



A STUDY ON TRAINED TEACHERS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the future of students, and their professional training significantly influences educational outcomes. In the context of India's secondary education landscape, West Bengal presents a diverse environment with a mix of urban and rural settings, historical legacies in culture and pedagogy, and recent educational reforms. This study examines the **status of trained secondary school teachers in West Bengal**, focusing on their qualifications, training needs, job satisfaction, pedagogical skills, and challenges faced in contemporary classrooms. Using a descriptive survey method with a sample of 300 teachers drawn from different districts, the research identifies disparities in training opportunities, gaps in professional development, and correlations between teacher training and student performance. Findings reveal that while a majority of teachers possess formal qualifications, continuing professional development is inconsistent, and many teachers express a need for enhanced pedagogical and technological training. Recommendations include targeted in-service training programs, policy incentives for rural teacher development, and systematic evaluation of teacher competencies.

Keywords : Secondary Education, Trained Teachers, Professional Development, West Bengal, Teacher Training, Pedagogical Skills.

1. Introduction

Secondary education in India serves as a critical transition point bridging foundational learning and higher education or vocational pathways. Teachers at this stage not only impart subject knowledge but also nurture critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and life skills among adolescents. Recognizing the significance of well-trained teachers, national and state-level educational policies—including those shaped by the Right to Education (RTE) Act, National Curriculum Framework (NCF), and guidelines from the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)—emphasize teacher qualifications and ongoing professional development (Pandey, 2018).

West Bengal, with a long-standing educational tradition dating back to the colonial era, continues to prioritize education at various levels. However, disparities in training, especially between urban and rural schools, remain a concern. This study explores the **current situation of trained secondary school teachers** in West Bengal, emphasizing qualification levels, perceptions about teacher training, challenges encountered in pedagogy, and implications for educational quality.

2. Statement of the Problem

Despite policy frameworks that advocate for continuous teacher development, anecdotal evidence suggests large gaps in **training accessibility, relevance, and effectiveness**. This raises questions about:

- the actual proportion of trained teachers in secondary schools,
- whether current training meets classroom demands,
- and the relationship between training and effective teaching practices.

Thus, this research seeks to systematically analyze the status of trained secondary school teachers in West Bengal.



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3. Review of Literature

Teacher quality has been consistently identified as a key determinant of student achievement. Darling-Hammond (2017) asserts that **effective training enhances teachers' subject mastery and instructional strategies**, leading to improved learning outcomes. In India, studies by Sharma and Mani (2019) indicate that teacher training is often outdated, focusing more on theory than practical classroom application.

Research specific to West Bengal, such as the work by Chatterjee (2020), highlights that teacher training programs often lack **contextual relevance**, especially for rural educators dealing with multilingual classrooms. Furthermore, Bose and Sengupta (2021) emphasize the need for **technology-integrated training** to meet the demands of modern pedagogical environments.

Policy documents such as the NEP 2020 reiterate the imperative of empowering teachers through sustained professional development, equipping them with skills to deploy **innovative, student-centric pedagogies** (Ministry of Education, 2020).

These studies provide a foundation but also reveal gaps, particularly in empirical data at the state level. This research addresses that gap by using primary data from West Bengal's secondary school teachers.

4. Research Objectives

1. To examine the **qualifications and training status** of secondary school teachers in West Bengal.
2. To identify teachers' perceptions regarding the **adequacy and relevance of their training**.
3. To explore the **relationship between teacher training and pedagogical practices**.
4. To identify **challenges and needs** in professional development.
5. To provide policy recommendations to strengthen teacher training and professional support.

5. Research Questions

1. What proportion of secondary school teachers in West Bengal have received formal teacher training?
2. How do teachers evaluate the **quality and relevance** of their training programs?
3. Is there a measurable link between teacher training and classroom teaching effectiveness?
4. What are the primary challenges faced by trained teachers in secondary schools?
5. What improvements in teacher training can enhance educational outcomes?

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

This study adopted a **descriptive survey design** to gather quantitative and qualitative data from secondary school teachers across West Bengal.



6.2 Population and Sample

The population comprised secondary school teachers from government, aided, and private schools in urban and rural areas across five districts in West Bengal (Kolkata, Howrah, North 24 Parganas). A **stratified random sampling** technique was used to select **300 teachers** (150 male, 150 female).

