-month courses have been provided to over 300 TTC faculties, 27% of whom are female. The Academy does not, however, have a curriculum of its own and currently depends on the foreign educators. All graduates from the universities are considered for teaching profession.

A number of qualified young of the country with Master’s and PhD degree acquired from abroad on scholarship are given preference as lecturers at different universities.

District Teacher Training Teams (DT3) provided training to 1,640 teacher trainers and 50,000 teachers on subject knowledge and pedagogy and arranged on-the-job support through in-service programmes in 2007 and 2008. Through the programmes, a total of 3,640 teacher-educators (at least 10 from each district) holding a bachelor’s degree were recruited. Moreover, 11,000 school principals and head teachers in all 34 provinces were provided

training and practical support on management. NGOs played an important role in implementing the DT3 programmes.

There is an awful need for professional teacher educators in atleast 18 provinces. More than 400 TTC lecturers have been provided monthly regional incentives of 160-200 US\$. The General Education programmes account for over 90% of the total operating budget. Teacher salaries remain the major annual operating cost among this.⁴ The Civil Service Commission reviews teacher salaries and other incentives of the pay and grading process. Priorities are given to the qualified teachers by taking encouraging steps in arranging non salary incentives including a programme of land lease and housing finance.⁵ Teacher Education Department started the regional allowances programmes in 2007, aiming at fulfilling the gap of teachers in high-risk and remote provinces by paying incentive salaries to the TTC lecturers and to female students.

In March 2004 the Minister of Education approved a significant increase in teachers' basic salaries as per seniority and qualifications. Qualifying the national competency test of teachers was also considered for this process. Teachers are now paid starting from 6,500 Afghani (Afs) (approximately 130 US\$) for the graduates of grade 12 to 21,400 Afghani (Afs) (approximately 428 US\$) for those with doctoral degrees. This is a major hype from the past situation in Afghanistan. It is fact that more funding is needed in order to attract additional teachers, particularly females, in remote and unsafe areas. MoE gradually has initialised the computerised Afghanistan Financial Management Information System (AFMIS) and salaries are now paid through the Verified Payroll Plan, with 21% of employees receiving their salaries through the banking system.⁶

According to the World Bank statistics on some 50 developing countries that a reasonable target for teacher pay is a multiple of 3.3 times per capita GDP. This is considered to be the average teacher salary in better performing countries in the world. Currently Afghanistan's teachers are paid on average 2.7 times of their per capita GDP. The objective is to raise this level to 3.1 times of per capita GDP by 2015. The World Bank estimates that the figure for per capita GDP in Afghanistan should be US\$ 493 by 2015.

3.2 Bangladesh: As quality teacher education is vital to enhance the professional excellence of the teachers, recruiting qualified teacher-educators through transparent and scientific recruitment process is considered essential in **Bangladesh**.

⁴ National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan (2006-2010). Available in [http://www.moe.gov.af/...](http://www.moe.gov.af/)retrieved Sept, 2013.

⁵ National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan, (1385-1389), Ministry of Education, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

⁶ *National Priority Program*, Human Resources Development Cluster, EDUCATION FOR ALL, March 2011, DRAFT for CONSULTATION, Ministry of Education, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Teachers are categorised in four main classes at University level in Bangladesh. The ascending rank of teacher is Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor. To be considered for appointment to the post of a lecturer, candidates must have Master's degree with at least one first class either at the Honours or at the Post Graduate level. A candidate with a third class in any of the degrees may also be eligible for appointment as a Lecturer, if he/she has a PhD degree. If suitable candidates are not found any of the qualifications may be relaxed.⁷ After attaining PhD degree, one can be appointed as Assistant Professor, and then gradually he/she is promoted to Associate Professor and Professor depending on research/teaching experience. Beside these, professor of Emeritus is considered as Extraordinary Professors after their retirement. College or University teachers are paid a healthy salary than secondary or primary teachers.

