

‘MANY TEACHING INSTITUTES SUBSTANDARD’

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Education and related issues

With as many as nine million teachers in around 1.5 million schools in India, the quality of education imparted to aspiring teachers is equally important. For education in our schools to improve, teaching has to improve.

This is the crux of the first volume on teachers and teacher education, comprising four papers on the subject, that was released by Azim Premji University on Thursday. It is the first volume in a series on ‘Issues in Education’, said the university in a press release.

Together, the four papers explore the landscape of Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in the country, corruption in private TEIs, the support system needed for teachers and the problem of those who are on contract.

Corruption flagged

The first paper — ‘Mapping the Landscape of Teacher Education Institutions in India’ — found that of the 17,503 TEIs in India, more than 90% are privately owned, stand-alone institutions, offering single programmes localised in certain geographies. Four States, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, account for 54% of all TEIs in the country, said the researchers. Only 12 States/UTs have at least one TEI in each district.

Equally worrying is the level of corruption, which is the focus of the second paper, Corruption in Private Teacher Education Institutions. According to the researchers, there are many substandard, dysfunctional TEIs functioning as ‘commercial shops’.

According to the researchers, TEIs deliberately neglected basic curricular requirements. “Classes are neither conducted seriously nor taken seriously by students,” said the authors of the paper. Almost all private TEIs allowed students with shortage of attendance to appear for examinations. More than 60% allowed students who had not completed their school internship to appear for examinations. At least 70% TEIs had an average student attendance below 80%.

The fourth paper in the series tackles the increasing prevalence of contract teachers, who are recruited for short periods on inadequate salaries with little or no benefits. This, the authors stated, had caused long-term damage to not just the teaching profession, but has also affected student learning.

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