

# philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University • Loyola Heights, Quezon City • 1108 Philippines

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## Teacher Education in the Philippines

Julieta M. Savellano

*Philippine Studies* vol. 47, no. 2 (1999) 253–268

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# Teacher Education in the Philippines

*Julietta M. Savellano*

The preparation of Filipino teachers occupies center stage in the growth of the educational system in the Philippines. From the time the Spanish colonizers established a school system more than a century ago, that center stage has received the continued attention of government and other sectors. This article presents major developments in teacher education in the Philippines since the Spanish period.

The first systematic efforts to train Filipino teachers during the Spanish regime began with the promulgation of a royal decree on 20 December 1863 establishing a normal school for male teachers of primary instruction in the city of Manila under the Fathers of Laity of Jesus, an essential condition to implement the colonial policy of "disseminating instruction in the Catholic faith, in the mother tongue, and in the elementary branches of the knowledge of life," and of providing capable teachers for this purpose. The education of female teachers started in the Municipal School of Manila with the issuance of a decree by the superior civil government on 30 November 1871. Subsequently, a royal decree was issued creating a normal school for female teachers of primary instruction in Nueva Caceres under the Sisters of Charity.

## **The American Period (1901–1935)**

When the Americans occupied the Philippines in 1901, they took immediate steps to reopen schools. Act No. 74, passed by the Phil-

This note was a paper presented at the National Centennial Congress on Higher Education sponsored by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), on 28–29 May 1998 at the Manila Midtown Hotel, Manila.

ippine Commission on 21 January 1901, laid the legal basis for the organization of a public school system under American administration, following primarily American educational principles but adapted to Philippine conditions at that time. Different types of schools were authorized to open, including the Philippine Normal School which was established in Manila on 1 September 1901. Other normal schools were subsequently put up in certain provinces to prepare teachers for the public school system. The training of teachers that was initially offered in Philippine Normal School was four years in length beyond the elementary level. In 1917, two regional normal schools were established, one in Cebu and the other in Ilocos Norte. Other normal schools were later opened, such as the Bayambang Normal School, Leyte Normal School and Albay Normal School. But while the goal of these schools was to train enough teachers in all regions, the facilities for teacher education were not adequate to meet the demands of the public school system owing to the lack of funds and faculty.

The formal preparation of high school teachers began only after the establishment of the University of the Philippines (U.P.), although the professional training of high school teachers had already been proposed years before the opening of the university. The U.P. College of Liberal Arts created an upper division in 1911 where, for one additional year, the basic two-year liberal arts curriculum was strengthened with some special courses designed for prospective high school teachers. To better prepare prospective teachers, the formal organization of professional courses was effected through the school of education on 29 September 1913. The function of this school was "to correlate and bring together all the forces of the university for the thorough preparation of high school teachers." A three-year program provided for the preparation of prospective teachers in selected secondary school subjects, professional study of the problems of secondary education, principles of teaching, and educational administration in addition to general education. Students were admitted to the school of education if they had completed the preparatory course in the college of liberal arts. A high school certificate was awarded after the three-year program. In 1915, the school of education expanded the program to four years leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Education. On 8 March 1918, the board of regents elevated the school of education to the status of college effective 1 July 1918.

The beginning, growth, and development of programs to prepare high school teachers not only in the University of the Philippines but

in the whole country was intimately linked to the life of the first dean of the college, Francisco Benitez. It was under his leadership through the teacher education program, that the foundation for the education of high school teachers was laid (Lacuesta 1981). Dean Benitez advocated the standardization of all normal schools and colleges of education so that graduation from any of them would be a reasonable guarantee of teaching proficiency. The program in the University of the Philippines set the basic pattern of programs for secondary school teachers in both public and private colleges of education in the Philippines.

The period from 1918 to 1926 saw several developments in the national life of the country which made colleges of education and normal schools accelerate the preparation of teachers. Increasing enrollment at the elementary and secondary school levels made it necessary to expand facilities for the preparation of the teachers.

A significant event in Philippine education during the period was the survey of the Philippine educational system conducted in 1925, popularly known as the Monroe Survey. The findings and recommendations of the survey board were so encompassing in scope that they were eventually used as bases for educational policy and planning by the Department of Public Instruction. The Director of Education prepared a statement of the aims and objectives of the public school system. To implement some objectives, more teachers with the necessary educational qualifications for teaching needed to be prepared in teacher-preparing institutions. Measures were taken by teacher education institutions to provide courses in general education which would give prospective teachers knowledge of the major human activities to help them understand the political, social, and economic conditions of their environment, the structure of their changing society, and the basic elements of the culture of that society (Lacuesta).

