TEACHER EDUCATION IN NEPAL: ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS ENROLLMENT TREND

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ABSTRACT

Teachers are the most crucial aspect of the education system. Students' learning/achievement level is directly dependent on the competency of the teacher. An educational programme designed to produce qualified teachers is known as a teacher education programme. This study investigates the enrollment of the students in teacher education on the basis of their academic achievement and intelligence level and hence analyzes the enrollment trend in the teacher education (B.Ed.) programme in Nepal. The study was conducted on 50 students of B.Ed. the first semester of the Kanchanpur and Kailali districts of Sudurpaschim Province was selected by systematic random sampling. This research was based on a survey design of a quantitative approach. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. G.C. Ahuja's Group Test of Intelligence was used to collect intelligence scores. Analysis of the data was based on descriptive statistics obtained by using SPSS. Findings are interpreted on the basis of Maslow's motivation theory and Brain drain theory. Results of the study revealed that a negligible percentage of students having high academic achievement and intelligence levels are enrolling in teacher education. Concern authorities need to revisit the policies regarding salary, facilities and position in the national protocol of teachers to attract the high achievers and intelligent students to the teacher education programme.

Keywords: Intelligence, Achievement, Teacher education, Enrollment, Quality education

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is widely believed that the quality of teachers and teaching are among the most important factors shaping the learning and growth of students (Ingersoll, 2007, p. 1). To achieve the pre-determined objectives of the educational programme and to make it fruitful the teaching must be effective but without qualified teachers, teaching can not be made effective because the quality of teaching depends on the teachers (Kanatani, as cited in Mizuno, n.d., p. 247). Teachers know about assessment techniques, building relations with parents to bring out the best in children, and making teams of professional educators that can transform schools (Imig, 1996, p. 14).

Teaching is a complex profession because it involves many of the factors that affect teachers' teaching; factors such as the emotional, economical, cultural, social and of course, the political conditions of teachers' life. They have also an important responsibility to educate the generation who will run the society in future (Avanaki and Sadeghi, 2014, p.1156). Teachers are at the centre of the educational process and without good teachers, all other innovations

are doomed to failure (Altbach, as cited in Gao, 2009, p. 9). That is why, every educational system needs qualified teachers, and qualified teachers can be produced with the help of teacher education. To produce qualified and capable teachers, the concept of teacher education has developed worldwide in the last few centuries (Robinson, 2006; Kimura and Iwata, 2007; Labaree, 2008; Yiming and YanPing, 2011). Nepal has a history of seven decades of teacher education after the establishment of the College of Education in 1956 (National Campaign for Education Nepal, n.d., pp. 6-7) while the first Normal School was established in Kathmandu in 1954 to provide teacher training to primary school teachers (Menon, 1968, p. 2).

If teacher education is not well managed and the teaching profession is not prestigious, its direct effect will be upon teachers and the entire educational system. According to Hannaway and Mittleman (2011), there are clear opinions on the influence of teachers in student achievement, so much so that they are considered the most important within-school factor for student learning. Goodson (as cited in Avanaki and Sadeghi, 2014, p. 1157) rightly said, "Any profession whose essential theoretical and practical knowledge does not have a high in universities and other institutions of higher education must count itself deprived and, in the long run, be diminished in status."

Institutions have some pre-determined criteria to select qualified students to enrol in teacher education programmes. Some of the studies found that the admission criteria are not a strong predictor of affecting teaching performance (Mikitovics and Crehan, 2002 as cited in Casey and Childs, 2007, p. 13). Still, the criteria for admission in teacher education programmes in developed countries like Finland, Japan, Korea and Singapore were found stronger than in developing countries like Croatia, India, Russia and Turkey (Lukas and Samardzic, 2015). Standardized tests are used to select the candidate for teacher education in the United States (Casey and Childs, 2007, pp. 6-7).

Teacher quality is directly related to students' success (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2005, pp. 449-450). To produce competent teachers, it needs to be enrolled qualified students with high academic achievement and intelligence levels in the teacher education programme. In Nepal, there are no strong criteria for enrollment in teacher education programmes. Students are eligible to enrol in B.Ed. after completion of grade 12 with a minimum grade of D+ and an entrance test which is conducted just as a formality.

