

REORGANISING SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION FOR QUALITY CONTROL

Lalit Kumar

Summary/Abstract

Quality of teacher is linked with the quality of education which makes a strong nation by providing qualified and educated citizen. Teacher education in India has slowly but steadily emerged as an important field of human activities. Without taking care of the conditions of secondary teacher education in terms of input, process and output the system of teacher education cannot be improved and developed. Steps have to be taken for the improvement of teacher education as (A) Input to attract and select better candidates and feeling of insecurity regarding job be removed or minimized; (B) Process curriculum need to be restructured, time duration be increased to two years, evaluation pattern be made reliable, provision for comprehensive colleges of education be made, voice of teacher and teacher educators be given due weightage in policy making, co-ordination be made between activities and programmes organised and expectation from the student teachers, proper environment be created for teacher education and societal support be gained; (C) Output - people be convinced to the utility of teacher education, teacher education cannot be imparted in one installment and professional growth of teacher and teacher educators be safe-guarded.

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It is universally accepted that the quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizen. The quality of citizens depends upon the quality of their education. The quality of their education depends upon several factors but the most significant factor is the quality of the teacher. Undoubtedly, the quality of the teacher is determined by the provision of adequate pre-service and in-service education of the teachers. All nations are spending considerable effort, energy and money on the Pre-Service and In-Service education of their teachers.

Teacher education in India has slowly but steadily emerged as an important field of human activities. Establishment and formation of bodies like U.G.C. NCERT, Regional Institutes of Education, State Institutes of Education, State Institutes of Science Education, Educational Research and Innovation Committee, Indian Council of Social Science Research and National Council for Teacher Education have provided the teacher education a sound base.

Knowledge explosion and explosion of population have widely affected the teacher education and its present status. Fast expanding periphery of knowledge and ever increasing population have left teacher education to think over its quality in the light of the present changing scenario. Teacher education in India for quality control needs to be re-organised, re-structured and re-vitalised to suit the present existing problems of different nature and also to stand parallel to the educational setup of developed countries of the world.

Well known educationist Dr. K. L. Shrimali has rightly marked, "The

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effectiveness of a training programme depends mainly on three factors. The first is the mental equipment which the teacher brings with himself to the training institution - his general education, temperament and character. The second is the efficiency of the training programme itself which, in its turn, depends upon the quality of the teacher educators, the syllabus of training and the physical equipment provided for training institutions; and the third is the condition under which teachers will be required to work after their training is over." We may consider the above three factors as input, process and output, respectively. Let us discuss the conditions of secondary teacher education for quality development in terms of input, process and output.

(A) Input

(i) *To Attract and Select Better Candidates* : Secondary Education Commission (1953) has stated "We are convinced that the most important factor in the contemplated educational reconstruction is the teacher - his personal qualities, his educational qualifications, his professional training and the place that he occupies in the school as well as in the community." It is clear from the above statement that ways and means to attract more and more brilliant young persons are a necessary prerequisite towards enhancing the professional status of teachers and teacher educators. Selection procedures need to be developed to ensure that those with right attitudes and aptitudes join the system. Incentives for attracting suitably inclined young persons to the profession and review of recruitment procedures of teachers are to be made clear. The purpose of the selection is to choose the candidate who really possesses an aptitude for teaching and simultaneously contains a sound knowledge of the concerned school subjects and a positive attitude towards teaching profession. The present selection procedure is neither uniform nor satisfactory. Somewhere selection is made on the basis of academic records and somewhere a test is conducted for the same. The test used ignores the candidate's subject knowledge and puts less emphasis on the aptitude, interest and attitude of the candidates. Some elaborate techniques for the selection of candidates for admission need to be used. A state level entrance test containing intelligence test, test of general knowledge, language test, numerical ability test, should be conducted areas of two school subjects to be chosen by the candidates. Two interviews, one for personality measurement and another for the measurement of subject knowledge, be conducted. In this connection panel of experts at the state level should be setup. Candidates getting less than 40% marks both in written and interview separately should not be considered for final selection. Additional weightage at the rate of 3% and 5% of marks for second and first class postgraduate degree holders be given. Ph. D. holders should be given 10% weightage of marks. The weightage be given only to the already qualified candidates in written test and interview as well.

