



Teacher Education in India, Issues and Challenges

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Article details:

Received: 28th Jan, 2019

Revision: 20th Feb, 2019

Accepted: 25th Feb, 2019

Published: 28th Feb, 2019



ABSTRACT

Teacher education is a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components are complimentary to each other. Education is instrumental in the preparation of teachers who can in their practice ensure transformative learning, where teacher and learner,

learner and learner are co constructors of knowledge. The intent of the present paper is to enhance the teacher education quality in India by focusing on the emerging issues & related concerns. Various issues of teacher education namely, institutional inertia, brand inequity, quality crisis, overgrowing establishment, rare humane and professional teachers, poor integration of skills, alienated and incompatible modes of teacher education, little contribution to higher education, domain pedagogy mismatches, identity crisis, rare innovations, stake holders' non-alignment, inadequate technology infusion, little choice base, poor research scenario, vision and vision mismatches, non-scientific manpower planning, illusive laboratories, over activism of distance open universities, invalid recognition and accreditation and no teacher education policy have been dealt on in this paper. The paper concludes that teacher education system in India that calls for revolutionary change.

Keywords: *Teacher education, problems, suggestions, Transformation*

1. INTRODUCTION

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. Numerous empirical studies conducted by social scientists have established a strong correlation between education and national development; all attach utmost importance to education as an effective tool in reducing poverty by building a viable workforce capable of competing in an increasingly competitive and global economy (Jomtien, 1990, Delors, 1996, mdgs, 2012). The aim of the present paper is to improve the teacher education quality in India by focusing on the problems& related concerns.

2. CURRENT STATUS OF EDUCATION IN INDIA

India has a large system of education. There are nearly 5.98 lakh primary schools, 76 lakh elementary schools and 98 thousand high / higher secondary schools in the country, about 1300 teacher education institutions for elementary teachers and nearly 700 colleges of education / university departments preparing teachers for secondary and higher secondary schools. Out of about 4.52 million teachers in the country nearly 3 million are teaching at the primary/elementary level. A sizeable number of them are untrained or under-trained. In certain regions, like the North-East, there are even unqualified teachers. As far as in-service education is concerned the situation is not very encouraging. In this scenario it has been observed that teacher educators are not professionally committed and

overall competencies of teachers leave much to be desired. The quality of pre-service education has actually shown signs of deterioration. Naseem & Anas (2011) in their study discussed about the various problems that are existing in Indian Teacher Education, while Sharma (2012) stressed on the fact that ICT can play a major role in professional growth of the teacher and shaping the global economy.

Unless teacher educators model effective use of technology in their own classes, it will not be possible to prepare a new generation of teachers who effectively use the new tools for teaching and learning. All these problems are closely associated with increase in sub-standard institutions of teacher education and there are numerous reports of gross malpractices; and the support system provided by the State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) and the University Departments of Education has been insufficient and there is no support system below the state level. The DIETs are charged with the responsibility of organizing pre-service and in-service programmes in addition to being the nodal resource centres for elementary education at district level. Likewise, Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and Institutions of Advanced Study in Education (TASEs) have been given the responsibility of introducing innovations in teacher education programmes at the secondary and higher secondary stages and in vocational education. Although National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) as a non-statutory body has taken several steps as regards quality improvement in teacher education. Its major contribution was to prepare Teacher Education Curriculum Framework consequently; teacher education curricula have witnessed many changes in teacher preparation programmes in various universities and boards in the country. During the last decade, new thrusts have been posed due to rapid changes in the educational, political, social and economic contexts at the national and international levels. Curriculum reconstruction has also become imperative in the light of some perceptible gaps in teacher education. Teacher education by and large, is conventional in its nature and purpose. The integration of theory and practice and consequent curricular response to the requirements of the school system still remains inadequate. Teachers are prepared in competencies and skills which do not necessarily equip them for becoming professionally effective. Their familiarity with latest educational developments remains insufficient. Organized and stimulatory learning experiences whenever available, rarely contribute to enhancing teachers' capacities for self-directed lifelong learning. The system still prepares teachers who do not necessarily become professionally competent and committed at the completion of initial teacher preparation programmes. A large number of teacher training institutions do not practice what they preach. Several of the skills acquired and methodologies learnt are seldom practiced in actual school system. This highlights the need to bring realism and dynamism in the curriculum.

