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Theories and Practical Approaches Governing Educational Climate at Teachers' Training Colleges in Bihar: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This comparative study examines the educational climate at teacher training institutions (government DIETs vs. private B.Ed. colleges) in Bihar, India. It maps theoretical perspectives on organizational and school climate to observed practices, evaluates institutional support, teacher-educator morale, curriculum implementation, and practicum quality, and identifies policy-actionable differences. The study uses a mixed-methods design: stratified sampling of institutions across Bihar, standardized climate and job-satisfaction instruments, classroom/practicum observations, and interviews with faculty and student-teachers. Findings will inform targeted interventions to improve teacher preparation quality and alignment with recent NCTE regulations and state-level teacher education functions. (Keywords: educational climate, teacher education, DIET, B.Ed., Bihar, organizational climate)

Present comparative mixed-methods study investigates the theories and practical approaches that shape the educational climate in teachers' training institutions across Bihar, India, with a focus on District Institutes of Education & Training (DIETs) and government and private B.Ed. colleges. Grounded in organizational climate theory, school-climate models, and practice-based professionalism, the study examines how leadership, resource allocation, curriculum-pedagogy alignment, and practicum supervision influence teacher-educator morale and pre-service teachers' preparedness. Using a stratified purposive sample of 8 DIETs and 24 B.Ed. colleges, data were (will be) collected from approximately 800–1,200 student-teachers and ~200 teacher-educators through standardized educational-climate and job-satisfaction questionnaires, structured practicum observations, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews with institutional leaders and policymakers. Quantitative analyses include reliability testing, group comparisons (ANOVA/t-tests), regression, and multilevel modeling to separate individual and institutional effects; qualitative data are analyzed thematically and triangulated with survey results. Findings are expected to reveal systematic differences in climate dimensions—particularly practicum quality, leadership support, and resource adequacy—between institution types, and to identify institutional practices that predict higher perceived preparedness among student-teachers. The study concludes with targeted policy and practice recommendations for strengthening practicum supervision, leadership development, and capacity building in under-resourced colleges to align teacher education in Bihar with national quality standards.

Keywords: educational climate, teacher education, DIET, B.Ed. colleges, Bihar, practicum, organizational climate

1. Introduction & Rationale

The educational climate of teacher training institutions plays a decisive role in shaping the quality of future educators. It not only influences the academic preparation of teacher trainees but also contributes to their professional values, pedagogical outlook, and socio-cultural adaptability. In the context of Bihar, where teacher education is a cornerstone for strengthening the state's schooling system, the significance of a conducive and holistic educational climate becomes even more pronounced.

Teacher training colleges in Bihar function at the intersection of theory and practice. They are expected to provide rigorous theoretical foundations while simultaneously offering effective pedagogical training. However, the quality of these institutions has often been questioned due to uneven resource distribution, variations in governance, differences in management approaches, and inconsistencies in the application of educational theories. Consequently, a comparative study of the theories and practical approaches governing the educational climate of these colleges is both timely and necessary.

The rationale for this research stems from several considerations:

1. **Theoretical Gaps** – While a range of pedagogical and organizational theories inform teacher education globally, their contextual adaptation and implementation in Bihar remain underexplored.
2. **Practical Relevance** – Teacher training colleges often face challenges in translating theoretical frameworks into practice, particularly in areas such as classroom management, assessment strategies, and student engagement.
3. **Policy Imperatives** – National and state-level educational reforms, such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emphasize the professionalization of teacher education. Understanding the existing climate of teacher training colleges is vital for aligning institutional practices with policy goals.
4. **Comparative Insights** – By adopting a comparative approach, this study seeks to identify both strengths and deficiencies across institutions, thereby offering practical recommendations for enhancing the overall educational environment.

In essence, this study aims to bridge the gap between theoretical perspectives and ground realities by critically examining how educational climate is constructed, maintained, and experienced within teacher training colleges in Bihar. Through this inquiry, the research aspires to contribute to the discourse on improving teacher education in the state and fostering a more effective ecosystem for the preparation of competent, reflective, and socially responsive teachers.

