



Teacher Education: Problems and Remedies

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Abstract

Teacher education includes training programs given to the teacher-trainees having pre-service and in-service components of training. It refers to the policies, regulations, provisions and procedure of teacher's training. This article examines teacher education with special reference to its problems and remedies regarding the present scenario of education in the country. The article defines teacher education and also narrates conceptual description of teacher education with certain aspects as pedagogical theory, teaching skills and professional aptitudes. The problems like admission procedure, employment issues, lack of facilities, lack of professionalism, lack of good practice teaching, lack of proper guidance and supervision, less importance of teacher education program, lack of enough teaching faculties, incompetent teachers, etc. Along with its remedial solutions are pointed out providing better ways of growing of teacher education program the whole country wide.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Problems, Remedies

Introduction

The best education is to provide the students with more and more learning experiences to lead them from the darkness of ignorance towards the light of knowledge. It is to enable them to live a better life and also make them to influence others around them to live in the same way. The teacher is the key factor of such kind of best education in schools and colleges. His role is as the guide, as the facilitator, as the mentor and the Guru of the students. *"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."* (NCTE, 1998) It is therefore the teachers are the most important component of educational process going on in the whole country. For this the significance of teacher education must be understood as it creates such teachers and gives them professional training in order to meet the requirements of the present and future needs of education in the country. The role of teacher education is much recognized worldwide; but in country like India there are some loop holes in understanding its whole concept and its proper implementation thoroughly. Along with the major challenges of education including vocational education, values education, education expansion and overall quality bringing in all kinds of education the teacher education also comprises of major issues and problems

to be resolved. Today teacher education is struggling a lot to strengthen its identity in the world of education. National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) have made immense endeavors to strengthen its identity which include bridge courses, two year diploma courses, new curriculum framework for teacher education, inclusion of TET and TAT exams for quality bringing in teachers, e-learning facilities, online portal of teacher education, online learning forums of education, etc.

Today the government of India and the education ministry has rethought the teacher education policy based on the recommendations made by the Education Commissions and Committees; important of them are the Kothari Commission (1964-66), the Chattopadhyay Committee (1985), the National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986-92), Acharya Ramamurthi Committee (1990), Yashpal Committee (1993) and the National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005). Further the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 has implications on the present teacher education system and the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher Education. The Act has important implications for teacher education in the country:

- *The Central Government shall develop and enforce standards for training of teachers;*
- *Persons possessing minimum qualifications, as prescribed by an academic authority authorise by the Central Government, shall be eligible to be employed as teachers;*
- *Existing teachers not possessing such prescribed qualifications would be required to acquire that qualification within a period of 5 years.*
- *The Government must ensure that the Pupil-Teacher Ratio specified in the Schedule is maintained in each school*
- *Vacancy of a teacher in a school, established, owned, controlled or substantially financed by the Government, shall not exceed 10% of the sanctioned strength.*(Retrieved from <http://mhrd.gov.in/teacher-education-overview>)

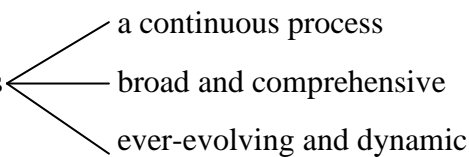
Meaning and Concept of Teacher Education

Teacher Education can be defined as a program of training given to the teacher trainees in order to meet the present and future requirements of the profession of teaching. It is a program that refers to the policies, provisions and procedures which are designed to equip the teachers with the knowledge, skills, aptitudes and attitude of the teaching profession. It trains the teacher professionals to perform their teaching tasks effectively and appropriately in the most meaningful way. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has defined teacher education as “*a program of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher education level.*”(NCTE, 1998) Teacher Education program works for enhancing the proficiency and competence of teachers so that they can meet the future needs and

requirements of the profession. This program also enables the teachers to face challenges and acquire solutions for them.

