



TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY-2020

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ABSTRACT

Education is one of the most powerful instruments of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of national goals. It is an effective means of social reconstruction. It helps in the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs and habits necessary for the human living. It helps to increase the productivity, achieve national and emotional integration; and accelerate the process of modernization. Teaching is said to be a nation building activity and the teacher is the architect of the future. He is the pivot around which the entire system of education revolves. The best system of education may fail to achieve the desired ends in the absence of sincere, competent and professionally talented teachers. The teacher has the rare privilege of shaping the most precious material of the land – the boys and the girls during their crucial period of development. The quality of education ultimately depends on the occupational commitment of teachers towards teaching profession. It is the responsibility of Teacher Educators working in different Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) to prepare teachers who are committed and dedicated to the teaching profession. Teacher preparation is an activity that requires multidisciplinary perspectives and knowledge, formation of dispositions and values and development of practice under the best mentors. Teachers must be grounded in Indian values, languages, knowledge, ethos and traditions. The National Education Policy-2020 made an attempt to restructure the Teacher Preparation programme in order to produce teachers of good quality to the nation. The present paper is an attempt to know the status of Teacher Education as envisioned by National Education Policy-2020.

Key words: *Teaching Profession, Quality education, National Education Policy-2020, Teacher Education Institutions.*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers play a very significant role in the teaching-learning process. They keep working to boost the confidence of their students and help them walk in the right direction. There are many teachers who dedicate themselves for the noble cause of teaching and work throughout their lives in empowering their students with the necessary knowledge and skills that help them grow successfully in their lives. No system of education can ever rise higher than the quality of its teachers. However excellent the things such as the courses of study, curricula, textbooks and other facilities are in an educational system, the whole system would fail without the teaching personnel who are committed and dedicated to the profession. Referring to the importance of a teacher in the educational structure, the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) rightly remarked: “Of all the different factors which influence the quality of education and its contribution to national development, the quality, competence and character of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant” (**Report of the Indian Education Commission, 1964-66, p.84**). The teacher is expected to perform the roles of a planned organizer of curricula, an innovator of educational ideas, practices and systems, a resource person in the propagation of ever expanding knowledge and a motivator to learners in several ways. The teacher has the rare privilege of shaping the most precious material of the land – the boys and the girls during their crucial period of development. Effective teaching requires a feeling of satisfaction and positive identification of the teacher with the profession.

MEANING AND NATURE OF ‘TEACHER EDUCATION’

‘Teacher Education’ refers to the policies and procedures designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, modes of behavior and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively and efficiently in the school and the classroom. In ancient times, teachers were often scholars or clergymen 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.

Teacher quality and the strength of educator’s leadership are considered as the greatest determinants for the success of any educational system. Quality teaching has a direct bearing on the student learning outcomes. Teacher quality affects all stages of teaching – from their entry into the profession to the ongoing development and their retention in the profession.

Quality teaching requires sincere efforts on the part of the Government to:

- attract talented teachers into the profession
- train the teachers through world-class pre-service education
- provide them satisfactory working environment in schools
- develop their skills and knowledge through in-service training
- retain them in schools till their retirement providing satisfactory service conditions.

TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Teachers are the torch bearers in creating social cohesion, national integration and a learning society. Enlightened, emancipated and empowered teachers lead communities and nations in their march towards better and higher quality of life. They reveal and elaborate the secrets of attaining higher values in life and nurture empathy for the fellow beings. Teachers not only disseminate knowledge but also create and generate new knowledge. They are responsible for acculturating role of education.

Teacher education is the backbone of the society. It is the quality of teacher education that decides the quality of human resources in a country. The management and sustenance of quality in teacher education is a great challenge for the policy makers and managers in the changing scenario. Quality has become the watchword of current educational growth in India. If we are to survive in this competitive, market oriented and technology driven world where boundaries of the country are fast disappearing, then there is no existence without quality in education.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN TEACHER EDUCATION

‘Quality and excellence in education’ is one of the major initiatives and priorities of the Government of India in its plans. To enhance the quality at all levels of education, the Government of India has been focusing its attention on quality in Teacher education and Higher education. Several attempts have been made to improve the status of Teacher education in India. The National Policy on Education-1986 and the Programme of Action-1992 suggested establishing District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs), Institutes of Advanced Study in Education (IASEs) to provide quality Teacher Education at different levels. Besides, the University Departments of Education and several National-level organizations like the National

Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) have been given the responsibility of taking measures to improve the quality in Teacher Education. In spite of the efforts put forth by different organizations, the quality in Teacher Education is not up to the expectations of the Government. There are several issues and challenges that come in the way of organizing Teacher Education programmes effectively in the country.

