

GROWTH OF SELF-FINANCED SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN WEST BENGAL: AN ANALYSIS OF THE PAST DECADES

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ABSTRACT

A drastic increase in the number of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions was observed in the past decades in India. This phenomenon can be attributed to various endogenous and exogenous factors: a fast paced life, competitive attitude, increase in literacy rate, students' interest in teaching etc., and this expansion of self-financing mode of Teacher Educational Institution needs to be analysed critically. In the present treatise, the main focus centres around the rate of increase in the number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal, the factors attributing to this growth, and the quality concerns in those institutions. The present study revealed that in West Bengal, the number of such institutions far exceeds its Government counterpart with a total number of 586 and 47 respectively (up to 255th ERC NCTE Meeting, 30th April - 2nd May, 2018). Among all, the district Murshidabad holds the first rank in comprising the highest number (103) of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions. In West Bengal, the first Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institution was recognised by National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in 2005. The growth of such institutions in West Bengal can be divided into two distinct phases: one during 2007-2009 and another during 2012-2018 with a major decline during 2010-2011. Between 2005 and 2018, the maximum number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions (188) got their recognition from NCTE in the year 2017. Among the five administrative divisions of the State, the growth of Self-Financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions of Malda division has been more pronounced than any other divisions, particularly during 2016-2017. An analysis of the growth also brings a major concern into focus that the quantitative growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions is not always consistent with the maintenance of quality. The present treatise will provide us the baseline data which will be helpful in understanding the nature of the challenges ahead in the field of teacher education. So, a more intensive study in this arena with planned implementation strategy may bring about a much needed balance between qualitative and quantitative expansion of these teacher education institutions.

KEYWORDS: self-financing, secondary teacher education institutions, growth, quality, quantity

INTRODUCTION

The present day education system is all about providing quality education, making students an effective member of the society, and giving them the scope of a good career prospect. In India, besides other professions, teaching in schools is also a traditionally preferred profession opted by a number of people since long due to its extreme academic nature; it is always considered as a highly prestigious profession in the society. According to the recent trend, the number of students willing to pursue teaching as a career is rising day by day due to the factors like high literacy rate, Government policies on education, establishment of new schools, revision of salaries of the teachers, recognition and appreciation by the society and so forth. With this, the demand for qualified and trained teachers has also been continuously increasing, which is in turn increasing the demand of different Teacher Education Programmes (Paul & Mondal, 2012) and simultaneously stimulating the growth of Teacher Education Institutions throughout the country. However, it is becoming difficult for the Government alone to provide the necessary resources and infrastructure required to compete with the growing demand of Teacher Education Institutions. Therefore, it is seen that in the last decade there has been an exceptional growth in the number of privately managed and Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions to fill up this gap. Self-financing in the field of teacher education has now

become a very common and widely accepted trend all over the country. It helps to accumulate more private investment to establish a number of new Teacher Education Institutions.

PRIVATIZATION IN EDUCATION

In India, education is provided by both public and private sectors across all three levels- Central, State and Local. The educational scenario of India is spectacularly vast and public investment has a huge role to play in the smooth functioning of a considerable amount of educational institutions. Previously the education system of India was seen to be primarily dependent on public investment. The past few decades, however, saw non-public or private funding taking the forefront in terms of investment in education. A rapid growth of private-funded educational institutions is taking place in all stages starting from pre-primary education up to higher education. In India, commercialization, industrialization and globalization together play a major role in this growth and increase in the number of educational institutions. The resource crunch is seen to create a big problem, and from time to time different committees and commissions have given suggestions to the educational institutions for the acquirement of funds and resources on their own. For example, the "Report of the CABE committee on Gnanam Committee Report" (1992) stated with regard to funds in the university that "it will not be possible for the State Governments to find adequate resource, to create endowment funds for each university. Universities however should make efforts to raise own resources but it must be ensured that there are no conditions attached like preference in admission etc." In another case, "A policy framework for reforms in education" (2000) stated about accepting private fund that "it would give the university opportunities to attract additional funds for teaching and research thereby facilitating financial autonomy, access to latest technology, improved employment prospects for students, continuous up-gradation and adaptation of curriculum and improved motivation in students". So, apparently it can be realised that there are some benefits which can be extracted from the privatization of educational system in India. Privatization on one hand shares the financial burden; on the other hand, it makes the system more cost-effective and competitive (Mohanty, 2005). Self-financing mode of education is found appropriate in this regard to run the institutions smoothly without consuming the financial resources of the Government.

MEANING AND NATURE OF SELF-FINANCED EDUCATION

Self-financed education today is regarded as a major contributor in changing both the educational and economic picture of a country like India. It is considered as an emerging viewpoint in liberal perspective in which the responsibility of funding education falls upon the parents and the students (Bhushan, 2008). In this context, Self-financed institutions are those which are promoted and managed by single individual, a group of individuals or corporates (Shankararaman, 2012). Here, the funds are arranged by them (fees paid by the students and private financing from other sources such as a corporate house), followed by obtaining affiliations from respective authorities. Then the faculties are appointed by them and the salaries are fixed. Finally, the admission procedure of the students in those institutions is also declared by them following the Government-issued orders and guidelines in those aspects. They normally do not receive any financial aid from the Central or State Government. They also do not get any financial grants from the UGC nor do they get any benefits from UGC (Swara, 2012). This method of financing can be seen as a more sustainable and equitable method than public or Government financing of education. In Self-financing mode, an institution is made increasingly to rely upon its 'own' resources in the form of fees, donations, endowments etc., rather than the financial aid from the Government (Sivasankaran, 2004).

