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A study to determine the private cost of students for acquiring secondary teacher education course in Assam, with reference to the Secondary Teacher Education Institutions under Dibrugarh University

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Abstract

Teacher Education is one of the most neglected and challenged sectors among all other education sectors of India in general and particularly in North east India. A person joins the teaching profession only when he is rejected by almost all sectors. One of the main causes of stagnation and dropout of students in secondary sector of Indian education is the teaching by untrained teachers. It is universally accepted that a teacher's personality and professional competence has a direct relation on the growth of young mind. The quality of a particular kind of education is largely dependent on the quality of the teachers. Unfortunately, in Assam the teacher education system is yet to be expanded to adjust with the changing educational need of the society. The curriculum and syllabi review effort being undertaken in the context of child centric, joyful and competency-based teaching especially at Elementary level education has not yet been fully supported by the teacher education programmes. As a result, there is large gap between what is expected and what is achieved at field level. On the other hand, for teaching at Secondary and Sr. Secondary stage the B. Ed or the M. Ed degree has yet not been made compulsory in the state of Assam. As different universities of the state control these teacher training institutions therefore, there is lack of uniformity and continuity in the curriculum and syllabi followed by them. Besides, no visible efforts can be seen for establishing linkage between various teacher education programmes of pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education level. This paper highlights the major findings of an independent research study on the private cost made by the students during the secondary teacher education programme in the secondary teacher education institutions in Assam. The study also highlights the problems faced by the students during the programme.

Key words: Private Cost, Secondary Teacher Education Course, Dibrugarh University.

01. Introduction: Teachers are considered as a key factor in accumulating the human resources of a country. The process of human capital formation in its entire possibilities depends greatly on the ability of the teacher community, specifically the secondary school teachers. Secondary stage of educational system is more crucial among all the stages, because when the children attain secondary stage, they undergo some immediate changes in their developmental life, viz., emotional, physical, moral, social, mental etc. Thus, to study the behavioural changes of secondary school students and provide constructive suggestions to the students, so that they may be able to realize their due positions in society, the teachers must be trained and efficient.

As in other developing countries, India is also facing a population pyramid of younger age group. This means majority of the total population belongs to a younger age group and it constitutes a huge number of secondary school students. So to control and manage this large group of population we must have a sufficient number of trained teachers. Moreover, with the introduction of Sarba Siksha Abhijan in the country in 2001 and Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhijan as a policy initiative in the Twelfth Five Year Plan presently being implemented, it becomes imperative to have a resource pool of trained teachers to undertake this massive enterprise in the field of achieving free and compulsory education for all. To achieve this objective the Secondary Teacher Education courses have been revamped to meet the needs of the times in our country. The significance of Secondary Teacher Education courses has been rightly examined by different Education Commissions of India, especially in the post-Independence era.

The growth of Secondary Teacher Education Institutions in Assam is also indirectly due to the New Economic Policy that was launched in 1991. Under this policy the Government of India started privatization of its major sectors among which Education was also predominant. Due to the removal of restrictions from Indian Economy the Private Sector got encouragement for investments in education and thus, ultimately we have seen the emergence of a large number of private schools, which demand trained teachers for quality education. In response to this demand for quality teachers a large number of Secondary Teacher Education Colleges have been established and almost all are under Private Sector. At present there are altogether forty nine Colleges of Secondary Teacher Education in Assam recognized by National Council of Teacher Education affiliated to Gauhati University, Dibrugarh University and Assam University.

The role played by the cost factor in the development of secondary teacher education needs to be studied because it has other related aspects, like beneficial effects of secondary teacher education courses for a trained teacher, problems of enrolment in secondary teacher education courses, job satisfaction of trained secondary school teachers, attitudinal changes of trained secondary school teachers, employment opportunities, etc. So the study of cost of secondary teacher education courses is considered an urgent need of the present educational set up.