In 2008 there was 14 Govt. Teachers' Training College in Bangladesh, with 297 teacher-educators out of which 90 were female and number of total student-teachers was 2070 with 991 female. There were 97 Non-Govt. Teachers' Training College with 973 teacher-educators out of which 496 was female and 7696 student-teachers, with 3534 female.⁸

3.3 Bhutan: Quality of a teacher education programme depends largely on the quality of the teacher-educators involved with it. In **Bhutan** teachers have to work in restrictive social environment with high moral expectations put by the community keeping touch with the Bhutanese traditions and customs. Still lack of exposure to the teachers is there which is affecting the teaching standard. All of the programmes of secondary teacher education are taught by a team of qualified and dedicated faculty attached to Royal University of Bhutan. The two National Institutes of Education (NIE) definitely contributed a lot to improve the scenario of secondary teacher education but their efforts are not enough as the requirement of trained teachers is far more than their intake capacity. There is a Centre for University Teaching and Learning (CULT) at Samtse College of Education established with the aim of promoting advance research and innovation in tertiary teaching and learning sectors. There is also a Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD) at NIE, Paro which was established in 2001 with an aim to support, encourage and promote a culture of research and scholarship for development of education programmes and practices in the country.

Teacher Educators in Bhutan have enough proficiency in English and Dzongkha (local language), Teaching-Learning theories, Student Psychology, Educational Philosophy, and Knowledge of Sociology. They have commitment to teaching profession and they use to practice Inspiring Visionary Leadership Quality Curriculum, Teaching strategies and skills, high degree of integrity, creativity and resourcefulness. They have proficiency on principles of curriculum development, curriculum review and course diversification but they should be acquainted with the global changes in teacher education.

⁷ Rajshahi University Calendar, 2006, 2, p 60.

⁸ Source: http://www.banbeis.gov.bd/db_bb/teachers_education.htm ...retrieved on Dec.18, 2012.

3.4 India: India has a large system of teacher education. Teacher educators play the pivotal role for effective implementation of teacher education curriculum. According to NCTE guideline, for an intake of 100 students or less, in a B.Ed institution the teaching faculty should comprise of one Principal or Head and at least seven as Assistant Professors for foundation course and methodology course. For intake of students in excess of the prescribed limit, the number of full time teachers shall be increased proportionately.

Quality of teacher educators has been considered as a major issue in teacher education system in India. Teacher educators should have one year M.Ed degree as the professional degree. They can further go for Ph.D. and so on. None of these are designed specifically to prepare a quality teacher-educator rather endowed with knowledge related to teacher education. Recently the M.Ed course has come under severe criticism on several issues. It lacks specificity, focus and rigidity as a professional education programme.

In pursuance of National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and the notification of Government of India regarding revised pay scale for teachers in July, 1988, the UGC in consultation with the State Governments and competent persons are conducting National-level Eligibility Test (NET) for recruitment of lecturers in universities and colleges. There are two avenues to enter this academic circle, one through direct selection by a University or college (government or private), and the second through selection by a centralised commission. Selection in both the cases is based on interview following fulfillment of criteria like having prescribed scores in Masters' level, having qualifying certificate of National Eligibility Test (NET) conducted by University Grants Commission (India) or equivalent test conducted by the State Government and / or having Ph.D degree as per the New Regulation, 2009 of UGC.

Qualifications prescribed for teacher-educators as per the Regulations of NCTE are:

For Lecturer:

(a) Foundation Courses: one post per 100 intakes for an institution

- Masters' Degree in Science / Humanities / arts with 50% marks
- M. Ed. With at least 55% marks or its equivalent grade and
- Any other stipulation prescribed by the UGC in the general norms including a pass in NET/SLET/SET prescribed in these regulations shall be mandatory
- A minimum score as stipulated in the Academic Performance Indicator (API) based Performance Based Appraisal System (PBAS) developed by UGC in these Regulations shall be a mandatory requirement.