The ever increasing number of students seeking higher education and rise in institutions and Universities as a result places unbearable financial burden on the Central and State Governments. Therefore, this explicit financial difficulties faced by the Government in bearing the burden of the colossal system of higher education and subsequently, a continuous search for alternatives to public financing of education can be considered altogether as the origin of the idea of privatization or Self-financing of higher education (Mishra, 2003; Sivasankaran, 2004). School education system is also rapidly accepting this shift of ever increasing financial burden on Self-financing mode of schooling. The private sector is permitted to start unaided Self-financed schools without putting any financial burden on the Government (Sivasankaran, 2004). Therefore, Self-financing mode of education, as a whole, is now becoming a reality which cannot be assumed away (Bhushan, 2008). This has given a boost to the increase in the number of Self-financed institutions from school education up to college and university education (i.e. higher education) in different fields like medical, engineering, management, information technology, computer applications etc.

SELF-FINANCING IN THE FIELD OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Like others, the same situation can also be assumed in case of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions. Teacher education in India primarily includes Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Institutions (popularly known as D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. colleges); and in both the cases there is always a crisis of adequate public-funded i.e. Government-financed Teacher Education Institutions in the Indian States. After the declaration of National Council for Teacher Education Regulations, 2014, making the teacher education programmes (D.El.Ed. and B.Ed.) as a mandatory qualification for the school teachers of primary, secondary and higher secondary schools, it has now become essential to maintain the supply of adequate qualified and trained teachers in those schools. At present, the Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions are playing the key role in maintaining that steady supply of trained teachers in the schools. Therefore, like any other level of educational system, there is a constant need of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions in India. In reality, privatization and Self-financing has led to the development of numerous Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions in different parts of the country including West Bengal especially in the last decade.

The establishment of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions offers some noteworthy advantages which are as follows:

- **Teacher Education Institutions in all the corners of the state:** Increase in the number of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions implies proper distribution of institutions in various districts of different States of India. This makes the available teacher education programmes accessible to a large number of aspiring students. It is impossible for the Government-financed Teacher Education Institutions to reach such a large crowd by themselves.
- **Scope of admission:** Government-financed Teacher Education Institutions fail to provide adequate number of seats when compared to the huge number of prospective teachers seeking admission because in almost all the States presently they are less in number in comparison to the Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions.
- **Accessible education:** Self-financing mode has made teacher education accessible to many students. In the absence of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions, previously the students had access to minimum number of seats available in the Government-financed Teacher Education Institutions. But now, with the availability of adequate number of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions, students can get admission in those institutions if they have the financial stability to pursue their preferred teacher education programmes (D.El.Ed., B.Ed. etc.).
- **Liberty to choose institutions:** With a number of Self-financed Teacher Education institutions existing in different districts of the Indian States, students get an opportunity to choose institutions as per their needs and requirements. They enjoy the liberty to select those Teacher Education Institutions which are close to their residence, thereby avoiding a long journey or staying at hostels.
- **Releasing burden of Government:** It is a known fact that due to the budgetary constraints, it is not always easy for the Government to allot adequate financing towards higher education. Therefore they look for different avenues of private investment. The Self-financing form of education indirectly helps the Government to release some of its financial burdens.
- **Superior learning environment:** The Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions are run by private management and the fund they generate is substantially huge and quick due to its Self-financing nature. Therefore if the management desires to develop a better teaching-learning environment for the students by providing better infrastructure including smart classrooms, internet facilities, adequate teaching-learning resources etc., they can do so at their own discretion.
- **Quick and easy decision making:** The Teacher Education Institutions run through self-financing mode may take their institutional decisions quickly on their own as they need no prior approval or face permission related issues from the controlling authority in most cases like Government institutions.

- **Organisational control:** It is easy for the Self-financed institutions to establish and maintain authority over and throughout the institution. This allows the management to have quick feedback regarding different functional aspects and also helps in the fulfilment of the objectives of an institution and makes it more efficient.
- **Steady supply of trained teachers:** The huge numbers of private or Self-financed schools that have developed and still emerging today along with Government-financed schools need a constant supply of trained teachers. The Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions are contributing in this regard in a major way. Because of them, the regular supply of trained teachers in those schools has become possible.
- **More employment in Teacher Education Institutions:** Increase in the number of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions is directly proportional to the increase in the rate of employment of the teacher educators in those institutions. Any candidate having proper qualification as per latest NCTE Regulations, 2014 can get a job as a teacher educator in the available Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions which directly helps in generation of employment.

