



Strategies to Improve Teaching Learning Process of Teacher Education

*Vikash kumar Meena

Research Scholar, Department of Education,
University of Rajasthan, Jaipur

Introduction

The quality of any nation depends on the quality of its citizens. Quality of citizens is directly dependent upon the quality of education. Quality of education is cent per cent based upon quality of the teachers who prepare students to compete in the world market to become harmonious productive citizens of a developed nation. That's why it is often told that teachers are the nation builders and the harbinger of cultural heritage. Teachers are the architect of society and markers of mankind.

Teachers are the torch bearers of a nation who play a major role in creating social cohesion, national integration and a learning society. They not only disseminate knowledge but also create and generate new knowledge. Teachers have always played a crucial role in preparing communities and societies towards exploring new horizon and achieving higher level of progress and development. They are the prime agents of change. The significance of emerging role of teacher has never been so critical at this juncture and hence paramount importance has been given not only to their status but also to their education. The quality of teacher performance in teaching provides him with proper status and respect from students and community. This further depends upon the education of teachers and teacher education institutions that have to address these issues and play their role in preparing teacher educators, who in turn assume responsibilities to groom the younger generation. The well equipped teacher is the pivot in the system of education. At all times the teacher is the pivot in the system of education.

An eminent educationist, philosopher and the former President of India Dr. S. Radhakrishna has aptly remarked in the report of the 1953 that "the teacher's Place in the society is of vital importance. He acts as the pivot for the transmission of intellectual traditions and technical skills from generation to generation and helps to keep the lamp of civilization burning."

As the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) points out "Every teacher and educationist of experience knows that even the best curriculum and the most perfect syllabus remain dead unless quickened into life by the right methods of teaching and right kind of teachers."

But only those teachers who are well trained can play a vital role in education as well as in the society. As the Secondary Education Commission (1954) state "We are however convinced that the most important factor in the contemplated educational reconstruction is the teacher, his personal qualities, his educational qualifications, his personal training, and the place he occupies in the school as well as in the community."

For the qualitative improvement of education a sound programme of professional education of teacher is essential. The professional preparation of teachers has been recognized to be critical for the qualitative improvement of education since the 1960 (Kothari Commission, 1964-66).

As put forward by Education Commission (1966) "The success of any system of education depends on the quality of its teachers, who shape the classroom by sharpening younger generations. It is no exaggeration to say that any system of education can rise above the level of the quality of its teachers.

Teacher are to be fully prepared to relate education to the changing patterns of life, needs and best possible professional preparation in order to raise and keep them continually improving. Teacher training institutions can play a crucial role in the development of education.

Identifying the needs to view the teacher as central to the process of change in school education, the Chattopadhyaya commission notes, "if school teachers are expected to bring about a revolution in their approach to teaching.... that the same revolution must precede and find a place in college of education."

Subsequently (1983 -85), the Chatoopadhyaya committee report of the National Commission on teacher envisioned the New Teacher as one who communicates to pupils " The importance of and the feeling of national integrity and unity; the need for a scientific attitude; a commitment to excellence in standards of work and action and concern for society." The commission observed that " ... what obtains in the majority of our teaching colleges and training institutes is woefully inadequate...."

The Report of the National commission on teacher (1983-85) highlighted the absence of clear-cut policies and priorities for in-service education and lack of systematic identification of the needs. It recommended "planning ahead of time" and closer scrutiny of Methodologies" adopted for in-service education of teachers. It is also recommended that strategies used for in-service education must be 'imaginative, bold and varied'".

The National Policy of education (NPE 1986-92) recognized that "... teacher should have the freedom to innovate, to devise appropriate methods of communication and activities relevant to the needs of and capabilities of and the concerns of the community." The policy further states that "... teacher Education is a continuous process, and its

pre-service and in-service components are inseparable. As the first step the system of teacher education will be overhauled.”

The Yashpal Committee Report (1993) on Learning Without Burden noted “... inadequate programmes of teacher preparation lead to unsatisfactory quality of learning in schools.... The emphasis in these programmes should be on enabling the trainees to acquire the ability for self teaching and independent thinking.”

Harvey (1993) and Atwood (2007) point out that quality processes tend to focus on ‘core’ aspects of education such as learning-teaching and course organization. In other words, teacher educators’ way of organizing theoretical framework, practical sessions and skills development programme affect the future teachers. The activities suggested during training are carried to the classroom teaching in the schools.

It can be said that teacher education is the training which prepares teachers to perform their jobs effectively in their socio-cultural environments. It should be multi-dimensional and capable of serving multifarious-purposes, besides being compatible with the values and norms of the society. It should be planned keeping in view the future requirements.