OR

- M.A. in Education with 55% marks or its equivalent grade
- B.Ed. with at least 55% marks and
- Any other stipulation prescribed by the UGC in the general norms including a pass in NET/SLET/SET prescribed in these regulations shall be mandatory

- A minimum score as stipulated in the Academic Performance Indicator (API) based Performance Based Appraisal System (PBAS) developed by UGC in these Regulations shall be a mandatory requirement.

(b) Methodology Courses: six posts per 100 intakes for an institution

- Masters' degree in subject with 50% marks
- M. Ed. degree with at least 55% marks or its equivalent grade and
- Any other stipulation prescribed by the UGC in the general norms including a pass in NET/SLET/SET prescribed in these regulations shall be mandatory
- A minimum score as stipulated in the Academic Performance Indicator (API) based Performance Based Appraisal System (PBAS) developed by UGC in these Regulations shall be a mandatory requirement. Having obtained 55% at Master of Education level and 50% at Masters' level or 55% at M.A. Education and B.Ed. and qualified the NET/SET exam teacher educators become eligible to apply in a College of Education.

Principal / Head (in multi-faculty institution):

- Academic and professional qualification will be as prescribed for the post of lecturer
- Ph.D. in Education
- Ten years teaching experience out of which at least five years teaching experience in a Secondary Teacher Educational Institution.
- A minimum score as stipulated in the Academic Performance Indicator (API) based Performance Based Appraisal System (PBAS) developed by UGC in these Regulations shall be a mandatory requirement.

Methodology of recruitment process is mostly based on the Academic Performance Indicators (API) as provided by the UGC. These procedures can be followed for both direct recruitment and for promotions under the Career Advancement Scheme (CAS).

Pay scale of teacher-educators is determined under CAS. The salary of the three tier Professors with Academic Grade Pay (AGP) has been fixed by 6th Pay Commission of 2006 ⁹(In Indian Rupees, considering US\$1 = INR Rs 50) – Assistant Professor: Rs 15,600-39,100 (AGP: Rs 6000), total amount: Rs 45,000/- per month, Associate Professor: Rs 37400-67000 (AGP Rs 9000), total amount: Rs 80,000/- per month, Professor: Rs 37400-67000 (AGP Rs 10,000), total amount: Rs 82,000-120,000/- and Professor (HAG) Rs 67000-79000 (limited only to 10% in equivalent grade of additional secretary government of India).

3.4 Maldives: Establishment of Subject Teacher Committees in schools of Malé by the Ministry of Education (MoE) during the mid 1990s was considered as the preliminary step

⁹ Report of the 6th Pay Commission, India.
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to provide knowledge sharing and professional development of teachers in **Maldives**.¹⁰ Still, there is good number of expatriate teacher-educators working in the field of secondary teacher education.

The teacher-educators in Maldives are considered as the essential players in promoting quality education. To enable effective teacher education programmes, training of teacher educators is also essential. This training largely put stress on curriculum, as well as on management and leadership. Some agencies like VSO (An international development organisation that works through volunteers), the British Council, World Bank also took initiatives in teacher training of the country. Part-time lecturing staffs have been recruited from the local schools and MoE Departments also.

Opportunities for developing professional skill are few in Maldives. Teachers' training modules and trainers' guide have been developed at the Faculty of Education. The intention is to train individuals from atolls on the materials of each module. Because of a lack of capacity, it was difficult to identify suitable people for training. However to ensure in-service development, short-term attachments, workshops and seminars in related areas of teacher education are occasionally arranged by the MoE where a top-down method is adopted in which the method of delivery, the target school and teachers are chosen by the MoE.

They are often sent to study trips to neighbouring countries on behalf of the MoE to ensure continuing professional development and their fruitful implementation in the country.

Social status of the teacher-educators is high in Maldives. Monthly salaries for teacher-educators are handsome compared to the salaries of other government jobs.