In the area of professional education, increased attention was given to mental achievement. To promote psychological tests as a means of improving instruction, courses in tests and measurement were offered in the colleges of education. The major fields of teaching for prospective teachers in the secondary schools included English, mathematics, history, geography, biology, physics, economics, library science, home economics, Spanish, and physical education. One notable trend that emerged was the increasing predominance of female over male students enrolled in the teaching course.

### **The Commonwealth Period**

The Philippine Commonwealth period placed new demands on the government and the nation. The preparation of the teachers was considerably affected by the events of this period. Responding to the demands of the nation during this transition period, the colleges of education and normal schools tried to expand and improve the teacher education curriculum, to bring them closer to the community and to the public schools. In general, all teacher-preparing institutions were expected to work in close cooperation with the Bureau of Education, to prepare future teachers on the basis of conditions in elementary and secondary schools, and to form an advisory committee to advise and recommend rules and regulations for ensuring the greater efficiency of these institutions. In the Philippines, as in other countries, efforts were being exerted to bridge the gap between the education of elementary and secondary school teachers. Another three decades had to pass, however, before this gap would be finally bridged, making teachers at these two levels equal in educational status (Lacuesta).

### **The Japanese Occupation (Dec. 1941–1945)**

During the entire Japanese occupation, the Japanese government tried to rapidly transform Philippine society through an educational system which was to be oriented both politically and ideologically toward the establishment of the East Asia co-prosperity sphere. The reopening of schools on 1 June 1942 by the Japanese military administration required a re-orientation and re-training of Filipino pre-war teachers. A normal institute for this purpose was established with the first regular session on 1 September 1942, continuing for 15 weeks until 11 December 1942. The Normal Institute was conceived primarily to introduce and disseminate the Japanese language and culture. Under the Japanese military administration, only the state colleges of education and normal schools were allowed to reopen and train teachers for elementary schools. They did not open, however, until toward the end of the Japanese Occupation.

### **The Post-Liberation Period (1945–1970)**

The Liberation of the Philippines by the Americans in 1945 ended four years of Japanese Occupation. The community school movement in the Philippines was born with teachers receiving a new orienta-

tion toward community development. In developing their programs, colleges of education and normal schools during this period took cognizance of the demand for teachers whose functions would include implementing the programs of government. Considering the shortage of qualified teachers as a result of the last world war and the urgent need to rehabilitate the country, universities and colleges opened teacher education programs to meet the demand for qualified teachers. With the approval of the Bureau of Private Schools, private universities and colleges of education offered a two-year normal curriculum leading to the elementary teacher's certificate, a two-year E.T.C. home economics curriculum and a three-year combined general and home economics curriculum.

By 1948, there were 107 private normal courses and fifty-four education courses for prospective elementary and high school teachers, respectively. The normal schools under the Bureau of Public Schools were the Albay Normal School, Cebu Normal School, Ilocos Norte Normal School, Iloilo Normal School, Leyte Normal School, Philippine Normal School and Zamboanga Normal School. On 18 June 1949, the Philippine Congress passed Republic Act No. 416 converting the Philippine Normal School into the Philippine Normal College, authorizing it to grant the Bachelor of Science in Education (B.S.E.) degree with special attention on elementary instruction. This set the pace for all teacher training institutions, public and private, to elevate their two-year E.T.C. curriculum to a four-year curriculum. Such a development seemed to equal the length of training of elementary and secondary school teachers, which helped raise the status of elementary school teachers and unify the teaching profession.

The U.P. College of Education, continued to offer programs leading to the Bachelor of Science in Education, Bachelor of Pedagogy, Bachelor of Science in Home Economics, Bachelor of Physical Education, and Certificate of Teacher of Adults. A change in the B.S.E. curriculum in 1947 provided for two integrated majors to replace the old prescription of one major subject and one minor subject, in order to equip the prospective teacher with a solid foundation in two teaching areas and to keep with the emerging trend of integrating specialized areas of knowledge into broader fields of knowledge. Today, the College of Education offers doctoral and master's programs in various fields, in addition to its undergraduate programs for prospective elementary and secondary school teachers. As such, it not only produces teachers, the purpose for which it was created in 1918, but it also develops different types of educational personnel

needed by the educational system, such as those related to research and extension, which are among the faculty's major concerns in pursuit of a university's primary functions. Once the four-year pre-service education became a standard pattern, graduate programs were opened in all universities and many normal schools.

