NWISA JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY
A Peer Reviewed and Refereed Journal ISSN Number 3048-6963 (Online)
Volume 2 Oct 2025

Citizens, Citizenship, and Education for Social Transformation: Teacher Education as a Cornerstone

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Abstract

This article presents a study investigating the notions and constructs of citizenship among student-teachers enrolled in teacher education programmes in Delhi, India. The research examines two prominent programmes and reveals significant differences in how student-teachers engage with the concepts of citizenship and the citizen. The findings demonstrate the influential role of teacher education programmes in shaping student-teachers' conceptions of citizenship, either by reinforcing prevailing notions or by fostering a more nuanced understanding of democratic citizenship. The study underscores the urgent need to evaluate current paradigms and practices in teacher preparation across various programmes. Examining student-teachers' notions of citizenship can help identify gaps in teacher education, thereby providing essential guidance to curriculum designers and policymakers in both school and teacher education. The research highlights the critical importance of taking teacher education seriously and recognizing teachers as key agents of social transformation in building a society grounded in 'constitutional morality'.

Key Words: *Citizenship, Citizenship Education, Teacher Education, Social Justice*

The question of who is counted as a citizen and what attributes make someone a citizen has been a central concern for social scientists, including educationists, since ancient times. A historical and conceptual exploration of these two concepts reveals how they have evolved through complexities, often making them a highly contested terrain of inquiry (Kymlicka, 2002).

Recent research on citizenship identifies a gap in understanding its everyday, practical dimensions, as scholarship has often focused on abstract or universal definitions. In this context, citizenship encompasses not only legal status but also the lived experiences of belonging and rights in daily life. Over the past two decades, social scientists have observed that individuals' backgrounds—such as caste, class, race, gender, and socio-political position—significantly shape their experiences of citizenship. For instance, feminist scholars and cultural theorists have examined how discrimination based on gender or caste restricts access to citizenship rights. When individuals' lived experiences diverge from the ideal of a universal citizen, it underscores the complexity of citizenship beyond official accounts. Documenting these experiences is therefore essential for understanding how citizenship is enacted in practice, not merely in theory (Lister et al., 2005).

This practical, everyday aspect of citizenship can be better understood by exploring the influence of institutions—such as schools—on citizens' experiences. An educational institution is not just a place for academic learning; it also shapes students' beliefs about participation and rights in society. Schools, especially, are important environments where students learn the values and behaviors associated with being a citizen. These lessons are taught through textbooks (official knowledge), unspoken rules (hidden curriculum), teachers' personal beliefs, and teaching methods (pedagogical practices).

Moreover, citizenship is introduced in school textbooks as an abstract concept, presented in light of its legal and constitutional definitions. Here, 'citizenship' is often described as the set of rights and duties individuals have as recognized members of the nation, defined by laws and the constitution, rather than by their everyday experiences.

In fact, research on school education shows *that* schools become sites for the exercise and reproduction of inequalities based on caste, class, and gender (Nambissan, 2004). The schooling

processes socialise the young minds in creating and perpetuating these practices, thus creating 'exclusionary meanings of citizenship (Guru, 2005). Ritubala' s work on school textbooks shows how Dalits, women, and tribes are presented to maintain caste hierarchy, patriarchy, and marginalisation. She also highlights the absence of Dalit icons, women personalities, and misrepresentation/prejudiced representation of marginalised communities in school textbooks (Ritubala, 1998).

In addition, everyday school experiences of Dalit children alienate them from the school and pedagogical processes (Sarohe, 2025). A teacher plays a crucial role in catalysing these realities as a mediator between the text and the taught. The teacher plays a significant role in shaping the meanings of who citizens are and what citizenship means. I have discussed elsewhere how teachers' knowledge and beliefs influence their pedagogical interactions. In other words, unless we bring change in the way teachers think and pedagogically practice the meaning of citizenship, we cannot imagine a democratic classroom by merely changing the school textbooks.