3.5 Nepal: With the massive expansion of junior and senior secondary education, it was necessary to train secondary teachers in post-secondary institutions by the quality teacher educators in **Nepal**.

Here teacher-educators for Secondary Teacher Education Programmes generally require a Master Degree with first division or equivalent in related discipline or Ph.D. degree in relevant discipline. They may possess degrees either in education and general pedagogy, or in the specific academic disciplines (e.g. mathematics education). Marks sheet of School Leaving Certificate Examination to the last degree are to be submitted while applying for the post of lecturer. Professional degree in teacher education is preferable in recruitment of lecturers for College of Education or lecturers for Faculty of Education.

The teacher educators mostly possess the two year M.Ed degree or M.Phil or Ph.D done from the Faculty of Education (FoE) of Tribhuvan University.

¹⁰ *Inservice Teacher Training Programme, 2003, Maldives*
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There has also been an emergent call for better trained teacher-educators to work in the wide range of school-based continuing professional development (CPD) programmes.

Salaries of teacher-educators in Nepal are low. They feel that the salary and benefits they are provided currently are inadequate compared to their demand.

3.6 Pakistan: The selection of lecturer in faculty of education in Pakistan is done by Public Service Commissions. M.Ed. is the minimum required qualification for appointment as lecturer. Although the cadres of faculty in training institutions remain under one controlling authority, there is no separate cadre of teacher educators. The teachers who are professionally qualified are appointed as teacher educators in secondary level teacher training institutions. The posts are inter-transferable between the colleges, the Executive District Officer (EDO) Schools and the Provincial Department of Education.¹¹

There are four faculty ranks; lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. A lecturer in Pakistan requires a Graduation with Master's Degree and high academic contribution in related field. An Assistant Professor requires a Ph.D. in relevant field and at least two years of teaching or research or professional experience. An Associate Professorship can be attained in the fourth year of employment. A professor should have ten years of post-Ph.D teaching or research experience in a Higher Education Commission (HEC), recognised university or a post-graduate institution or should have professional experience in the relevant field in a national or international organisation.

There is no system of Performance Appraisal of the teacher educators. Promotions to higher grades or higher post are advocated on the basis of seniority rather than performance appraisal. The Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) are just maintaining as an outdated tradition.

Teachers in Pakistan are underpaid compared to people with similar qualifications in other professions. Teacher Education also suggests that teaching in Pakistan is considered a job, not a profession. Accordingly, teachers do not have a professional attitude towards teaching. However teachers remain in a respectable position in socio-cultural and religious perspective, rather than financial cause.

The Academy for Educational Development (AED) Pakistan, is currently implementing the Pakistan Teacher Education Professional Development Programme (PTEPDP). The overall objective of PTEPDP is to enhance the professional skills of Pakistani teachers in teaching of Mathematics, Science and English.

3.7 Sri Lanka: Be it a Teacher Education College, General College or University in Sri Lanka, teachers are designated as:

¹¹ Pakistan Teacher Education And Professional Development Program (PTEPDP), USAID Contract no. EEE-I-00-01-00010-00, *Performance educational Development*, USAID, Islamabad, p10.*Gap Analysis and Training Needs Assesment of Teacher Training Institutions*, Academy for Volume-IV, Issue-I July 2017 82

- ♦ Professor emeritus (on retirement at the age of 65)
- ♦ Senior professor
- ♦ Professor
- ♦ Associate professor

Appointment of professors still follows the British system in Sri Lanka and is governed by the University Grants Commission (UGC), Sri Lanka regulations. A points-based system considers contributions to the research field, national development and institutional development. Several types of professorships exist in the country:

Professor positions are clearly separated from other junior faculty positions such as, in seniority order: Senior Lecturer (grade I) (usually PhD and 6+ years service), Senior Lecturer (grade II) (usually a Ph.D and 2+ years service), Lecturer (usually with PhD), Lecturer (probationary) and Assistant Lecturer.

