

Language, Curriculum and Resource Needs for D.El.Ed Students in Northeast India: Focusing on Tripura — A Case for Proper Curricula, Textbooks and Resource Materials

Anirban Sen

Guest Lecturer, Department of English
College of Teacher Education, Kumarghat, Unakoti, Tripura
Senanirban13@gmail.com,

Abstract: *Quality teacher preparation at the elementary level is fundamental to achieving equitable and effective schooling. In India, the Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed) trains future elementary teachers who will shape learning during children's foundational years. However, persistent gaps in curriculum design, context-sensitive textbooks, and teaching-learning resources—especially in the North-East region and states like Tripura—undermine the capacity of D.El.Ed students to learn pedagogical principles deeply and to translate them into classroom practice. This paper examines the need for properly constructed, contextually relevant curricula, textbooks and resource materials for D.El.Ed students in India, with a focused analysis on Tripura. Using an interpretive qualitative methodology—document analysis of policy texts (NEP 2020; NCFTE), review of state curricular materials, and literature on teacher education in the North-East—this study identifies critical issues: mismatches between national frameworks and local needs, inadequate locally-relevant textbook material, limited multilingual resources, poor integration of practicum and digital resources, and uneven teacher educator capacities. The paper offers recommendations: a revised context-responsive D.El.Ed curriculum aligned with NEP 2020 and NCTE norms; development of regional textbooks and resource banks in local languages; stronger practicum models with community linkages; digital resource integration (DIKSHA and state portals); and sustained capacity building for teacher educators. Implementation of these measures can improve the preparedness of D.El.Ed graduates to teach inclusively in Tripura's multilingual, culturally diverse classrooms.*

Keywords: *D.El.Ed, curriculum, textbooks, resource materials, Tripura, teacher education, NEP 2020, North-East India.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Elementary teachers play a pivotal role in shaping children's early learning experiences. The Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed) has been India's primary pre-service qualification for preparing teachers for classes I–VIII (NCTE; NEP 2020). Yet, across many states—particularly in India's North-East region—teacher education faces persistent quality and relevance issues that affect graduate readiness (Bhattacharjee, 2011). Tripura's socio-linguistic diversity, rural settlements, and unique cultural contexts require D.El.Ed curricula and materials that are locally meaningful while meeting national standards. This paper argues that properly designed curricula, textbooks, and resource materials—rooted in local languages, socio-cultural realities, and contemporary pedagogical goals—are essential for D.El.Ed students to learn more effectively and to teach more responsively.

The paper synthesizes national policy documents and regional evidence to: (a) identify gaps in existing D.El.Ed provision related to curricular content and learning resources; (b) explain why localized, pedagogically rich textbooks and materials matter for teacher learning in Tripura; and (c) propose practical curricular and resource strategies aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) and teacher education frameworks.

2. Literature Review and Policy Context:

2.1 National frameworks and teacher education expectations:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 places teacher education at the centre of transforming school outcomes; it calls for improved pre-service programmes, integrated internships, and continuous professional development (Ministry of Education, 2020). NEP 2020 advocates “school-facing” teacher preparation that is flexible, practice-oriented, and

context-sensitive. Earlier foundational frameworks—such as the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE, 2009)—also emphasized reflective practice, subject-pedagogy integration, and community engagement in teacher preparation (NCTE, 2009). Recent regulatory updates and draft norms (NCTE, 2025) continue to align teacher education with NEP’s emphasis on practicums and integrated curricula. These national directives create opportunities—but also obligations—for state teacher education institutions to redesign curricula and resource materials to be locally relevant and pedagogically sound.

2.2 Teacher education challenges in the North-East and Tripura:

Research and reports on the North-East identify several systemic challenges: high proportions of untrained or under-trained teachers, limited infrastructure for teacher training institutions, variable quality of practicum support, and scarcity of pedagogically appropriate materials for multilingual classrooms (Bhattacharjee, 2011). Specific studies on Tripura highlight similar problems: proliferation of self-financing teacher education institutions with uneven quality, outdated course materials, and inadequate field engagement (JETIR report on Tripura, 2020). The result is D.El.Ed graduates who may lack strong content knowledge, contextually adaptable pedagogical strategies, and familiarity with multilingual instructional resources.