Expenditure on education constitutes an important form of investment in economic development. Investment criteria are therefore quite relevant in determining the amount of content to education. Skills and attitudes pertinent to the promotion of economic development constitute a necessary, though not exclusive, end-product of education and not only the content but also the methodology and the technology of education have to be formulated for achievement of this objective within the educational system. The objective of development of human resources makes education an investment and it is the maximizing of returns from this investment that determines its contribution to the development of human resources and therefore to economic and social growth. So, there is an utmost importance of research studies on cost and investment of different levels of education in developing countries like India.

02. Significance of the Study: Investment in education is a major source of human capital formation in a country. Training for teachers is considered as a vital aspect in accumulating human capital in a country. So, to determine the magnitude of human capital formation it is essential to analyze the cost and benefit of teacher training course. Cost benefit is an integral part of educational planning, programming and budgeting. It is a form of investment appraisal which compares the cost and the benefits of an educational project. The training of teachers is a major area of concern at present, since both pre-service and in-service training of school teachers is extremely inadequate and also poorly managed in most states. Pre-service training needs to be improved and differently regulated in both public and private institutions, while systems for in-service training require

expansion and major reforms that allow for greater flexibility. Teacher Education is one of the major dimensions of present Indian Education system. Due to the growing consciousness regarding quality education among the parents and School Managements the demand of teacher education is rising tremendously. To improve the quality of education, the demand for trained teachers has increased. Trained teachers are more effective in implementation of the course content in actual classroom situation because they are aware about all the dependent and independent variables of classroom teaching. From this view point, for quality education the urgent need of the teacher training course can be visualized. Now, question may arise as to how far the youths are attracted towards the teacher training course? Whether cost of the course or expenditure involved in its transaction is an obstacle for them? What is the reason for the rising trend in the cost of Teacher Education? Why are the B.Ed. aspirants of other states motivated to the colleges of Teacher Education under D.U. for the course? In order to analyze the solutions or answers to these pertinent questions, a research study is an immediate need as it is not easy to answer all these questions.

Research studies in this area of teacher education are also essential in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of Government plans and policies. For instance, if the government wants to offer an incentive to the B.Ed. degree holder teachers, then the unit cost of this Course must be considered. If it is found that, the financial incentive offered by a Government on completion of the teacher-education course is comparatively less than the unit cost of the course, then the teachers may not be motivated towards the course at all. It is thus urgent to study the cost of this course so that the government can implement the scheme of monetary incentive in an effective manner.

A research study on this issue would also contribute to an understanding of the value of teacher education and help in understanding the financial problems plaguing the development of Teacher Education in Assam. In order to ensure that adequate measures can be taken to develop the Secondary Teacher Education course in Assam, especially after the introduction of 6th Pay Commission salaries by the state government, the private colleges have also had to increase the salary of the teacher trainers, and this pay hike has also led to the increase in the cost of teacher education.

03. Title of the Study The Title of the present study is *“A study to determine the private cost of students for acquiring secondary teacher education course in Assam with special reference to the Secondary Teacher Education Institutions under Dibrugarh University”*

04. Definition of Key Terms:

4.1 Cost of Secondary Teacher Education: It refers to a study of the total expenditure incurred by the Colleges of Teacher Education Institutions and its trainees to complete the one year B. Ed. Course under Dibrugarh University. In the study, private cost of students will be studied and analyzed with respect to the objectives of the study.

4.2 Secondary Teacher Education Institutions (B. Ed. Colleges): These institutions refer to Teacher Education Institutions offering the one-year Secondary Teacher Education course, also known as the B.Ed. course under Dibrugarh University.

05. Objectives of the Present Study :

5.1 To determine the private cost of student for acquiring secondary teacher education course under Dibrugarh University.

5.2 To make an assessment of the financial and other problems faced by teacher trainees while undergoing the course.

06. Research Questions

6.1 What is the private cost of teacher trainees in acquiring secondary teacher education?

6.2 What are the problems faced by the teacher trainees in colleges of teacher education?

07. Delimitations of the Study: This study has included only the Secondary Teacher Education Institutions offering Secondary Teacher Education course, or B. Ed. Course under Dibrugarh University. Moreover, the information is provided based on the data within the period of 2009-2011.