The growth of the teaching profession was phenomenal during the last half of the 1960s to the early part of the 1970s. The increasing popularity of the teaching course accounted for the tremendous increase in the number of teachers. The main features of teacher education programs remained constant, serving as the general matrix for organizing courses for prospective teachers. In actual practice, teacher education institutions followed a curricular pattern as required by Department of Education memorandum no. 27, series of 1970, entitled "Revised Teacher Education Program." Although there were innovative programs, such as the integrated teacher education program and the ladderized curriculum, the general pattern remained the same.

On the whole, differentiated curricula for prospective teachers in elementary and secondary schools have been offered by most of the universities and colleges of education up to the present. The curricula, however, provide for common courses in the general education and professional education components for both prospective elementary and secondary school teachers. Conferences, seminars, and workshops continue to be undertaken by professional organizations, notably the Philippine Association for Teacher Education (PAFTE) to deliberate on vital matters related to teacher education and recommend to policy making bodies like the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), CHED and Congress, reforms to make teacher education more relevant and responsive to educational needs and development.

### **Teacher Education Today**

The growth and development of teacher education in the Philippines can be studied in terms of the number and types of teacher education institutions, legislative initiatives on teacher education, and policies and standards promulgated by the DECS, and more recently by the CHED. Today there are approximately 815 institutions offering various types of teacher education programs with each region in the country having at least fifteen teacher education institutions (TEI). Approximately 85 percent of the institutions are private, the rest are state-supported. During schoolyear (SY) 1994-1995, enrollment in

teacher education programs was approximately 211,000, ranking fourth among fields of study. Graduates numbered approximately 47,000 for SY 1994–1995, ranking fifth among programs of study. More than 60 percent of TEIs offer graduate programs at the master's level, with about 15 percent offering doctoral programs in education (BHE 1991).

Policies and standards governing teacher education programs were defined in Order nos. 26 and 37, issued in June 1953 and August 1986, respectively, by the then Ministry of Education Culture and Sports (MECS). MECS order no. 26 prescribed specific rules and standards for the administration and management of teacher education institutions. It also prescribed the guidelines for the offering of the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) program, including the distribution of courses and units in the general education, professional education and the area of specialization components of the curriculum. The order also provided guidelines for admission, residence and graduation requirements. The main concern of teacher education is the preparation of teachers imbued with the ideals, aspirations and traditions of Philippine life and culture and sufficiently equipped with knowledge of an effective delivery system.

In 1986, MECS issued order no. 37 entitled, "Amendments to MECS Order 26," prescribing policies and standards for the implementation of the revised Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSE) program and the offering of areas of specialization in the BEEd program. In 1993, the Technical Panel for Teacher Education, in consultation with the national PAFTE board, came out with a set of minimum requirements. Individual institutions may add reasonable courses to achieve their institutional objectives and realize their regional goals. (*PAFTE News and Views*, April 1993). A non-education baccalaureate degree holder with eighteen units in professional education may also qualify to teach in elementary/secondary schools. In addition to the bachelor's degree in education and other qualifications appropriate to elementary and secondary school teaching, teachers in elementary and secondary schools are required to pass the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET).

During the decades of the 1950s and 1960s, teacher education accounted for the biggest enrollment at the tertiary level. Approximately one out of three students at the collegiate level was enrolled in teacher education. This popularity of teacher education programs during this period may be attributed to their accessibility in universities and colleges throughout the country and the big demand for



teachers in a time of rapid school expansion. During the latter part of the 1970s, however, specifically during 1977–1978, enrollment in teacher education programs dropped to about five percent of total tertiary level enrollment. After this year, teacher education enrollment rose gradually until it reached 18 percent of the total enrollment in 1990–1991. The sharp decline in teacher education enrollment during the 1970s and 1980s maybe ascribed to a number of factors including the low salary of and consequently low prestige accorded to elementary and secondary school teachers. Moreover, teacher education after the 1960s created a negative image as the “easiest course . . . and the dumping ground for those who could not make it to the other professions.” (Task Force to Study State Higher Education 1987, 3–8).