The present paper focuses on the study of the growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions (i.e. B.Ed. colleges) in West Bengal starting from 2005 up to 2018. According to U-DISE 2015-16, there are 95736 secondary and higher secondary schools in West Bengal. Following the recent order of NCTE setting the B.Ed. programme as mandatory qualification for the persons to be recruited as teachers of such schools (NCTE, 2014), there is an urgent need to increase the number of Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in the State so that a continuous supply of qualified and trained teachers in those schools can be provided. In West Bengal, there are many Government-financed Teacher Education Institutions whose aim is to provide quality education to the prospective teachers. These include Government and Government-aided B.Ed. Colleges, University B.Ed. Departments, B.Ed. Departments in General degree Colleges and University College. But keeping in view the inadequate number of those Government-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions comparing to the demand, the role of private investment and Self-financing mode of teacher education were felt to be indispensable. The establishment of such a large number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in almost all the districts of West Bengal and their recognition by NCTE is the result of that urgent and immediate requirement.

GOVERNMENT-FINANCED AND SELF-FINANCED SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN WEST BENGAL

Presently, there are as many as 633 Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal across different districts (data based on the list of recognized Teacher Education Institutions, Eastern Region, NCTE; updated up to 255th ERC Meeting held on 30th April to 2nd May, 2018). Of these, 47 (7.42%) are Government-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions including Government and Government-aided B.Ed. Colleges, University B.Ed. Departments, B.Ed. Departments in General degree Colleges and University College. Rest 586 (92.58%) Secondary Teacher Education Institutions are Self-financed (Fig. 1). Both the categories of Institutions are simultaneously operating to provide education and training of the prospective teachers in the State.

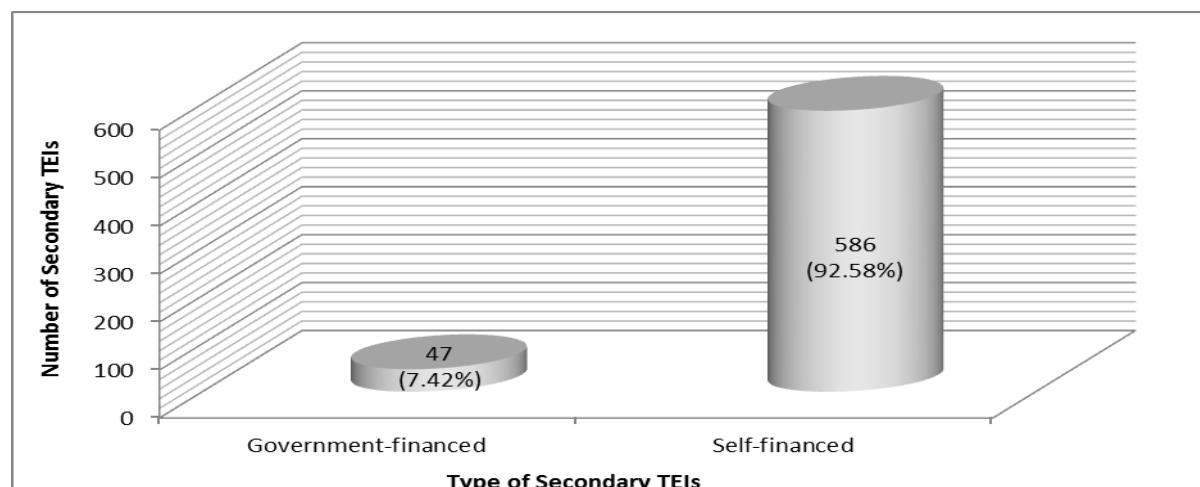


Fig. 1: Total number and percentage of Government-financed and Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal

DISTRIBUTION OF SELF-FINANCED SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN DIFFERENT DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL

At present, there are 23 districts in West Bengal (Fig. 2). The present distribution of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions is not homogeneous across all the districts; in some districts the percentage of occurrence is very high (like Murshidabad, Birbhum, Nadia etc.), whereas in some other districts the percentage is very low (like Jhargram, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Cooch Behar etc.). Only the newly formed Kalimpong district has no Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institution. Among all, Murshidabad district ranks first in West Bengal in terms of number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions (103). The number and percentage of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in different districts of West Bengal are displayed below (Table 1 & Fig. 3).

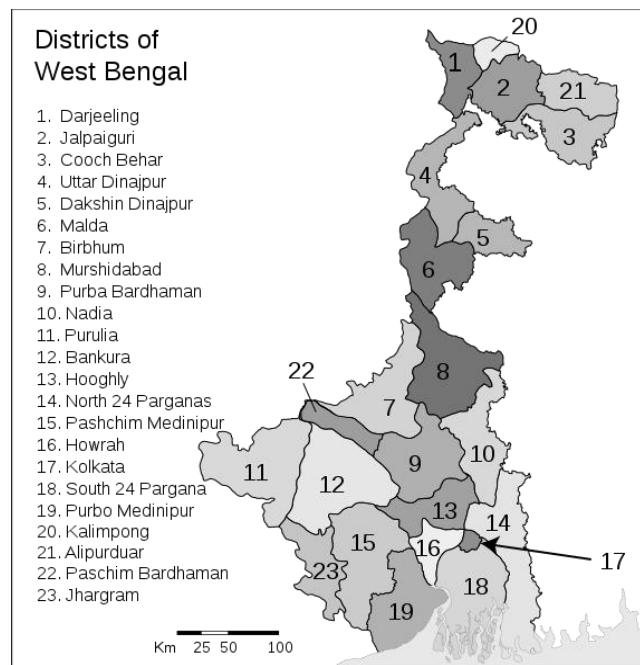


Fig. 2: Districts of West Bengal (Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>)

