



PERCEPTION OF PRE SERVICE TEACHER TRAINEES TOWARDS QUALITY ASSURANCE

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ABSTRACT: Teacher training institutions have remained in the state of neglect for too long. While theoretically everyone agrees that efficacy of these institutions determines the quality of school education, in practice, not much as being done to ensure that these become professional institutions with professionally qualified, motivated faculty, which needs to function in a state of adequate infrastructure and resource support. To maintain the standards and to update the qualities, we require commitment, complete involvement of all the personnel, friendly management, free market environment and training of people concerned. Up gradation and development in all these spheres is possible only through empowering teachers through different aspects

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INTRODUCTION:

Sankaracharya regarded education to be synonymous with self – realization. Swami Vivekananda, modern exponent of Vedanta Philosophy, perceived education as the manifestation of divine perfection already existing in man. “Education he said, should aim at man making. By man making he implies the formation of character, increase in the powers of mind and expansion of the intellectual capacities. Rabindranath Tagore’s idea of education is that, it should help the individual child realize the essential unit of man and his relationship with Universe is an education for fullness.

Then there were commissions that delved into the system of education and deliberated on various issues, challenges and gave out suggestions for improvements qualitatively and quantitatively. The Indian Education Commission of 1966 condenses the various views on education, thus education according to Indian tradition is not a means to earn a living nor is it only a nursery of thought or a school for citizenship. It is initiation into the life of spirit training of human souls in pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue. It is a second birth – “Dvitiyam Janam” Education for liberation. 4

The Westerners viewpoint:

Plato held that education should enable one to attain the highest good or God, through pursuit of

inherent spiritual values of truth, beauty and goodness. Aristotle however held that education exists exclusively to develop man’s intellectual in a world of reality, which man can know and understand.

St. Thomas Aquinas considered education to be the process of discerning the truth about things as they really are and to extend and integrate such truth as is known. That education was to ensure proper morality and John Calvin emphasized salvation in the 16th and 17th centuries and Martin Luther, who stressed that salvation, was available through faith and this faith would be reached only through education and study of the Bible.

The general aims of education are developing democratic citizenship, vocational efficiency, education for leadership, development of personality. The general objectives of the education are to read, write and think, to help the child to learn a trade as a means of livelihood, to help the child to fit in the society in which he is expected to live Having seen the wide degree of discussion on the concept of education, we need to think of or deliberate about as to how to achieve it. In this background, the modern education has attained its goals to be: to increase productivity; to bring about national integration; to accelerate the process of modernization; and the cultivation of social, moral and spiritual values. The demand for qualified and quality teachers has been continuously increasing all over the world. There has been an unprecedented

expansion of 5 school education especially in the developing countries, which has accentuated such a demand.

Quite naturally, the teacher education programs have acquired renewed significance. It has become imperative that the effort and resources mobilized towards teacher education are effective and field relevant in particular country contexts.

It is necessary that quality concern is explicit in every aspect of teacher education programs. This quality concern goes beyond technical accuracy and consistent effort to carry out talks. If such concern is an integral part of the processes and practices within an institution, students will gain meaningful and holistic experience.

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), as an autonomous institution of the University Grants Commission (UGC), has been entrusted with the responsibility of assessment and accreditation of colleges and universities in India.

Towards this, the NAAC has been engaged in redesigning its on-going methodologies of assessment and accreditation, based on its own field experience, its shared knowledge with other international quality assurance agencies and the quality imperatives in the changing context of worldwide higher education scenario. After several consultative meetings with academic and educational experts, feedback responses from various stakeholders and due approval by the competent authorities of NAAC, a new methodology for 6

assessment and accreditation of higher education institutions has been prepared by NAAC. This came into effect from 1st April 2007.

Quality in Education:

The word quality comes from Latin word „Qualis“ meaning „what kind of.“ With a variety of meanings and connotations, it has been referred to as a „slippery concept“ (Pfeffer and Cootc, 1991). This implies that quality means different things to different people.

The British Standard Institution (BSI) defines quality as “the locality of features and characteristics of a product or service that has been on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs” (BSI, 1991)

But quality in education means, the educational process is such that it ensures students to achieve their goals and thereby satisfies the needs of the society and help in national development. As teachers, principals, heads of departments and planners and policy makers in education we may be having this question in our mind- Why worry about quality? It is not just because of the UGC directive that we should think of quality, rather quality should be a bottom – up approach and every one should be conscious of why we should worry about quality of

our teaching programs and institutions. Some of the reasons are

1. Competition
2. Customer satisfaction
3. Maintaining standards
4. Accountability 7
5. Improve employee morale and motivation
6. Credibility, prestige and statistics
7. Image and visibility.