According to Good's 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.*" (Good, 1973)

Further Good pointed out (1941), "*Teacher education not only refers to the total educative experiences which contribute to the preparation of a person for a teaching position in schools, but the term is more commonly employed to designate the program of courses and other experiences offered by an educational institute for the announced purpose of preparing persons for teaching and other educational service and for contributing to their growth in competency for such services.*"

Teacher Education is 

Teacher Education is a continuous process that includes pre-service and in-service training process for the teachers. "*Teacher education can be considered in three phases: Pre-service, Induction and In-service. The three phases are considered as parts of a continuous process.*" (The International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education; 1987) Moreover, teacher education is broad and comprehensive in the matter that it does not include only training programs but also other extension activities of education i.e. non-formal education, literacy programs and education awareness programs. Further and at last, teacher education is always dynamic and ever-evolving i.e. it makes the teachers ready to face challenges and be abreast of the recent trends and innovations in education field.

Teacher Education comprises of three major things – *teaching skills, pedagogical theory and professional skills*. Teaching skills includes training and practices for the teacher about different approaches, techniques and strategies that can help them in daily classroom activities. Further the Pedagogical theory includes all the philosophical and psychological aspects of education enabling the teachers with the teaching skills. On the other hand, the professional skills help the teachers with soft skills, interpersonal skills, computer skills and life-long learning skills.

Aims of Teacher Education

The major aims of teacher education include –

- (1) "*To enhance the institutional capacity available at present forensuring the adequate supply of trained teachers for all levels of school education.*
- (2) "*To utilize all possible kinds of institutions, including university departments of education and teacher training institutions in the private sector, for in-service*

training of the existing cadre at all levels, in addition to State institutions, including CTEs.

- (3) To recognize teacher education (for all levels of school education, from pre-school to senior secondary) as a sector of higher education and to facilitate co-operation and collaboration between institutes of teacher training and colleges of general education or universities with a view to enabling interaction between different departments of a local college (or university) (e.g. sciences, languages, social sciences) and the institute of teacher training.*
- (4) To envision a comprehensive model of teacher education, utilizing the Chattopadhyay Commission Report and updating its perspective, and ensuring that progress towards a new, comprehensive model is paralleled by necessary modifications in policies of teacher recruitment, deployment and service conditions, including emoluments.*
- (5) To prepare a curriculum policy and framework for teacher education which is consistent with the vision of the NCF, 2005, and to translate it into imaginative syllabi and textbooks for pre-service courses and sets of in-service training material suited to diverse conditions and needs.*
- (6) To bring about synergy between institutional structures operating at different levels, e.g. NCERT and NCTE at national level, SCERTs and boards of education at State level, DIETs and undergraduate colleges at the district level and so on.”*

(Retrieved from <http://www.teindia.nic.in/About.aspx>)

Major Concerns of Teacher Education

Teacher Education Policy

The policies for teacher education have been changed from time to time. The Commissions and Committees on Education after Independence of India to the present time have given their ample recommendations and suggestions for developing teacher education on the whole. The NCTE prepared the curriculum framework for teacher education in 1998 also recommended for two year B.Ed. program to prepare quality teachers. So, teacher education regulations are formed by NCTE in 2014. There is an endeavor to improve the quality of teacher education with the new education policy. Today the twin strategy for improving education is accepted: first is prepare teachers for the school system which is called as Pre-service training and second is to improve capacity of existing school teachers which is called as In-service training.

Curriculum

Teacher Education curriculum must include all round mastery of the teachers. It should focus on the changing scenario and context of the world while the construction of curriculum of teacher education. Today, there is a need of multi-media curriculum

based on Information and Communication Technology. Such curriculum can provide the teachers an opportunity of growing thoroughly in his subject area by updating himself with pedagogical and technological knowledge.

Quality Research

Research is the foundation for good education world-wide. Recently, there is a need of good research activities that can be beneficial for the development of teacher education. Research studies done on the basic problems and challenges of the classroom and school climate can help education to grow ultimately. The teachers need to initiate such research activities in schools and colleges in order to meet the requirements of good teaching-learning process around them.