Table 1: Distribution of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions across different districts of West Bengal

Sl. No.	Name of the District	Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Alipurduar	7	1.19%
2	Cooch Behar	6	1.02%
3	Jalpaiguri	5	0.85%
4	Kalimpong	0	0.00%
5	Darjeeling	6	1.02%
6	Uttar Dinajpur	22	3.75%
7	Dakshin Dinajpur	18	3.07%
8	Malda	33	5.63%
9	Murshidabad	103	17.58%
10	Birbhum	48	8.19%
11	Purba Bardhaman	31	5.29%
12	Paschim Bardhaman	13	2.22%
13	Nadia	49	8.36%
14	Purulia	11	1.88%
15	Bankura	31	5.29%
16	Jhargram	5	0.85%
17	Paschim Medinipur	40	6.83%
18	Purbo Medinipur	33	5.63%
19	Hooghly	29	4.95%
20	Howrah	18	3.07%
21	Kolkata	8	1.37%
22	North 24 Parganas	43	7.34%
23	South 24 Parganas	27	4.61%
TOTAL		586	100.00%

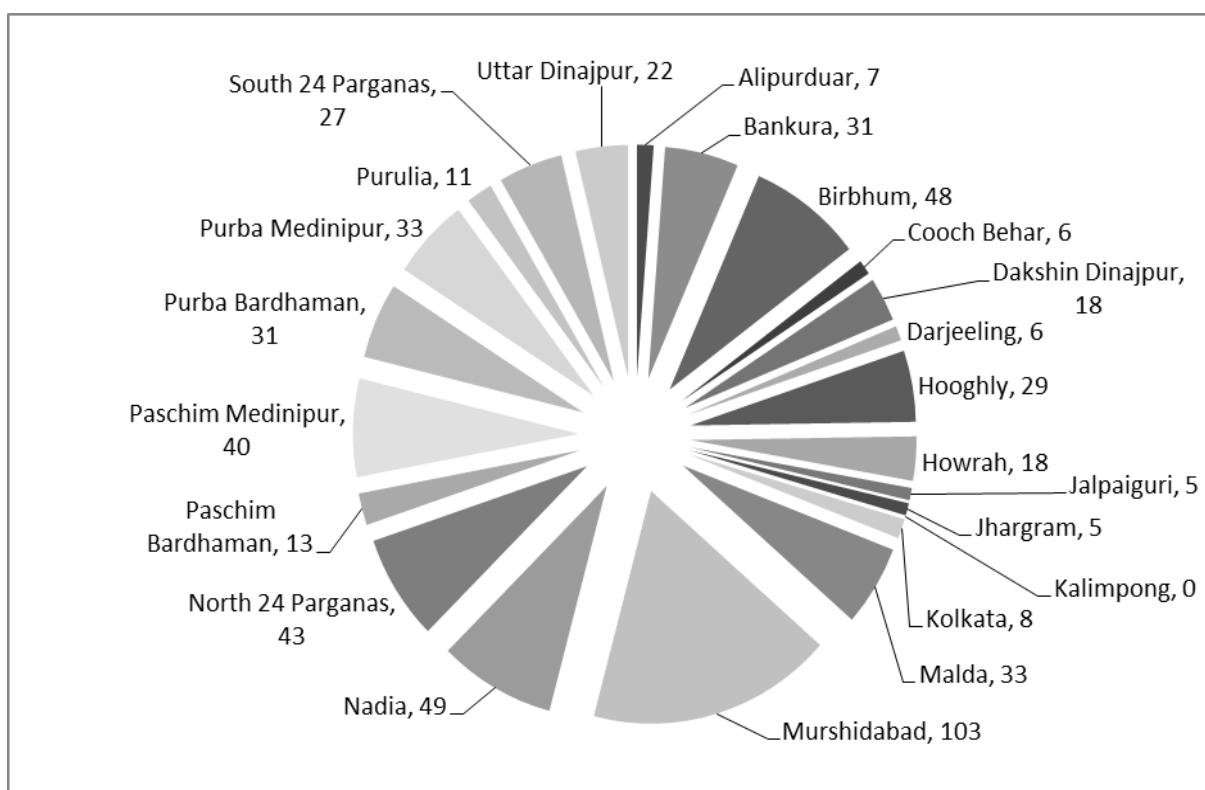


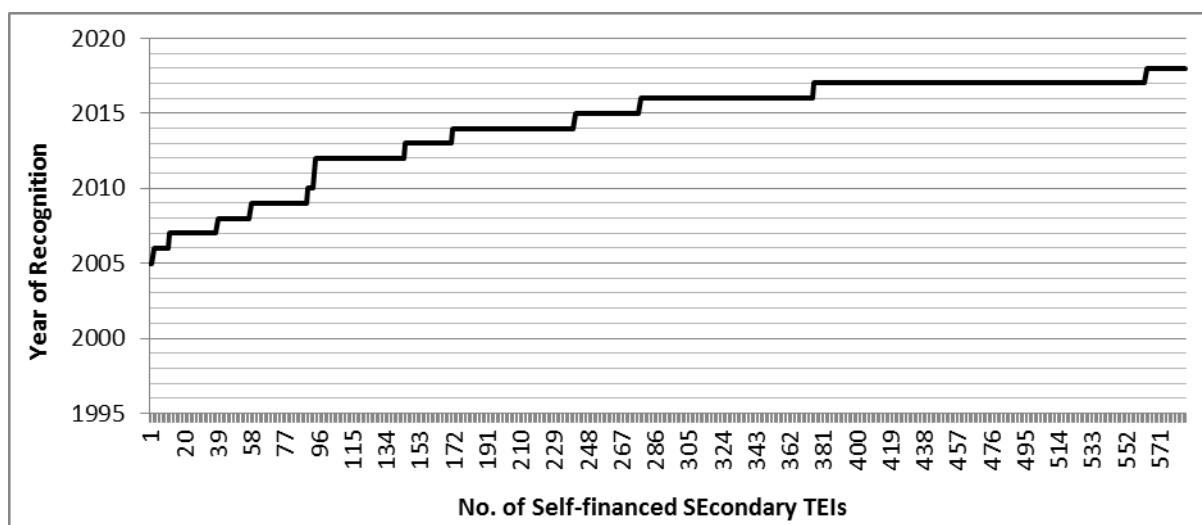
Fig. 3: Number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in different districts of West Bengal

GROWTH OF SELF-FINANCED SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN WEST BENGAL

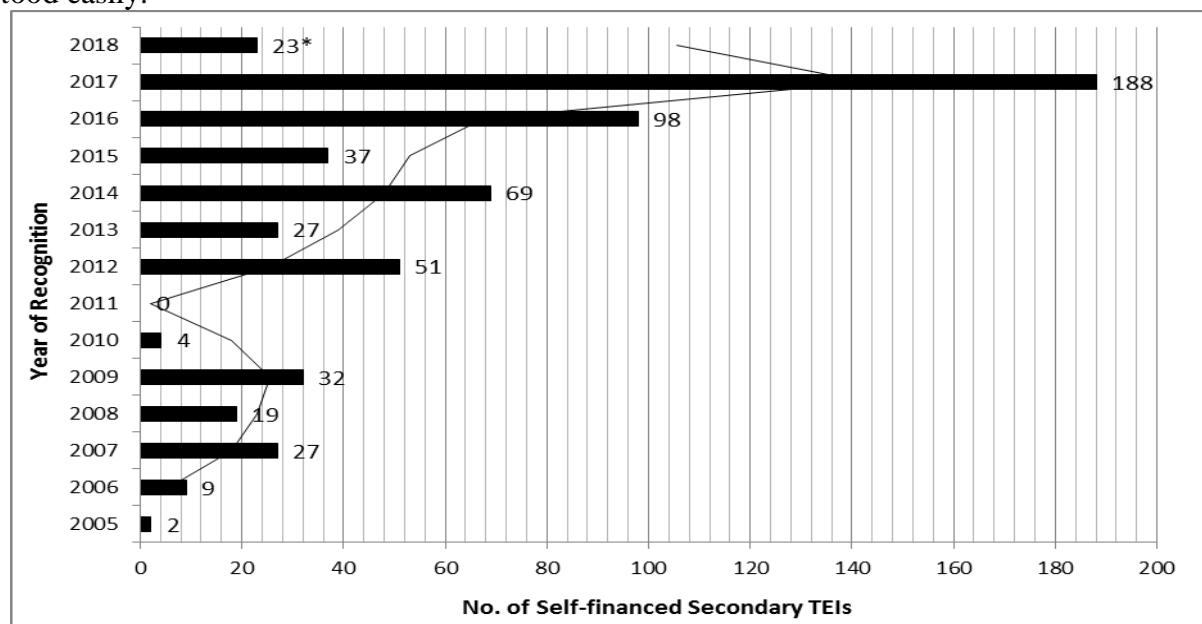
In West Bengal, the Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions were introduced in the year 2005 (Table 2) when NCTE gave recognition to two Secondary Teacher Education Institutions under private management and started operating in Self-financing mode namely Mohanananda College, Durgapur and Institute of Education, Haldia. In 2006, NCTE recognised another nine Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions to run the B.Ed. programme (Table 2). Since then a steady growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions has been observed (Fig. 3) with NCTE giving recognition to a number of such institutions per year. However, in 2011, no single Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal got recognition from NCTE. Table 2 indicates the number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions recognised each year by NCTE starting from 2005 up to 2018 (list updated up to 255th ERC NCTE Meeting held on 30th April to 2nd May, 2018). Also Fig. 4 indicates the growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal graphically where the gradual increase in number of such institutions in each year (excluding 2011) can be observed.

