Model Classroom Practices in Teacher Education: Implementation Challenges in Present Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates model classroom practices in teacher education by examining digital tool utilization and virtual learning platforms in education. Teacher education faces three main obstacles, which include technology gaps and digital literacy gaps, but also involves finding the appropriate balance between practical classroom experience and simulated learning activities. To overcome these challenges, institutions must provide support, and their staff needs training for professional development and flexibility in the framework.

KEY WORDS

Model classroom practices, Teacher education, Digital tools, Virtual learning environment, Digital literacy.

INTRODUCTION

A classroom environment is students' physical, social, and emotional surroundings while they are learning, referred to as the classroom environment. Along with the interactions between students and teachers, it also takes into consideration factors like lighting, seating arrangements, and accessible resources. Respect, cooperation, and inclusivity are all encouraged in a supportive learning environment. Classroom environments can be classified as digital or virtual classroom environments, including technology and online platforms, the use of digital tools and devices, collaborative, where group projects and conversations are essential, or traditional, where students follow set rules; it can include both outdoor and indoor activities. In a broader sense, learning around the four walls is not only a part of classroom environments, but it also includes all those activities that facilitate an interaction between student and

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teacher; it can be lab work, field trips, games room activities, and other co-curricular activities. The perfect learning environment fosters creativity, critical thinking, a feeling of community, and student engagement while accommodating a variety of learning preferences.

A model classroom can be used as a guide to design an ideal learning setting. It provides examples of efficient teaching approaches, classroom management, and student engagement strategies that can be implemented in a traditional classroom environment. In order to assist teachers in enhancing their skills and creating a more engaging, inclusive, and effective environment for students' academic and personal development, model classrooms promote best practices in technology integration, collaborative learning, and a variety of teaching techniques. It makes teaching learning more comprehensive and beneficial for the learners. In the present scenario, there is a need to arrange a classroom in this manner because situations are changing; we should also update ourselves as per the need and demand of time.

Objectives of the Study

This research paper aims:

1. To explore model classroom practices in teacher education in this digital age.
2. To analyze its implementation challenges.
3. To discuss its suggestions in order to improve the quality of teacher education.

Review of Related Literature

SK, M. M., & Sain, S. K. (2024) researched that technology is slowly taking over the educational system. To guarantee that everyone has access to high-quality education, the Indian Ministry of Education has launched a number of digital platforms, tools, and devices, including SWAYAM, SWAYAM Prabha, Shodhganga, Shodh Shuddhi, NDL, NAD, e-PG Pathshala, e-Yantra, FOSSE, SAMARTH, IRINS, spoken tutorials, and Virtual Labs, among others. The study looks at issues and fixes related to putting digital initiatives into practice in universities. With the aid of content analysis, this study used secondary data from a variety of government reports and policies, newspaper articles, and journal publications. Many challenges arise in the successful implementation of digital initiatives in higher education in India because of a lack of awareness and understanding. When implementing digital projects, the following issues arise: inadequate policy guidelines, norms, and regulations; limited digital resources and technologies; and insufficient internet access in rural institutions. This study examines ways to address the challenges associated with putting digital initiatives into practice, such as scheduling frequent training sessions and workshops that aid in raising awareness and understanding among researchers, students, and academics. To successfully execute digital projects in higher education, it is necessary to have sufficient internet infrastructure, particularly in remote locations, and to have long-term support. If students are able to learn digitally, the results will be extremely advantageous. Faculty members benefit from honing their professional skills.