(ii) *Feeling of Insecurity regarding Job be removed or minimized* : There should be a planning unit in each state education department. The function of this unit should be to regulate the demand and supply of teachers in various school subjects. Feeling of insecurity regarding job among students who come in the course need to be removed or minimized.

(B) Process

(i) *Curriculum need to be restructured* : Curriculum is the core component of teacher education programme. The development of an appropriate curriculum is indispensable for improving the quality of teacher education that affects the education system in the long run. The teacher education curriculum - frame work, developed by NCTE and U.G.C. respectively in 1978 and 1988, be discussed and revised in close collaboration with eminent teacher educators. Kumar (1994) has rightly suggested, "there must be a nation wide curriculum of teacher education. For the regional diversity an additional paper, in the light of the demand of the particular region, should be included in the curriculum." Curriculum be developed to ensure their relevance to the societal needs as well as the learning needs of the individual. Human rights, nurturing the human qualities, national values, moral and value inculcation, environmental education, health education, population education, scientific and technological changes, futurology of education, social, economic, religious and ethnic problems, innovations and new methods, skills and techniques of teaching, co-curricular activities along with statistical treatment, evaluation techniques, historical, psychological, sociological and philosophical foundations of education be given due weightage in framing the curriculum of teacher education. Revision of curriculum be made a continuous process.

(ii) *Time duration be increased to two years* : University Education Commission (1949) has rightly remarked that too little time is given to school practice. This is due to short time duration. Many educationists, commissions and committees have suggested the present one year B.Ed. course be made of two years duration. The major shortcomings of teacher education is its short duration compared with the duration for other professions - medical, engineering and law. The main purpose of teacher education programme is to develop healthy attitude and values and there after, develop the personality too. It is not possible for a training college during the short duration of nine months. Most of the B.Ed. students count their days in the colleges of education. They are, in general, said to be neither serious nor sincere to acquire the required teaching-learning skills. It is high time for the sound health of teacher education to think how far the teacher educators are able to impart the techniques of teaching to the trainees in such a short period.

(iii) *Evaluation pattern be made reliable* : Kumar (1995) has rightly asked a question regarding evaluation pattern of teacher education, "perhaps education is the only subject where a student does not fail. Is education such an easy subject? If not, the evaluation pattern of this course is faulty, unreliable and invalid." University Education Commission (1949) has ascertained "students were never failed in their practical test, and we enquired what happened if his five lessons were not deemed satisfactory." Internal and external assessment is not free from subjectivity. Formative evaluation along with summative evaluation need to be utilised both for the theory papers and practical work. Dave (1967) recommended a nine point scale for evaluation of internal assessment for assessing activities under student teaching. He was also of the view that evaluation of the total programme of the student teaching in terms of each activities under student teaching be emphasised in evaluation scheme of practice teaching in colleges of education. Activity based evaluation for internal and external assessment can make the evaluation system reliable. Provision of interview should be made besides written examination for the evaluation.

(iv) *Provision of comprehensive colleges of education be made* : Small training colleges are neither economical nor effective. There is a need of comprehensive colleges of education as suggested by Baroda study group and recommended by several educationists of fame. There is complete isolation of primary and secondary teacher education in India. Two types of institutions have no mutual contact in any sphere of their work. There are so many common areas in pedagogy. The gulf can be bridged by comprehensive colleges of education which will have provision for teacher training of all types. It would also be necessary to explore common areas of professional work and promote mutual contact of teacher educators of all levels of education. In this regard establishment of two or three comprehensive colleges of education in a state can serve the purpose upto a satisfactory extent.

(v) *Voice of teacher and teacher educators be given due weightage in policy making* : Voice of teacher and teacher educators be given due weightage in the process of policy making and programme structuring for teacher preparation. Rajput (1996) has rightly pointed out, "The existing education system provides poor quality of general education and teacher education to teachers but expects them to deliver good quality education to the children. When a dam collapses, those blamed are the engineers and architects and not the workers who have followed the instructions. Just the reverse occurs in case of teachers. When the education system fails the governments and the decision makers are never blamed, only the teachers are blamed for the failure. Teacher are implementors of decision taken by non-teachers. They however accept all the blames whenever there is a failure. Teachers and teacher educators are the dynamic focal points

of all activities pertaining to education. They deserve a role in policy formulation, in evaluating implementation strategies, in training the functionaries of the system and finally in ensuring learning attainments of his wards both in cognitive and affective domains.