Table 2: Number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal as per their year of recognition by NCTE (2005-2018*)

Year of Recognition	No. of Institutions recognised by the NCTE in the respective year
2005	2
2006	9
2007	27
2008	19
2009	32
2010	4
2011	0
2012	51
2013	27
2014	69
2015	37
2016	98
2017	188
2018*	23
Total	586

**Fig. 4: Growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal**

While studying the trend and pattern of growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal starting from 2005 up to 2018 (list updated up to 255th ERC NCTE Meeting held on 30th April to 2nd May, 2018), it can be observed that the growth has taken place in two distinct phases: the first one during 2007-2009 and the second one during 2012-2018 with a major decline during 2010-2011. During the first phase i.e. 2007-2009, 78 Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions got their recognition from NCTE, and by 2009, as many as 89 Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions were existing in different districts of West Bengal. Then, during 2010-2011, only 4 Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions got their recognition from NCTE; and as mentioned earlier, in 2011 there was no new recognition for any Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions by NCTE. After that, the span 2012-2018 witnessed another massive influx where a number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions were established in almost all the districts of West Bengal and recognised by NCTE, and started operating to produce trained teachers. As seen from the trend line in Fig 4, the second phase of growth is more extensive than the first phase. During 2016-2017, highest number of recognitions was given; altogether 286 Self-financed secondary teacher education institutions got their recognition from NCTE during this phase of which maximum number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions (188) got recognition in the year 2017. Thus, the final figure now becomes 586 till 255th ERC NCTE Meeting held on 30th April to 2nd May, 2018. From the Fig. 5, the trend of growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal in different years can be understood easily.

**Fig. 5: Trend of year wise growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal**[*List updated up to 255th ERC NCTE Meeting held on 30th April to 2nd May, 2018]

The State of West Bengal is divided into five administrative divisions namely: Jalpaiguri division (Alipurduar, Cooch Behar, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Kalimpong), Malda division (Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Malda and Murshidabad), Burdwan division (Hooghly, Purba Bardhaman, Paschim Bardhaman and Birbhum), Presidency division (Howrah, Kolkata, Nadia, North 24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas), and Medinipur division (Purba Medinipur, Paschim Medinipur, Jhargram, Purulia and Bankura). Table 3 provides the number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions recognised by NCTE in each year in all the divisions of West Bengal from 2005 up to 2018 (up to 255th ERC NCTE Meeting held on 30th April to 2nd May, 2018). This division-wise study of the growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions indicates that the Malda division has the highest number of institutions and their growth particularly in 2016-2017 has been more pronounced than any other division (Fig. 6). The second highest rank is held by the Presidency division which also shows a high growth particularly in the years 2014, 2016 and 2017 (Fig. 6). On the other hand, the lowest number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions can be witnessed in the Jalpaiguri division where the rate of growth has always been low with only 24 institutions in total up to 2018. In the year 2017, in this division, 10 Institutions were recognised by NCTE which was the highest number of recognition received in a year. The other two divisions namely Burdwan and Medinipur exhibit moderate rate of growth in terms of getting recognition of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions with 121 and 120 Institutions respectively up to 255th ERC NCTE Meeting held on 30th April to 2nd May, 2018.

Table 3: Number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in all the five divisions of West Bengal as per their year of recognition

Year of Recognition	Burdwan Division	Malda Division	Jalpaiguri Division	Presidency Division	Medinipur Division
2005	1	0	0	0	1
2006	0	4	1	3	1
2007	5	7	2	7	6
2008	3	1	1	8	6
2009	10	8	0	8	6
2010	1	2	0	0	1
2011	0	0	0	0	0
2012	12	16	3	15	5
2013	8	11	0	7	1
2014	21	12	2	22	12
2015	11	9	1	8	8
2016	13	32	2	20	31
2017	28	68	10	44	38
2018*	8	6	2	3	4
Total	121	176	24	145	120