Amiruddin, S. (2023) studied that education is a powerful instrument that is an essential component of personal development. It acts as a roadmap for forming and advancing the future of humanity and the density of students. The quality of teachers and the overall standard of the educational system are clearly correlated. As the saying goes, "Teachers build nations." When it comes to human resource development, educators are without a doubt the judges. The cultural, social, and economic advancement of a country is now known to be contingent upon the skilful classroom instruction of outstanding educators. It is necessary to raise the standard of the nation's teacher training program. The fundamental requirements have not yet been met by teacher education in India. However, the majority of instructors lack the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary to evaluate educational strategies, content, organization, etc. To meet the constantly evolving needs of society, the teacher-education program's curriculum needs to be completely redesigned and restructured. Since independence, teacher education initiatives have received a lot of attention from the Indian government. A talented, dedicated instructor with strong professional ethics is what we need right now. Because of this,

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teacher education and teacher educators must thoroughly examine their respective standards. This should be followed by thoughtful planning and deliberation over the arrangement and restructuring of teacher education institutions. This has the ability to improve the overall quality of instruction at every grade level across the nation and to bring about major changes among educators.

Jehangir, F., & Nasreen, A. (2020) investigated that the purpose of this study was to find out how the teacher training program affected the future instructors' ability to teach. Since educators have the power to change people's lives, it is crucial that they are not only instructed on what to teach but also on how to do it. Prioritizing their learning and development in addition to that of the students is essential both before they reach the classroom and throughout their time there. Two hundred aspiring instructors from the University of Punjab participated in the study. The mean score of male and female prospective instructors was measured using the independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA. The majority of aspiring teachers desire efficient and educational teacher training programs, according to the research's findings.Prospective teachers demonstrated superior communication abilities, planning and preparation of the material taught, use of A.V. aids, and in-class interaction and management. Additionally, aspiring educators expressed dissatisfaction with the teacher preparation program.

Mandal, S. (2018) studied that this article's goal is to go over and explain the broad framework of competencies for teachers. Field competencies, research competencies, curriculum competencies, lifelong learning competencies, sociocultural competencies, emotional competencies, communication competencies, information and communication technologies (ICT) competencies, and environmental competencies are the nine dimensions that comprise the general framework for teacher competencies. In addition to supporting professional development and curriculum studies, teachers' skills have an impact on their values, behaviours, communication, goals, and practices in the classroom. Therefore, it is crucial to talk about how teachers might enhance the teaching-learning process in the classroom. Examining the competencies of the modern teacher is the main goal of this study. We looked into the following topics in order to comprehend 21st-century instructional skills: students' abilities, instructors' professional development levels, teachers' pedagogical cultures, pedagogical innovations, and 21st-century teaching competencies.

Kumar, P., & Azad, S. (2016) examined that the quality of instructors determines the effectiveness of education, which is the key to any country's progress. Learner achievement and high-quality education are attributed to the knowledge, commitment, quality, professional commitment, and motivation of educators. Today, governments all around the world face a significant issue in producing such instructors. Given the ever-growing body of knowledge, new pedagogical and psychological theories, philosophy, sociology, and globalization have made teaching more difficult. Today's teacher education programs need to be creative and well-planned. Today, teacher education programs need to be examined, analyzed, revised, reconsidered, and refocused. Improving teacher education is a three-pronged task: it is a research problem involving educational issues, concerns, questions, and conditions; it is a challenge for every country to produce teachers who are effective and well-prepared; and it is a concern for declining values and questions about the purpose and goals of education for society. The teacher education curriculum and regulations in India have undergone a paradigm shift in recent years as a result of the reforming and restructuring process, as well as the influence of various policy papers and documents such as the Kothari Commission Report (1964–66), the Acharya Rammurti Samiti Report (1990), the National Knowledge Commission Report, the NCF (2005), the NCTE regulations (2009), the Right to Education Act (2009), the NCTEF (2010), and others. Yet, there have also been some challenges, such as the updated curriculum, the length and caliber of the internship, in-service teacher education, the absence of practical components, and the questionable nature of distant learning for teacher education. This essay discusses a few regulations, issues, and recommendations regarding teacher preparation.

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Methodology

In order to study the model classroom and its practice in teacher education in the present digital era, this qualitative study uses a theoretical methodology. It focuses on the guidelines of NCTE and NEP 2020 to support the importance of model classroom practices in teacher education.

The data was collected through the process of:

1. **Literature Review:** to study the previous work related to teacher education, training of teachers, and competencies of prospective teachers.

2. **Analysis of Document:** To study the different challenges for implementing model classroom practices in teacher education in the present digital era.

