



ROLE & CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATED TEACHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Integrated Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programs aim to streamline teacher education by combining undergraduate and B.Ed. courses into a single integrated curriculum. MHRD has introduced integrated teacher education programme (ITEP) all over India from 2020 to create the team of quality teachers in India. This professional training programme is qualitative and well designed, but is facing some challenges also. This paper focuses on these emerging trends, changes and other issues such as quality of teacher training programmes, poor integration of skills, lack of innovations, teacher curriculum, teacher education and ICT etc.

Key words: Teacher Education, Integrated, Role, challenges

Introduction

Perhaps the most prized objective of every human society, past and present, is the education of its citizens. Thus, in an attempt to define education, philosophers, educationists, and other great minds have made every effort. However, the majority of these definitions bear the imprint of the authors' worldviews, moral principles, and worldviews. Despite the fact that these categories might represent the social structures of today. So far, no one-size-fits-all definition has been discovered. A common definition of education is still being sought after. Despite the fact that different intellectuals have defined education in different ways, the idea of education may be examined from the perspective of several educational theories. Education is a deliberate endeavour with certain goals in mind, such as imparting knowledge or developing abilities and moral qualities. These objectives could include the growth of comprehension, reason, kindness, and integrity. A number of scholars stress the importance of using critical thinking skills to discern between indoctrination and education. While some theorists favour a value-neutral meaning of the term, others insist that education must lead to a student's improvement. In a slightly different context, education can also refer to the mental states and dispositions that persons with education possess—rather than the practice itself.

TEACHER EDUCATION

. According to Goods 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. Teacher Education = Teaching Skills+Pedagogical theory + Professional skills. Teaching skills would include providing training and practice in the different techniques, approaches and strategies that would help the teachers to plan and impart instruction, provide appropriate reinforcement and conduct effective assessment. It includes effective classroom management skills, preparation and use of instructional materials and communication

skills Pedagogical theory includes the philosophical, sociological and psychological considerations that would enable the teachers to have a sound basis for practicing the teaching skills in the classroom.

VISION OF TEACHER EDUCATION:

More consideration needs to be given in teacher education to the new demands coming from the educational system. In order to achieve this, it must prepare teachers for two roles: first, as an enthusiastic, humane, and supportive facilitator of learning environments that helps students discover their talents and fully realise their physical and intellectual potential; second, as an engaged member of the community that actively contributes to the process of curriculum renewal in schools in order to keep it relevant to the shifting needs of learners and society at large, while also taking into consideration lessons learned from the past and emerging concerns and imperatives.

These expectations imply that the teacher works within a larger framework, with its dynamics and concerns influencing her work. In other words, educators must be aware of and sensitive to the social contexts of education, the differences in students' backgrounds, the macro national and global contexts, and the national concerns for attaining excellence in addition to equity, parity, and social justice.

In order for TE to meet these goals, it must have elements that allow student teachers to care for and enjoy spending time with children; Recognise kids in their social, cultural, and political environments; Consider learning as the process of deriving meaning from one's own experiences; Recognise how learning happens, how to create conducive learning environments, and the variations in pupils' learning styles, pacing, and types of learning. Consider the creation of knowledge as an ongoing, reflective learning process. Keep an open mind and never stop learning.

Meaning of Integrated education.

With integrated education, children from a variety of backgrounds and needs—such as those with emotional, cognitive, or physical disabilities—can learn alongside their peers in traditional classroom settings. It draws attention to variety, acceptance, and understanding among pupils, fostering a sense of equality and community. It draws attention to variety, acceptance, and understanding among pupils, fostering a sense of equality and community.

The Integrated Education Goals/objectives

The primary objectives of integrated teacher education programs include:

Streamlined Teacher Education:

Integrating B.Ed. with undergraduate studies aims to create a seamless pathway for aspiring teachers, eliminating the need for a separate postgraduate course.