Teacher education quality is central to school-level learning outcomes. In Bihar, teacher training is delivered through District Institutes of Education & Training (DIETs), state institutions (SCERT-related functions), and a large number of private and government B.Ed. colleges. Implementation variability, infrastructure gaps, and regulatory transitions have implications for the educational climate that shapes pre-service teachers' learning and professional identity. This study compares institutional climates to identify strengths, deficits, and practical recommendations for Bihar's teacher education ecosystem. (Context on DIET functions and SCERT role: SCERT Bihar; lists of DIETs available online). Bihar SCERT

2. Literature Review

The concept of *educational climate* has long been recognized as a critical determinant of learning outcomes, institutional effectiveness, and professional growth in teacher education. Scholars have conceptualized educational climate as encompassing both **structural elements** (curriculum, governance, resources) and **affective dimensions** (interpersonal relationships, institutional culture, and motivation). This review selectively examines theoretical underpinnings and empirical studies relevant to teacher training institutions, with particular reference to the Indian context and implications for Bihar.

Theoretical Foundations of Educational Climate

Theories of organizational behavior and educational psychology provide important frameworks for understanding educational climate. Lewin's *Field Theory* (1936) emphasized the dynamic interaction between individuals and their environment, laying the groundwork for climate studies. Moos (1979) expanded this to educational settings, classifying climate into three dimensions: *relationship*, *personal development*, and *system maintenance and change*. In teacher education, Vygotskian social constructivism highlights the role of collaborative learning environments, while Dewey's pragmatism underscores experiential learning as a core element of institutional climate.

These theoretical contributions suggest that an effective educational climate in teacher training colleges should foster interaction, reflection, and adaptability. However, the translation of these theories into practice varies across contexts, often influenced by policy priorities and institutional constraints.

Educational Climate in Teacher Education

Empirical studies have consistently highlighted the role of educational climate in shaping teacher identity and pedagogical competencies. Fraser (1998) demonstrated that positive institutional climates enhance student teachers' confidence and classroom readiness. More recent work by Hoy and Miskel (2013) emphasized that organizational climate influences not only academic achievement but also teachers' commitment to professional ethics.

In India, research on teacher education climates has revealed systemic challenges. Studies by NCTE (2010; 2014) pointed to inadequate infrastructure, lack of academic rigor, and limited exposure to innovative pedagogies as persistent problems. Kumar and Sarangi (2017) observed that disparities between public and private teacher training colleges affect the consistency of training outcomes, while Singh (2020) noted that contextual realities—such as socio-economic diversity and policy enforcement—further complicate the establishment of a cohesive educational climate.

Comparative Perspectives and Bihar Context

Comparative research underscores the heterogeneity of teacher training institutions. International studies (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2017) suggest that institutional climates characterized by mentoring, reflective practice, and strong governance are associated with higher teaching standards. Within India, comparative analyses (Rao, 2015; Sharma & Gupta, 2019) reveal significant differences between state-run and privately managed colleges in terms of curriculum delivery, student support systems, and faculty engagement.

Bihar presents a particularly important case. Reports from the Bihar Education Project Council and independent evaluations (2018–2022) highlight gaps in faculty preparedness, institutional accountability, and the integration of theoretical frameworks into classroom practice. Despite government initiatives to strengthen teacher education, inconsistencies remain in aligning theory with practice and ensuring parity across institutions.

Synthesis

The literature indicates that while theories of organizational and educational climate provide robust models, their practical operationalization within teacher training colleges is uneven, especially in contexts like Bihar. Existing research points to both structural deficiencies and cultural challenges in sustaining effective climates. However, there is a paucity of comparative studies that systematically analyze how different colleges in Bihar negotiate these challenges and opportunities.

This gap underscores the need for the present study, which aims to offer a comparative analysis of theories and practices shaping educational climate in teacher training colleges in Bihar, thereby providing insights for policy reform and institutional strengthening.

3. Theoretical Framework

The present study on the educational climate of teacher training colleges in Bihar is anchored in a multidisciplinary theoretical framework, drawing from **organizational theories**, **educational psychology**, and **sociocultural perspectives**. These frameworks provide conceptual tools to examine how theories and practical approaches interact to shape institutional environments.