08. Methodology:

8.1 Research Method of the study: The researcher used the **survey** and **descriptive method** for this research study as the nature of the data to be collected demands so.

8.2 Population and sample of the study: There were all together 11 Secondary Teacher Education Institutions under Dibrugarh University in the period of 2009-2011, offering the Secondary Teacher Education Course (B. Ed) of one year. To study the cost of secondary teacher education, all these institutions together constituted the population. Thus, all these institutions, their teacher trainees, Principals, accountants, office staff together formed the population of the study.

To conduct the present study, seven Secondary Teacher Education Institutions offering one year secondary teacher education course under Dibrugarh University, recognized by National Council for Teacher Education and affiliated/permitted by Dibrugarh University were chosen by using the purposive sampling method. One College of Teacher Education was selected from each District. However, in the Dibrugarh District itself, during that time, there were four colleges; so the researcher selected two colleges from this district for sample

8.3 Tools and Techniques: As the present study is carried out particularly on cost of secondary teacher education under Dibrugarh University and there was no standard questionnaire especially for this, the investigator had to develop the measuring instrument of his own. So the investigator has prepared all the tools himself and standardized them accordingly. The following tools were used in the present study-

8.3.1 A Questionnaire was used for eliciting information from teacher trainees regarding the private cost of the students and problems faced by them during the course.

8.3.2 Documentary analysis - (i) Budget of Dibrugarh University, (ii) Audit report of accounts of the Secondary Teacher Education Institutions, (iii) other relevant documents of accounts.

8.4 Procedure of data collection: In the present study the collection of data was both primary and secondary in nature. For the objectives, data were collected for this study, by direct personal interaction with the sampled B.Ed. students during the academic session 2009-2010, more specifically, in June 2010.

8.5 Analysis of data: Both Quantitative and Qualitative analysis methods were used in the proposed study.

09. Findings of the study:

9.1 Findings regarding Private Cost of the Student Teacher Trainees during the course. The findings are presented in absolute monetary value, i.e. in terms of Indian rupees for the year 2009-10.

9.1.1 Regarding the cost of lodging: In this study, the private costs of lodging at a private lodge, College hostel and rented house were calculated separately. The students who lived in their own house during the course were excluded from the calculation. The findings are - to live in rented house, annually Rs 22,678 was required by the students, in private lodges it was Rs 22,329 and in a College hostel, the expenditure incurred was Rs 13,130 in the year 2009-10. The average cost of lodging for B.Ed. Course is Rs 19,379. The % of cost of lodging to the total private cost is 71.13%.

Table 1 illustrates the findings as observed by the investigator.

Table 1: Cost of Lodging measured annually in terms of Indian Rupee

Sl. No	Heads	Cost Amount (in Rs)	Average cost of lodging	Percentage of cost of lodging to total private cost
1	Private lodge	22,329	19,379	71.13%.
2	College hostel	13,130		
3	Rented house	22,678		