The following are some of the issues to be tackled with carefully to ensure quality in Teacher Education.

(i) Selection of Teachers

The selection of teachers to work in different Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) is defective. The recruitment of teachers to work in TEIs should be based on some criteria which is being followed uniformly across the nation. A national-level recruiting agency should be given the responsibility of recruitment of Teacher Educators to different Colleges of Teacher Education. To monitor these institutions, there should be exclusive Teacher Education Universities in different States.

(ii) Duration

The duration of Elementary and Secondary Teacher Education courses has been enhanced from one year to two years. Though duration is enhanced in the course, there is no proper attention of the administration in the functioning of these TEIs.

(iii) Incompetency among student teachers

The student teachers who come out of these TEIs are not competent enough to teach the students effectively in the schools. They are not prepared properly to face the complexities of real life.

(iv) Problem of practice teaching

Though the duration of internship and practice teaching are increased in the Two-year D.Ed. and B.Ed. programmes, there is no increase in the quality of teaching for various reasons. There should be strict supervision by the TEIs over the internship of student teachers.

(v) Teacher demand and supply

There is a mismatch between the demand and supply of teachers – area wise and subject wise. This is due to lack of proper data base with the Government. Hence, an updated data base should be made available with the departments concerned.

(vi) Lack of innovative practices

Most of our Teacher Educators still follow the traditional methods of teaching in TEIs. They are not innovative in their ideas, thoughts and approaches. It is the need of the hour to follow innovative practices by integrating technology in the teaching-learning process.

(vii) Mushrooming of Teacher Education Institutions

During the last two decades, there is increase of Teacher Education Institutions in leaps and bounds. The mushrooming growth of Teacher Education Institutions has raised the curtain for commercialization in Teacher Education. TEIs have come into the hands of a few who have no concern for quality in Teacher Education. This has created a new category of students popularly known as ‘non-attending students’, who simply take admission in TEIs and appear for the examination to get a qualified degree in Teaching.

(viii) Lack of Infrastructural and Instructional facilities

Many Teacher Education Institutions suffer from lack of Infrastructural and Instructional facilities. These institutions manage to show them at the time of inspection by the Affiliating Bodies.

To overcome these deficiencies in the Teacher Education Programme and to improve quality in Teacher Education, the Government of India has taken initiative to suggest a few measures in its newly introduced National Education Policy (NEP) – 2020. The following are some of the ideas expressed in the Policy Document of NEP-2020 to enhance quality in Teacher Education and produce quality teachers to the nation.

TEACHER EDUCATION AS ENVISAGED BY NEP-2020

The National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 envisions that Teacher education should play a vital role in creating a pool of school teachers to shoulder the responsibility of shaping the next generation. The quality of education ultimately depends on the occupational commitment of teachers towards teaching profession. It is the responsibility of Teacher Educators working in different Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) to prepare teachers who are committed and dedicated to the teaching profession. Teacher preparation is an activity that requires multidisciplinary perspectives and knowledge, formation of dispositions and values, and development of practice under the best mentors. Teachers should be grounded in Indian values, languages, knowledge, ethos and traditions; and well-versed in the latest advances in education and pedagogy.

According to the Justice J. S. Verma Commission (2012) constituted by the Supreme Court, a majority of stand-alone TEIs - over 10,000 in number are not even attempting serious teacher education but are essentially selling degrees for a price. Regulatory efforts so far have neither been able to curb the malpractices in the system, nor enforce basic standards for quality, and in fact have had the negative effect of curbing the growth of excellence and innovation in the sector. The sector and its regulatory system are, therefore, in urgent need of revitalization through radical action, in order to raise standards and restore integrity, credibility, efficacy, and high quality to the teacher education system.

National Education Policy-2020 envisages that, in order to improve and reach the levels of integrity and credibility required to restore the prestige of the teaching profession, the Regulatory System shall be empowered to take stringent action against substandard and dysfunctional teacher education institutions (TEIs) that do not meet basic educational criteria, after giving one year for remedy of the breaches. By 2030, only educationally sound, multidisciplinary, and integrated teacher education programmes shall be in force.

As teacher education requires multidisciplinary inputs, and education in high-quality content as well as pedagogy, all teacher education programmes must be conducted within composite multidisciplinary institutions. To this end, all multidisciplinary universities and colleges - will aim to establish, education departments which, besides carrying out cutting-edge research in various aspects of education, will also run B.Ed. programmes, in collaboration with other departments such as psychology, philosophy, sociology, neuroscience, Indian languages, arts, music, history, literature, physical education, science and mathematics. Moreover, all stand-alone TEIs will be required to convert to multidisciplinary institutions by 2030, since they will have to offer the 4-year integrated teacher preparation programme.

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