Developing Skills

Skills are invariable to have in order to succeed in any field and teacher education is such area where the teachers should be the master of the skills like communication techniques, creativity, critical thinking, etc. Technology excellence is also an added skill in teacher education.

Teaching Pedagogy

Teaching Pedagogy means the science of teaching-learning process. In teacher education, the pedagogical knowledge and skills are very significant aspects. Teaching and Learning both the processes are done parallel and the learning is never done by chance or suddenly. Good pedagogical knowledge of a teacher helps him in dealing with the students in classroom in the best possible productive way.

Co-curricular Activities

In teacher education, the co-curricular activities include seminars, conference, workshops, etc. It should be noticed that all the students become a part of such activities in the institution. Apart from the routine syllabus, such activities give them an experience of new learning in a different way. Inter-college co-curricular activities should be conducted annually along with motivational prospects for the students.

ICT in Teacher Education

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is not a new concept nowadays. However, more effective ICT can help grow and expand education faster than before. Lt. Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam talked about the Virtual University in his books where all the institutions and universities are made linked and inter-connected. It is known as the networking of all the educational institutions. It creates a kind of educational bridge that helps in passing on the learning more easily and effectively. Teacher education, today, needs such an idea to be implemented soon for the betterment of school and college education.

Problems/Challenges of Teacher Education

1. Monitoring of Institutions

Monitoring of the teacher education institutions is a good task but it is not possible to monitor each and every teacher education college every year. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) does the task of monitoring the teacher education colleges but cannot monitor all of them. Therefore, today there are a number of institutions which are more oriented to money making rather than the educational growth of students

2. Admission Procedure

The admission procedure has a problem of selecting good and suitable candidates for the teacher education course. Sometimes low level students enter into this course on account of money power in the management seats. There is no any interview or some kind of a entrance test for the candidates to enter in teacher education course. This strongly affects the quality of teacher education colleges.

3. Employment Issues

This is a big issue in teacher education area as the candidates coming out after completing the course training cannot find proper job in time. They have to wait for a long until the education department recruits them. Here, all the candidates cannot get a job of a teacher because of the low number of vacancies and a big number of students coming out of the institutions every year. So there is a gap between the demand in recruitment and supply by the institutions.

4. Lack of facilities

Improper facility is one of the bid issues. Teacher Education colleges play major role in creating young talents contributing to the nation and also the teacher's job is considered the best profession of all; however it is treated as the step son of education. Some teacher education colleges are working in rented buildings, some with inadequate classrooms and infrastructures, some with inadequate teachers as comparing to the students intake of the college, some colleges lack proper practice and training environment as the buildings are in noisy area, lack of language laboratory, science laboratory, proper library, reading corner, computer labs, etc. All these affect the importance of teacher education and create less qualifies candidates for teacher's job.

5. Lack of Professionalism

Teachers lack professionalism because of less importance given to newer trends and innovations in his program. Only the routine course and training are going on every year and no further endeavors are done to update the teachers with new knowledge. There is no any way how to develop the professionalism of the teacher educators. It makes them less committed and less devoted to their work which may later on affect the quality of teacher education on the whole.

6. Lack of good Practice Teaching

It is noticed that the students are not serious with teaching practice in this training course. Most of the students come in this program only to have a good job after completing it. They are aimless and don't give much importance to the practical work of the course and always emphasize on the theoretical area of the program. Thus, this makes them unknown of the basic pedagogical aptitudes and skills.

7. Lack of proper guidance and supervision

The student trainees lack enough and proper guidance in their subject methods while lesson planning and presentation in classroom. No enough time is provided for discussion on the topic to be taught in practical by the subject method experts which affect their presentation of content in an appropriate way. The lesson plans are also checked in a formal way without any discussion. Also enough feedback and support is not provided to the students in order to raise their confidence level and to face the classroom situations. Sometimes the subject method knowledge and expertness also affect the training of the students.