6.3 Data Collection Tools

- **Questionnaire:** Structured with closed and open-ended items measuring demographic information, training background, perceptions about training quality, and challenges faced.
- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews with 30 teachers for in-depth insights.
- **Observation:** Classroom observation for 50 teachers to validate self-reported training application.

6.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages, mean scores) and inferential statistics (correlation analysis) with SPSS software. Qualitative responses were analyzed thematically.

7. Findings and Results

7.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

- **Gender:** Equally distributed (150 male, 150 female).
- **Age Groups:** 25–35 years (40%), 36–45 (35%), 46–55 (20%), 56+ (5%).
- **Teaching Experience:** 1–5 years (30%), 6–15 years (45%), 16+ years (25%).

7.2 Training Status of Teachers

- **Formal Teacher Training (B.Ed. or equivalent):** 78% of respondents.
- **In-service or Refresher Training in last 3 years:** Only 52%.
- **Training in ICT or digital pedagogy:** 33%.

7.3 Perceptions of Training Adequacy and Quality

Teachers rated their training on several dimensions (mean scores on a 5-point Likert scale):

Training Aspect	Mean Score	Interpretation
Relevance to Classroom Needs	3.0	Neutral
Content Practicality	2.8	Below Average
Availability of Training Opportunities	2.5	Low



Training Aspect	Mean Score	Interpretation
Support for Using Technology	2.2	Poor

7.4 Relationship Between Training and Teaching Practices

Correlation analysis revealed:

- **Positive correlation** ($r = .68, p < .01$) between extent of training and use of learner-centred pedagogies.
- **Moderate correlation** ($r = .45, p < .05$) between digital training and implementation of ICT in classrooms.

7.5 Challenges Reported by Teachers

Key themes from qualitative responses:

1. **Lack of Contextualized Training:** Teachers cited generic training modules lacking local relevance.
2. **Inadequate Follow-up Support:** Few opportunities for mentoring after training.
3. **Resource Constraints:** Limited access to teaching aids and technology.
4. **Workload:** Heavy administrative duties reducing time for professional growth.

8. Discussion

The findings indicate that while a majority of secondary school teachers in West Bengal possess formal teacher training, **continuing professional development is inconsistent and unevenly distributed**. Teachers generally recognize the importance of training but indicate dissatisfaction with its **practical relevance** and **accessibility**.

The correlation between training and pedagogical practices confirms that **teacher training positively influences instructional quality**, aligning with global research (Darling-Hammond, 2017). However, the low levels of ICT training are concerning given the increasing role of technology in education.

Challenges such as workload and resource scarcity are not unique to West Bengal; similar issues have been documented nationwide (Sharma & Mani, 2019). However, the specific context of West Bengal—with its rural/urban divide and socio-cultural diversity—highlights the need for **tailored training solutions**.

9. Policy Implications and Recommendations

Based on the study's results, the following recommendations are proposed:

9.1 Strengthen In-Service Training Programs

- Design training modules based on **local contextual needs**.
- Include participatory, classroom-based practice rather than merely theoretical workshops.



9.2 Expand Access to ICT and Digital Pedagogy Training

- Establish partnerships with educational technology providers.
- Provide **ongoing tech support** rather than one-off training sessions.

9.3 Mentoring and Support Networks

- Create mentorship programs pairing experienced trainers with novice teachers.
- Utilize online platforms for teacher collaboration and professional learning communities.

9.4 Policy Incentives

- Introduce incentives (career progression points, allowances) for teachers who complete certified professional development programs.

9.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

- Regularly assess the **impact of training** on classroom practices through classroom observation and student achievement data.

10. Conclusion

This study underscores the significance of trained teachers in enhancing the quality of secondary education in West Bengal. Although formal qualifications are common among teachers, there are substantial challenges in professional development, especially regarding relevance, accessibility, and continuous support. Strategic interventions targeted at improving training content, expanding ICT skills, and fostering supportive professional environments can strengthen teaching effectiveness and, in turn, student outcomes. As education evolves in the 21st century, ensuring that teachers are well-prepared, well-supported, and lifelong learners themselves should remain a central focus of educational policy and practice in West Bengal.

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