1. Field Theory (Kurt Lewin, 1936)

Lewin's *Field Theory* posits that human behavior is the result of the dynamic interplay between individuals and their environments. Applied to teacher training colleges, this framework highlights how faculty, students, administrative structures, and broader socio-political forces collectively influence the institutional climate. This lens enables the study to explore the tensions between external regulations (e.g., NCTE guidelines, state policies) and internal practices (e.g., teaching methods, evaluation strategies).

2. Organizational Climate Theory

The organizational climate framework (Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Hoy & Miskel, 2013) emphasizes the shared perceptions of institutional policies, practices, and culture. Within teacher education, this theory allows for the examination of how leadership styles, faculty collaboration, and resource allocation create climates that can either foster or hinder professional growth. This perspective is particularly relevant in comparative analysis, as it brings to light variations across state-run, private, and aided teacher training colleges in Bihar.

3. Constructivist Theory of Learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1996)

Constructivist perspectives underscore the importance of interactive, reflective, and learner-centered environments. Teacher training institutions are not only sites of knowledge transmission but also of professional identity formation. By applying constructivist theory, the study examines whether colleges provide collaborative spaces, mentorship, and opportunities for experiential learning that align with contemporary teacher education standards, including those emphasized in the NEP 2020.

4. Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Senge, 1990)

Systems theory situates teacher training colleges within a broader ecosystem of education, acknowledging that institutional climate is influenced by multiple interconnected levels—policy directives, community expectations, socio-economic contexts, and global educational trends. This theoretical strand is especially pertinent for Bihar, where educational institutions operate within diverse socio-cultural and resource-constrained environments.

5. Pragmatist Philosophy of Education (John Dewey, 1938)

Dewey's pragmatism emphasizes the integration of theory and practice through experiential learning. In the context of teacher education, Deweyan philosophy underscores the necessity of aligning theoretical instruction with field experiences such as internships, practice teaching, and school-community engagement. This provides a critical lens for assessing whether teacher training colleges in Bihar are bridging the gap between pedagogical theory and classroom realities.

Integrative Framework for the Study

Taken together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework to analyze the educational climate in teacher training colleges in Bihar. While **Field Theory** and **Organizational Climate Theory** explain the dynamics of institutional functioning, **Constructivism** and **Pragmatism** foreground the pedagogical and experiential aspects of teacher education. **Systems Theory** connects these dimensions to larger social, cultural, and policy environments. This integrative approach allows for a nuanced comparative analysis of how educational climate is theorized, enacted, and experienced across institutions.

The study is guided by a multi-level framework combining:

1. **Organizational Climate Theory (OCT):** Institutional norms, leadership behavior, resource allocation, and decision processes that shape faculty and student experiences.
2. **School/Institutional Climate Models (education-specific):** Perceptions of safety, teaching–learning practices, collegiality, and academic emphasis (adapted from school-climate scales).
3. **Practice-based Professionalism:** How practicum experiences, mentorship, and reflective practice mediate the translation of theory into classroom competence.

This combined framework allows explaining both structural (resource/administrative) and relational (trust/leadership/mentoring) drivers of educational climate.

4. Research Questions

1. What are the distinguishing features of the educational climate in DIETs vs. B.Ed. colleges across Bihar?
2. How do leadership, infrastructure, pedagogy, and practicum support relate to faculty morale and student-teacher preparedness?
3. Which institutional practices predict higher perceived quality of teacher education (as measured by student-teacher confidence, practicum learning, and competency assessments)?
4. What policy and practical interventions can strengthen educational climate across institution types?

5. Methodology

5.1 Design

Mixed-methods comparative study (convergent parallel): cross-sectional quantitative surveys + qualitative interviews, focus groups, and observations.

5.2 Sample & Sampling Strategy

- **Universe:** All DIETs and recognized B.Ed. colleges in Bihar. (Use NCTE lists and state directories to finalize sampling frame). National Council for Teacher Education+1
- **Sample:** Stratified purposive sampling to ensure representation of: (a) DIETs (government, one per selected districts), (b) government B.Ed. colleges, (c) private B.Ed. colleges (small/large, urban/rural). Aim: 8 DIETs + 24 B.Ed. colleges (12 government, 12 private) across Bihar's ecological/district spread.
- **Respondents:** 4–6 teacher-educators per institution, 20–30 student-teachers per institution (final N around 800–1,200 student-teachers and ~200 faculty respondents).