A Model Classroom

A well-organized, excellent learning environment that promotes the ideal teaching and learning methods is referred to as a model classroom. Teachers, administrators, or prospective teachers can use it as a demonstration area to observe or learn about effective instructional methods, classroom management practices, and student engagement strategies. It makes teaching learning more learner-centric (such as considering the needs of students, active participation of learners, discussions, project work, etc.) than teacher-centric (authority of a teacher, active engagement of teacher, delivering lectures, demonstration practices, etc.).

The following could be important traits of a model classroom:

➤ Effective teaching techniques are one of the features of a model classroom, which makes teaching and learning interactive, creative, and productive that enhances the learning experience and engagement of students. Collaborative work, discussions, or hands-on activities, etc., are examples of interactive teaching techniques.

➤ Classroom management, an effective learning environment, or a well-organised classroom always encourages a teacher in order to adapt and evaluate the learning goals. He/she is able to provide timely feedback to the students in light of learning goals and learning outcomes.

➤ Active engagement learning and individualised instruction are the key components of a model classroom. Individualized instruction or personalized instruction means those instructions that suit the different needs of all students. The learners should actively participate in the teaching-learning process.

➤ Integration of technology: Such as the use of digital resources to improve instruction. The use of multimedia, digital tools and devices, and ICT in the teaching-learning process makes learning engaging, effective, and interactive because it is based on a multisensory approach.

➤ Using inclusive methods or assistive techniques means meeting the needs of differently abled students.

Implementing these practices effectively can create a dynamic and supportive learning environment where students are more likely to succeed. In a nutshell, a model classroom is not just a classroom; rather, it includes all those teaching-learning practices and strategies that promote student involvement.

1. Latest Education Policy 'NEP 2020' also Emphasis on Model Classroom

"It's true that the rapidly transforming surroundings and career opportunities make it more significant than ever for students to study—and, especially, to learn how to learn. Accordingly, education needs to shift away from content and towards teaching students how to think critically, solve challenges, be creative and multidisciplinary, and innovate, adapt, and incorporate in emerging knowledge in domains that are new and evolving. To make education more realistic, comprehensive, integrated, inquiry-driven, discovery-orientated, learner-centred, discussion-based, flexible, and, of course, interesting, pedagogy must change." [para. 04, page no. 03]

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"Key thoughts, ideas, applications, and problem-solving will be the main topics of the required information. Questions will be encouraged, and classes are expected to feature more enjoyable, imaginative, cooperative, and inquiry-based tasks for students to learn more deeply and through experience. Teaching and learning will be carried out in an easier and more engaging manner." [para. 03, page no. 12]

"Experiential learning will be implemented at every level, including hands-on learning, education including the arts and sports, and pedagogy based on storytelling, among other aspects, as expected practice in each topic and with explorations into the correlations between various subjects. Classroom interactions will shift to skill-based learning and teaching in order to reduce the achievement gap in learning outcomes." [para. 04, page no. 12]

Model Classroom Practices in Teacher Education

1. Teacher Education

➢ The **National Council for Teacher Education** has defined teacher education programs as "In addition to non-formal education, part-time education, adult education, and distance (correspondence) education courses, teacher education programs also include research and training of individuals to prepare them to teach at the pre-primary, primary, secondary, and senior secondary stages in schools."

➢ **Internship:** The wide curriculum area of 'Engagement with the Field" would include school internships, which would be intended to promote the growth of a wide range of viewpoints, professional skills, and teaching aptitudes and sensibilities. The B.Ed. curriculum should foster ongoing interaction with students and the school (such as participating in rigorous and ongoing evaluation for learning), thereby establishing a collaboration all year round with nearby schools. Student teachers will be prepared for the different needs of students in classrooms. Four weeks of these events will be planned during the first year of the course."[NCTE Regulations, 2014; Appendix 4]

In teacher education, "model classroom practices" refer to the methods, approaches, and settings that take place in teacher preparation programs to assist prospective teachers in strengthening their ability to teach. These methods, which are frequently used in simulated or real-life classroom environments, give future teachers hands-on experience, guidance, and feedback.