In the words of Rabindranath Tagore, the first Indian Nobel Laureate. “A teacher can never truly teach, unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp, unless it continues to burn its own flame.”

What is Quality Education?

The human capital involved with an individual and its rate of return. One of the major aims of education is to help the individual to earn his livelihood. Casual observation and statistical data indicate that people with more education earn higher wages relatively compared to the people with less education (Psacharopoulos, 1972).

Quality life is the outcome of quality education. Our society demands certain values from an individual. How to preserve the social norms and how to conform the social norms is a part of education. Quality education impacts its students intellectually and socially.

There are six dimensions to develop quality education. They are

- Promotion and improvement of basic education.
- Reorientation programme at all levels to address sustainable development.
- Developing public awareness and understanding for sustainability.
- Providing training
- Involving higher education 8
- Management

The existing education should be improved according to the needs of the time. It has to fulfill the demands of ones“ own country and the changing scenario of the world. It must be competitive and co-operative.

Hawers Stephen (1990) indicated that quality could be taken to underline different needs by different groups of peoples. He described the characteristics of educational quality as:

- Efficiency in meeting the set goals.
- Relevance to human and environmental needs and conditions.
- „Something more“ in relation to the pursuit of excellence and human betterment.

Another approach defined three quality – related terms:

1. Quality assurance

The determination of standard, appropriate methods and quality requirement by an expert body.

2. Contract conformance quality

Some quality standards have been specified during the negotiations of forming a contract.

3. Consumer driven quality

Those who are to receive a product or service make explicit their expectations. 9

Quality movement in Indian Higher Education:

The University Grants Commission (UGC) with its statutory powers is expected to maintain quality in Indian higher education institutions. Section 12 of the UGC Act of 1956 requires UGC to be responsible for the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examinations and research in universities.

The objectives of UGC are to provide academic leadership to universities, to keep up the standards of education, to act as a kind of clearing house, to safeguard the interests of teachers and students. Various Committees and commissions on education over the years have emphasized the need for improvement and recognition of quality in Indian higher education. system with the expansion of educational institutions became the concern for quality. The constitutional amendment in 1976 brought education to the concurrent list making the central government more responsible for quality improvement (Stella and Gnanam, 2003). The new education policy (1986) emphasized on the recognition and reward of excellence in performance of institution and checking of sub-standard institutions.

Consequently, the Program of Action (POA) in 1986 stated, "As a part of its responsibility for the maintenance and promotion of standards of education, the UGC will, to begin with, take the initiative to establish an accreditation and assessment council as an autonomous body." After eight years of continuous and serious deliberations, the UGC established NAAC at Bangalore as a 10 registered autonomous body on 16 September 1994 under the society's Registration Act 1860.

The system of higher education in India has expanded rapidly during the last fifty years. In spite of the built-in regulatory mechanisms that ensure satisfactory levels of quality in the functioning of higher education institutions, there have been criticisms that the country has permitted the mushrooming of institutions of higher education with fancy programme and substandard facilities and consequent dilution of standards. To address the issues of deterioration in quality, the National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) and the Plan of Action (POA, 1992) that spelt out the strategic plans for the policies, advocated the establishment of an independent national accreditation body. Consequently, the NAAC was established in 1994 with its headquarters at Bangalore.

The NAAC functions through its General Council (GC) and Executive Committee (EC) where educational administrators, policy makers and senior

academicians from a cross-section of the system of higher education are represented. The Chairperson of the UGC is the President of the GC of the NAAC, the Chairperson of the EC is an eminent academician in the area of relevance to the NAAC. The Director of the NAAC is its academic and administrative head, and is the member-secretary of both the GC and EC.

The NAAC also has many advisory and consultative committees to guide its practices, in addition to the statutory bodies that steer its policies. The NAAC has a core staff and consultants to support its activities. It also receives 11

assistance from a large number of external resource persons from across the country who are not full time staff of the NAAC.

Summary

Teachers are the crucial elements in preparing young people not only to face the future with confidence not build it with purpose and accountability. Education is a dynamic process of human development and empowerment. Teacher education has been widely advocated as the single important ingredient in the economic, social and political and cultural development of developing/developed society. Teacher without quality can be judged as a man without mind. Quality of teacher education depends basically on a number of factors such as infrastructure, learning environment curriculum, teaching learning materials (TLM) and teacher's participation with demand of changing society Quality enhancement in teacher education is a deliberate process of change that leads to improvement. In academic problem two teams are often used namely "Quality Assessment and quality assurance". They are like two sides of a coin. The former refers to the internal and external evaluation used to assess the overall teaching research performance of the institution. There is a need for teachers in community health, guidance and counselling, research strategies, competitions personal development and student support services. 35

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