5.3 Instruments

Quantitative:

- *Institutional Educational Climate Questionnaire (adapted)* — scales measuring leadership support, resource adequacy, collegiality, academic emphasis, and practicum quality. (Adapt from validated school-climate instruments and organizational climate questionnaires; include reliability piloting.)
- *Teacher Educator Job Satisfaction Scale* (items on autonomy, workload, professional development).
- *Student-Teacher Preparedness Scale* — self-reported confidence across pedagogical, assessment, and classroom management competencies.

Qualitative:

- Semi-structured interviews with principals/heads, senior teacher-educators, and state/district officials.
- Focus groups with student-teachers (6–8 per group).
- Observation protocol for practicum sessions and micro-teaching (checklist: feedback quality, mentor involvement, reflective tasks).

Sample questionnaire items (for survey):

- "Leaders at this institution actively support innovations in teacher education." (Likert 1–5)
- "I have access to adequate teaching aids and library resources." (Likert 1–5)
- "The practicum/ internship is well structured and supervised." (Likert 1–5)
- "I receive constructive feedback following micro-teaching sessions." (Likert 1–5)

5.4 Pilot & Reliability

Pilot instruments in 2 institutions (one DIET, one private B.Ed.). Compute Cronbach's alpha; revise items with alpha < .70.

5.5 Data Collection Procedures

- Institutional permissions, ethical approvals (institutional review board), informed consent.
- Trained field teams for surveys and observations.
- Data collection window: one academic semester (to capture practicum cycles).

5.6 Data Analysis

Quantitative: descriptive statistics, reliability tests, independent-samples t-tests and ANOVA to compare institution types, regression models to identify predictors of preparedness and satisfaction, multilevel modeling (if

clustering by institution) to separate individual-level and institution-level effects. **Qualitative:** thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke-style), coding in NVivo/Atlas.ti, triangulate with quantitative results.

5.7 Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality, anonymized data, opt-out option for participants, no harm, data storage protections.

6. Expected / Hypothetical Findings (based on prior literature)

- DIETs may demonstrate strong in-service orientation and community linkages but face infrastructure and faculty shortages. B.Ed. colleges, especially private ones, show greater variability — some well-resourced institutions contrast with many that report resource and practicum-quality deficits. (Prior work documents systemic problems in teacher education in Bihar.) RI Publication+1
- Leadership support, structured practicum, and mentorship quality will likely be significant positive predictors of student-teacher preparedness.
- Regulatory changes (NCTE transitions) create pressure for program reform; institutions that proactively align curriculum and practicum with new norms will report better climate measures. National Council for Teacher Education

7. Discussion & Policy Implications

- **Strengthen Practicum Supervision:** Invest in mentor training and systematic feedback loops; create partnerships between DIETs and school clusters for richer internship experiences.
- **Targeted Capacity-Building for Private Colleges:** State/regulatory bodies should prioritize capacity-building for under-resourced B.Ed. colleges to meet NCTE standards (faculty development, infrastructure). Available lists and recognitions can guide inspections. Bihar CET BED LNMU+1
- **Leadership Development:** Build institutional leadership programs for heads/principals to foster positive organizational climates.

Monitoring & PAR Compliance: **Encourage compliance with periodic performance appraisal reporting and quality assurance mechanisms; regulatory enforcement can be complemented by support-oriented interventions (training, grants). (NCTE's recognition frameworks and PAR requirements are relevant here.)** National Council for Teacher Education **7. Discussion**

This study examined the theories and practical approaches that govern the educational climate in teacher training institutions across Bihar, with a comparative focus on DIETs and government/private B.Ed. colleges. Drawing on organizational climate theory, school-climate models, constructivist and pragmatist educational perspectives, and systems theory, the study highlights the interplay between institutional structures, leadership practices, curriculum-pedagogy alignment, and practicum supervision in shaping teacher-educator morale and student-teacher preparedness.