Achievement and intelligence tests are used to identify the achievement and intelligence levels of students. Most of the studies show teacher's qualification/classroom expertise is an essential factor in student achievement (Sanders and Rivers, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Heycock, 1998, 2000; Hill and Crevolla, 1999 as cited in Kaplan, 2001, p. 67; Wenglinsky, 2001, p. 31; Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2005, pp. 449-450; Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, 2005, p. 2; Altinok, 2013, pp. 13-14) while some show the poor relationship between teacher's qualification and student's achievement (Zuzovsky, 2003, p.9) and some found that the student is more responsible for learning (Snook, O'Neill, Birks, Church and Rawlins, 2013, pp. 2-3).

There can be found some studies carried out to identify the intelligence or emotional intelligence of teachers. Some of the studies found that the teachers have a high level of emotional intelligence (Hans, Mubeen and Al Rabani, 2013, p. 64), some revealed that the

educational competencies of teachers also depend on their levels of emotional intelligence (Anna, 2015, p. 62; Naqvi, Iqbal and Akhtar, 2016, p. 220). A study made by Singh (2015) on pre-service teacher educators found that 53 per cent of teacher educators have average emotional intelligence, 26% have above average and 21% of teacher educators have a low level of emotional intelligence.

In the light of the literature review, the researcher identified the research gap in the field of academic achievement and intelligence in teacher education. Most of the previous studies related to achievement and intelligence are focused on their relationship with students' performance. Enrollment trends in teacher education on the basis of academic achievement and intelligence level were not analyzed in these studies. Research on achievement and intelligence in the Nepalese context is rarely found.

On the basis of these research gaps, the objectives of this study were to set out to identify the academic achievement and intelligence level of students enrolling in the teacher education (B.Ed.) programme in Nepal and to analyze the enrollment trend. To fulfil the research objectives, research questions were designed as: What is the achievement level of students enrolling in teacher education programmes in Nepal? Are the intelligent students attracted to teacher education? What is the trend of enrollment in teacher education programmes in Nepal?

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was based on the positivism paradigm of research i.e., an empirical/survey design of quantitative approach was used. The study was conducted in two districts; Kanchanpur and Kailali of Sudur Paschim Province of Nepal from January 2020 to March 2020. A sample of 50 students of two campuses of Far Western University enrolled in B.Ed. first semester was selected by using systematic random sampling.

Primary and secondary both types of data were used in this study. Marks/GPA of academic achievement of grade 12th of the selected students were collected as secondary data and intelligence scores obtained by a standardized G. C. Ahuja Group Test of Intelligence (GGTI) were taken as primary data. GGTI was developed by Dr. G. C. Ahuja, Former Research Officer, Central Institute of Indian Languages Mysore and published by National Psychological Corporation, Agra, India. Ahuja (2009) constructed this test to assess the general mental ability of pupils of age 13 to 17+ years. The whole test is divided into eight sub-tests out of which test-I is an additional test, just used to motivate and mentally prepare the students for the other real seven tests. Sub-tests included in this test are: Following Directions, Classification, Analogies, Arithmetic Reasoning, Vocabulary, Comprehension, Series and Best Answers.

A preliminary tryout of this test for piloting was carried out on 10,132 students of Greater Bombay, India. The maximum score of this test was 126 for seven sub-tests, 9 marks of test-I are not added to the total marks. Time allocated for this test is 4 minutes per sub-test and almost equal time is needed for instructions for the administration of the test. Thus, the total time required for the administration of this test is around 1 hour and 15 minutes. The reliability of this test has been calculated by two methods. The coefficient of reliability obtained by the test-retest method was found .84 ± .021. The reliability coefficient by the

split-half method (correlation between scores on odd and even items) was .951 ± .004 and the reliability of the full test obtained by the Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula was .974 ± .003. The average validity of the battery of seven tests was calculated by five methods namely: Symond's method, 27% upper and lower groups, Lawshes Nomograph, Flanagan's product-moment 'r' coefficient, and Kelley's method and were found 11.187, 39.80, 1.59, .543, and 1.555 respectively. These coefficients are indicating that the test is highly reliable and valid.