Thus, we cannot neglect the internship part in the teacher education program. In order to connect theory with practice, internships are essential in teacher education programs. Through practical experience, it enables future educators to implement their pedagogical expertise in real classroom environments. As they adjust to various learning needs, trainees learn critical skills including lesson planning, classroom management, and effective communication. Guidance during internships promotes confidence and professional development. By strengthening their skill and dedication to promoting high-quality education, this immersion experience prepares prospective teachers for the rigorous requirements of the teaching profession.

2. Key elements of model classroom practices in teacher education include the following:

2.1. Active Learning Techniques

➢ **Collaborative Learning Engagement:** In order to show how they would interact with students in the classroom, teacher candidates often participate in group projects, case studies, and peer discussions. Through Problem-Based Learning (PBL), teachers who want to teach are encouraged to go through real-world teaching challenges which help them develop their critical thinking and decision-making abilities.

2.2. Approaches for Classroom Management

➢ **Support for Positive Attitude:** Future educators are taught techniques for managing a learning environment and encouraging positive behaviour, including behavioural modification, rewards and punishments, and defined rule-setting.

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2.3   Differentiated Instruction

➢   **Adapting to Diverse Learners:** Teacher candidates receive training on how to adjust lessons to suit the diverse learning styles, aptitudes, and interests of their pupils. This involves the use of guidance, flexible grouping, and structured assignments. Through inclusive education, aspiring educators gain knowledge about how to successfully integrate students with disabilities.

2.4   The Use of Reflective Practice

➢   **Self-Assessment and Feedback:** In order to get better, teachers-in-training are encouraged to analyze their own methods, evaluate their success, and get feedback from peers and mentors.

2.5   Technology Integration

➢   **EdTech Tools:** Prospective teachers receive training on how to use interactive platforms, learning management systems, and digital assessment tools to improve instruction.

➢   **Blended Learning:** Future educators have been provided to use digital resources to enhance in-person instruction through the integration of both virtual and physical learning experiences.

➢   **Virtual Learning Environment:** In teacher education, virtual learning environments provide adaptable and easily available professional development platforms. They promote digital literacy and innovative pedagogy by facilitating interactive learning, teamwork, and real-time feedback. Future teachers are offered the required resources by the virtual learning environment to effectively communicate and instruct in today's increasingly digital classroom environment.

2.6   Formative and Summative Assessment

➢   **Student-Centred Assessment:** Both formative (continuing) and summative (final) assessments are used to teach teacher candidates how to evaluate students, making sure that the assessments are in accordance with instructional strategies and learning objectives.

2.7   Supervised Practice and Training

➢   **Action Research:** To further develop their methods based on data, aspiring educators might take part in action research projects that examine teaching practices in their own classrooms.

2.8   Professional Collaboration

➢   **Team-Based Teaching:** Aspiring educators work together with peers to solve problems, plan together, and teach together. This enables them to collaborate professionally in authentic learning environments.

➢   **Interacting with the School Community:** In order to promote student achievement, prospective teachers are taught the value of collaborating with families, administrators, and community members.

These model practices are intended to support aspiring teachers in acquiring the thoughtful and adaptable mentality necessary for continuous professional growth in addition to their professional skills.

3.   'NEP 2020' represents the above points in this way

"In order to develop a group of educators who will inspire the next generation, teacher education is essential. The process of preparing teachers involves developing different opinions and knowledge, cultivating values and attitudes, and enhancing skills under the most appropriate guidance. In addition to being knowledgeable about the most recent developments in education and pedagogy, teachers must have an excellent basis in Indian values, languages, knowledge, ethos, and traditions, particularly tribal traditions."[para. 01, page no. 42]

"Training in both tried-and-true and innovative pedagogical approaches will be part of every B.Ed. program. These include learner-centred and collaborative learning, multi-level teaching and assessment, teaching children with disabilities, teaching children with special interests or talents, and integrating educational technology." [para no. 04, page no. 23]