* List updated up to 255th ERC NCTE Meeting held on 30th April to 2nd May, 2018

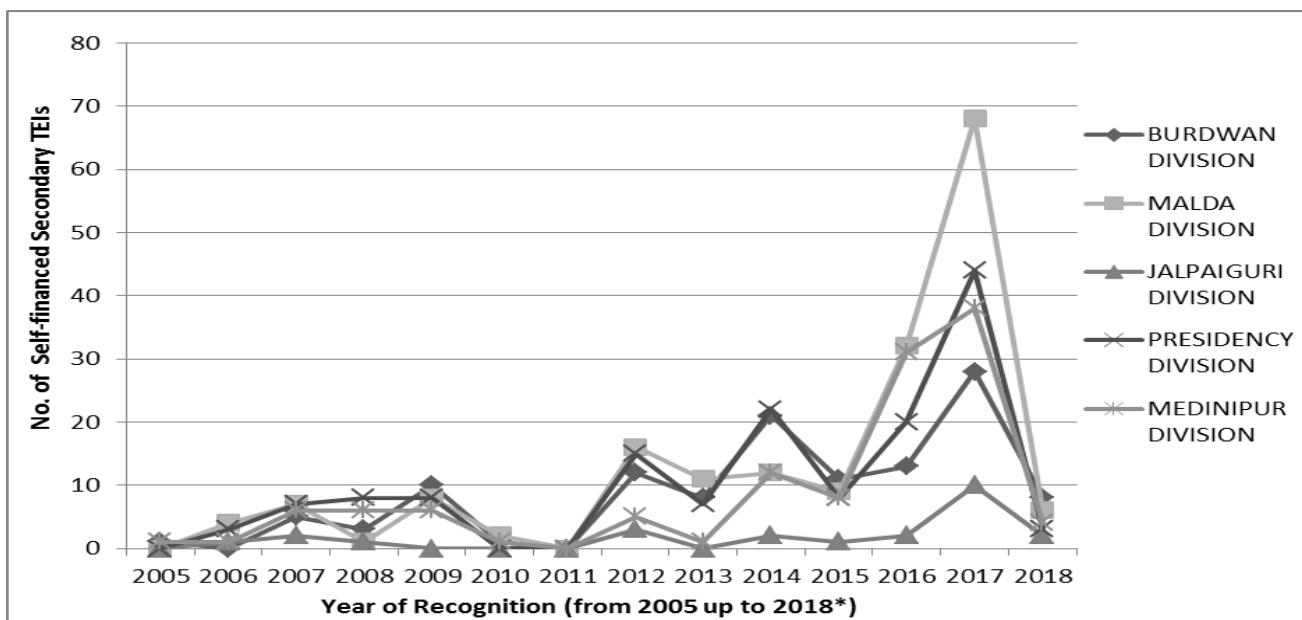


Fig. 6: Comparison of year wise growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in different administrative divisions of West Bengal

[* List updated up to 255th ERC NCTE Meeting held on 30th April to 2nd May, 2018]

FACTORS ATTRIBUTING TO THE GROWTH OF SELF-FINANCED SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN WEST BENGAL

The aforementioned growth of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal is not a random phenomenon. There may be various reasons which have been contributing towards this development are as follows:

- **Literacy:** In West Bengal, the number of children seeking education today is much higher than before. According to the West Bengal population census data (2011), the then literacy rate was 76.26%, whereas in 2001, it was only 68.64%. This indicates that the literacy rate had gone up. This involved development of a large number of schools in the State followed by the need for more trained teachers to teach in those schools. This may be one of the reasons towards expansion of establishment of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions in the State.
- **Students' interest in teaching profession:** The teaching profession has always attracted many students. NCTE has now made B.Ed. degree compulsory for secondary school teachers through its Regulations, 2014. Therefore, the willingness to study B.Ed. programme has increased manifold and hence the number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions has also increased rapidly.
- **Shift in preferences:** Earlier the students were more inclined towards the Government Teacher Education Institutions because they felt more secured but presently the students have shifted their preference towards Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions may be due to the fact that the students of Self-financed institutions are receiving equal opportunities in the field of employment like their Government counterpart.
- **Competition to get a job:** The huge number of the population in West Bengal seeking education has resulted in competition in every field of education including teacher education. People want everything to be quick in order to obtain a degree. The Government-financed Teacher Education Institutions are incapable of providing enrolment to such a huge mass. This has led to the increase in the number of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions.
- **Lack of Government-financed Teacher Education Institutions:** Due to a lack of financial resources, the Government has been unable to develop adequate number of Teacher Education Institutions. Therefore, they alone cannot maintain the supply of trained teachers in the present market of school education system. So, there was always a need for private enterprises to share the burden. This has led to the emergence and development of self-financed secondary teacher education system in West Bengal to meet the demand of adequate trained teachers in schools.
- **Good business:** Since education has become commercialized, private investors are looking to create good profit in the market of education. They have understood that there is a continuous need and demand of providing good educational facilities and it is also a good business opportunity. Teacher Education is one such field where this aspect holds true. It provides a lot of scope for the growth of a good business venture. This is another factor as to why there has been an increase in the number of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal.
- **Increase in private schools:** The number of private schools has been increasing in the past few decades at a huge rate. This has created a huge job opportunity. Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions are using this opportunity to provide the facilities to the aspiring students without having to wait for admission in Government-financed Teacher Education Institutions to complete their B.Ed. programme.
- **Government initiatives:** Government of India in partnership with State Governments initiated different Centrally Sponsored Schemes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) for universalising elementary and secondary education respectively. Under these schemes, to maintain the quality of school education, the schools have to maintain an appropriate number of teachers. So, there is an upsurge in the demand of trained teachers throughout the State stimulating the growth of Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions.

- **Presence of large number of untrained teachers in schools:** In West Bengal, there were approximately 91% trained teachers at both secondary and higher secondary stages up to September, 2010 (MHRD, GOI, 2012). After NCTE's notification (2014) setting B.Ed. degree as a mandatory qualification to teach at secondary and higher secondary stages, there was an urgent need to train the untrained teachers quickly to meet the criteria and also to avoid job loss. This demand was partially satisfied through the Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions and it also can be considered as a factor behind the growth of such institutions.

