

## Emerging Concerns in Pre-Service Teacher Education

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### ABSTRACT

It is a well known saying that a teacher is the national builder. To be able to discharge such a high responsibility, it is very necessary that the teacher must become conscious of his role towards society. His behavior should indicate his attempt to do his job properly. His personality must reflect characteristics of a good citizen, dignity of the individual, rights and duties etc., so that he may transmit the same to the younger generation. The above said facts express the dire need of teacher-education. This is the reason that teacher education is considered as an integral part of education system and improvement of its major objectives. Without providing the quality teachers, free and compulsory education cannot be shaped properly. So that, after independence the importance of teacher's education was given the sole priority. Even today after 70 years of independence, teacher's education is a major challenge for us. Teacher education is perhaps more confronted with how to negotiate and significantly address the world of teaching-learning than merely dealing with duties, responsibilities and classroom assignments. It is now at the fork of fullness of vision in a fascinated world of immediate gain in every endeavour and worries and frustrations in fruitless teaching sans joy, sans freedom and creative adventure. As a consequence, the challenges of teacher education today for addressing tougher ones of tomorrow remains a far more thrilling adventure to be more worthily undertaken. Hence, this paper tries to explore the basic concept, professional skills, norms and regulations, Issues and problems of teacher education, commissions attempt, individual initiatives and role of various agencies.

**Keywords:** Teacher Education, Development, Problems, govt. initiatives, Quality assurance

Teacher education in India, especially the pre-service preparation of teachers, is a carry over of the outmoded model of teacher education practised in Britain during the later decades of the 19th century. The advent of the information revolution has altered beyond recognition the shape and scope of education, and warrant the adoption of several new approaches if it has to practice the new education. The teachers of the next generation have to muster the tools of the information age and acquire the skills for using the new tools and educational instrumentalities if they have to remain competitive in the emerging world scenario of education. Teacher education in India has to change drastically if it has to serve

the needs of the emerging 21<sup>st</sup> century society. The assumption underlying all programmes of teacher education is that the professional competence of teachers could make a profound difference in their educational transactions and on the development of their students. The new expectations placed on the teaching profession in the new educational scenario, demands higher degrees of professionalism on the part of the new generation of teachers. The new generation teachers need updated professional knowledge and competencies for teaching using the electronic media. Curriculum transaction and instructional management in the new set-up demand several new professional skills on the part of the teacher. Dealing with the vast quantum of

information available to the learners and creating the appropriate learning environment for dealing with the information are complex professional tasks for which the teachers have to be carefully prepared. The degree of success with which this task is approached ensuring a dynamic interaction between the learner and the ever-growing structure of knowledge will decide the future of the country's education.

### **Issues in Teacher Education Programme**

**Problem of selection-** our selection of teachers is quite defective. There is no standard screening criteria for the selection of Indian teachers. Defective selection procedure may lead to the deterioration of the quality of teachers. Therefore proper selection of teachers should be made on the bases of aptitude test and personal interview.

**Duration -** our teacher education programme earlier used to be of nine months duration but a drastic change has been introduced by extending its duration to two years to make it at par with the training of other professionals. But it is still in its infancy stage so no valid conclusion can be drawn about its effectiveness. We can't predict to what extent it will help us to fulfil the broad objectives of education.

**Incompetency of student teacher-** there is a gap between theory and practicing component of training institution. Students are not well prepared to face the complexities of real life. So this gap must be fulfilled at priority basis.

**Problem of practice teaching-** period of teaching practice observed in our teacher education institution is very limited and a ritual only. Our supervisors lack the vision for this important component of teaching. They don't have enough time to observe and provide needed feedback to practicing pupil teacher. So, a clear framework should be developed regarding teaching practice phase in teacher education institutions.

**Teacher demand and supply-** there is a mismatch between the demand and supply of trained teachers-area wise, subject wise and perspective wise. This is primarily because of inadequate database of requirements for teachers. So, it becomes the responsibility of the state to create database and liaison with the teacher education colleges.

