



Present Scenario of Teacher Education in India: Challenges and Remedies

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Abstract:

“The Destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms.” (Kothari Commission 1964-66). Teachers have a great responsibility in shaping future of nations. As a matter of fact teacher education and training in India becomes a matter of crucial importance for national development. The Socio-Cultural ethos of the society is reflected by the status of the Teacher and no nation can be built without the immense contribution of its teachers. But Teacher Education in India has been struggling to strengthen its identity. The intent of the present paper is to enhance Teacher Education quality in India by focusing on the emerging issues & related concerns.

Key Word: Teacher Education.

“The status of the teacher reflects the socio cultural ethos of the society, it is said that no people can rise above the level of its teachers” (National Policy on Education, 1986).”

The higher education is expanding day by day in India. Many universities and colleges have been established in government and private sectors. Quality institutions in higher education e.g. Central universities are being established at various places. No doubt that education plays a significant role to build a Nation, but the quality of education can only be determined by the quality of teachers. Teachers are engineered in Teacher-Education-Institutions therefore; the preliminary efforts should be made in improving the quality of teacher education. There have been many problems being faced by the whole system of Teacher Education in India which affects the complete scenario of concerning courses. Some of the problems concerning teacher education are discussed in this Paper.

• **Improper Procedure of selection:**

Present selection procedure of teaching faculty lead to deterioration of the quality of teachers. Objectivity is normally seen in the selection procedure all over India where teachers are selected only as they have some favors' or recommendations. Better selection method would not only improve the quality of Teacher-Training-Programs but also save the personal and social wastage. Some suggestions are mentioned:

- (i) **Language Efficiency Test:** language plays a vital role in teaching. If a person wants to be a teacher; he should have a proper command on language. It is seen that many teachers are not very efficient in their local/mother/professional language¹. These teachers can't teach the subject

properly and can't interact with pupils properly. While selecting teachers for teacher training institutions, all the applicants should give a language proficiency tests; this will improve the instructional system of the Teacher-Training Institutions.

- (ii) **Test of Intellectual Expression Capabilities:** Teachers in most of the Teacher-Training Institutions are appointed immediately as the post seems to be vacant. There is no system for a proper appointment of faculties. Mostly in this situation; teachers aren't even interviewed. Thus who haven't capability of teaching or to express their ideas are normally appointed². Further due to experience and seniority; they get higher post or status in the system. This situation must be avoided and a proper and detailed interview should be taken; so that the quality teachers can be found and others may prepare themselves to become up-to-the-mark.
- (iii) **Test of Content cum Methodology:** Teachers must have the knowledge of the basic content (Teaching Subject) and Methodology of the same; but mostly it is seen that they haven't adequate knowledge about their basic subject and on the part of knowledge of methodology³; they are at primary stage. They only know a few teaching methods. In this situation they can't train pupil-teacher properly. For this a test of content cum methodology should be applied on all applicants.
- (iv) **Test of Personality Traits:** Before appointment all applicants should go through a series of tests related to personality Traits⁴ e.g. honesty, courtesy, responsibility, compatibility, loyalty. Enthusiasm, open-mindedness, self-control, influence, initiative, adaptability, industriousness, carefulness, self-reliance, compassion, patience, perfectionism, courage, decisiveness, drive, perseverance, calmness, stability etc. to prove themselves a right candidate to become a Teacher-Trainer.

- **Shorter Duration of the Course :**

As per the present Norms and Standards of NCTE⁵; the duration of course for secondary teachers is one year (only 200 working days). The main objective of teacher education programs is to human resource in the field of teaching-learning. The short period of teacher-training programs is not sufficient to achieve this objective and it should be expanded at least for two academic years.

- **Incompetent Course:**

The existing training programs do not provide adequate⁶ opportunities to the pupil-teachers to develop competency because the policy makers and organizers of teacher's training programs are not aware of the existing problems of schools; hence they do not provide the facility and training to the pupil-teachers to meet-up the demands of the schools and as well as the society. Therefore; a close relation and interaction should be maintained between feeding schools and Teacher-Training Institutions.

- **Lesser Practice Teaching:**

Practice-Teaching is a vital part of any teacher-training-program, and per NCTE norms and standards; a pupil-teacher has to deliver 40 lessons for the fulfillment of the course, a lesson is normally delivered in one period of 40 minutes and hence a pupil teacher only spends less than 30 hours for the same. And on other hand; he spends 160 days for 8 hours per day in theory classes. The total time he spends is 1280 hours in theory class. The ratio between theory and practice is 43:1. The gap between practical and theory course should be filled by allotting more time to practice-teaching.