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"**Teacher incentives and training:** Teachers will receive comprehensive training in learner-centric pedagogy as well as how to use online teaching platforms and tools to become skilled online content providers. The teacher's responsibility in encouraging students to actively engage with the material and with one another will be emphasized." [para no. 08, page no. 59]

Model Classroom Practice in Teacher Education: Implementation Challenges in the Digital Era

The growing demand for technology in teacher education raises a number of challenges with regards to performing model classroom practices. From my perspective, these key challenges are:

1. Integration of Technology in Teaching and Learning

In the digital age, it might be difficult for many teacher education courses to ensure that incoming teachers are not only technologically proficient but also skilled at using digital resources to improve instruction meaning that the prospective teachers are not able to use digital tools, multimedia devices, or online platforms in the teaching-learning process. They don't have sufficient knowledge related to CAI, LMS, etc. They follow a teacher-centred or traditional approach in comparison to a learner-centred or digital approach in their teaching-learning process.

"The inadequate use of technology in teacher education is a serious issue. In a time when digital literacy is essential, many Indian teacher preparation programs fall behind in using innovative instructional materials and techniques. The general growth of the educational system is hampered by the growing divide between traditional teaching methods and contemporary technology developments."   *Singh, R. J. (2023)*

Suggestion: Prospective teachers need a new set of skills to enhance their technological abilities for improving their teaching practice. It simply means that teacher educators should focus on digital competencies or digital pedagogy competencies. Digital pedagogies that combine traditional teaching methods with technology-based strategies, for example, using Learning Management Systems (LMS) for collaborative projects, incorporating virtual reality (VR) or simulations for practice, or using educational software to model personalized learning strategies.

2. Access and Equity in Digital Resources

There is often a significant disparity in access to technology, both for prospective teachers and their students. The access to digital resources is not available for all the prospective teachers in teacher education institutions. Many researchers studied that in rural areas a number of institutions are not able to provide the knowledge and training related to technology to their students, the main cause of this being a lack of resources. It simply means there is a lack of funds, digital infrastructure, digital tools and devices, and, most importantly, trained and skilful teachers. For imparting knowledge, they still highly rely on traditional resources. This digital divide is one of the issues of the teacher education program.

Suggestion: Teacher education programs need to address equity issues by providing access to technology and ensuring that all prospective teachers have the opportunity to work with a variety of digital tools. The government should also provide enough funds to teacher education institutions in order to arrange digital tools and devices, digital infrastructure, and trained teachers. The tools and devices should be user-friendly. The teachers should be capable of adapting this.

3. Preparation for Diverse Student Needs

There is a need for inclusion or e-inclusion in the education sector. E inclusion means using those technologies that are bridging the gap between technologies and the special needs of learners. In order to include all the students in the teaching-learning process, it is required to use those methods, approaches, and resources that suit the different learning needs of all students, varying levels of technological proficiency,

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special educational needs, and cultural backgrounds. But the prospective teachers are not trained enough; they still follow a one-size-fits-all approach.

Suggestion: In teacher education, model classrooms should concentrate on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles so that aspiring teachers can use digital resources to develop flexible classes that cater to the necessities of all students, which makes their teaching inclusive and accessible for all students regardless of their abilities or disabilities. Technology-enhanced personalised learning should be an essential element of training that addresses diversified learning styles. They should be trained to adapt multimedia-based teaching and learning. Multimedia elements (videos, audio recordings, images, animations, graphs, and flow charts) help them to present the same content in a variety of formats. This caters to the different learning styles, ultimately resulting in personalized learning.

4. Pedagogical Shifts and Resistance to Change

Despite the fact technology is significant, some teacher educators and aspiring educators might find it uninteresting to adopt technological innovations. They neither have a positive outlook towards technology nor do they appreciate the new innovations. They feel that it makes teaching and learning more complex and challenging for both teachers and learners. They also have a misconception that using technology affects their thinking ability or make them a slave to technology, means that technology directs or guides them.