2.3 Textbooks and resource materials: why they matter for teacher learning:

Textbooks and teacher resource materials are not merely information carriers; they mediate pedagogical ideas, exemplify classroom activities, and scaffold novice teachers’ lesson planning and assessment practices (Batra, 2020). For D.El.Ed students, well-designed textbooks model age-appropriate pedagogy, integrate assessment literacy, include sample lesson plans, and present culturally relevant classroom scenarios. In multilingual contexts such as Tripura, materials in local languages and bilingual support are crucial for both teacher learning and later classroom implementation (SCERT Tripura; DIKSHA state initiatives). The digitization of resources via platforms like DIKSHA further presents an opportunity to supplement print textbooks with multimedia content, though access disparities must be addressed.

3. Objectives:

1. To examine gaps in current D.El.Ed curricula and textbooks as they affect student learning in Tripura.
2. To analyse the specific resource needs—print and digital—required by D.El.Ed students to develop pedagogical competence for Tripura’s elementary classrooms.
3. To propose evidence-based curricular and resource interventions aligned with NEP 2020 and regional realities.

4. Methodology:

This research employs a qualitative, document-analytic approach supplemented by a focused regional scan. Sources included: (a) national policy documents (NEP 2020); (b) curriculum frameworks (NCFTE 2009; NCTE draft regulations); (c) state curricular materials and portals (SCERT Tripura syllabus & e-books; Tripura study materials); (d) scholarly reports on teacher education in the North-East (Bhattacharjee, 2011), and (e) peer-reviewed and grey literature on textbooks, DIKSHA and D.El.Ed curriculum reforms. Documents were analysed for recurring themes: curricular alignment with school needs, language and multilingualism, textbook design features, practicum integration, use of digital resources, and teacher educator capacity. Based on the synthesis, the paper recommends practical curriculum and resource design strategies for Tripura.

5. Analysis and Discussion:

5.1 Curriculum design: alignment, depth and local relevance:

A significant issue is the superficial alignment between national frameworks and state D.El.Ed curricula. NEP 2020 requires competence-based, practice-oriented preparation, but many existing D.El.Ed syllabi still emphasise fragmented theory and limited practicum (NCTE; NEP 2020). State institutions must therefore redesign syllabi to: (a) integrate subject-pedagogy courses with sustained micro-teaching and classroom internships; (b) include modules on multilingual pedagogy, local histories and cultures; and (c) build assessment literacy grounded in classroom data. Revised D.El.Ed curriculum documents from several north-eastern teacher training institutes illustrate an early move toward NEP alignment, but scaling this across Tripura’s institutions requires standardized curricular guides and monitoring.

5.2 Textbook content: pedagogy, examples and contextualization:

Many D.El.Ed textbooks currently lack classroom-level exemplars that show how to teach language, mathematics, and environmental studies to multilingual learners. Effective textbooks for D.El.Ed should model: lesson plans with step-by-step pedagogical moves; sample learner work; differentiated instruction strategies; inclusive practices for children with diverse needs; and locally relevant content (stories, local games, community practices). Tripura’s SCERT has produced e-books for school classes; however, parallel investment is needed in D.El.Ed teacher resource textbooks

tailored to the state's elementary contexts (SCERT Tripura resources). Textbooks should also be bilingual or contain mother-tongue support for pedagogical items—helpful where trainee teachers will instruct in Bengali, Kokborok, or other regional tongues.

5.3 Multilingual resources and language policy in practice:

NEP 2020's emphasis on mother-tongue or regional language instruction in early grades implies a need for D.El.Ed students to be fluent in bilingual/multilingual pedagogy. In Tripura, where Bengali and Kokborok are significant classroom languages alongside others, resource banks must include: (a) bilingual lesson templates; (b) graded readers in local languages; (c) glossaries of pedagogical terms in regional tongues; and (d) examples of code-switching strategies useful for subject teaching. Without such resources, teacher trainees struggle to implement mother-tongue instruction effectively.