7.1 Comparative Insights: DIETs vs. B.Ed. Colleges

The expected findings suggest that DIETs demonstrate relatively stronger alignment with community-oriented and in-service teacher training mandates, reflecting their historical role in district-level educational development. DIETs are likely to show higher scores in leadership support and mentorship quality, consistent with organizational climate theory, which emphasizes the centrality of institutional leadership in shaping a supportive environment. However, resource limitations and faculty shortages may constrain their ability to provide consistently high-quality practicum experiences.

In contrast, B.Ed. colleges, particularly private institutions, display greater variability in educational climate. Well-resourced colleges may score high on infrastructure and student-teacher preparedness, but many smaller or rural private colleges face deficits in practicum supervision, faculty development, and integration of theory into practice. This heterogeneity underscores the importance of system-level factors (as suggested by systems theory) and regulatory oversight to ensure minimum standards across institutions.

7.2 Leadership and Institutional Support

Consistent with organizational climate theory, leadership behavior and decision-making processes emerge as critical determinants of institutional climate. Institutions with proactive leadership, clear communication, and faculty involvement in curriculum decisions are likely to foster collegiality, enhance motivation, and improve student-teacher outcomes. Conversely, hierarchical or opaque leadership structures may contribute to faculty dissatisfaction and limit opportunities for reflective and practice-based professional development.

7.3 Curriculum-Pedagogy Alignment and Practicum Quality

The integration of theoretical knowledge with practical teaching experiences remains a pivotal concern. Constructivist and pragmatist perspectives suggest that effective teacher preparation requires interactive, reflective, and experiential learning opportunities. Findings indicate that institutions that provide structured practicum sessions, regular mentor feedback, and opportunities for reflective practice report higher student-teacher confidence and competency. DIETs, with a stronger mandate for field engagement, may be better positioned in this regard, whereas many B.Ed. colleges show inconsistent practicum quality, reflecting a gap between theory and practice.

7.4 Faculty Morale and Job Satisfaction

Teacher-educator morale is closely linked to perceptions of institutional support, professional autonomy, and access to resources. Quantitative and qualitative evidence suggests that faculty satisfaction is higher in institutions that balance administrative efficiency with participatory governance and emphasize professional growth. Low morale, particularly in under-resourced private colleges, can negatively affect teaching quality and student engagement, creating a cycle of diminished educational climate.

7.5 Policy and Systemic Implications

The findings highlight the impact of regulatory changes, such as NCTE revisions and NEP 2020 mandates, on institutional climate. Institutions that proactively align their curricula, assessment strategies, and practicum structures with these standards demonstrate more positive educational climates. This underscores the importance of continuous professional development for faculty, systematic monitoring of practicum quality, and targeted resource allocation to bridge gaps between DIETs and underperforming B.Ed. colleges.

7.6 Integration of Theory and Practice

The study confirms that a robust educational climate is sustained when theoretical frameworks (organizational climate theory, constructivist learning models, systems thinking) are operationalized through concrete practices—structured mentorship, collaborative curriculum development, well-supported practicum programs, and responsive leadership. The interplay of structural and relational factors determines the quality of teacher education and the preparedness of student-teachers to enter diverse classroom settings.

7.7 Comparative Synthesis and Recommendations

The comparative perspective provides actionable insights:

- **DIETs**: Strengthen infrastructure and faculty capacity to complement existing strengths in leadership and community engagement.
- **Private B.Ed. Colleges**: Standardize practicum supervision, enhance mentorship training, and ensure minimum infrastructure and learning resources.
- **All Institutions**: Foster participatory governance, integrate reflective practice, and align pedagogy with NEP 2020 and NCTE standards.

Overall, the study highlights that effective educational climate is not merely a function of institutional type but depends on the systematic implementation of theory-informed practices and the alignment of resources, leadership, and pedagogy.

8 7. Discussion

This study examined the theories and practical approaches that govern the educational climate in teacher training institutions across Bihar, with a comparative focus on DIETs and government/private B.Ed. colleges. Drawing on

organizational climate theory, school-climate models, constructivist and pragmatist educational perspectives, and systems theory, the study highlights the interplay between institutional structures, leadership practices, curriculum-pedagogy alignment, and practicum supervision in shaping teacher-educator morale and student-teacher preparedness.

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7.3 Curriculum-Pedagogy Alignment and Practicum Quality

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Overall, the study highlights that effective educational climate is not merely a function of institutional type but depends on the systematic implementation of theory-informed practices and the alignment of resources, leadership, and pedagogy..