Thus, while examining the complexity of 'being and becoming' a citizen through the processes that take place within institutionalised forms and sites of learning, viz., schools, is crucial, an enquiry into teachers' 'invisible pedagogies' is imminent. Various studies in the West have already underlined the importance of taking teacher education seriously, arguing that teacher education programmes can provide pre-service teachers with adequate opportunities to engage with their understanding of social inequalities and to imagine their role in addressing them as school teachers. This field of enquiry has continued to be neglected in Indian educational research, particularly in the context of citizenship in teacher education. It is in this context that the present research is located. This study interrogates the notions of citizenship among the student-teachers of two popular teacher education programmes in India. The focus of this study remained on listening to these educational practitioners as they become active agents in

constructing the meanings of citizenship that matter to them in their everyday lives. Further, it traces the probable sources of these notions in teacher education curricula.

Research Design

Kallio, Wood, and Hakli (2020) offer an analytical framework, extending the work (Lister et. al., 2005) on 'lived citizenship', delineating the banality of 'being and becoming' a citizen via four markers: 'spatial, intersubjective, performed, and affective', thus bringing in not only an interdisciplinary in citizenship studies but also enriching the 'vocabulary of citizenship'.

In the present study, Student-teachers speak about citizenship using their everyday experiential accounts as citizens. Therefore, qualitative methods were used within the interpretivist research paradigm to collect and analyse data. Fieldwork included a self-administered questionnaire for the initial stage of data collection. This is followed by semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with 10 selected students from each teacher education programme. The two programmes have been named as Teacher Education Programme A (TEPA) and Teacher Education Programme B (TEPB). Approval for data collection was sought from the appropriate authorities.

The following section draws upon the major findings of this research work.

Citizens, Patriots, and Nation as a Homogeneous Entity (TEPA)

Mukesh, while expressing his views on 'who is a citizen', states that every individual residing in India is a citizen. He said that they are his fellow citizens irrespective of their caste, class, region, or religious background. While many student-teachers held views on citizenship similar to Mukesh's, others had different ways of understanding and articulating their ideas of citizenship.

Rehana said, "Citizenship *starts at one's home because a nation is a mere collection of families. So, like in a family, there are norms and values to abide by to keep it happy and functional; you abide by the laws of a country and comply with societal norms to keep it integrated. You keep*

your locality clean, maintain harmony with your neighbours, and choose the right political representative by voting during elections. These are some of the ways to keep a society and a nation together".

The two views above are representative of how student-teachers in the Teacher Education Programme A (TEPA) constructed the concepts of a citizen and citizenship. They looked at citizens as 'ideal citizens' and 'social citizens.

For the majority of TEPA student-teachers, citizenship was defined in constitutional-legal terms, meaning that only an individual born in India was a fellow citizen by virtue of their birth in the country. While expressing their views on their roles as citizens, most respondents expressed strong emotions, such as 'national pride' and a sense of 'belonging to the nation', which predominantly shaped how they saw themselves and others as citizens. This emerged more effectively when respondents defined a patriot as an 'ideal citizen'. For them, 'freedom fighters', 'soldiers', and political leaders who protect the nation were the only true patriots and therefore ideal citizens, as visible in the responses of Mudita and Bhavesh below;

Mudita: Who can die for the country? Who can sacrifice their personal lives to protect Indians? Only a soldier! They are the true citizens; they are the ideal citizens.

Bhavesh: Bhagat Singh, who laid his life for millions of Indians, for our freedom, for our liberation from the Britishers. He is my idea of an ideal citizen... I know I can never imagine myself doing what he did for us. Though I am fascinated by his life, I don't have the courage to be like him.

Like Bhavesh and Mudita, the majority of respondents believed that not every citizen has the courage to become an 'ideal citizen'; they believed that every citizen should 'do the least' to compensate for this by remembering the nation. All the respondents shared that, since their school years, their routine has been marked by remembering the nation and the sacrifices of patriots.

They believed that this is an important aspect of the education of every child who grows up in India. Through school assembly, children are taught to take pride in being an Indian citizen and protect the nation if needed. The student-teachers believed that this routine remembering of the nation was crucial in teaching them to emulate the life of 'soldiers', 'martyrs', and 'freedom fighters' while celebrating these ideals. They described how the everyday morning assembly in their teacher education institutions provided them with the opportunity to continue this tradition. Some of the respondents described how slogans like *Desh ki Raksha hum karenge*' (we will protect the nation) and '*Bharat Mata ki Jai*' (Hail Mother India) during morning assembly have nurtured their patriotic sentiments since childhood. The flag hoisting, taking the pledge of 'laying one's life to serve the nation' as well as singing patriotic songs during days of 'national relevance' were not mere celebrations of people and memories of the Indian freedom struggle, but these practices also evoked 'nationalistic feelings' of oneness among them.