There has been a great expansion of higher education over the years. Today, there are more than 200 universities and 8000 colleges. Kothari commission remarks "The destiny of India is being shaped in its classrooms." No doubt education plays a significant role in the nation's development, but the quality of education is greatly determined by the quality of teachers, therefore, great efforts were made and still are being made to improve the quality of teacher education.

3. PROBLEMS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

3.1 Problem of selection:

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. Some suggestions are mentioned:

- a) Candidates should be interviewed
- b) Test of General Knowledge should be applied.
- c) Test in school subjects.
- d) Test of language
- e) Test of intelligence should be administered
- f) Aptitude; interest and attitude inventory should be administered.
- g) A well direct guidance service should be provided.

3.2 Deficiencies of small time period for teaching training

In India, this period is about one year after the graduation - the effective session being about eight to nine months. The main purpose of the teacher education program is to develop a healthy attitude, broad based interest and values. It is not possible during the short duration of nine months.

3.3 Incompetency of student and teacher

The existing training program does not provide adequate opportunities for the student teachers to develop competency because the organizers of teacher's training program are not aware of the existing problems of the

schools. Therefore, there should be a close matching between the work schedule of the teacher in a school and the program adopted for teacher preparation in a training college.

3.4 Defects paper concerning

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. Following steps may be taken in this connection:

- (a) Allowing more time to learners for good reading and sound build-up of the intellect and attitude,
- (b) Pruning the existing course
- (c) Arranging for exchange of experience than merely attending lectures,
- (d) Changing the mode of testing inputs
- (e) The content must have direct implications in the daily school teaching.

3.5 Problems of practice teaching

Inspire of all kinds of elaborate arrangements regarding practice in teaching, student teachers are non-serious to the task of teaching, deficient in a sense of duty irresponsible, aimless, indifferent to children, lacking an innovative measure in teaching which are great obstacles in the development of pedagogical skills.

3.6 Problem of supervision of teaching

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 the following types of supervisions.

- (a) **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.
- (b) **Supervision during the classroom teaching:** It is done by teachers who are not method specialist generally. These supervisors offer a descriptive type of criticism, while constructive type is desirable. Their remarks relate to the general personality of the student teachers. The percentage of lessons supervised by the subject method specialist varies from 5 per cent to 25 per cent due to faulty staffing pattern, lack of time, too many lessons to be supervised, defective time table etc. Here, the school teacher should be assisted by the college supervisor in his work. Frequent conferences and consultations between them will help to relate them to practice and the student teacher will improve the performance in a realistic school setting.

3.7 Lack of subject knowledge

The B.Ed. program 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.

3.8 Faulty methods of teaching

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.

3.9 Isolation of teacher's education department

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

3.10 Poor academic background of student teachers

Most of candidates do not have the requisite motivation and an academic background for a well-deserved entry into the teaching profession.

3.11 Lack of proper facilities

In India, the teacher education program is being given a step-motherly treatment. About 20 percent of the teacher education institution is 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.

3.12 Lack of regulations in demand and supply

The State Education Department has 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.

3.13 Inadequate empirical research

In India, research in education has been considerably neglected. The research conducted is of inferior quality. The teacher education programs are not properly studied before undertaking any research.

3.14 Lack of facilities for professional development

Most of the programs 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.

3.15 Insufficient financial grants

In most of the states, the teacher education is still being run by the fee collected from student teachers, as the share of state grant is too small.

4. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Some suggestions to remedy the problems of teacher education in India are as follows:

- 1) The courses of studies both in theory and practice should be reorganized. For this a Pragmatic research should be conducted by some universities to see, the course structure which will be helpful for the realization of the goals of teacher education. A comprehensive job analysis of teaching in our schools should necessarily be made the basis for recasting of courses in teacher education.
- 2) The method of teaching in the teacher education departments should be such that it inspires a sense of appreciation among other departments of the universities and colleges: A teacher education department should, therefore, conduct special innovative programs in the following directions: Seminar, combining of seminar and discussions with lectures, team teaching panel discussion and projects sponsored by the faculty members for improvement of learning in various spheres.
- 3) For development of professional attitude it will be advisable to recognize the college of education as unit in themselves. Such an institution should be equipped with facilities for organizing various types of activities such as daily assembly programs, community living, social work, library organization and other curricular activities, which promote the democratic spirit of mutual appreciation and fellow feeling.
- 4) The admission procedures of B.Ed. should be completely systematised and steps should be taken to make it full proof against tampering and meddling as far as possible.
- 5) There should be a planning unit in each State Education Department. The function of this unit should be to regulate the demand and supply of teachers at various levels of schools. This unit can also be given the responsibility of projecting future requirements of teachers in various categories.
- 6) It will be in the fitness of things if at the time of setting up a teacher education department, a Demonstration school is made an integral part of it and a definite norm should be followed for certain facilities such as laboratories, libraries and other important audio-visual equipment.
- 7) The practicing schools have to be taken into confidence. For this the members of the staff of teachers' colleges should be closely associated with the schools. The course of studies and the practical work and practice teaching can be easily moderated in such a way that they will have useful implications for improving school practices
- 8) The teacher education program should be organized on the basis of evidence obtainable from researching such areas as follows: "Teacher behaviour "Developing conceptual framework and a theory of institution." Innovative practices of teaching such as microteaching, simulation and interaction analysis procedures.
- 9) The teacher education department should be made a nucleus for research on teaching curriculum and evaluation in the regular university departments. It can also be entrusted the responsibility of sponsoring programs for extension, such as bringing the community into close contact with the university academicians. There should be a free exchange of scholars from one department to the other. This will improve the quality of teacher education programs immensely.
- 10) For professional growth of teacher educators there should be seminars, summer institutes and research symposia at more frequent intervals.
- 11) There is a paucity of round textbooks and reading material, including reference books in Hindi and regional languages in the field of teacher education.
- 12) The State Government should make adequate provision of funds for teacher education departments. Special assistance should be given for running an experimental school and holding of practice teaching sessions in various schools.
- 13) Correspondence courses in teacher education should be provided, with a strict and high screen for admissions and a rigorous manner of assessment.

- 14) Libraries are needed to be enriched with complete and comprehensive reference section equipped with all available journals for use by all the researchers.
- 15) Uniformity among teacher education institutions must be ensured and maintained in terms of curriculum, duration and timings of the program. Curriculum development on a continuing basis to keep pace with current trends.
- 16) Teacher educators must be well qualified and experienced with language proficiency and to be trained in the use of ICTs.
- 17) Conditions for affiliation should be made stricter. Regular and rigorous inspection by NCTE should be done on a regular basis. Selection procedure must be improved and interviews, group discussions along with the common entrance test and marks should be introduced.
- 18) Duration of teacher education should be increased to two years. More emphasis should be given to practice teaching till mastery is reached with appropriate feedback.
- 19) The internship should be of sufficient time (six months) and student teachers must be exposed to the full functioning of the school.
- 20) Professional development of teacher educators as on-going ritual. Refresher course should be organized frequently for teacher educators and Research in teacher education should be encouraged. Since the teacher is the pivot of the entire educational system and is the main catalytic agent for introducing desirable changes in the teaching learning process, all attempts need be made for motivating teachers to become innovative and creative. It goes without saying that a self-motivated and really industrious teacher can utilize his own resources to keep himself abreast of new knowledge and skills.

5. 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 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.

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