8. Curriculum Issues

It is criticized by many educationists that the curriculum of teacher education lack appropriateness to the training program. It is noticed that the curriculum does not meet all the requirements necessary to fulfill in teacher's training. There is a need of more relevant content for teachers.

9. Less importance of teacher education program

The teacher education program is considered less important than other courses in the country. Young students like to join the courses other than teacher's training course. Engineering, science, management areas are the most selective areas of the young students to get admission and make these as career path. Also the many people think teacher's job as the last option of career selection when there is no other option remained. Thus, teacher education program is considered as inferior to other faculty programs in education.

10. Lack of enough teaching faculties

There are different subject methods taught in the teacher education colleges and it is necessary to have expert teachers of all these subjects. But the lack of recruitment of the teachers on the regular basis does an effect on the quality teaching work as irregular and contract teachers with less than minimum qualification teach the teacher trainees. Sometimes one teacher teaches two or three subjects or more than that to the students. It also affects the admission of students in such colleges.

11. Incompetent teachers

It is always opined that the teachers should be an expert of his subject and updated with newer competencies and skills. Especially in the teacher education colleges where the teachers are created, it becomes compulsory and invariable to have enough

competencies in the teacher educators. Incompetency of teacher educators results into deficiency of teacher-trainees.

Solutions/Remedies of Teacher Education

The solutions and remedies of the burning issues and problems of teacher education can be defined as:

1. Monitoring system should be divided into small committees for inspection of the education colleges so that each institution is covered under the monitoring.
2. Admission procedure should include entrance test at university level so that eligible candidates can enter into the teacher's training course.
3. New granted schools and colleges should be established for arousing new vacancies in the field of education so that the issue of unemployment is resolved.
4. All the colleges should be provided enough facilities and amenities in order to grow teacher education to the fullest limit. New criteria should be determined for this and follow up work should be taken by the department and then the government.
5. Arrangement of professional learning programs should be done to update the knowledge of teacher education. It should be conducted monthly and quarterly basis with two or three days seminars and workshop.
6. Practical teaching should be raised in number if necessary and its follow up work must be conducted so that the training can be done appropriately and satisfactorily.
7. Adequate discussions on subject method lesson planning should be arranged by subject expert of college before conducting practical lesson in school.
8. Curriculum of teacher education needs to be revised and updated with time. The needs and latest trends of the global education and society should be kept in mind during this updating task of curriculum.
9. Teacher's importance should be raised by providing proper compensation, inspiration and motivation by the department and the government in order to attract more young talents to the teacher education program.
10. Enough teaching experts and faculties should be appointed on regular basis so that weaknesses of students in hard subjects can be avoided. These faculties should be eligible and qualified as suggested by NCTE and UGC.
11. Teacher education program should be added life skill training program in order to enable the teacher and students.
12. Self-learning techniques should be taught to the students to reduce dependence on the teachers. Project method learning can be implemented for this.

13. The utilization of ICT and its necessity in today's world should be explained in teacher education colleges and its implemented should be done for effective learning process.
14. Educational colleges should be graded and accredited according to the established standards of the government agencies and also provided extra funding on the basis of the highest grading points.
15. The privatization of the education colleges must be strictly regulated and organized as per the government rules and standards.
16. More correspondence programs should be initiated in order to expand teacher education to the remotest area of the country. However, the practical teaching must be arranged in schools and colleges for actualizing the purpose of teacher education program.

Conclusion

Thus, the teacher education program has an immense importance in education. The demand of teachers will be increased if the teacher education area will be developed in proper way. Here is the need of bringing teacher education to its requisite standards. Teacher education program will be successful fully if it is reformed comprehensively and revised systematically as the time demands. The issues and problems will remain in more and less number from time to time; but more important is to have their remedial solutions when the problems arise. Such research studies and articles have been written and published a lot. The educational authorities should take advantages of such good research works so that the field of teacher education can be developed in positive direction.

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