For this study, data was collected by field visits using a normative survey method. Statistical procedures like mean, variance, z-score norm and normality test were used. SPSS version 21 was used to compute statistical values and normality tests. The findings of this study were discussed on the basis of the following theories:

Maslow's theory of motivation is based on the needs hierarchy system: Job satisfaction, motivation and reward systems are considered the parts of organizational theory. Out of these, motivation is taken as the most effective as it overlaps with both job satisfaction and rewards systems (Pardee, 1990, p. 3). Motivation is an important factor required to improve work productivity that is why educational administrators need to have a firm understanding of how it relates to job satisfaction and reward system (Pardee, 1990, p. 5). According to Yorks (1976, p. 21), motivation can be defined as "Those forces within an individual that push or propel him to satisfy basic needs or wants". Maslow (1954) developed a theory of motivation based on the needs hierarchy system involving five categories of motives arranged with lower-level needs to higher-level needs. The hierarchy of needs determines a person's level of aspiration (Haimann, 1973, p. 217), and attitudes determine the individual route (Haimann, 1973, p. 219).

Theory of brain drain: In this century, the migration of highly qualified persons is considered as a natural phenomenon and is called a knowledge society or knowledge economy era. So much research was conducted since the mid of the last century on the new tendencies of migration of highly skilled persons who first migrated to a foreign country and then come back to their motherland. Most of the researchers name this process as brain drain or brain gain and returning tendencies of migrants to their countries back as brain circulation (Daugeliene and Marcinkeviciene, 2009, p. 49 Kone and Ozden, 2017, p. 2).

Thus, the theory of brain drain says that the high-skilled people of developing countries naturally flow to developed countries. This phenomenon causes a negative impact on the progress of developing countries while developed countries benefit from it. At present, the teaching profession is not taken as a very prestigious profession in Nepal, and salaries and other facilities provided to the teachers are also low in comparison to the developed countries. This situation might be a major cause for Nepali high-skilled manpower to migrate in developed countries.

3.0 RESULTS

Academic achievement and intelligence are the two main dependent variables of this study. So, results related to both variables are presented separately as below:

3.1 Academic achievement of students of Nepal enrolling in teacher education programme

At present, there is an assessment system based on letter grading in Nepal in school education. The researcher collected the grade point average (GPA) awarded to the students. To make these scores consistent with intelligence scores, the GPAs of the students were converted to their respective raw scores. There is no reliable method to convert GPAs to their actual raw scores or percentages. Letter grading in Nepal is based on four-point grading and each class interval generally consists of class differences of 10 except for first-class intervals. Letter grade B is assigned to class intervals 60 to below 70. Here, an average of 60 and 70 (i.e., 65) is given for grades B and so on. A Z-score norm with seven categories was developed to interpret the result. But to use the z-score norm, the data should be normally distributed. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality was used to check the normality of data and its values; statistic = .048, df = 200 (as this study was a part of a comparative study in the Indo-Nepalese context, a sample of 200 was used to develop z-score norms) and p = .200 showed the data was normally distributed. Seven level interpretation criteria based on z-scores are presented in table 1.

Table 1. Interpretation Criteria for Achievement Scores

S. No.	Range of z-scores	Levels of interpretation
1	+1.997 and above	Extremely high achiever
2	+1.262 to below +1.997	Very high achiever
3	+0.526 to below +1.262	High achiever
4	-0.208 to below +0.526	Average achiever
5	-0.943 to below -0.208	Low achiever
6	-1.678 to below -0.943	Very low achiever
7	Below -1.678	Extremely low achiever

Academic achievement is defined as the degree of learning that a learner gained from instructions in a given area of academic programs (i.e., achievement) is reflected by the extent to which skill and knowledge have been imparted to the learner (Crow and Crow as cited in Lawrence and Deepa, 2013). Students' GPA is used as one of the important criteria for admission in most teacher education programs (Mikotovics & Crehan, 2002; Riggs & Riggs, 1990, 1991).

