

Empowering India through Quality Teacher Education: Enhancing the Quality of Trainees and Teacher Educators

Dr. (Mrs.) Nishta Rana

Associate Professor (Deputy Head), P. G. Department, MIER College of Education (Autonomous), Jammu-180001 (India)

ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 15 May 2019

Keywords

NCTE, Teacher educators, Trainees, Two year B.Ed./M.Ed..

Corresponding Author

Email: drnishtarana[at]gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Education is an instrument for preparing younger generation for facing the challenges in life and teachers at any level play significant role in shaping the personality of young ones. Further, quality of teachers is dependent upon quality of a number of factors viz. their training, interest in teaching profession, adaptability, intelligence and motivation etc. Furthermore, it remains a big challenge to attract good quality students in teaching profession. After passing twelfth class, major lot (so called cream) of students enters technical/vocational education courses and leftover takes up general higher education (B.A. /B.Sc. /B.Com.). After their graduation, they take up their subject specialization (M.A. /M.Sc. /M.B.A. etc). Now, again the students who do not find admission in these courses, they plan to enter in B.Ed. /M.Ed. course, which are responsible for creating teachers and teacher educators. Starting from teacher educators to pupil teachers and then teachers, and then students at school level, quality gets deteriorated at all levels. Thus, quality of overall education system gets impacted. The policy makers, therefore, need to ponder over this matter for improving the status of teachers, vis-a-vis their salaries, working conditions upgradation in terms of qualifications and hence, getting effective teachers in this profession. Though under the direction of the Supreme Court of India, NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) has made B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses of two-years, but increased duration for these programmes has further multiplied the problems. Teacher-educators and experts perceive these changes as insufficient to improve the quality of the system as a whole and that of the prospective teachers in particular. The need of the hour therefore, is to devise ways and means to strengthen the modified scheme of teacher education. This paper throws light on enhancing the quality of trainees and teacher-educators by looking into various factors responsible for deteriorating standards of teacher education.

1. Introduction

The Education System which was evolved first in ancient India is known as the Vedic system. The importance of education was well recognized in India, '*Swadeshe puujyate raja, vidwan sarvatra puujyate*' "A king is honoured only in his own country, but one who is learned is honoured throughout the world." The ultimate aim of education in ancient India was not knowledge, as preparation for life in this world or for life beyond, but for complete realization of self. The Gurukul system fostered a bond between the *Guru* and the *Shishya* and established a teacher-centric system in which the pupil was subjected to a rigid discipline and was under certain obligations towards his teacher. The world's first university was established in Takshila in 700 BC and the University of Nalanda was built in the 4th century BC, a great achievement and contribution of ancient India in the field of education. Science and technology in ancient and medieval India covered all the major branches of human knowledge and activities. Indian scholars like Charaka and Susruta, Aryabhata, Bhaskaracharya, Chanakya, Patanjali and Vatsayayna and numerous others made seminal contribution to world knowledge in such diverse fields as mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, medical science and surgery, fine arts, mechanical and production technology, civil engineering and architecture, shipbuilding and navigation, sports and games. The Indian education system helped in preserving ancient

culture and promoting cultural unity and infused a sense of responsibility and social values. The ancient Indian education system has been a source of inspiration to all educational systems of the world, particularly in Asia and Europe. But, what is the present status? India seems to have lost its preeminent position mainly because of poor education.

2. Present Status

In the seven decades after independence while much has been achieved, many would genuinely feel that India has not taken its rightful place in the comity of nations. At independence, India had sound institutional infrastructure and an administrative system that was the envy of the developing world; even taking into account the major achievement in standing out as a stable democracy, India seems to have lost its preeminent position mainly because of poor education. Various evaluation (NCERT's NAS, NGO Pratham's ASER) studies show a decline in learning levels among school students (National Policy on Education, 2016). Some of the findings are:

- Nearly half of the students of grade V were not able to read at grade II level, similar status is for arithmetic skill (Government Schools).
- This is a matter of serious concern, since approximately 80% of all recognised schools at the elementary stage are government run or supported.

- Without strong foundation in early years, the child's future progress (mental and physical) is highly circumscribed.
- Poor learning outcomes in primary school stage naturally spills over to secondary stage and continues to the college years

Education is an instrument for preparing younger generation for facing the challenges in life and teachers at any level play significant role in shaping the personality of young ones. Further, quality of teachers is dependent upon quality of a number of factors viz. their training, interest in teaching profession, adaptability, intelligence and motivation etc. Furthermore, it remains a big challenge to attract good quality students in teaching profession. After passing twelfth class, major lot (so called cream) of students enters technical/vocational education courses and leftover takes up general higher education (B.A. /B.Sc. /B.Com.). After their graduation, they take up their subject specialization (M.A. /M.Sc. /M.B.A. etc). Now, again the students who do not find admission in these courses, they plan to enter in B.Ed. /M.Ed. course, which are responsible for creating teachers and teacher educators. Starting from teacher educators to pupil teachers and then teachers, and then students at school level, quality gets deteriorated at all levels. Thus, quality of overall education system gets impacted. The need of the hour therefore, is to devise ways and means to strengthen the modified scheme of teacher education and improve the quality of education at all levels.