5.4 Practicum: linking theory to practice through rich materials:

Effective practicum depends on a clear interface between coursework and field experience. D.El.Ed curricula must provision: supervised micro-teaching sequences, lesson study groups, reflective journals, and assessment rubrics—each supported by resource packs that demonstrate classroom interactions. Field resources can include observation protocols, structured feedback forms, and video exemplars of good practice (available via DIKSHA or state repositories). The NCTE's recent norms and NEP 2020 call for internships and integrated practice components, but many institutions lack the resource packets to operationalise these effectively.

5.5 Digital platforms and resource accessibility (DIKSHA and state portals):

Digital platforms such as DIKSHA offer open educational resources that can supplement print textbooks with multimedia and interactive content. State education portals (e.g., SCERT Tripura) host e-books and teaching materials which—if curated for D.El.Ed needs—can greatly enhance trainee learning. However, digital divide issues (connectivity, device access) and low digital literacy among some trainees and teacher educators are barriers. Therefore, resource strategies should adopt a blended model: high-quality print textbooks complemented by offline-accessible digital content (USB drives, preloaded devices) and CDs where needed.

5.6 Teacher educator capacity and quality assurance:

Textbooks and curricula are only as effective as the educators who deliver them. Strengthening teacher educator competencies—through targeted in-service modules on curriculum-based instruction, textbook use, multilingual pedagogy, and digital resource design—is crucial. Monitoring mechanisms, periodic curriculum review committees, and partnerships between SCERT, DIETs and universities can institutionalise quality assurance. The experience of North-East states shows that capacity gaps often undermine otherwise sound curricular materials (Bhattacharjee, 2011).

6. Recommendations:

Based on the analysis above, the following strategic recommendations are proposed to strengthen D.El.Ed curricula, textbooks, and resource materials in Tripura.

6.1 Develop a context-responsive D.El.Ed curriculum aligned with NEP 2020 and NCTE norms:

- Convene a state curriculum committee (SCERT, DIETs, universities, and practitioner teachers) to prepare a revised D.El.Ed curriculum that operationalises NEP 2020's practice-orientation (integrated internships, subject-pedagogy integration, multilingual pedagogy).
- Ensure the curriculum includes mandatory modules on inclusive education, multilingual classroom strategies, community engagement, and assessment for learning.

6.2 Produce high-quality teacher resource textbooks with local contextualization:

- Design D.El.Ed textbooks that: model lesson planning, include classroom scenarios from Tripura's socio-linguistic contexts, provide sample assessment tools, and present differentiated instruction strategies.
- Publish bilingual editions (Bengali–English; Kokborok–English) and include localized case studies, folk stories, and pedagogical activities drawn from Tripura's cultural milieu.

6.3 Create a state-level digital and print resource bank for D.El.Ed trainees:

- Curate a repository on SCERT Tripura's portal and mirror it on DIKSHA with downloadable lesson plans, video exemplars, and student work samples. Ensure offline access options (preloaded SD cards, printed compendia) for trainees with limited connectivity.
- Incentivise teacher educators to create OERs (lesson videos, micro-teach exemplars) in local languages and upload to the platform.

6.4 Strengthen practicum with scaffolded materials and community linkages:

- Embed structured practicum packages—observation protocols, feedback rubrics, reflection templates—into the curriculum. Link practicum to local schools and community centers for collaborative projects (literacy drives, environmental education).



- Encourage Lesson Study groups where trainees and in-service teachers collaboratively design, observe and refine lessons.

6.5 Invest in capacity building for teacher educators and quality monitoring:

- Organise sustained professional development for teacher educators on curriculum implementation, textbook use, formative assessment, and digital resource creation.
- Establish an annual curriculum review and textbook evaluation cycle involving practitioners to keep materials relevant and updated.

