



Contemporary issues in Indian teacher education

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Abstract

Education is widely considered as the key to human development and it is a process of human enlightenment and empowerment for the achievement of a better and high quality of life. It brings out desired changes in the individual as well as in the society. Educational institutions played very important role for fulfilling this purpose. Educational institutions are performing their functions of providing learning experiences to their students to lead them from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge and teacher is holding key position in this process. As stated by NCTE (1998) in Quality Concerns in Secondary Teacher Education, The teacher is the most important element in any educational program. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for implementation of the educational process at any stage. So, A teacher should prepare himself for this special task before accepting the responsibility of teaching. It is well known that the quality and extent of learner achievement are determined primarily by teacher competence, sensitivity and teacher motivation which ultimately depends on the teacher education. Teacher Education is a programme that is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence. Teacher education is important as efficient teachers can shape an efficient future society. The development of the standard of education is closely connected with the question of teacher education. The teachers' training institution helps a lot to do this task. In the education policy the importance of the teachers' training is admitted for a long time. Teacher Education encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory and professional skills. New developments, population exposition, technology and many more sets new challenges in teacher education. Present paper focus on current issues and problems facing by teacher education today.

Keywords: education, teacher, teacher education

Introduction

Education itself is the basic human right and as a tool to make a sensitive about issues and problems. Education is the process to teach people to learn right actions and made them understand that freedom is not unrestricted. Education translates the meaning of authority and freedom. It teaches how to avoid punishment to live externally free and inwardly peace full with clear conscience, enriched mind without fear and worry. Education uses conditioning, reconditioning, learning, learning techniques to bring people within red line zone to change behavior. Man is a social being. He is an integral part of society. The man is product of society where as society also depends upon its individuals for its development. Aims and objectives of any society can achieved through the proper educations of its men. For such an educational system, we require efficient teachers. It is well known saying that 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 behave should indicate his attempt to do his job properly. His personality must reflect characteristics of good citizenship, 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. An educational institution performs a significant function of providing learning experiences to lead their students from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. The key

personnel in the institutions who play an important role to bring about this transformation are teachers. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for implementation of the educational process at any stage. This shows that it is imperative to invest in the preparation of teachers, so that the future of a nation is secure. The importance of competent teachers to the nation's school system can in no way be overemphasized. The National Curriculum Framework 2005 places demands and expectations on the teacher, which need to be addressed by both initial and continuing teacher education.

Meaning of Teacher Education

It is well known that the quality and extent of learner achievement are determined primarily by teacher competence, sensitivity and teacher motivation.

The National Council for Teacher Education has defined teacher education as – A programme of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher education level. Teacher education is a programme that is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein.

According to Goods Dictionary of Education Teacher education means, —all the formal and non-formal activities and experiences that help to qualify a person to assume

responsibilities of a member of the educational profession or to discharge his responsibilities more effectively.

As W.H. Kilpatrick put it, -Training is given to animals and circus performers, while education is to human beings. Teacher education encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory and professional skills.

Teacher Education = Teaching Skills + Pedagogical theory + Professional skills.

Teaching skills would include providing training and practice in the different techniques, approaches and strategies that would help the teachers to plan and impart instruction, provide appropriate reinforcement and conduct effective assessment. It includes effective classroom management skills, preparation and use of instructional materials and communication skills.

Pedagogical theory includes the philosophical, sociological and psychological considerations that would enable the teachers to have a sound basis for practicing the teaching skills in the classroom. The theory is stage specific and is based on the needs and requirements that are characteristic of that stage.

Professional skills include the techniques, strategies and approaches that would help teachers to grow in the profession and also work towards the growth of the profession. It includes soft skills, counselling skills, interpersonal skills, computer skills, information retrieving and management skills and above all life long learning skills.

An amalgamation of teaching skills, pedagogical theory and professional skills would serve to create the right knowledge, attitude and skills in teachers, thus promoting holistic development.