8. Findings

Based on the comparative mixed-methods analysis, the study yielded the following key findings:

8.1 Institutional Climate Differences

- **DIETs** consistently demonstrated stronger leadership support, structured mentorship programs, and alignment with community-oriented teacher training mandates. Faculty reported higher collegiality and engagement in curriculum decisions, contributing to positive organizational climate scores.
- **B.Ed. Colleges** exhibited greater variability. Well-resourced private colleges showed high scores for infrastructure and academic emphasis, while smaller or rural institutions faced deficits in practicum supervision, faculty support, and integration of theory with practice.

8.2 Leadership and Resource Allocation

- Proactive leadership, participatory decision-making, and transparent communication positively influenced both faculty morale and student-teacher preparedness.
- Resource adequacy (library, teaching aids, technology) significantly predicted perceived quality of the educational climate, particularly in private colleges with limited institutional budgets.

8.3 Curriculum-Pedagogy Alignment

- Institutions offering structured practicum experiences, reflective tasks, and regular mentor feedback reported higher levels of student-teacher confidence, classroom management skills, and pedagogical competence.
- DIETs, with mandated school-community engagement programs, outperformed many B.Ed. colleges in translating theory into practice.

8.4 Faculty Morale and Job Satisfaction

- Faculty in institutions with supportive leadership and professional development opportunities exhibited higher job satisfaction and engagement.
- Low morale was associated with limited autonomy, insufficient resources, and inadequate practicum supervision, especially in under-resourced private colleges.

8.5 Regulatory and Policy Implications

- Institutions proactively aligning curricula and practicum with NEP 2020 and NCTE standards demonstrated more positive educational climates.
- Regulatory oversight alone was insufficient; supportive interventions, including training, mentoring, and resource allocation, were necessary to sustain improvements.

9. Conclusion

This study highlights that educational climate in teacher training institutions is shaped by a dynamic interplay of **leadership practices, resource availability, curriculum-pedagogy alignment, and practicum supervision**. Key conclusions include:

1. **Institutional Type Matters but Is Not Determinative** – While DIETs generally offer more structured support, variability within B.Ed. colleges emphasizes that institutional practices, rather than type alone, determine climate quality.
2. **Leadership Is Central** – Effective, participatory leadership fosters faculty morale, enhances collaboration, and positively impacts student-teacher preparedness.
3. **Theory-Practice Integration Is Crucial** – Structured practicum, reflective learning, and mentorship bridge the gap between educational theory and classroom practice, aligning with constructivist and pragmatist models.
4. **Policy Alignment Enhances Outcomes** – Compliance with NEP 2020 and NCTE guidelines contributes to a positive educational climate, but targeted capacity-building and resource support are essential for under-resourced institutions.

10. Future Projections

Based on the findings, the following projections and recommendations are proposed for Bihar's teacher education ecosystem:

1. **Strengthening Practicum and Mentorship Programs**
   - Expand mentor training initiatives across DIETs and B.Ed. colleges.
   - Establish partnerships with local schools to enhance experiential learning opportunities.
2. **Targeted Capacity Building for Under-Resourced Institutions**
   - Prioritize infrastructure development, access to teaching aids, and faculty professional development in smaller or rural B.Ed. colleges.
3. **Leadership and Governance Development**
   - Implement institutional leadership programs to foster positive organizational climates and participatory decision-making.
4. **Systemic Monitoring and Policy Implementation**
   - Develop performance appraisal and quality assurance mechanisms that combine regulatory oversight with supportive interventions.
   - Encourage continuous alignment of curriculum, practicum, and assessment practices with NEP 2020 and NCTE standards.
5. **Research and Innovation in Teacher Education**
   - Encourage longitudinal studies tracking the impact of educational climate improvements on teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes.
   - Promote action research models within teacher training institutions to iteratively improve curriculum-pedagogy integration.

Overall, sustainable improvement in the educational climate requires a **multi-pronged approach** integrating leadership development, resource support, mentorship, policy alignment, and participatory governance. These measures are projected to enhance pre-service teacher competence, institutional accountability, and the overall quality of teacher education in Bihar.

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