6.6 Monitor equity in resource distribution and digital access:

- Map resource gaps across urban–rural institutions and allocate targeted funding for textbooks, laboratory aids, and digital devices.
- Partner with state and central schemes (DIKSHA, Samagra Shiksha) to ensure equitable distribution of digital and print resources.

7. Implications for Policy and Practice:

Implementing these recommendations aligns Tripura's D.El.Ed provision with NEP 2020 objectives and addresses regional specificities. When D.El.Ed students learn from textbooks and resources that reflect the realities of their future classrooms—language diversity, local knowledge, and inclusive pedagogy—they are better prepared to enact developmentally appropriate practices. Systematic curriculum revision coupled with resource development and teacher educator capacity building can create a supply chain of high-quality elementary teachers capable of improving learning outcomes across Tripura's varied settings.

8. Limitations and Directions for Future Research:

This paper is based on document analysis and regional scans of policy and grey literature; it does not include primary field data from D.El.Ed students, teacher educators, or schools in Tripura. Future empirical research should gather stakeholder perspectives through interviews and classroom observations to validate and refine the proposed curricular materials and resource templates. Longitudinal studies assessing the impact of revised textbooks and practicum packages on trainee performance and elementary pupil learning would also be valuable.

9. Conclusion:

D.El.Ed students in Tripura require curricula, textbooks and resource materials that are pedagogically robust and contextually appropriate. In the absence of such resources, theoretical coursework remains disconnected from the realities of multilingual, multicultural elementary classrooms. Aligning D.El.Ed curricula with NEP 2020 and NCTE norms, producing bilingual and locally contextualised textbooks, integrating digital and offline resources, strengthening practicum materials, and investing in teacher educator capacity can collectively transform teacher preparation in Tripura. These changes are not merely administrative—they are foundational to ensuring that elementary teachers are prepared to nurture learning, inclusion and community engagement in the North-East and beyond.

REFERENCES:

1. Batra, P. (2020). *Re-imagining curriculum in India: Charting a path beyond the textbook* [Article]. *Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development*.
2. Bhattacharjee, D. S. (2011). *Teacher Education in Northeast India—Status, Issues and Strategies* (ERIC Document).
3. DIKSHA. (2018). *DIKSHA: National Digital Infrastructure for Teachers*. Government of India.
4. Ministry of Education. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Government of India.
5. NCTE. (2009). *National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE)*. National Council for Teacher Education.
6. NCTE. (2025). *Draft NCTE (Recognition Norms and Procedure) Regulations 2025 and Norms and Standards of Teacher Education Programmes*. National Council for Teacher Education.
7. SCERT Tripura. (2025). *New Syllabus and e-books*. State Council of Educational Research and Training, Tripura.
8. Tripura University. (2017). *EDCN-906E Teacher Education* [Study material]. Tripura University.
9. JETIR. (2020). *Problems of Teacher Education in Tripura* [Research article]. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*.
10. Revised Curriculum for D.El.Ed (example). (2025). *Curriculum of 2-year D.El.Ed course* (DIET Dhemaji).



Web References:

- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7604648/>
- <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED529381.pdf>
- <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/diksha-national-digital-infrastructure-teachers>
- https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
- https://ncte.gov.in/website/PDF/NCFTE_2009.pdf
- <https://ncte.gov.in/website/PDF/DraftNCTERegulations2025.pdf>
- https://www.scerttripura.org/new_syllabus.php and <https://www.scerttripura.org/ebooks.php>
- <https://tripurauniv.ac.in/site/images/pdf/StudyMaterialsDetail/EDCN-906E-Teacher%20Education.pdf>
- <https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR2008226.pdf>
- https://dietdhemaji.in/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Curriculum-of-2-year-D.El_Ed_-course-TTT.pdf

Author note: This study synthesises national policy documents, state curricular resources, and published reports to propose practical reforms for D.El.Ed curriculum and materials in Tripura. The author recommends participatory curriculum development involving SCERT, DIETs, teacher educators, and practicing elementary teachers to ensure the relevance and sustainability of proposed resources.