Early Exposure to Teaching Skills:

By introducing B.Ed. components earlier in the academic journey, students gain exposure to pedagogical skills and educational theories from the beginning, allowing for a more gradual and immersive learning experience.

Holistic Development:

Integrated programs emphasize holistic development, fostering not only subject-specific expertise but also pedagogical knowledge and practical teaching skills.

Reduced Redundancy:

Integrating B.Ed. with undergraduate studies minimizes redundancy by avoiding repetitive coursework. This streamlined approach optimizes the use of time and resources for both students and educational institutions.

Equitable Possessions

Giving every student equal opportunities, regardless of their abilities or limits, is the goal of integrated curriculum and education. It seeks to eliminate barriers that might prevent some children from receiving a top-notch education.

All-Inclusive Educational Setting

The goal of integrated education is to create a welcoming classroom where learners with different needs can coexist and grow. It teaches children to appreciate and accept one another.

Academic Achievement

Integrated curriculum aims to guarantee academic success for every student. It focuses on adapting teaching methods, providing specialised support, and promoting an inclusive curriculum that meets students' diverse learning needs.

Social Integration

Integrated education aims to foster social inclusion by increasing student contact and collaboration. It fosters healthy relationships, dispels myths, and increases empathy in children with and without disabilities.

Individual Growth

A focus of integrated curriculum is the importance of each student's personal growth. It aims to boost their self-reliance, self-assurance, and self-worth so they can reach their greatest potential and contribute significantly to society.

Rights and Freedom

Ensuring students with disabilities have equal access to education, chances for involvement, and support is the goal of integrated teaching. It seeks to create a society that values diversity and upholds the dignity of every individual.

Merits:

Several advantages are associated with integrated teacher education programs:

1. **Time and Cost Efficiency:** Combining teacher education with undergraduate studies reduces the overall duration of teacher education, potentially making it more cost-effective for students.
2. **Seamless Transition:** Integrated programs facilitate a seamless transition from academic studies to professional teacher preparation, providing a continuous and coherent educational experience.
3. **Flexibility:** Students often have the flexibility to choose teaching subjects aligned with their undergraduate majors, allowing for a more personalized and relevant teacher education experience.
4. **Early Professional Development:** Early exposure to teaching practices enables students to develop essential teaching skills and attitudes from an early stage, contributing to their professional growth.
5. **Reduction in Redundancy:** By integrating teacher education components with undergraduate studies, redundant coursework is minimized, avoiding duplication of efforts in separate postgraduate teacher education programs.

Demerits:

Despite the merits, integrated teacher education programs also face challenges and drawbacks:

1. **Depth vs. Breadth Dilemma:** Critics argue that integrating teacher education with undergraduate studies may compromise the depth of subject knowledge, as the focus may shift towards encompassing pedagogical content rather than specialized subject mastery.
2. **Limited Exposure to Education Courses:** Some students and educators express concerns that integrated programs may offer insufficient exposure to education-specific courses, potentially impacting the depth of pedagogical understanding.
3. **Credentialing Issues:** In some regions, traditional teacher education programs may be the established route for teacher certification. Integrated programs might face challenges in gaining recognition and acceptance from regulatory bodies.
4. **Varied Implementation:** The success of integrated teacher education programs depends on the implementation strategies adopted by different institutions. Consistency and standardization across programs can be challenging to achieve.
5. **Adjustment Period:** Students entering integrated programs may face an adjustment period as they navigate the dual demands of undergraduate studies and professional teacher preparation, potentially experiencing increased academic pressure.

Conclusion

In conclusion, integrated teacher education programs aim to transform teacher education by providing a seamless, efficient, and holistic pathway for aspiring educators. While these programs offer various benefits, including time and cost efficiency, early exposure to teaching skills, and a streamlined curriculum, challenges such as the depth vs. breadth dilemma and credentialing issues need careful consideration. The success of integrated teacher education programs depends on the commitment of educational institutions to maintain high academic standards, ensure effective implementation, and address potential demerits through continuous improvement strategies.

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