Bhavesh: "I think the national anthem is not merely an anthem; it is written to evoke patriotic sentiments among true citizens. It celebrates our history of the freedom struggle by remembering those who laid down their lives to free our nation. And it is our duty to respect our heritage, our history. I feel very emotional every time I hear the national anthem. The same goes for our national symbols; they are only remembered on certain days. It should become our everyday routine of remembering them".

Mudita: "For a patriot, celebration of national days like Independence Day and Republic Day is important. This is why we need to celebrate them every day. And we, as teachers, should teach our students to feel equally patriotic about the nation. It starts with teaching them to sing the national anthem perfectly".

The student-teachers of TEPA thus believed that the role of a teacher is to instil a sense of 'patriotism' in learners, in which pedagogy included eulogising the colonial past and the role of

freedom fighters in liberating enslaved Indians from the colonisers. This sentiment is nurtured in the present by praising the soldiers who protect the nation. Ironically, all the student-teachers denied emulating the life of soldiers or freedom fighters. They perceived themselves as ordinary citizens. This brings us to the second construct of citizenship, 'social citizen'. This 'social citizen' reflected the relation that student-teachers had with themselves and the ordinary individuals they interacted with in their everyday contexts. According to them, this 'social citizen' was a normative idea of a citizen who is responsible, law-abiding, dutiful, and 'love thy neighbour'.

Student-teachers expressed that 'responsibility' needs to be prioritised over 'rights', as they believed that it is responsibility, not rights, that should be central to citizenship. While discussing their participation as citizens, student-teachers believed that a citizen should extend unconditional support in the functioning of the existing government and its institutions. Student-teachers argued that 'voting during elections' and 'feeling responsible' towards other citizens should be the cornerstone of citizenship actions.

They argued that 'voting' and a strong sense of duty towards other citizens are important indicators of citizenship participation.

Student-teachers also developed the idea of a non-citizen while constructing the idea of a citizen. Since the citizen was construed within a 'constitutional-legal' framework, the student-teacher viewed anyone outside this framework as a non-citizen. According to the student-teachers, immigrants from other countries were 'illegal', 'outsiders', and 'aliens' whom these student-teachers often despised, as is expressed below;

Mukesh: "Why should a refugee be given equal status to an ordinary citizen of India? " You can see that many of these refugees are leading a better life, comfort, and facilities that many poor and underprivileged Indians don't get. Our own people should be given those facilities before we

spend our resources on these outsiders, because they will never be counted as our citizens. They will be only outsiders, always.

The student-teachers of TEPA viewed the immigrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Tibet as 'strangers in their homeland'. Emotions such as hatred and suspicion dominated their responses as they expressed their views on immigrants. Many questioned why 'national resources are being wasted on them?'

The immigrants thus emerged as 'imagined enemy' (the outsider) in the minds of these student-teachers who were marginalised in their conceptual category of a citizen. While the student-teacher frequently claimed that every 'legal citizen' (in their words) is a fellow citizen, their responses showed otherwise. They categorised some citizens as lesser citizens or as 'bad citizens'; "people with anti-India views" (who question the government), 'interstate migrants', and 'criminals' (in student-teachers' words) were non-citizens among the fellow citizens who fell in the category of non-citizens for them.

The ease with which the student-teachers argued that immigrants in India are non-citizens is worrisome. Despite this teacher education programme, in particular, having student-teachers from diverse social, cultural, and religious backgrounds, it did not provide adequate opportunities to critically engage with issues of diversity in an informed and rigorous manner. The responses, in fact, show that these student-teachers carried forward their 'common-sensical' notions of 'others' both in their everyday context as well as in a supposedly 'educative environment'.

A further inquiry into the notions of citizenship vis-à-vis gender concerns and issues revealed student-teachers' positions on issues of women and freedom, which showed a contradiction. Their responses mirrored gendered and patriarchal beliefs as they often found arguing in favour of prioritising women's roles as mothers, wives, and daughter-in-law rather than their individual freedom as citizens.

Bhavani: A woman should have the freedom to do so at any time or any place. She should feel free and safe even at night. Having said that, women should learn to refrain themselves, when she knows what can happen with her if she goes out at unsafe times. I strongly believe that if something goes wrong with a woman, she is to some extent responsible for it.