Nature of Teacher Education

Teacher education is a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components are complimentary to each other. Teacher education is based on the theory that-Teachers are made, not born in contrary to the assumption,-Teachers are born, not made. Since teaching is considered an art and a science, the teacher has to acquire not only knowledge, but also skills that are called -tricks of the trade. Teacher education is broad and comprehensive. Besides pre-service and in-service programmes for teachers, it is meant to be involved in various community programmes and extension activities, viz adult education and non-formal education programmes, literacy and development activities of the society. It is ever-evolving and dynamic. In order to prepare teachers who are competent to face the challenges of the dynamic society, Teacher education has to keep abreast of recent developments and trends. The crux of the entire process of teacher education lies in its curriculum, design, structure, organization and transaction modes, as well as the extent of its appropriateness. As in other professional education programmes the teacher education curriculum has a knowledge base which is sensitive to the needs of field applications and comprises meaningful, conceptual blending of theoretical understanding available in several cognate disciplines. Teacher education has become differentiated into stage-specific programmes. This suggests that the knowledge base is adequately specialized and diversified across stages,

which should be utilized for developing effective processes of preparing entrant teachers for the functions which a teacher is expected to perform at each stage.

Objectives of Teacher Education

The basic objectives of Teacher Education can be classified as follows-

- Provide opportunities for self-learning, reflection, assimilation and articulation of new ideas; developing capacities for self directed learning and the ability to think, be self-critical and to work in groups.
- Provide opportunities for understanding self and others (including one's beliefs, assumptions and emotions); developing the ability for self analysis, self-evaluation, adaptability, flexibility, creativity and innovation.
- Provide opportunities to enhance understanding, knowledge and examine disciplinary knowledge and social realities, relate subject matter with the social milieu and develop critical thinking.
- Provide opportunities to develop professional skills in pedagogy, observation, documentation, analysis, drama, craft, story-telling and reflective inquiry objectives.
- Provide teachers with intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country but in the wider world.

Problems of Teacher Education

Teachers play a vital role in educating and inspiring the young generation to become the demographic dividend of the future generation. Teacher Education is a crucial area which urgently needs focus in order to develop the standards of pedagogy in India. Unfortunately it is suffering from many deficiencies and structural issues as:

- Defects of selection procedure lead to deterioration of the quality of teachers. Better selection method would not only improve the quality of training but also save the personal and social wastage.
- In India, period of teacher training is of one year after the graduation - the effective session being of eight to nine months. The main purpose of teacher education programme is to develop healthy attitude, broad based interest and values. It is not possible during the short duration of nine months.
- The existing training programme does not provide adequate opportunities to the student teachers to develop competency because the organizers of teacher's training programme are not aware of the existing problems of schools. Therefore there should be a close matching between the work schedule of the teacher in a school and the programme adopted for teacher preparation in a training college.
- A student teacher should know the meaning of education, its objectives, the socio-cultural and politico-economics background, the principles that guide construction of curriculum etc. But a proper preparation towards a good. Orientation is impossible in a short duration.
- In spite of all kinds of elaborate arrangements regarding practice in teaching, student teachers are non-serious to the task of teaching, deficient in sense of duty irresponsible,

aimless, indifferent to children, lacking innovative measure in teaching which are great obstacles in the development of pedagogical skills.