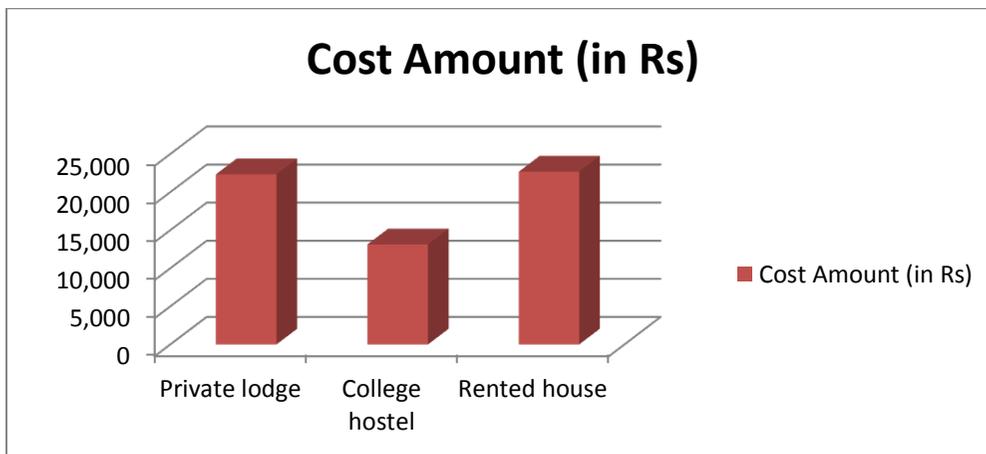


Figure: 1: Cost of Lodging measured annually in terms of Indian Rupee

9.1.2_Regarding the Private Tuition: In B.Ed. course it was found very exceptional, as there was no cost for any sort of private tuition; implying that all the students of the B. Ed Course did not take any tuitions whatsoever.

9.1.3_Regarding the Uniform/Dress: None of the sampled colleges had the rule of uniform dress for the student trainees. So no cost was incurred on uniform/dress.

9.1.4 Regarding Cost on Books: From the information revealed in the questionnaire, and the total amount incurred on purchase of books in the year 2009-10, the average cost on books per student was Rs 2,113. The percentage of expenditure on books to the total private cost was 7.75% of the total private cost.

9.1.5_Regarding Cost on Stationery Items: The average cost on stationery item was Rs 1,445.70.and it occupied 5.30% of the total Private cost made for B.Ed. course.

9.1.6_Cost on Communication: In the present study, it was found that the students had incurred Rs 1,427.40 in communication (including use of phone, internet and transportation for their study purpose) for the year 2009-10, and it's percentage to total private cost is 5.23%

9.1.7 Expenditure On Major Practical Programmes :

(a) Cost of Work Experience: As one of the major practical programmes of the teacher education Course, the average cost on work experience activity was found to be Rs 422/- for the year 2009-10. The percentage of the cost to the total private cost was therefore 1.54%.

(b) Expenditure on Community Survey: As an important head of the Practical programme of the B. Ed Course, the expenditure on it was found to be Rs 221/- per student which equals a share of 0.8 % of total private cost.

(c) **Expenditure on Teaching Aids:** Rs 534/- was incurred on Teaching aids by each of the sampled students in the session 2009-10, which shares 1.95 % of total private cost and is the highest expenditure made among all the practical programmes of the B. Ed Course.

(d) **Expenditure on Practice Teaching:** From the study, it was found that Rs 445/- was incurred by an individual student for practice-teaching programmes and it constituted 1.63% of the total private cost of a student pursuing the B. Ed Course in the year 2009-10.

The total expenditure, made by an individual student for all major practical programmes, therefore, was Rs. 1,622/-, which is 5.94% of the total individual private cost of the B. Ed Course under Dibrugarh University in the year 2009-10.

9.1.8 Cost of Entrance Examination: As the Dibrugarh University has been conducting the B. Ed Common Entrance Test (CET) since 2001-02, for admission into the B. Ed Course every year, the cost of Entrance Examination also had to be included in the private costs of the non-deputed Pre-service teacher trainees (not deputed by Assam Government under its rules and regulations), who were the main sample for this study. This was not incurred by the deputed teacher trainees. This item includes the cost of application for entrance exam along with the cost of books for the examination. The average cost on this component was found to be Rs 425/- and shared 1.5% of the total private cost of a non-deputed teacher-trainee.

9.1.9 Any Other Costs: This head included the miscellaneous costs incurred by the students, which are not covered in any of the above heads. The average cost under this head was found to be Rs. 850/-, and its % share to total cost was 3.11%.

The following table shows the distribution of expenditure on different heads and their % share to the total private cost incurred by the students during the course:

Table 2: Item-wise Distribution of Private Costs of the B. Ed. Students for the Year 2009-2010.