**Isolation of teacher education department-** our departments hardly develop linkages with schools, peer institutions, universities and other institutes of higher learning as also the community. However much remain to be done in this direction. The curriculum of the school, its actual transactional modalities, examination system, management process and its ethos need to be the main thrust areas of teacher education programme. Teacher education institutes should work in collaboration with the larger society.

**Lack of innovative practices-** our teacher educator's still practice obsolete methods of teaching. They are not innovative in their ideas, thoughts and approaches. Need of the hour is to incorporate latest technology in teaching learning process.

**Less opportunities for professional development-** to produce the quality teachers we must focus upon their maximum professional development. Every teacher must take the opportunity to continue his/her professional development throughout his/her career. Teachers should be open to ideas, to refine decisions making skills and to become more effective in integrating theory and practice.

**Mushrooming of teacher education institutions-** the last decade has evidenced the mushrooming growth of teacher education institutes leading to a very unhealthy suicidal trend that is commercialization. Education has come into control of people who do not have any concern with quality of teacher education. For them colleges are money making machines. This growth has created a new category of students popularly known as non attending. So, there should be a check on opening of such institutions.

**Problem of infrastructure-** although we have a long list of teacher education colleges but majority of them lacks the required infrastructure to carry out teaching learning activities. Facilities are there but only in papers. Infrastructure is made available only at the time of inspection. As soon as the team leaves the college, there is nothing. This disease can be curbed only with the proper interventions from the bodies governing the teacher education programme. So, these are some of issues or challenges that our teacher's education is facing. There is need to come forward and take some concrete steps. More attention must be paid to defining and assessing

global competence in teaching and learning. Training teachers for the global age also requires that teacher educators who are preparing future teachers in our colleges need to develop the capacities as well as the knowledge, skills and dispositions to help pupil teacher acquire them.

### Remedies

1. Value education should be given to teachers, so that they could educate young minds in the right direction.
2. Curriculum of teacher education programme should be revised from time to time according to changing needs of society.
3. The quality of teacher education programme should be up graded.
4. Teacher education programme should be raised to a university level and that the duration and rigour of programme should be appropriately enhanced.
5. Teacher education institutions should be put under strict control of this regulatory body for the selection of teacher, students and provisions of good infrastructure etc.
6. Institutions working should be examined from time to time and strict action should be taken if they fail to come up to expected level.
7. Teachers should be trained about stress management mechanism so that they could help students in managing the stress and sustaining themselves in this time of social isolation, parental pressure and cut throat competition.
8. Teachers should be able to think critically make right decisions and maintain harmonious relations with others.
9. Teacher education programmes should enables the teachers to develop their life skills among students.
10. Techniques used in teaching should develop habit of self learning and reduce dependence on teachers. It will help them to reflect on their own and doing something new. Doing something new is creativeness.
11. Teachers should encourage student's capacity to construct knowledge.

12. Constitutional goals of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity can be realized through proper teacher education.
13. Teachers are to make positive contribution to the realization of the constitutional goals.
14. Teachers must understand the importance of the constitution in its true prospective in the light of Indian Culture ethos and integrate it with the philosophy of education.
15. Teachers should prepare to own responsibility towards society and work to build a better world, commitment to justice and zeal for social reconstruction.
16. The impact of science and technology and ICT on society and education should be fully discussed in teacher education institutions.
17. Scientific temper should be developed and its application for the solution of problems of life should be encouraged.
18. New knowledge and new experiences should be incorporated in the curriculum and there should be a scope for teachers for reflection of knowledge.