The increase in enrollment in teacher education programs during the 1990s could be a function of a reported shortage of teachers at the basic education levels and the relatively less stringent admission requirements, as well as the higher probability of a person getting a college diploma in teacher education programs compared to other degree programs. (EDCOM Report, Area Report, Education and Manpower 1991). Studies (Ibe 1995, 91–125; Padua) reveal that 15 percent of high schools seniors opt to enroll in teacher education programs. Before the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) was abolished, high school students who chose teacher education had percentile scores ranging from sixty to seventy-five, confirming studies and observations that teacher education did not attract the most capable students. Seventy-one percent of freshmen enrolling in teacher education program earn their degrees. Roughly 65 percent of education students enroll in the BEEd program, the remaining one-third in the BSEd and/or BSIED programs. Over the last several years, however, enrollment has shown a shift in preference from BEEd to BSEd.

With the current thrust in science and technology, it is unfortunate that only 15 percent of students in education go into science fields. These are students in the upper 15 percent of the teacher education enrollees. As to gender distribution, females constitute a large proportion of the enrollment, roughly 85 percent. Until such time that the teaching profession can offer more attractive incentives in the form of salaries and other benefits which are comparable with those of other professions, this trend can be expected to persist.

The concern over teacher education has been articulated in many fora. Research studies on different aspects of teacher education have shown many areas that need to be strengthened. While these stud-

ies have shown that there are no universally accepted standards to measure the quality of education, the findings of some studies on teacher education institutions, students and graduates of teacher education programs reflect the performance of TEIs and their graduates. Studies which looked at conditions (inputs) that are believed necessary to produce quality, can give indicators of performance. A study completed in 1994 by a research team from the University of the Philippines Education Research Program, of which the writer was a member, focused on the human and physical resources in teacher education. This study and three others on teacher education done by three other institutions were undertaken under a grant from Japan coursed through the former Bureau of Higher Education of DECS in June 1992.

The study, *Human and Physical Resources in Teacher Education*, collected data through questionnaires from 201 TEIs which represented 39 percent of the total 531 TEIs at the time the study was done. Findings of the study indicated that TEIs generally need a great deal of improvement and upgrading with regard to their faculty, physical and library resources. There was great disparity in the availability of resources. The findings suggested, however, that while much had to be done to improve the system of teacher education in the country, the TEIs were trying their best to improve their standards in human and physical resources. The study also revealed that about 44 percent of TEI faculty had only bachelor's degrees; of the 56 percent with graduate degrees, a fourth had doctoral degrees. What was as disturbing as the academic qualifications of the faculty was the finding that only 50 percent of the TEIs had 76 to 100 percent full-time faculty. The faculty had teaching loads ranging from 19 to 30 units in about 55 percent of the TEIs. Seventy-five percent of the faculty were involved only in teaching. More than a half of the TEIs did not have faculty doing either research or extension, the other activities in which tertiary faculty should also be involved.

With respect to physical resources, data gathered indicated that TEIs gave low priority to building services and concerns. About a third of the TEIs had no computer instructional capability. About a fourth of the TEIs had only half or less of the required minimum requirement with respect to instructional media equipment. Only 4 percent of the TEIs met 50 percent of the standards on library resources. The standards recommended in the study were based on the accreditation standards of the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) and the Accrediting Agencies of Chartered

Colleges and Universities of the Philippines (AACUP) and/or standards from such sources as the Manual of Regulations for Private Schools and DECS Policies and Standards. The low compliance indicated by the findings suggests the need to implement the policies more adequately and firmly.

The bulk of TEI graduates are BEEd enrollees despite studies on teacher supply and demand which show a greater demand for BSE graduates, especially in the sciences. Qualifying rates of the Professional Board Examination for Teachers (PBET) reduced the number drastically because the ratio of passing for BEEd graduate was lower than that of the BSE graduates. From 1990 to 1994, the percentage of PBET passers ranged from 10.9 percent to 35.6 percent (Ibe 1995). During this same period, the annual output of TEIs ranged from 38,815 to 41,332. The number of actual PBET examinees each year was three times more than the number of graduates of TEIs. This was because every year many non-passers retook the examination. The low percentage of passers explained the big number of examinees each year which ranged from 114,432 to 122,830 from 1990 to 1994.