Sl. No.	Item / Head	Average cost (in Rupees)	% of Total Private cost
1.	Cost of Lodging	19379	71.13%
2.	Private Tuition	Nil	Nil
3.	Cost on Uniform Dress	Nil	Nil
4.	Expenditure on Books.	2113	7.75%
5.	Expenditure on Stationery	1445	5.30%
6.	Cost on Communication	1427	5.20%
7.	Cost on CTE	425	1.50%
8.	Cost on Work Experience	422	1.50%
9.	Cost on Community Survey	221	0.8%
10.	Cost on Teaching aid	534	1.95%
11.	Cost on Practice Teaching	445	1.63%
12.	Any other cost	850	3.10%
	Total Private Cost	Rs. 27,261/-	100%

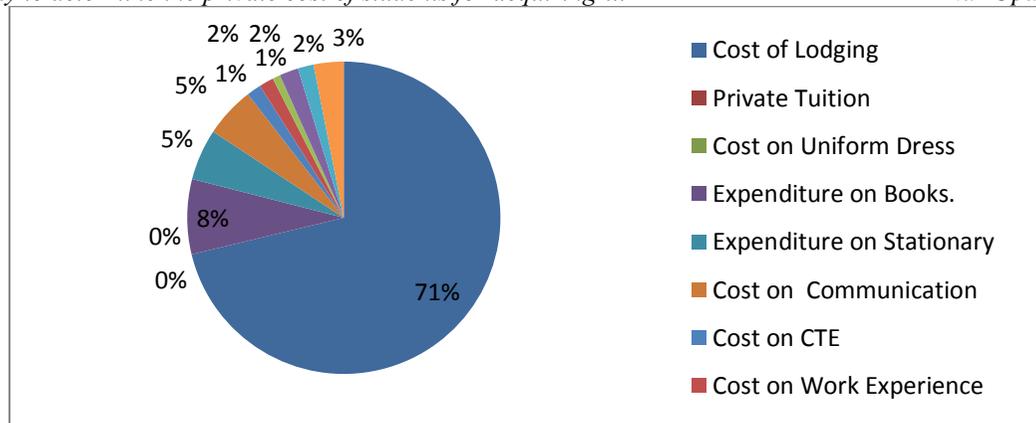


Figure: 2 Item-wise Distributions of Private Costs of the B. Ed. Students

9.2 Findings regarding problems, especially financial problems, faced by Students during the Period of study of the B. Ed Course, in 2009-10:

9.2.1 95% of the sample students expressed the view that the expenditure for the B. Ed Course was managed by their parents and guardians. Remaining 5% of the same managed their expenditure by themselves.

9.2.2 60% of the sample students thought that B.Ed. course is a course of high benefit with low cost and 40% remarked it as a course of high benefit with high cost. No students were found who viewed the B. Ed. course as one which has low benefits.

9.2.3 Regarding a question whether Government should provide B.Ed. course free of cost, 90% of the sample students gave their response in support of the answer.

9.2.4 In this study it was found that 70% of the sampled students faced financial problems during the course and only 30% said that they didn't face any financial problems during the course.

9.2.5 In the present study, it was found that none of the sampled students received any financial grants or scholarships for pursuing this Course from the Government.

9.2.6 Regarding the problems of infrastructural facilities, lack of common room for students was found in almost all colleges.

9.2.7 80% of the sampled students, i.e., a large number of students of the B. Ed Course of the session 2009-10, thought that the cost of teacher education is relatively high in the private management institutions under Dibrugarh University.

10. Discussion and Conclusion: As teacher education has an important place in the broad educational set up of our society, it is very essential to find out the cost and benefit of teacher education prevailing in the country. Thus it is hoped that the findings of the present study undertaken by the researchers will lead to an understanding of the structure of cost of teacher education. In the emerging years there will be an urgent need of increasing the number of trained teachers in our society, especially in the North-east, in the light of the policies of the Central Government in the area of school education, and it is hoped that the findings of the study will help the administrators of the state realize how with a little financial or other infra-structural support, the state government may be able to join hands with the private enterprise in teacher education so as to maintain quality of teacher-training as also to ensure that the human-resources thus produced, have the capacity and quality to be employed not only in the state scenario, but also in any other state of India.

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