While most student teachers echoed Bhavani's views, a few, like *Manoj,* countered them.

Manoj: What are you talking about? It is this kind of thought process that is problematic. It is the society that nurtures such a thought process that a girl cannot go out at night without her parents, but we are not ok if she is with a man. As the young generation, it is our responsibility to question such thinking.

Another recurring theme that emerged during the interaction with the student-teachers was their resentment of caste-based reservation. I have argued elsewhere how the student-teachers believed that caste-based discrimination was a 'thing of the past' and does not exist in the present time (Sarohe, 2025).

Sehaj: The reservation was started to raise the economic status of people from the SC, ST, and OBC communities. They have already reached the place they never deserved, yet we still provide them with a reservation. I strongly believe that the reservation should be discontinued. Also, economic deprivation should be the single most important criterion for providing reservations.

Mudita: Provide financial help if needed. Support them during their early years of schooling. But why reservations in employment and higher education? There, it should be based solely on merit.

Two major points emerged from this study regarding student-teachers' understanding and views on caste: first, their view that caste cannot have any bearing on one's identity as a citizen. This was strongly connected to their denial of caste. Though student-teachers continued to deny caste, they also simultaneously took pride in calling themselves 'general caste', 'the one who does not have a reservation'. Moreover, they presented themselves as the protector of 'merit', which they

believed was eroded by caste-based reservation. They also attributed the role of reservations in stalling India's economic progress. In addition to this, they also held the view that caste-based reservation is a way to promote caste -based division and hierarchy, which can be detrimental to the 'political unity' of the nation and the casteless identity of a citizen. The findings of this aspect of caste and citizenship have been discussed elsewhere in detail (Sarohe, 2025).

The findings from interactions with the student-teachers at TEPA helped me analyse how they engage with issues of inequality based on caste, class, gender, and immigration. I also attempted to gauge the different frameworks these student-teachers used while expressing their views. The findings show that student-teachers were not able to understand that caste-based violence, both symbolic and physical, is still a reality in the lives of Dalit citizens despite constitutional safeguards. Also, the patriarchal ways of defining women in their motherhood and wifely roles are disconcerting. I have already discussed how teachers' beliefs can significantly shape what unfolds in their classrooms. A student-teacher who denies caste, holds patriarchal views, and perceives diversity as a threat (including their views on immigrants) can have serious pedagogical implications for children in a diverse classroom. A teacher's inability to view diversity not only as a resource but also as a challenge can make it difficult to imagine anti-caste, anti-patriarchal, and inclusive pedagogical conditions in which they can engage their students in critiquing and challenging caste structures to reimagine a society built on the ideals of social democracy.

Citizens, Citizenry, and Social Justice: TEPB

The student-teachers of the Teacher Education Programme B (TEPB) emphasized their participation as citizens informed by their ideal of social justice. For them, a real citizen is someone who not only questions oppressive structures but also challenges and intervenes to transform them. They argued that for a citizen, awareness of their constitutional rights is integral

to a socially just conception of citizenship. They also viewed that this awareness should be paired with their responsibilities as citizens.

Kiran: When you are aware of your citizenship, you would know whenever it is violated. It is exactly then that you would know what needs to be done in those situations. This is how every citizen should be.

Jyoti: Every individual in this country is a citizen. Some are more vocal about their rights, while others are not. But we cannot say they are exercising less citizenship. What an individual thinks and behaves depends a lot on their contexts, their social realities.

For the student-teachers of TEPB, a citizen is both a right-bearing and a responsible citizen. For them, these two qualities shape how citizens perceive their participation and citizenry. On this basis, they classified citizens into two types: personally responsible and socially responsible (Sarohe, 2017). The category of 'socially responsible citizenship' is derived from Westheimer and Kahne's ideas of 'participatory citizenship' and 'justice-oriented citizenship' (see Westheimer and Kahne, 2004). So, a personally responsible citizen would be someone who keeps their residential area clean by managing waste judiciously. In this way, the 'personal responsibility' was confined to the individual's immediate locality and her participation in keeping it safe and healthy. The second level of citizenship, which student-teachers defined as being a socially responsible citizen, had a larger domain in which to work. This meant an individual is more critical and reflective about the larger socio-political happenings around her and how they would affect everyday life. They argued that society evolves from the self to the larger human context. The following key excerpts illustrate how student-teachers viewed participation in the betterment of society as citizens as the cornerstone of citizenship. Unlike student-teachers of TEPA, who largely constructed the nation as an abstract and homogeneous entity, the student-teachers of TEPB imagined their nation in multiple ways while still feeling