De La Salle University's study on "Cost Effectiveness of Teacher Education in the Philippines: A Comparative Analysis of Public and Private Schools Program" (1995) reveal comparable performance in the PBET of public and private schools. Private TEIs were more cost-effective than public TEIs, as shown in lower unit cost, lower drop-out rate, and higher student-faculty ratio. Results of the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) show that the performance of teacher education graduates in the said examination is still quite discouraging, reflecting the substandard quality of many TEI programs and students. The passing rates were 26.87 percent and 21.72 percent in the 1996 and 1997, respectively, for BEEd graduates. It was 28.77 percent and 33.31 percent in 1996 and 1997, respectively, for BSE graduates. Ibe's studies show that while a few TEIs consistently topped the list of TEIs with a high percentage of PBET passers, some institutions consistently performed very poorly with about 15 percent of the TEIs having qualifying percentages ranging from 22 percent to 0. The popular areas of specialization among teacher education students are English, Filipino, mathematics and social studies (Ibe 1991), in that order. These four subjects do not require special equipment and are therefore the most common major fields offered by TEIs. (Ibe)

Two recent legislative initiatives which have given a boost to teacher education and to the teaching profession are Republic Act

(RA) 7784 providing for the establishment of centers of excellence and the creation of a Teacher Education Council, and RA 7836 prescribing the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). From 1978 to 1995, teachers took the Professional Board Examination for Teachers (PBET) administered by the Civil Service Commission. To pursue and implement RA 7784, regional centers of excellence and development were identified and recommended by the Technical Panel for Teacher Education of CHED, guided by the criteria prescribed by the law. Twenty TEIs from thirteen regions of the country were identified on the basis of the criteria operationalized by the technical panel. The first Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) was administered by the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) in 1996. The two laws recognize the vital role of teachers and reflect the government's commitment to quality education.

### Accreditation

The FAAP 1996 Directory shows that twenty-eight private TEIs have attained Level III accreditation. Forty-eight private and two public TEIs have been granted Level II accreditation. Nine private TEIs and eleven public TEIs have Level I accreditation. A total of ninety-eight TEIs have teacher education programs accredited at varying levels. While this number constitutes just about 13 percent of the total number of TEIs, an increasing number of these institutions, both public and private, desire to be accredited. This manifests the concern of TEIs to upgrade their programs and outputs.

The Philippine Association for Teacher Education (PAFTE) was established in 1966 and through the years has demonstrated its commitment to promote, upgrade, and maintain standards of teacher education through a variety of professional activities, at both the national and regional levels. The invaluable contribution of PAFTE to teacher education and to upgrading the status of teaching as a profession has been recognized by the DECS, CHED and the PRC. With the implementation of RA 7836, PAFTE was designated by PRC as the accredited professional association to assist it in the accreditation of continuing professional education programs for teachers and all other PRC programs for the teaching profession. The association's commitment to enhance the quality of teacher education is manifested in its dynamic and continuing program of professional activities for its members, relevant researches, extension activities for the faculty of

teacher education institutions, the writing of books for professional education courses, dialogues with policy makers, and the establishment of linkages with agencies and organizations in education.

### **Prospects in Teacher Education**

Teaching and teacher education remain troubled fields, with the latter in need of direction. Colleges of education need to exercise responsible leadership in this critical period of our country's education. The reform of teacher education and of the teaching profession are two goals that teacher education institutions must continue to address. The future of teacher education is inextricably interwoven with the future of teachers. Teacher education will improve in direct relation to the improvement of the status of teachers in society.

The image of the teacher education student as intellectually inferior to other students must change. Teacher education institutions can contribute to this goal by addressing both external and internal factors. Externally, teacher education institutions must continue to work with policy makers and professional organizations for the improvement of teachers' salaries and working conditions, and for the creation of other incentives for qualified students to pursue teacher education programs and go into teaching. Scholarships and other forms of incentives must be expanded. Internally, teacher education institutions should give strong consideration to improving entrance requirements, and to providing remedial experiences for those who cannot be admitted but who wish to prepare to meet these requirements. Alternative admission standards that would include consideration of a person's motivation, leadership qualities, sensitivity, and potential for teaching and learning, must be looked into. Raising standards tends to attract better students.