THE DEMAND OF QUALITY IN SELF-FINANCED SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The above discussion can be said to shed a considerable light on how Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in West Bengal has grown in terms of the quantity. However, the same scenario is sadly yet to match the quality of Self-financing mode of secondary teacher education in West Bengal. In this age of privatization, education has no doubt become commercialized and the self-financing mode of providing education is an outcome of this commercialization. Therefore, even though it has numerous advantages as discussed above, deterioration of the quality aspect has always been a major concern in these Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions due to commercialization. With the increase in the number of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions, the number of trained teachers, aspiring to get teaching jobs in schools, has increased too. But these large numbers of trained teachers are sometimes hardly employable because many of them lack the required skills for proper work (Mishra, 2003). Herein lies the misuse of Self-financing mode of education. If Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions run Teacher Education Programmes as an extension of their business activities involving the concepts of profit and loss, the quality of the prospective teachers produced by them will be very poor. These types of incidents, if they do take place, are quite distressing and demand immediate attention of the Government. As the quality and extent of learners' achievement in school are determined primarily by teachers' competence, sensitivity and motivation (Lal, 2016), utmost care should be taken by the Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions when it comes to maintenance of the quality of training of prospective teachers.

NCTE was given the status of a statutory body in 1995 to achieve planned and coordinated development of the teacher education system throughout the country, and to frame and maintain norms and standards in the teacher education system (Maheshwari, 2009). To assess and subsequently accredit Teacher Education Institutions, NAAC-NCTE had identified six criteria to serve as the basis of its assessment procedures (Pillai, 2009): 1) Curriculum Design and Planning, 2) Curriculum Transaction and Evaluation Research, 3) Development and Extension, 4) Infrastructure and Learning Resources, 5) Student Support and Progression, and 6) Organisation and Management. Recently, NCTE through its 'TeachR' Platform (2017) provided another framework for ranking and accreditation of Teacher Education Institutions with four distinct criteria: 1) Physical assets, 2) Academic assets, 3) Teacher and Learning Quality, and 4) Learning Outcomes. Regular inspection and assessment of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions by concerned authorities following such types of pre-determined criteria will be helpful in maintaining the minimum norms and standards required to ensure quality in those institutions. Some suggestions are generated with respect to the Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in this regard which can be found helpful:

- There should be monitoring, assessment, accreditation and quality assurance of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions by NCTE, affiliating universities and other concerned authorities at regular intervals.
- It is necessary to remove 'mechanical' transaction of curriculum in many Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions. The student-teachers should be provided with proper infrastructural facilities, well-developed library and adequate teaching-learning resources, and their creative aspects should be encouraged more.
- Integration of ICT should be made as per requirement during curriculum transaction to improve the teaching-learning process and to give the student-teachers better learning experiences.
- The Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions should maintain the duration of School Internship strictly with regular supervision and guidance by school teachers and respective teacher educators belonging to different method subjects/groups.
- The Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions should organise seminar, conference, workshop etc. at regular intervals. These programmes are helpful to the student-teachers in understanding different theories, methodologies, Government policies etc. related to their course in diverse ways.

- In Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions, appointments should be given to the 'Quality' teacher educators following some rigorous and democratic selection procedures. A step has already been taken by NCTE by fixing NET or SET as a mandatory qualification to get a job as teacher educator (NCTE, 2017).
- The teacher educators of Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions should be given the scope to attend different continuing professional development programmes regularly as suggested by NCFTE, 2009, so that they can understand various ways and means of curriculum transaction.
- The Self-financed Secondary Teacher Education Institutions should take initiative to launch other teacher education programmes after receiving the necessary permission from the State Government as well as the affiliating bodies, like D.El.Ed., M.Ed., integrated B.A.B.Ed. & B.Sc.B.Ed. etc. as a part of upgradation of the institution which eventually lead to quality enhancement through co-ordination and collaboration among different programmes.

CONCLUSION

Even though the requirement of adequate Teacher Education Institutions have been addressed by bringing the self-financing mode of teacher education into the equation, for the seed to bear fruit it has to be kept in mind that all the objectives of quality of Teacher Education Institutions, accessibility of teacher education, affordability of teacher education programmes and accountability of the teacher educators have to be properly met. The backwardness in teacher education curriculum was removed by NCTE through development of a standard and contemporary teacher education curriculum in form of National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education in 2009 and enhancement of the duration of B.Ed. course by making it a programme of two years duration. The contemporary teacher education programmes now also exhibit some major shifts (e.g. learner centism, active participation of learners, focus on social context, multidisciplinary focus, multiple and divergent exposure etc.) as realised and suggested by NCF, 2005 to keep pace with this rapidly changing school education system. So, it is the balance and the proper integration of various aspects of teacher education which has the power to uphold the future of quality teacher education in India and take it to an altogether new level. The available Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions must play significant role in this case. Being a major and significant fraction of Teacher Education Institutions of West Bengal, the Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions should essentially maintain the basic norms and standards suggested by NCTE/State Government/Affiliating University as it is maintained by a number of the Government-financed and Self-financed Teacher Education Institutions, and this will eventually help to produce better trained teachers and also to maintain their supply in the schools of West Bengal in future.

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