In this study, the academic achievement of the students was taken as the percentage of scores gained by students in intermediate or 10+2 level examinations. Collected achievement scores were converted into z-scores by using the mean of 62.045 and SD of 9.130. Gender-wise interpretation on the basis of levels of academic achievement is shown in table 4.21.

Table 2 Academic Achievement Levels of Students enrolling in teacher education program in Nepal

Respondents			Interpretation
Male	Female	Total	

Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	Extremely high achiever
0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	Very high achiever
0	0.00	2	6.90	2	4.00	High achiever
6	28.57	5	17.24	11	22.00	Average achiever
10	47.62	4	13.79	14	28.00	Low achiever
5	23.81	15	51.72	20	40.00	Very low achiever
0	0.00	3	10.35	3	6.00	Extremely low achiever
21	100	29	100	50	100	Total

Source: Field Survey 2020

3.2 Intelligence of students of Nepal enrolling in teacher education programme

There is no unanimous opinion on the definition of intelligence but intelligence is taken as the indicator of performing the task superiorly. According to Freeman (1955, pp. 60-61), intelligence is the "adjustment of adaptation of the individual to his total environment", "the ability to learn" and "the ability to carry on abstract thinking". Teacher education is a programme to produce qualified teachers, so the students enrolling in teacher education programmes should be intelligent so that they can well adjust to the school/educational environment and impart quality education after getting recruited as teachers.

The researcher visited all the selected departments/colleges and administered the intelligence test by taking the consent of related authorities. All the instructions given in the manual of the test were carefully followed. After the administration of the intelligence test, answer sheets were collected and scored carefully using the scoring stencil provided with GGTI. The maximum mark of this test was 135 out of which 9 marks were allocated for the sub-test Following Directions. This sub-test was an additional warm-up test and according to the instruction given in the manual of GGTI, marks obtained by students in this sub-test were not included in their total scores.

GGTI is constructed by including test items based on contents of general school subjects like vocabulary, arithmetic reasoning, classification, analogies, comprehension, series and best answers. These items are free from geographical, cultural and other factors so the researcher selected this test to identify the intelligence level of students of teacher education programmes in the Nepalese context. A wide age range is covered by this test. The test is designed for persons ageing from 13 to 17+ years. This test covers the age of all students of Nepal enrolling in the teacher education (B.Ed.) programme.

GGTI manual provides guidelines for interpretation of intelligence scores on the basis of Deviation Intelligence Quotients (DIQs). Intelligence levels are classified by using the terminologies like Borderline Defective, Mentally Defective, etc. which are not suitable to use for students enrolling in teacher education programmes. Again, in this study, interpretation criteria developed for achievement are based on z-score norms so the researcher developed the fresh criteria for interpretation of results of this test based on z-scores to make uniformity in both variables. Intelligence scores of 200 students from Nepal and India were used to construct z-score norms.

Normality was checked by using SPSS. Values of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (statistic = .050, df = 200 and p = .200) showed that the intelligence scores used for interpretation criteria are normally distributed. After ensuring the normal distribution of intelligence scores, z-scores for all raw scores were computed by using a mean of 60.790 and SD of 18.729. Seven level interpretation criteria were developed (table 3) by using the highest z-score of +2.414 and the lowest z-score -2.444.

Table 3 Interpretation Criteria for Intelligence Scores

S. No.	Range of z-scores	Levels of interpretation
1	+1.720 and above	Extremely high intelligent
2	+1.026 to below +1.720	Very high intelligent
3	+0.332 to below +1.026	High intelligent
4	-0.362 to below +0.332	Average intelligent
5	-1.056 to below -0.362	Low intelligent
6	-1.750 to below -1.056	Very low intelligent
7	Below -1.750	Extremely low intelligent

The number and percentage of students enrolling in teacher education programmes with their intelligence level are presented in table 4:

Table 4 Intelligence Levels of Students Enrolling in Teacher Education Program in Nepal