### Emerging Trends

*National Curriculum Framework 2005:* The National Council of Educational Research and Training brought out the NCF 2005 stressing the following changes at school level: (a) connecting the curricular knowledge with the learners life experiences of outside school environment, (b) shifting learning from rote memorization to construction of knowledge by the learner by actively participating learning activities, (c) enriching the curricular experiences which move beyond the prescribed textbooks, and (d) integrating assessment with the learners classroom life experiences (NCF, 2005). The changes visualized through constructivist pedagogy where teachers take a role of facilitator of learning by engaging learning in small group / cooperative learning, problem based learning, project based learning, and other pedagogical strategies which follow constructivist principles. The school syllabi were revised to reflect the NCF vision by NCERT and various state government agencies. The syllabi prepared under NCF-2005 also in consonance with the RTE Act. NCERT and various state agencies engaged in conducting in-service training program

for teachers to share and prepare the teachers to engage the student learning visualized by NCF 2005. *National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2009*: The development of NCFTE 2009 was guided by epistemological shift visualized by NCF 2005, and taking cognizance of changing school contexts and demands in the light of RTE 2009, Universalization of Secondary Education its implication to teacher education (Pandey, 2011). The framework envisaged having longer duration of teacher preparation program which can provide adequate time and opportunity to self-study, reflective practice, longer duration of internship, experiencing newer and innovative pedagogic approaches both at teacher education institution and school during internship.

*Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) 2009*: NCF 2005 stressed that need for integrating assessment with the learners' classroom life experiences. NCF position paper on Examination reformation (2006) observed that, External examinations are largely inappropriate for the "knowledge society" of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and its "need for innovative problem solvers", and suggested strongly that, school-based CCE will reduce stress on children, make evaluation regular and comprehensive, provide space for teacher to be creative in their teaching and diagnose the learners difficulty. By considering NCF suggestions, CBSE vide its Advisory No. 39 dated 20.9.2009 introduced Examination Reforms and Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) in the CBSE schools. Successively CCE implemented in other state boards.

*Justice Verma Commission 2012*: The Supreme Court of India in 2011 while hearing special leave petition (SLC) regarding D.Ed. admission of Maharashtra appointed Justice Verma Commission to examine all the issues related to teacher education and make recommendation which could lead to improvement in quality of teacher education as well as regulatory function of the NCTE. The Commission made the following recommendations: Government investment in establishing teacher education institutions in eastern and northeastern states; instituting entry-test for pre-service teacher education program; increasing the duration of teacher preparation program as per the recommendation of Kothari commission 1966;

newer teacher education institutions to be located in multi, interdisciplinary academic environment i.e. composite institutions; redesigning current teacher education programs in the context of NCFTE 2009, RTE 2009 and other related documents; attaching dedicated school with each teacher education institution where student teacher get opportunity to experiment and develop the capability to become reflective practitioners; establishment of national level academic body to look into norms, standards, developing reading material and faculty development of teacher educators; developing material for continuous professional development (CPD) through distance and blended learning mode; 2 year M.Ed.; considering teacher educators as visiting faculty in schools; institutionalizing faculty development programs; creating inter-university centre in teacher education to promote research in education; (in-service) developing policy framework for in-service teacher education; strengthening CTE, IASE and University Departments in engaging CPD of secondary teachers; developing framework for teacher performance and teacher audit; review of norms and standards periodically by NCTE; developing comprehensive guidelines for innovative teacher education program by NCTE; developing framework for already recognized institution by NCTE; setting up of Teacher Education Assessment and Accreditation Centre (TEAAC) to prepare comprehensive framework for accreditation of teacher education institutions; setting up of institutional platform to coordinate with other agencies such as UGC, universities, Distance Education Council (DEC), and state governments; and establishing vigilance cell at NCTE etc.

### **Quality Assurance in Teacher Education**

Quality is contextual. It is very difficult to give a comprehensive definition of quality. The best teacher of a particular school may be a poor teacher in some other school. However, the quest for quality has been the major concern of the entire human civilization. Quality is not an act, it is a habit. It generally signifies the degree of excellence. It is the totality of features and characteristics of the product, process or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. In the educational context, quality is seen as a complex issue as education is concerned with human being. When we describe

human being as a product, the description cannot encapsulate all the characteristics of teachers or learners in the same way, as one would describe the quality of commodities. Hence, the definition of quality varies depending upon the individual, institution and educational situation, social and national context.

The major factors of quality concerns in teacher education are *input, process and product factors*.