(vi) *Co-ordination be made between activities and programmes organised and expectation from the trainees* : The profession of teacher education, if it has to regain its past glory, must be conducted on a value based approach. Every teacher training institution must practice, what it expects its trainees to practice in their schools. Individual institutions and groups of institutions need to take initiatives on their own. The teacher training has to establish its credibility. This would not be possible as long as the certificates and degrees in teacher education are achieved anywhere without putting sufficient hard work and rigour through professionally adequate programme. Teacher and teacher educators need to respond to the issues of the curriculum (what to teach) and pedagogy & methodology of teaching (how to teach). They have to expand their horizons and identify patterns without whose presence the relevance of education would just remain a dream. There is generally a mismatch between real teacher prepared and recruited by the system and the expectations emerging out of the education policy from the teachers.

(vii) *Proper environment be created for teacher education* :

B.Ed. course should be made a fully residential course. Day scholars should not be allowed in the course. All training colleges should provide adequate residential facilities so as to be able to arrange community life and other suitable activities for the trainees. Teacher education colleges should have a separate campus, it must not be made a department in an academic college. An environment be created that the trainees must feel about the responsibility they are going to bear.

(viii) *Societal support be gained* : Govt. shall have to take the assistance of the community, the non-government organisations, universities and other institutions to ensure educational developments in future. Education must not be made the responsibility of the government only. Society must be encouraged to have a role to play in educational system in general and teacher education in particular.

(C) Output

(i) *People be convinced to the utility of Teacher education* : Several studies show little impact of teacher training on learning attainments of children. The way teacher training is imparted leaves little impact on the trainee. The parents are conscious while purchasing a glass and choosing a doctor but never worry about the teachers of their wards being trained or untrained. Teacher education has not yet distinctly

established the need of its essentiality as in the case for professions like law, medicine and engineering. People need to be convinced of the inevitability of teacher for good education.

(ii) *Teacher education cannot be imparted in one instalment* : No body subscribes to the philosophy that a person can teach effectively for entire period of his service after completing a course of teacher education for one, two or even four years. The belief is gaining ground that a teacher must be a life long student. Teacher education never ends. The teacher goes on learning all the time, keeps abreast of all the new developments in his field and endeavours to feed his students from a fresh running stream and not a stagnant pool of knowledge. Rabindranath Tagore proclaimed "a teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another unless it continues to burn its own flame." There has been urgent need for the professional rejuvenation of teachers. The teacher must generate new warmth and radiate new light. He must kindle new enthusiasm in his pupils. This can be accomplished by reducing his load and releasing him for participation in programmes of in-service education. He should be provided with new materials, books and educational journals so that he may keep in touch with all new developments. The need is to focus on inservice education, both for the teachers and the teacher educators. Development of new models of inservice education need to be emphasised. In influencing the life and character of children and youth one of the most potent factors is the example set by the teacher. The personal example of teacher colleges and the study of books by the pupil teachers. These statements suggest that high priority should be given to the inservice education of teacher education so that they could acquire fresh knowledge and activities to circulate.

(iii) *Professional growth of Teacher and Teacher educators be safe-guarded* : Provisions like that of study leave for acquiring higher qualifications either do not exist or are not easy to avail of. Opportunities to visit good institutions and centres of innovations are practically nil. Availability of training material to school teachers and teacher educators is either non-existent or indeed rare. There is hardly any thing that could motivate the teachers and teacher educators in the system. Professional organisations have to come to search for the possibilities of enhancing the moral of the teachers and teacher educators on one hand and in ensuring that they are professionally and academically in tune with the times, on the other. Provisions for higher learning and knowledge refreshment are necessary for the education system to contain progressive views, scientific approach and modern out look.

Despite different problems, teacher education is striving hard to restructure its desired shape. New Education Policy (1986), Programme of

Action (1992) have laid much emphasis on the developmental aspects of teacher education. NCTE has got statutory power to regulate, co-ordinate and promote teacher education in the country. What is needed more is the devotion of teacher educators along with the proper financial supports by the government of India and concerned state governments. To attract brilliant students, to make the programmes objective based and to manage for continuous education of teachers and teacher educators at work are the cardinal principles for qualitative improvement of teacher education in the country.

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