'patriotic' about it. They view every citizen as having multiple identities, such as religion, caste, class, and gender, which affect their chances as citizens. They argued that a nation as a moral society should be a place where everyone is respected, despite these differences. They also shared the belief that the diverse traditions, cultures, and histories of communities across India create unique opportunities to deepen democracy and promote fraternity. Some student-teachers even expressed that fraternity should transcend beyond geo-political borders and embrace every individual as an equal citizen.

Jyoti: Citizenship is not just about being Indian. That would be a limited way of thinking about it. You need to be a citizen of humanity, the world.

Kiran: Singing the national anthem and patriotic songs on certain days is a great way to be a citizen. But that is not enough. There is more to being a citizen. It is about being aware of one's rights and asserting them when needed.

The findings show that, for many student-teachers, the idea of citizenship was shaped by epistemic justice. It echoed Assister's idea of 'epistemic community' wherein its members were bound by a collective sense of social justice, often transcending geopolitical borders. Student-teachers' notions emerged from their understanding of gender, caste, and class issues. Their perspectives on these issues often intersected with feminist and other critical discourses, demonstrating their ability to engage with social justice issues in depth. This can also be explained by the student-teachers' understanding that an individual's social, economic, and cultural positionalities shape their ability to claim their rights and 'total citizenship'. One of the student-teachers, Kiran, discussed how our deep-seated prejudices and the discriminatory behaviour that emanate from these prejudices shape a traumatic reality for the disadvantaged people who are equal citizens as per the Constitution of India.

Kiran: "When sanitation workers collect garbage from our homes, we behave discriminately

with them. We do not allow them to sit and eat with us, leaving them with the feeling that they are not equal to us. I have seen people in my locality who would not allow them to enter their houses. Whenever they are offered something, they maintain physical distance. The dish used to serve them food is either handed to them or thrown into the dustbin. Our discriminatory behaviour makes them learn to accept this as the reality."

Like Kiran, many student-teachers expressed that the social structures of caste and practices deny some citizens the ability to actualize their citizenship rights. Also, their assertion that these contexts shape the understanding and experience of an active citizen proves how these student-teachers made the assertion that merely providing 'right to equality' does not guarantee its substantiation. Rather, it's one's gender, class, and caste that affect and determine the degree to which citizens can enjoy their rights as citizens. Also, their 'rejection of universals' aligned with their challenge to the liberal discourse on citizenship by acknowledging and accepting differences. Student-teachers showed a rigorous understanding of the gender issues. They often shared personal anecdotes to discuss broader patriarchal issues in society, thereby echoing the idea that 'personal is political' as well. The following excerpts illuminate this;

Jaya: The Constitution has given women sufficient rights to protect them as equal citizens. But can we really say that women are treated as equals in their everyday lives? Starting from family to employment, it is they who get discriminated against because of their gender. Only when everyday reality is gender-sensitive and women-friendly will we feel equal citizens.

Kiran: Look at the representation of women in politics. Look at their participation in elections. It is disturbing. Women, who constitute half of our population, are not present to speak on the issues that affect them. Because of their low representation in politics. Is it not a matter of great concern?

Student-teachers responses show their ability to use a feminist lens to speak up about how patriarchy shapes every aspect of their lives. They believed that it is only through this feminist lens that they can catalyse 'collective conscientisation' and political action against gender injustice. The student-teachers of TEPB can be described as 'justice-oriented citizens. In Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) work, justice-oriented citizens assess social, political, and economic structures through a critical lens, challenge oppressive forces, and seek to reconstruct alternative possibilities.