*Input Factors:* Input factors involve the entire physical infrastructure such as building, equipment, library, books, laboratory and playground etc. it also includes “students’ entry behaviour such as their family background, socio-economic status, academic achievement, their interest, need etc. teachers’ entry behavior such as their academic and professional background, socio-economics status, their attitude towards teaching profession, interest, etc. are also considered as input factors.

*Process Factors:* A teacher education programme is said to be successful if its outcomes are maximized amongst the trainees in terms of development of necessary skills, Values and attitudes. These outcomes are largely depending upon how effectively the process of training is organized. Quality lies in its processes. Output is the result of processes. A process is a particular course of action intended to achieve the desired results. It is a sustained phenomenon marked by gradual changes through a series of actions that lead towards a particular result. It may be natural or man-made but a continuous activity or functions (Mishra, 2002). Good quality inputs coupled with weak processes may not lead to desired outcomes. On the other hand, good quality processes coupled with minimum desirable inputs may lead to desired outcomes. It includes the instructional strategies and processes.

*Product Factors:* Product factors are the desired outputs of a given course of instructions. It determines whether objectives of a particular course of instruction are being achieved or not. They are students’ academic achievement, commitment to teaching profession, efficiency in learning, personality development, etc.

Focused Parameters in Teacher Education: NPE, 1986 has rightly stated that, “No people can rise above the level of teachers.” So or the development

of the country, it is very important to have good teachers and good teachers can be produced only if we have a good system of teacher education and dedicated and efficient teacher educators.

The following quality parameters must be focused by the concerned agencies like government, the university and finally the education department.

- ❑ B.Ed and M.Ed course should be of two years term. In which first year should be for covering the theory portion and second year for practice of teaching. In second year of M.Ed the special courses like population education, environment education and action research should be emphasized.
- ❑ Well qualified teachers should be appointed.
- ❑ Infrastructure as per the guidelines of NCTE should be provided.
- ❑ The teachers must be provided the opportunity to improve their qualification by organizing seminars, conferences, Workshops, writing, presenting research papers and undertaking some research work.
- ❑ Accountability of the student as well as the teacher should be determined.
- ❑ Teachers should be prepared to care for children and to love with them, love knowledge and be constantly learning, own responsibility towards society and work to build a better world, develop sensitivity to the problem of the learners, commitment to justice and zeal for self reconstruction.
- ❑ The state government should instruct all the heads of the schools, private management, education department not to recruit untrained teachers in the schools. The excursion, activities, summer camps, educational fairs, talent searching programmes etc. should be organized frequently in the institutions.
- ❑ The criteria of promotion should be revised. It should not be on the basis of time promotion rather it should be based on performance in general.
- ❑ All educational agencies should give opportunity to the teachers to enhance professional qualification. They should be oriented through latest techniques and modes of teaching.

- ❑ Government should promote the contribution of private investors, NGOs and various related agencies to work or for the improvement of professional growth of the teachers and to improve infrastructure at institution level.
- ❑ There should be a co-ordination between the government, management and teachers so that a democratic system of working together may be developed.
- ❑ Very fortunately we adopted democratic political system in the country but it seems that democracy is shown on the papers and not in the field.
- ❑ Last but not least we must provide more finance to education.

## CONCLUSION

It is a well-known saying that teacher is the nation builder. The quality of teacher education programme needs to be up graded. Teacher education has not come up to the requisite standards. Teachers are not able to think critically and solve the issue related to teaching methods, content, organisation etc. teacher education programme needs a comprehensive reform and restructuring curriculum of teacher-education programme needs to be revised according to changing needs of society. No doubt a lot of stress is given on teacher-education course in India. The above discussion clearly indicates the enormous

task ahead of the institution of teacher education, integrating all aspects in the course to achieve the goal of education. Teacher with competences and commitment, encompassed by professional ethics are the need of hour. The challenges are ever changing and never ending. Thus, both teacher education and teacher educators require and systematic review of their benchmarks followed by a serious planning and consideration about restructuring and resetting of teacher education institutes. This can bring about drastic changes in teachers and improve the quality of teachers at all level of education.

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