- **Improper Supervision:**

The supervision of practice teaching aims to bring improvement in the instructional activity of the pupil-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:

(i) Micro Level Supervision:

Before delivering lessons in actual situation; the pupil-teachers are supervised at their micro-lesson in which they deliver short lessons (Micro-lessons) which helps them to develop confidence and micro-skills to handle the common classroom and teaching-learning related problems⁷. Micro-lessons in many teacher-training-institutions are done as a formality; no proper stress is given on this. There should be an organized instructional structure in these institutions to guide pupil-teacher properly which can lead the pupil-teacher to make their confidence higher enough.

(ii) Supervision during the Classroom-Teaching:

Merely five to six minutes are given to a pupil-teacher by a supervisor as he has to check others also who are teaching in different classes at the same time, hence he can't give proper attention to any pupil-teacher during the entire session due to faulty staffing pattern, lack of time, too many lessons to be supervised, defective time table etc.. It is also seen that these supervisors are not method specialists and can't give constructive criticism. Their remarks are related to the general personality of the student teachers. 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.

- **Lack of Knowledge of Methodology:**

Most of the teacher-educators aren't innovative or curious to learn modern teaching methods of teaching. They even not have any experimental ideology to develop new pattern of teaching. It is required to arrange modern in-service training programs for them to make them competent towards modern instructional technology.

- **Poor Staff:**

Most of the candidates enroll themselves in teaching courses as they could not get admissions in other courses. Meritorious students normally do not adapt teaching as a profession. Thus the staff get admitted in teacher-training courses haven't adequate knowledge of the content and zeal of being a teacher. The policy makers should improve the glory of teaching profession so that the intelligent pupil can be attracted towards these courses.

- **Poor facilities and Money-Minded Management:**

Most of the Teacher-Education-Institutes in India do not have proper infrastructural and instructional facilities. Most of the private managements consider these institutions as a money-making-machine. NCTE, MHRD and UGC should give a proper attention on this issue and take better steps to upgrade the status of these institutions.

- **Old Demand and Supply Estimates of Teachers and Teacher Educators⁸:**

The demand and supply estimates settled by the NCTE are too old as they were framed in 2006 for next ten years. They haven't been reviewed yet. As per these data many teacher-education-institutes have been opened throughout India without proper planning. State Education Departments do not on the basis of which they may work out the desired intake for their institutions. Opening a large number of these institutions has made saturation in some areas while some are still waiting for government and private sectors to open teacher-education-institutes there. There is a considerable lag between the demand and supply of teachers. This has created the problems of unemployment and underemployment. Government needs to re-estimate the demand and supply status to control this situation

- **Lack of Empirical Research:**

In India, researches in teacher education are done only to obtain minimum required qualification to become lecturer in some teacher training colleges. The quality of research in this area is very inferior. The teacher education programs are not properly studied before undertaking any research. Universities need to make the research status high and sincere.

- **Formality based professional development programs:**

UGC conducts faculty development programs through ASCs in various Universities but 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. These programs should be aimed for future perspectives and included innovations in teaching-learning process.

- **Poor Financial Status:**

Most of the states teacher-education-institutions are run by the fee collected from pupil-teachers, as the share of central and state grant is negligible. Government should raise the limit of these grants so that these institutions can compete the challenges.

- **Suggestions to Remedy the Problems of Teacher-Education.**

- (1) Quality of teacher-education should be improved using some innovative ideas.
- (2) Proper instructional and infrastructural facilities should be developed.
- (3) The admission procedures in teacher-education-institutes should be made systematic and steps should be taken to motivate intelligent pupils to adapt teaching as a profession.
- (4) State Governments should regulate the demand and supply of teachers at various levels of schools.
- (5) Each teacher-training should be assigned to a demonstrative school where pupil-teachers can learn modern and innovative practices of teaching-learning.
- (6) Practice-Teaching should be given more time allotment so that pupil-teachers can have significant time to flourish there skills.
- (7) The quality of research in teaching-learning should be improved
- (8) Government should make adequate provision of funds for teacher-education-institutes.
- (9) Libraries should be enriched with complete and comprehensive reference section equipped with all available journals for use by all the researchers.
- (10) Since the teacher is the pivot of the entire educational system all attempts should be made for motivating teachers to become innovative and creative.

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