A candidate for Associate Professor, Professor or Senior Professor must have Ph D/ Doctoral Degree in relevant subject. Besides, an Associate Professor, Professor or Senior Professor should possess ten, fifteen and twenty publication respectively in the indexed journal. The above provision came into forth with effect from 01.04.2014.¹²

More than 70% of teachers in Sri Lanka are females. There is no barrier for women to participate in professional development programmes. Salary and other benefits such as fellowships are provided without any discrimination based on gender.

A well structured teacher appraisal system is functioning in the country keeping a close liaison with Trade Unions which takes part in pay structure, promotion and transfer of teachers, selection of teachers for training or scholarship etc.

4. Status of Teacher-Educators: A Comparison:

- Teacher-educators of the region are playing an important role in building the capacity of student-teachers in the pre-service secondary teacher education progammes. So, well qualified faculty members including principals, teacher-educators, and technical staffs are to be recruited for the secondary teacher education institutes of all the countries in the region. Countries in the region are in a process of recruiting **well qualified** young with at least Masters' Degree, through **entrance examination** or **interview** as per the procedures maintained in the country concerned. **Pakistan** and **Afghanistan** should take proper care on the matter. In Pakistan there is no separate cadre of teacher-educators. Private sectors in **India and Bangladesh should recruit quality teachers** maintaining standard norms.
- Most of the teacher-educators in the region are trying to adopt **constructivist approach**, driven by the concept that learning is an active construction and

¹² University Grant Commission Circular no. 04/2014 dated 01.04.2014. Retrieved from http://www.ugc.ac.lk/attachments/1325_04_2014.pdf... on April 3, 2014.

reconstruction of knowledge and **teaching is a process of guiding and facilitating** students in the process of knowledge construction. A sound promotional system has also been adopted for the teacher educators in the region, which is aptly followed in **India and Sri Lanka**.

- Quality teacher-educators can only run a quality teacher education system. **Afghanistan** is trying to get their scholars back home by offering lucrative incentives. **Bhutan** and **Maldives** are in a process to replace the existing expatriate teacher-educators. **India** is trying to build a stock of quality teacher-educators by recruiting aspirant young through a regional or national test.
- Candidates with Masters' degree and Ph.D are largely recruited or preferred as teacher-educators in most of the countries through **entrance examination or interview** as per the procedures maintained in the country concerned. A sound pay package is now being provided to the teacher-educators of secondary teacher education programmes in all most all the countries in the region. Teacher-educators of **Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan** and **Bangladesh** are to some extent **dissatisfied** with their salary. Most of them enjoy a high social status too.
- Professional courses have been initialised for the teacher-educators in some countries. Teacher-educators of **Maldives, Bhutan and Bangladesh** are mainly sent abroad to acquire better knowledge and to learn use of ICT in teaching learning activities.

5. Conclusion: The domains of education are influenced regularly by Globalisation which has an all-round unique effect on economy, culture and information system around the world. Education today is facing the challenges as well as experiencing a range of opportunities due to Globalisation. Re-engineering of the entire system of education is thus becoming obligatory which depend upon number of factors out of which the most pivotal is the teachers. The teacher-educators can only bring success by developing a skill to identify different teaching objectives, attitude and patterns of teaching behaviour through quality teacher education programmes. A student-teacher when compares his/her teaching behaviour with different teaching behaviour patterns, makes a strategy of his/her own and implements them in a classroom situation which bring definite success. All the countries of SAARC region are focusing on recruiting the most capable persons into the teaching profession to achieve success in this arena. The student-teachers should be provided quality pre-service initial teacher education, bestowed with enough opportunities to upgrade their knowledge and skills. To attract most able candidates into the teaching profession in teacher education institutions and to motivate them, each Government should take some innovative steps to improve the status of teacher-educators by offering better salaries and providing better working conditions.

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