Citizenship in the Education of Teachers: Some Reflections

This study was undertaken to understand the nuances and details of student-teachers' conceptions of citizenship. The findings presented above show that the student-teachers who were enrolled in different teacher education programmes have diverse ways of talking about citizenship. The strength of the research lies in its ability to capture the 'common-sensical' notions of citizenship among student-teachers as they engaged with the question of citizenship, drawing on examples from their everyday contexts. The findings show that, despite individual ways of conceptualising 'citizen' and 'citizenship', a pattern emerged in which student-teachers from one institution shared similar responses. To understand this pattern, the second part of the research was to locate probable sources of these conceptions of citizenship. By talking to the participants in this research, an attempt was made to determine whether the courses of study, practicums, and pedagogical processes within a particular teacher education program influence or shape their notions of citizenship. Since both teacher education programmes are offered after class twelve, completion of schooling, it was pertinent to identify potential sources of citizenship among these student-teachers.

An interesting finding was that there were no specific courses to educate student-teachers on citizenship. However, there were curricular components that could have provided some

opportunities for them to engage with the issues of citizenship. In TEPA, these curricular and pedagogical spaces are used solely to promote the idea of a liberal citizenship that forecloses engagement with issues of diversity, inequality, and social justice. The pedagogy used in these classrooms further prohibited the use of conflict in the classroom discussions. As a result, the student-teachers could not get adequate opportunities to question their stereotypes and notions on many issues related to caste, class, and gender. Experiences arising out of these 'pedagogical interactions' only confirmed their existing beliefs that they learnt during their schooling years. It was these commonsensical notions that they referred to as they interpreted their roles as citizens (Sarohe, 2018). These notions focused on understanding citizenship as equal to celebrating 'nation' through 'patriotism', which they learnt as abstract ideas from social science textbooks and from their memories of school assemblies, as they prepared to become teachers.

The TEPB, similarly, did not have any specific course on 'citizenship education'. However, the components of 'citizenship education' were carefully woven across the curriculum and practicums. The teacher educators used pedagogies that provided adequate space and opportunities for student-teachers to question their beliefs and challenge their earlier-held views on various social issues. Both theory and practicum courses provided specific opportunities to shape experiences that prepared student-teachers to be interrogative and deliberative citizens. These courses enabled student-teachers to understand how their social positioning determines their privileges. This acknowledgment to understand their privileges opened their ways of understanding the world. Student-teachers shared several experiences where they learned to acknowledge their own privileges and also started questioning 'undeserved inequalities' that many people different from them. These opportunities further empowered them to voice their views courageously and act in a socially just manner. They strongly believed that classrooms are grounds to practice democracy by traversing and navigating the often labelled 'controversial' and

'conflict-ridden trajectories. They held the conviction that teachers have a critical role to play in practicing critical pedagogy, which equips them to feel the onus to 'problematise and alter the structures and processes of injustices' both as persons and professionals.

Conclusion

Kallio, Wood, and Hakli (2020) argue that studying varied dimensions and the everydayness of citizenship can provide an important lens for delineating everyday acts and agency, such as resisting or consenting to normative, dominant, and oppressive narratives of citizenship. This approach not only offers a nuanced focus on how identities and citizenships are shaped, but also brings 'personal' under scrutiny as a site of citizenship study, where 'political' is understood in pluralistic and radical ways.

One can perhaps use this scholarship of 'lived citizenship' to undertake research in some of the most crucial spaces, such as the education system, particularly in teacher education. The present paper emerges from a study that uses this approach to examine the notions of citizenship among student-teachers in two of the most popular teacher education programmes in Delhi. The findings discussed here empirically demonstrate the role of the teacher education programme in shaping nuanced conceptualisations of citizenship and the citizen, as well as teachers' roles vis-à-vis these two constructs. One of the major findings is that the participants in the present study's study hold competing, heterogeneous, and, in some cases, overlapping discourses of citizenship and identity. However, one can find a significant level of similarity among student-teachers enrolled in the same teacher education programme in the conceptualisation of their roles as citizens. This brings us to an important role teacher education programmes play in shaping student-teachers' notions of citizenship. I have argued elsewhere how teachers' notions and beliefs have a significant bearing on their 'implicit pedagogies' of citizenship, which can further shape varied meanings of exclusion and inclusion for their learners (Sarohe, 2018).

By sharing findings in this paper, the author calls upon all educational practitioners to study and evaluate the current paradigms and practices of teacher education in India. I argue that examining student-teachers' notions of citizenship can provide much-needed direction to curriculum designers and policymakers in identifying the existing gaps in teacher education programmes. This study draws attention to the urgency of taking teachers' education seriously if we hold the conviction that teachers are crucial agents of social transformation and hold the key to building a future grounded in the ideals of democratic citizenship.

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