

Recent issues and problems in India: Teacher education

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Abstract

Education is a dynamic process. One of the most important requirements to promote and strengthen education is the training of teachers. Teacher education refers to the policies and procedures designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the school and classroom. Teacher education is important as efficient teachers can shape an efficient future society. Teacher education is an integral component of the educational system. The development of the standard of education is closely connected with the question of teacher education. After discussion with educationists found that improvement in working of teacher education institutions, knowledge of science and technology, emphasis on value education, healthy discussion on social issues and development of life skills are major remedies to bring quality and improvement in the teacher education. The intent of the present paper is to enhance the teacher education quality in India by focusing on the emerging issues & related concerns.

Keywords: Education, Teacher Education, Problems and Issues

1. Introduction

Education itself is the basic human right and as a tool to make a sensitive about issues and problems. India has one of the largest systems of education ranging from early childhood education to higher education. In a pluralistic and developing society like India equity and quality of education are two important concerns particularly in a globalized world. The maintenance of quality of education at school level without the support of a good teacher is a misnomer and that is the reason that in the long history of its traditions in India, teachers have always been much revered. In the process of making education more meaningful, or a question of improving its quality or even making it more accessible to children, one thing that always prominently matters is the teacher, as the teacher is the heart of the school system. The place and importance of teacher in a society can never be overestimated. A teacher is a central figure in the formal teaching learning set up. He is a telescope through which people can see the distant tomorrows of the students. He is the ultimate agent who dispenses knowledge, frames the times schedule, selects reading materials, evaluates learning outcomes and helps pupils to overcome their difficulties and personal problems. He is who sets the standards, builds up desirable attitudes and approves or disapproves pupil behavior. Education has to develop a peace loving personality and the programme of teacher education has to contribute in this regard.

Teacher Education

Teacher education means professional preparation of teachers. It is not training of teachers, but it is acquisition of that type of knowledge skills and ability which helps a teacher to discharge his professional duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. It means reshaping the attitude, habits and personality of a teacher. A teacher education is not just a graduate or post graduate or even one armed with a doctoral degree aspiring for a job to make his both ends meet.

Teaching is a service oriented profession which requires a will to sacrifice. It is one of the common professions in our society. It is probably the most inspiring and complete profession for the very fact that unlike craftsman, a teacher deals with the most sensitive of subject matter, i.e. human child. Professional training of teachers is key to quality enhancement of school education. The aim of education of taking the Nation into 21st century cannot be achieved unless teachers have the necessary skills and competencies. The skills and competencies can be developed through systematic approach to revitalize and modernize Teacher Education Programme. The training of teachers assumes great significance in the educational system. Teacher education system is an important vehicle to improve the quality of school education. It is a continuous process. Teacher education is important as efficient teachers can shape an efficient future society. Teachers can greatly influence young minds and hence it is important that competent teachers are recruited.

Teacher education refers to the policies and procedures designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the school and classroom. In early times, teachers were often scholars who had no formal training in how to teach the subjects of their expertise. In fact, many believed that "teachers were born, not made." It was not until the emergence of pedagogy, the "art and science of teaching," as an accepted discipline that the training of teachers was considered important. Although there has been continued debate about whether teaching is a "science" that can be taught or whether one is "born" to be a teacher, it has generally been agreed, at least since the nineteenth century, that certain characteristics are needed to qualify a person as a teacher knowledge of the subject matter to be taught, knowledge of teaching methods and practical experience in applying both. Most educational programs for teachers today focus upon these points. However, the internal character of the individual

is also an important aspect of teaching; whether that is something one is born with or can be taught and what are the qualities that are needed for the role of teacher are also a matter of debate.

Agencies of Teacher Education

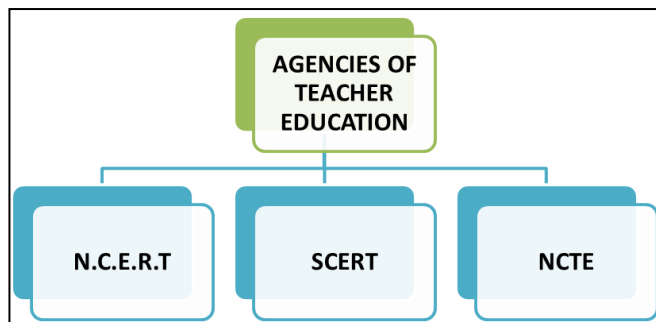


Fig 1: Agencies of teacher education

Role of N.C.E.R.T (National Council of Educational Research and Training) in promoting the quality of teacher education

- Develops curriculum, instructional and exemplar materials, methods of teaching, techniques of evaluation, teaching aids, kits and equipments, learning resources, etc.
- Organizes pre-service and in-service training of teachers, teacher educators and other educational personnel
- To organize pre-service and in-service education programmes for teachers
- Disseminates improved educational techniques and practices and research findings.
- Acts as a cleaning house for ideas and information on all matters relating to school education and teacher education.

Role of SCERT (State Council of Educational Research and Training) in promoting the quality of teacher education

- To impart in service - training to the inspectors of preprimary to higher secondary education.
- To impart in service - training to the teachers from pre-primary to higher secondary schools.
- To make available extension - services to teacher - education - institutions and co-ordinate the same.
- To prepare teaching aids for educational institutions.
- To motivate teachers to undertake /investigative research regarding content cum methodology.