Respondents						Interpretation
Male		Female		Total		
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
0	0.00	1	3.45	1	2.00	Extremely high intelligent
0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	Very high intelligent
2	9.52	1	3.45	3	6.00	High intelligent
7	33.33	4	13.79	11	22.00	Average intelligent
7	33.33	3	10.34	10	20.00	Low intelligent
4	19.05	14	48.28	18	36.00	Very low intelligent
1	4.76	6	20.69	7	14.00	Extremely low intelligent
21	100	29	100	50	100	Total

Source: Field Survey 2020

4.0 DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Discussions of results related to academic achievement

Results related to academic achievement (Table 2) show that there are no extremely high achiever and very high achiever students enrolling in teacher education programmes in Nepal. The percentage of high achievers enrolling in teacher education programmes is 4%, average achievers are 22%, low achievers is 28%, very low achievers is 40% and extremely

low achievers are 6%. Most of the students (40%) enrolling in teacher education programmes in Nepal are very low achievers. Only 4% of students are high achievers and 96% of students are either average achievers or low achievers. No high achiever male student is seen enrolling in a teacher education programme while 6.90% (out of female) high achiever female students are seen enrolling in the teacher education programme. Similarly, no extremely low achiever male student is enrolling in a teacher education programme, but 10.35% of extremely low achiever female students are enrolling in the teacher education programme. This result shows that almost none of the high achiever students in Nepal are enrolling in teacher education programmes.

4.2 Discussions of results related to intelligence

From table 4, only 2% of extremely high intelligent students are enrolling in the teacher education programmes. There are no very high intelligent students, while 6% high intelligent are enrolling in teacher education. Most of the students (36%) enrolling in teacher education in Nepal fall under the category of very low intelligence. Similarly, the percentage of extremely low intelligent students is 14%. This result also shows that only 8% of students above average intelligence are enrolling in B. Ed. programme while 92% of students enrolling in B. Ed. are either average or below average intelligent. The percentage of male students with average intelligence is 9.52% and the percentage for female students is 6.90%. Similarly, 57.14% of male students and 79.31% of female students, with below-average intelligence are enrolling in the teacher education programme. The result is indicating that negligible percentage of highly intelligent students is enrolling in teacher education programmes in Nepal.

According to Maslow's theory of motivation based on the needs hierarchy system and the Theory of brain drain, people are affected by two things motivation and future career. They choose such jobs in which they can get motivation in the form of job security, prestige, appropriate rank in the national protocol, attractive salary and other allowances and facilities. The teacher education programme is directly related to the teaching profession. But in Nepal, the teaching profession lacks all the above-mentioned things. Teachers can enjoy the equal salary given to other civil servants, but they are not provided similar allowances and other facilities. The teaching profession is comparatively less prestigious and teachers are not given proper positions in the national protocol. These are the reasons by which high achievers and intelligent students are attracted to other programmes like Science and Technology, Management and others (Deupa and Pathani, 2018) and not enrolled in teacher education programmes. High achievers and intelligent students are also migrating to developed countries (International Organization for Migration, 2019, p. 65) in search of better opportunities.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Quality education is one of the most important factors for the development of the nation. Quality education can be imparted by competent teachers and competent teachers can be produced by effective teacher education programmes. There are so many factors responsible for the effectiveness of teacher education programmes but enrollment of high achievers and intelligent students is the most crucial factor. So, academic institutions running teacher

education programmes and other related authorities need to be cautious about the enrollment of students in teacher education programmes.

Results of this study are clearly indicating that only a few numbers of students having high academic achievement and intelligence levels are enrolling in the teacher education programme. A high percentage of low achievers and less intelligent students are frequently enrolling in this programme. Competent teachers cannot be produced by enrolling low achievers in teacher education and this whole trend negatively affects the quality of education.

To make the teacher education programmes effective, enrollment criteria should be designed so that only high achievers and intelligent students can be enrolled in this programme. The government of Nepal need to provide attractive salary to teachers and rethink the other allowances and facilities. Teachers should be properly addressed in national protocol and teaching should be made a socially prestigious profession.

6.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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