- The supervisory organizations for practice teaching aims at bringing improvement in the instructional activity of the student teachers by using various techniques and practical skills in teaching and help them to develop confidence in facing the classroom situations. This is done through following types of supervisions: Supervision before classroom teaching: It aims at guiding in planning their lessons, learning to organize contents, formulating suitable gestures and developing other related skills. At present the lesson plans are checked superficially and no discussion is made by the subject method specialist.
- The B.Ed. programme does not emphasize the knowledge of the basic subject. The whole teaching practice remains indifferent with regard to the subject knowledge of the student teacher.
- In India teacher educators are averse to innovation and experimentation in the use of methods of teaching. Their acquaintance with modern class-room communication devices is negligible.
- As has been observed by education commission, the teacher education has become isolated from schools and current development in school education. The schools consider the teacher education department as an alien institution and not a nursery for the professional development of school teacher. These departments only observe the formality of finishing the prescribed number of lessons no caring for the sounders of pedagogy involved in the procedure.
- Most of candidates do not have the requisite motivation and an academic background for a well deserved entry in the teaching profession.
- In India, the teacher education programme is being given a step-motherly treatment. About 20 percent of the teacher education institutions are being run in rented buildings without any facility for an experimental school or laboratory, library and other equipment's necessary for a good teacher education department. There are no separate hostel facilities for student teachers.
- The State Education Department have no data on the basis of which they may work out the desired intake for their institutions. There is a considerable lag between the demand and supply of teachers. This has created the problems of unemployment and underemployment.
- In India, research in education has been considerably neglected. The research conducted is of inferior quality. The teacher education programmes are not properly studied before undertaking any research.
- Most of the programmes are being conducted in a routine and unimaginative manner. Even the association of teacher educators has not contributed anything towards development of a sound professionalization of teacher education in the country.
- Selection process for the training of perspective teachers has failed to considerable extent, as it does not select the persons having higher aptitude for teaching profession.
- Old methods are still being employed despite tremendous changes, which have taken place in teaching-learning

process. Furthermore, supervision of practice teaching is perfunctory, biased and subjective.

- Mass communication and computer education is still not a part of teacher's training programme, which is need of the day.

The teacher trainee are taught about defects in examination system, but their own examination are very defective, biased, unscientific, unsystematic and unreliable.

- The present teacher education programmes does not have meaningful linkages with schools, peer institutions, other institutions of higher education and the community. Teacher education programmes do not prepare student teacher to face ongoing practices in the present system of education.
- Curriculum reforms and pedagogic reform are not coping with the rate of advancement of knowledge, besides varied packages of curriculum followed by different affiliating universities.
- Poor Infrastructure, Separate institutions for teacher training are virtually absent.
- Many teachers have little understanding over the subject content they teach posses few teaching skills and are poorly motivated.
- Government is allowing the opening of new institutions even if the new colleges do not satisfy the prescribes norms.
- There is under employment of highly qualified personnel since most of the teacher educators are double postgraduates.
- The staff members are working in private B.Ed Colleges with a fear of insecurity for their job.

Suggestions

There are some suggestions for improving the conditions of teacher education:

Value education should be given to teachers, so that they could educate young minds in the right direction. Curriculum of teacher education programme should be revised from time to time according to changing needs of society. The quality of teacher education programme should be up graded. 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. Institutions working should be examined from time to time and strict action should be taken if they fail to come up to expected level. Teachers should train 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. Teacher education programmes should enables the teachers to develop there life skills among students. 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. Update information about current affairs, Students tend to learn better if their courses as well as teachers' methodology is in line with current happenings around the world. Information of the teachers in this regards has to be continuously updated. Teacher educators must be well qualified and experienced with language

proficiency. Teacher educators to be trained in the use of ICTs. Institutes of low standards should be reformed or closed. Conditions for affiliation should be made strict. Regular and rigorous inspection by NCTE should be done on a regular basis. Selection procedure must be improved and interviews, group discussions along with common entrance test and marks should be introduced. More emphasis should be given on practice teaching till mastery is reached with appropriate feedback. Internship should be of sufficient time (six months) and student teachers must be exposed to the full functioning of the school. Evaluation in teacher education should be objective, reliable and valid. Several types of co-curricular activities should be included in the curriculum. Refresher course should be organized frequently for teacher educators. Research in teacher education should be encouraged. Since teaching these days involves 3D modeling with the help of projectors and other lab instruments which may be new to the teachers itself, therefore the teachers have to be kept in line with such technologies that aid the process of teaching.

Conclusion

Teacher and his education are very significant aspects of any nation. The education gives a new shape to the individual and the nation as well. It is a well known saying that teacher is the nation builder. The quality of teacher education programme needs to be upgraded. 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, organization etc. Teacher education programme needs a comprehensive reform and restructuring curriculum and needs to be revised according to changing needs of society. No doubt a lot of stress is given on teacher-education course. Unfortunately still there are several loopholes in the system. After the deep study, I came to this conclusion that Centre and States Governments should join the hands to bring the quality and improvement in the teacher education, then bright future of teacher education is possible.

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