Role of NCTE (National Council of Teacher Education) in promoting the quality of teacher education

- Making recommendations to the center and State government Universities, the U.G.C and other institutions in the preparation of plans and programmer’s in the field of teacher education.
- Coordinating and monitoring teacher education and its development in the country.
- Preparing a guideline with regard to minimum qualifications for the candidates to be employed as teacher- educators at different levels.
- Preparing a guideline and specified requirements for

starting new courses and programmes under teacher education.

- Developing a guideline for general teacher-education programme.

Issues of Teacher Education

A lot of planning and resources has been spent for improving the quality of teacher education. New technologies have been introduced in the field of education, still our teacher-education could not raise up to the expected level. It is lacking behind somewhere in realizing its purpose. Its scope has brode and its objectives have become focused during the last thirty five years, but teacher education could not realize its objective fully.

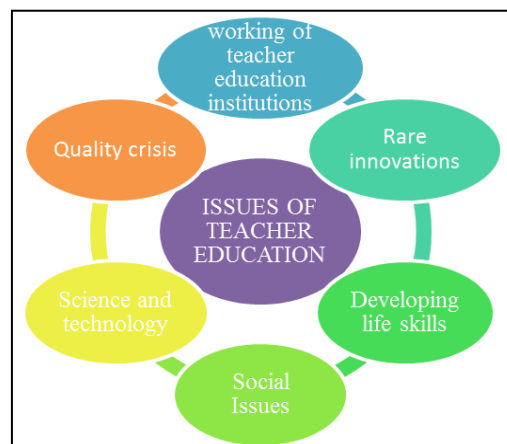


Fig 2: Issues of Teacher Education

➤ Working Of Teacher-Education Institutions

The National Council for teacher- education (NCTE) is a regulatory body which controls the functioning of these institutions and prevent them from becoming commercial institutions, but because the country is so diverse with innumerable institutions, it sometimes get difficult to monitor all the institutions. Some institutions have become simply money making centre and produce certified but incompetent teachers which is a matter of great concern because incompetency of teachers can harm the system of education.

➤ Developing Life Skills

Life skills are certain skills which are essential for personal development and growth. These skills enable man to deal with the life’s difficulties and adversities more effectively. These skills are (a) Thinking Skills (b) Self Awareness, Problem Solving, Creative Thinking, Decision making and Critical thinking (c) Social Skills –Interpersonal relations, effective communication and empathy (d) Emotional Skills –Stress Management. Main issue is that teacher-education is memory based i.e. there is no active involvement of students, so we are lacking in the development of life skills among the students, which are essential for all round development of students.

➤ Social Issues

There are various social problems issues that today our nation is confronting. These are population explosion, unemployment, diversity and communal tension. Teacher can safeguard students against these social problems of they are sensitive towards these issues.

➤ Science and Technology

The world has become interdependent and is turning gradually into a global village. But educational programme for teachers or teacher-education has not made full use of their development skill the teachers with the knowledge of latest technological advancement are not being produced who are expected to use these upcoming techniques.

➤ Quality Crisis

There are problems of quality perception, quality scaling and quality differentiation in Teacher Education. There is a significant variance between expected and actual quality. Alas, this gap is widening. This is exemplified by the successive entrance tests for higher level, be it Graduate or Doctoral Level. There has to be adequate focus on all the systemic parameters- input, process and output. The degeneration of quality of Teacher Education can be attributed more to the private sector.

➤ Rare Innovations

Innovations in Teacher Education are very rare. Novel ideas die because of non-incubation. Personalized teacher education, specialized teacher education, and even integrated teacher education are rarely found because we don't have the capacity to tolerate repeated failures arising out of experimentation. The society and its institutions must have the capacity to tolerate genuine mistakes committed inadvertently during the course of innovation.

Problems of Teacher Education

There are many problems and issues plaguing the system of teacher education. Teacher preparation has been a subject of discussion at all levels, from the government, ministries, regulatory bodies, schools, to teachers themselves.

Major problems of teacher education are:

- Traditional curriculum and teaching methods of teaching in the teacher education programme
- Objectives of teacher education not understood
- Unhealthy financial condition of the colleges of education
- Negative attitude of managements towards development of both human as well as material resources
- Improper selection of the candidates (student teachers) to be admitted
- Inadequate duration of the teacher programme
- improper organization of teacher education
- Unplanned and insufficient co-curricular activities
- Practice teaching neither adequate nor properly conducted
- Lack of dedication towards the profession

Suggestions for Improving the Condition of Teacher Education

- Curriculum of teacher education programme should be revised from time to time according to changing needs of society
- New knowledge and new experiences should be incorporated in the curriculum and there should be a scope for teachers for reflection of knowledge
- Teacher educators must be well qualified and experienced with language proficiency
- Teacher educators to be trained in the use of ICTs
- Privatization of teacher education should be regulated

- More emphasis should be given on practice teaching till mastery is reached with appropriate feedback
- Evaluation in teacher education should be objective, reliable and valid
- Teacher pupil ratio should be ideally 1:8.
- Research in teacher education should be encouraged

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. Teacher education has to be conceived as an integral part of educational and social system. It is essential to develop identified competencies to prepare effective teachers. It is equally necessary to develop commitment and build capacity to perform as integral part of teacher preparation. Emphasis on continuing life-long learning has to become an essential concern of teacher education. 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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