There is a consensus among scholars that critical reflection and intentional effort to think about one’s own experience are the core issues for any innovative teacher education programs to facilitate personal and professional growth of teachers. The question is how teacher education programs can get new teachers to be reflective practitioners and analyze their own experience to get deeper understanding of their students.

Teachers do not enter the classroom as finished products. Most teachers who remain in the profession grow over time and become better. Good teacher produce good students (Rice 2003). A teacher’s most important task is contributing to and enhancing the learning and achievement of his her students. For this purpose a teacher should have to be a continuous learner.

The social, economical, technological, and political changes in society have complicated the roles of the teachers in classrooms and society as well as those of the teacher educators. Teacher education programs have often been criticized for falling short in preparing future teachers with their increasingly demanding task of teaching. Cochran-Smith describes teacher education as “a problematic and contested enterprise, troubled by enduring and value-laden questions about the purpose and goals of education in a democratic society”. In order to meet the internal (teachers’ job satisfaction, sense of self efficacy, etc.) and external demands (social and political demands), teacher educators have been searching for the alternative instructional methods to bring up the quality in teacher education.

It is the responsibility of teacher education institution to produce teachers who can explore the creative potential of students and can direct this potential towards appropriate channels (Gupta 1997).

The purpose of education is to convert savage into sage by providing opportunities and guiding each to develop to the maximum his/her potential abilities and aptitudes into "appropriate knowledge, skills and qualities of head and heart. Only quality education can achieve this goal". If education should build nation builders, teacher education should concern itself with providing master builders, well-equipped physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually" (Rohidekar 1997).

As observed by Pandey (1997) that, teacher education programmes can bring about revolutionary changes to meet the challenges of 21st century

The very fact that teaching is a profession and it entails that teaching is a specialized activity for which specialized knowledge/ training is required through specialized institutions. A good institution will produce individuals who will be devoted to the profession and make their mark in the activities organized by them while going to the field. Teacher educators are responsible for producing quality teachers.

Preparation of teachers for 'effective teaching' needs pedagogical and interpersonal teaching skills. Sharma (2000) is of the view that teachers can play their role effectively only when they are well trained. We criticize the existing teacher education institutions; which train teachers by using obsolete methods of teaching. Student-teachers learn theoretically, they neither apply effective teaching learning techniques during their own training nor during their teaching. Teaching skills and tactics can be inculcated by effective teacher education programme.

The empirical evidence regarding the present teacher education process in meeting the quality expectation revealed a wide gap between theory and practice; lack of clear-cut instructional design, strategies, and manufacturing process in behavioural terms.

The basic need of the day is to have a dynamic teacher. Teacher education should focus on the preparation of teachers who could facilitate the students to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies, which would help them to agents of social change and transformation. The current teacher-training program does not suit the present societal needs (Dash 2006).

Today the supply of quality teacher is an ongoing emerging matter of concern at the National and International Scenario.

For the attainment of that goal some Strategies we have to adopt in our education system

- ICT has brought innovative e-learning tools and resource. Web blog, Social Book Marking, Wiki, RSS, Podcasting, Instant messaging, Text chat etc. are many examples to improve teaching learning process.
- The websites containing encyclopedias help the teachers and students in gathering information about a particular concept so as to make the whole process of teaching learning interesting.
- IQ SIM technology develops innovative and interactive web-based simulator quality management tools through activation of prior experiences, demonstration of skills and inclusion of skills into real-world descriptions.
- M-Education, E-Content, Radio, T.V, Video Recording & Playback are innovations to enhance teaching learning process.
- Orientation Programmes, Refresher Courses, Seminars, Conference, Workshops are played a vital role in quality education which required in the modern information & communication era.
- Action Research enables teachers to examine their own teaching and their students learning by engaging in a research project in their classrooms.
- Case discussions help teachers to examine written narratives or videotapes of classroom teaching and learning and discuss what is happening, the problems, research and outcomes.
- Coaching & Mentoring assists teacher's work one-on-one with an equally or more experienced teacher to improve their skills through a variety of activities, including classroom observation and feedback, problem solving and co-planning.
- Learning Orientation can prepare teacher and students for learning by providing an initial structure to clarify intended outcomes and cue desired learning strategies.
- Coherent content to facilitate meaningful learning and retention, content is explained clearly and developed with an emphasis on its structure and connections.
- Co-operative learning enables students often benefit from working in pairs, small groups to build understanding or help one another master skills.
- Goal –oriented assessment enables the teacher uses a variety of formal and informal assessment methods to monitor progress towards learning goals.
- Constructivist oriented teaching strategy, teaching meta-cognitive strategies, cognitive activation, frequent open learning tasks, discovery learning, fading from more structured to more open assignments.
- Supportive classroom climate helps students learn best within cohesive and caring learning communities.

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