3. Various factors responsible for deteriorating standards of teacher education

1. **Entering Behaviour of Teacher Trainees:** Quality of entering students is very poor. Bright students do not prefer to get admission in teacher education programmes. The percentage for getting admission has been reduced to 45. Further, no entrance examination has been conducted to scrutinize better students.
2. **Lesser Number of Applicants:** After increased duration of B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses, lesser number of students is applying in these courses letting the seats vacant.
3. **Disinterest, Reluctance and Apathy of Students:** As the teacher education colleges are getting low quality students, they are disinterested and reluctant to attend the colleges, to do their teaching practice, assignments and even internal assessment examinations.
4. **Uncertain Future of Teacher Educators:** As admissions in B.Ed. colleges are at stake, future of teacher educator is uncertain. Also, today no one aspires to be teacher educator now.
5. **No Regular Staff:** Most of the B.Ed. colleges do not appoint the competent faculty. Only part timers and substitute staff members are running the courses. Such staff cannot put its whole hearted efforts in the quality attainment/enhancement.
6. **Less Committed Teacher Educators:** As most of the teacher educators are working in private teacher education institutions where they get one third of the

salary in comparison to their government counterparts, making them unstable to remain at their places.

7. **Linguistic Disability:** Although medium of instruction is English, but students are not able to follow their teachers. Students have Hindi as their language for expression.
8. **Paucity of Bilingual Teachers:** There is paucity of teacher educators who can teach in two languages.
9. **Lack of Scholarships and Financial Assistance:** There is no provision for scholarships or any other financial assistance and students are least motivated to pursue their B.Ed.
10. **Lack of Grievance and Redressal:** The grievance and redressal programmes for teacher educators as well as for students in teacher education colleges are poor.
11. **No Placement Assistance by the Department:** There is no departmental assistance in providing placement of students after or during their B.Ed.
12. **Lack of Library Resources:** Availability and usage of library facilities in teacher education colleges is lacking.
13. **Lack of Vision and Mission:** Most of the managements are not from education background. For them opening B.Ed. College is a profit making enterprise rather than a dedicated centre of preparing teachers.
14. **Mushroom Growth of Private Institutions:** There is mushroom growth of B.Ed colleges. Number of applicants in B.Ed. is less than the number of seats to be filled.
15. **No use of Technologies:** There is no or less usage of modern technologies in teacher education preparation programmes.
16. **No Attached Experimental School:** Practice of teaching is at farce as no attached experimental school is there in most of the teacher education colleges.
17. **Mismatch between Demand and Supply:** New teacher education colleges have been opened in the state without conducting any need and supply demands.
18. **No Monitoring by NCTE:** Due to Article 370, NCTE Act does not apply in the teacher education colleges in J&K. Regulatory bodies are not enforcing regulations in letter and spirit.
19. **NAAC Accreditation:** It is surprising to observe that very few number of teacher education colleges have volunteered themselves for NAAC accreditation.

4. Suggestions

It is high time now to look into the working conditions of teacher educators because it is the teacher educator who is ultimately responsible for the quality of teacher education, quality of education and empowering India by empowering Indian youth. The following suggestions may be given for improving the quality of teacher education:

1. Attracting good quality students in teaching profession
2. Ensuring better entering behavior of teacher trainees

3. Providing equal salaries and perks to teacher educators working in government and private sectors
4. Providing scholarship and financial assistance to teacher trainees
5. Strengthening grievances and redressal system
6. Enriching library facilities
7. Placement assistance by the department
8. Strong enforcement of regulations
9. Using technology in the process of admission, teaching-learning and evaluation
10. Only management people with vision and mission should be allowed to open teacher education colleges
11. Appointing regular staff in teacher education colleges
12. Appointing adequate number of staff members as specified by regulating bodies
13. Strict Monitoring by NCTE and other agencies like HEERA (upcoming)
14. Making accreditation compulsory
15. Providing enough opportunities to teacher educators for their professional development
16. Matching demand with supply
17. Appointing only trained teachers in schools

5. Conclusion

On the totem pole of the state management hierarchy, education comes relatively low both in status and recognition. This was part of the administrative ethos bestowed by colonial rulers who had no interest in imparting education to the bulk of Indians. This neglect should no longer be tolerated. Education in general and teacher education in particular must be given the highest priority. It is the duty of Central and State Governments to provide necessary resources and create conditions that are favourable for the process of teaching and learning to flourish viz. trained, equipped, interested, motivated and brainy teachers through such type of teacher educators too. Every opportunity needs to be provided to young persons to get good quality education and acquire skills that will surely lead to empowered India. The present central government has proposed to begin a four year integrated teacher education programme, after 10+2, from the year 2019. It can be proved to be a great step as we can have genuinely interested candidates to get entry in this profession. If India does the things now required to be done, in 15 to 20 years Indian Education can be transformed and the rest of the 21st century could then belong to India.

References

1. Rana, Nishta (2017). Quality Issues Regarding Teacher Education in Jammu and Kashmir, *Journal of Community Guidance and Research*, 34(1), 144-152.
2. National Policy on Education (2016). *Report of the Committee for Evolution of the New Education Policy*, Ministry of Human Resource Development.
3. Rana, Nishta (2016). Technological Change: Implications for Teacher Education. In Arun K. Gupta (Eds.), *Improving Higher and Teacher Education Through ICT* (pp. 21-31). Jammu: MIER.