Suggestion: The use of digital tools in pedagogy should be demonstrated by teacher education programs, not as a supplement but as an integral part of pedagogy. Teachers are required to set an example by integrating technology into their lessons and reflecting on how it may enhance both teaching methods and student results. They should have a positive outlook towards technology and adapt it as the needs of the present scenario.

5. Professional Development and Continuous Learning

We live in the digital era; therefore, digital platforms and continuous ICT-based educational initiatives are necessary to meet the current and future challenges in providing quality education for all students, so our education system needs alternative modes of quality education. Technology is constantly evolving, and educators must stay up-to-date with the latest tools and pedagogies. However, prospective teachers often receive limited opportunities for sustained professional development, ongoing training, and continuing improvements.

Suggestion: Continuous professional development should be a key component of teacher education programs, enabling access to conferences, webinars, workshops, and cooperative online communities on an ongoing basis. After students join the workforce, this can assist trainers in keeping up to date with evolving technological innovations and pedagogies.

6. Ethical Issues and Digital Citizenship

The value of ethical concerns about data privacy, digital safety, and mindful internet use rises as digital tools occupy the centre spot in classrooms because there is a lack of humanistic or value-based education. Nowadays students are anxious, depressed, impatient, or face a lot of psychological problems. It is the responsibility of teacher educators to enable future teachers to deal with these challenging circumstances in their own classrooms.

Suggestion: It is required that teacher education programs include guidance on the ethics of digital citizenship. This involves directing aspiring educators to set an example of acceptable digital behaviour for their students in addition to teaching them how to safely protect student information and create secure online environments. Teacher educators should be capable of guiding their students, and give them appropriate suggestions so that they are able to tackle the challenges and hurdles in their own life. The solutions to these challenges should be value-based and accepted; they should not harm themselves and the other ones.

7. Focusing on the theoretical aspect more than the practical aspect

In teacher education institutes, the focus is still more on theoretical aspects. Subjects like ICT, work experience, and communication skills are taught theoretically rather than giving them practical knowledge.

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Most importantly, the internship of prospective teachers is not done in an effective manner. Observation of the classroom and school activities is not enough for their professional growth and development.

Similarly, it is not enough that they are aware of technology, digital literacy, digital pedagogy, and virtual simulations, but it is also important that they know how to incorporate all these technological advances in the teaching-learning process.

Suggestion: A solution for the lack of practical aspects could be that students should be provided real-life experiences along with practical knowledge. Practical subjects should be taught practically.

In an internship, prospective teachers connect themselves with the students and school. Apart from teaching, they should also actively engage in other activities such as the organization of co-curricular activities, maintaining the record of students, and involvement in the evaluation process. The teachers should be aware of them or prepare them in such a manner that they can handle the learning situation in an effective manner. They should be aware of the implementation of new techniques and innovative pedagogical approaches. They should live the life of a school teacher. They should be aware of the job challenges. They should assist the school teachers in their work. In short, they should be treated as an assistant teacher.

"The goal of teacher education should now be to provide student teachers with the necessary knowledge and abilities to use and integrate the right technology in an appropriate way. Every educator has a responsibility to successfully integrate technology, pedagogy, and subject-area material into their lessons."

Dangwal, K. L., & Srivastava, S. (2016)

8.   There is also a clash of ideologies between teachers and students

There are some teachers who are not efficient with technology, and students are unwilling to cooperate with them. The same is the case with students; there are students who are tech-savvy in nature, and teachers don't want to appreciate them.

Suggestion: Short-term and evening courses should be provided to in-service teachers to make them aware of new trends in the education sector. Prospective teachers should also develop an empathetic attitude towards teachers.

CONCLUSION

Model classroom practices serve as the core requirement for teacher education to develop educator readiness toward digital accomplishments. Adopting new teaching practices requires multiple issues to be resolved, which include equitable technology access as well as digital literacy integration and continuous professional development alongside student diversity understanding and sustainable management and technology acceptance promotion and future teacher mentorship. The training of aspiring teachers should focus on building their digital teaching abilities by adopting inclusive, flexible strategies that focus on successful technology use within the classroom environment.

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