A review of the teacher education curriculum shows a need to increase courses in the major field. For practical reasons, teachers need more depth and breadth in their field of specialization. An uninformed or ignorant teacher can do much harm. A program of carefully chosen courses in content is imperative for teachers to develop a solid grasp of the goals and objectives of a field. Overall academic performance is positively associated with successful teaching. It must be emphasized, however, that good teaching does not automatically occur when teachers know their subject. While research suggests that knowledge of subject matter does not necessarily make

a person a good teacher of that subject, it seems reasonable to conclude that teachers with good instructional capabilities would be more effective if they had in-depth knowledge of the subjects they teach. A critical and continuing review of the curriculum should focus then on content and process and the optimal utilization of the appropriate educational technology and strategies. The formulation of a research agenda in teacher education could be part of a TELs research and development plans. The impact of training programs on teaching performance and a follow-up on the life and professional career of graduates to assess the success and failure of the programs, could be the subjects of research which could provide valuable inputs in curricular revision. The challenge in teacher education is to examine and restructure the curriculum to reflect issues and concerns in our present environment and the megatrends of the 21st century.

A more effective integration of theory and practice has always been sought in teacher education programs. Such integration requires sound judgment and discernment on the part of teachers. Every effort must be made to understand the school as an organization and the way people behave in it. This requires the early and systematic exposure of prospective teachers to classroom experiences. More and more of such experiences are being carefully woven into the different professional courses as early as the first year. This exposure and even gradual participation would enable prospective teachers to discover whether they really want to teach and intensify their desire to teach. It would enable them to see the relevance or irrelevance in the pre-service program and provide them with a greater understanding of their uniqueness in preparation to teach. The field component of teacher education programs could also provide the bridge between the pre-service and in-service training of teachers. The sharing of expertise and resources between public schools and the institution would be encouraged.

Another issue in teacher education is scholarship. The issue stems from the question of the "right blend" of the two tasks of professional schools, one addressed to the demands of the profession and the other to the standards and traditions of a university. While other professional schools can draw clean boundaries around their clients, those in teacher education are faced with a widening range of groups to which they are expected to respond. They find it necessary to continually review their programs to meet the needs of various educational groups. Their dilemma is how to maintain academic standards accepted in a university and at the same time relate in

immediate ways to the real world of teachers, children, parents and the general public. This issue has also been raised because of the low scholarship productivity of teacher education institutions and of the low regard by the society for the work of teachers. Teacher education institutions must demonstrate behavior consistent with the university's stress on scholarship and academic excellence.

Increased collaboration between schools and teacher education institutions has developed in the last few years. The role of collaboration in the effective implementation of teacher education programs has resulted in the formation of partnerships. University faculty and school system personnel must continue to share responsibility for implementing activities of future and present teachers. Collaborative efforts in public schools should be products of long-range projects that are negotiated between the two parties not only for the field experience of prospective teachers but also for providing in-service training assistance.

The in-service education of teachers has been a major concern in teacher education during the last two decades. In the past, most resources and efforts in teacher education went to pre-service preparation. Colleges of education, however, are now filling the potential market in programs of in-service education. Colleges and universities are becoming more receptive to working on the in-service education of public school teachers. In many situations, teachers in the field have learned how to perform their tasks better as they work with prospective teachers. College professors find a testing ground for theory and a real situation for research. Colleges of education are seeing the limits of pre-service teacher education. They see the value of involving teachers in their own professional development and recognize the importance of having teachers deal with actual teaching problems in advanced study. They realize that the professionalization of teaching will require a more gradual induction into service and a bridging of the gap between pre-service practice and in-service training.

Historically, education courses have drawn their clientele almost exclusively from education students. At present, however, one can see that they are appealing to more non-education students and graduates. In view of the concrete steps being taken by the government to improve the incentive schemes and working conditions of teachers, teacher education programs are attracting an increasing number of non-education graduates who enroll for the required units in education to qualify them to teach. This group of degree holders who seek a career change or a second career option represents an

immediate source of potential teachers and may be the answer to the critical problem of teacher shortages in some subjects. Alternative certification programs could target such clientele. The main concern, though, should not be just having the students meet the required units in education but equipping them with the necessary competencies to teach.

The aforementioned issues and prospects in teacher education underscore the fact that the quality of teachers cannot be improved unless the quality of their education is also improved. The task can be accomplished if colleges and universities work closely with schools and concerned agencies. Global developments demand comprehensive reforms in education. Teachers must be ready to assume new roles in the face of global developments, new technologies, and emerging types of new learners. Teacher education, teaching and teachers shall always be at the center of educational reforms. Teachers shall continue to play a critical role in initiating, adopting and implementing reforms. They can and should make a difference in inspiring and stimulating our young people to excel. But they can do this if, and only if, they are supported, assisted, appreciated, recognized and provided the appropriate incentives by all concerned.

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