



STUDY ON TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

*Sandeep Sharma and **Dr. Roopam Jain

*Research Scholar, Department of Education, SunRise University, Alwar, Rajasthan (India)

**Associate Professor, Department of Education, SunRise University, Alwar, Rajasthan (India)

*Email: sandeepsharma23282@gmail.com

Abstract: Recently, India is encountering quick and sudden changes in teacher education. The one-year B.Ed. Program was converted into a two-year Program in 2015, and it was implemented abruptly and without much planning in the same year. While the stakeholders of teacher education are still busy in reflecting and debating the pros and cons of 2-year B.Ed. programme, NEP 2020 has declared that from 2030 the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) i.e the 4-Year Integrated B.Ed. Programme will be the lone teacher education programme in the country for preparing secondary education teachers. It appears that teacher education is in the midst of a significant transformation. Teacher educators, pupil-teachers, and all other stakeholders are unsure what will happen and, if implemented, how it will be carried out in B.Ed. colleges and universities' departments of teacher education. The vision and mission of teacher education, which directs and decides the fate of school education, must be crystal clear. This chapter attempts to revisit the development of teacher education in India, analyses current challenges, the prevailing curriculum framework, eligibility criteria for teacher educators, and forecasts some possible solutions to the issues and challenges confronting teacher education in the country.

[Sharma, S. and Jain, R. **STUDY ON TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA**. [Saini, T. and Kumar, A. **STUDY ON POPULAR PROTESTS AND SOCIAL STRUCTURES**. *Researcher* 2024;16(5):131-136]. ISSN 1553-9865 (print); ISSN 2163-8950 (online). <http://www.sciencepub.net/researcher>. 04.doi:[10.7537/marsrsj160524.04](https://doi.org/10.7537/marsrsj160524.04).

Keywords: TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME, INDIA, POLICY

Introduction:

Educational institutions render a significant contribution in making provision of knowledge and information to the students to lead them towards light from darkness (Concept of Teacher Education, n.d.). The key personnel within the educational institutions, who play an important part in the implementation of this task and in bringing about transformation within the lives of the individuals are the teachers. The teacher is regarded as the most important element within the educational program. It is the teacher, who is responsible for putting into practice the educational programs at any stage. It is vital to make an investment in leading to preparation of the teachers in an appropriate manner, so that the individuals, community as well as the entire nation can move forward towards progression. The teachers are required to be well-prepared and possess the essential skills and abilities with the purpose of performing their tasks and functions in an appropriate manner.

The teachers are required to be effectively trained not just to perform their job duties of educating the students, but they also lead to progress of the community and secure the future of the nation. The significance of competent and proficient teachers cannot in any way be overemphasized. The National Curriculum Framework 2005 places demands and

expectations on the teacher, which are required to be addressed by both initial and continuing teacher education. The concept of teacher education primarily states that the quality and extent of the achievement of the learners are determined primarily by teacher competence, sensitivity and teacher motivation. Teacher education comprises of all formal and non-formal activities and experiences that would help to improve the aptitude and qualify a person to assume the responsibilities of the members of the education profession or to carry out his or her job duties more appropriately (Concept of Teacher Education, n.d.).

Scope of Teacher Education

The scope of teacher education has been highlighted in the following factors: (Concept of Teacher Education, n.d.).

Teacher Education at Different Levels of Education

Teacher education is regarded as an indispensable concept for the teachers at all levels of education. These are, pre-primary, primary, elementary, secondary, higher secondary and tertiary. The system of education is different at all levels. The main focus of teacher education is based upon the levels of education. On the other hand, the needs and requirements of the students also vary at each level. The teacher education need to take into consideration

the needs and requirements of the students. Therefore, level and stage-specific teacher preparation is essential. Teacher education renders a significant contribution in the development of teaching skills among the students. The teachers, employed in professional institutions are informative in terms of practical and theoretical knowledge regarding their respective subjects. It is essential for them to make use of specialized teacher training inputs with the purpose of training the students, who are making an entry into their professions. In the area of teacher education, special education and physical education are also emphasised upon. The knowledge base is adequately specialized and diversified across different levels of education. It has the main objective of preparing the teachers to perform their job duties in an appropriate manner.

Triangular Basis of Teacher Education

Formation of the appropriate knowledge base for each stage of education requires a high degree of academic and intellectual understanding of the information that is related to teacher education. This involves the selection of the theoretical knowledge from the disciplines cognate to education, namely psychology, sociology and philosophy and converting into the forms that are suitable for teacher education. These disciplines provide the basis for better understanding and application of teacher education. The philosophical basis provides the insights to the student teachers in terms of philosophy, ancient and modern philosophical thoughts of the philosophical thinkers of education and various aspects, such as, curriculum instruction and discipline. The sociological basis helps the student teachers to understand the role of the society and its dynamics in the educational system of the nation and the world at large. It takes into account the ideals that have an influence upon the national and international scenes. The psychological basis helps the student teachers to develop insights into the psychological well-being of the students. This enables them to understand their self and the learning situations. In this manner, they are able to provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences to their students. In this manner, the students are able to benefit from learning.

Aspects of Teacher Education

The aspects of teacher education are, who (teacher educator), whom (student teacher), what (content), and how (teaching strategy). Teacher education is dependent upon the quality of teacher educators. The quality of the pedagogical inputs within the teacher education programs and their operative utilization for the purpose of preparing prospective teachers depend to a large extent on the professional competence of teacher educators and the ways in which it has been utilized for the

reinforcement of the teacher education programs. Teacher education programs, thus have the main objective of adequately preparing teacher educators. The student teachers are the ones, who obtain knowledge and information in order to achieve their professional as well as personal goals. It serves to equip the teachers with the conceptual and theoretical framework, within which they can acquire an understanding of the intricacies of the profession. It aims at the formation of the attitude among the individuals, so they are able to cope up with challenges and problems in a positive manner. The individuals get empowered with the skills and abilities, so they are able to perform all the relevant tasks and functions in an operative and efficient manner. The primary focus of teacher education is upon the content matter.

Changing Context of Teacher Education in the Indian Scenario

The well-established tradition of teaching and learning in India has retained its strength even under adversarial circumstances. The post-independence period was characterised by the major efforts being made to nurture and bring about transformations in teacher education. The system of teacher preparation has come under considerable pressure, as a result of the expansion and growth of school education, through the efforts to universalize elementary education. There have been implementation of efforts to adapt and update the teacher education curriculum to the local needs, to make it more context-based, responsive and dynamic, particularly in terms of the needs and requirements of the overall system of education. The present system of teacher education is supported by a network of national, provincial and district level resource institutions, working in integration to improve the eminence and efficiency of the teacher preparation programs at the pre-service level and also through in-service programs for serving the teachers throughout the country (Concept of Teacher Education, n.d.). The main factors that highlight the changing context of teacher education in the Indian scenario have been stated as follows:

Impact of National Policies

India has made considerable progress in the field of education since independence. This is with regards to the overall literacy, infrastructure, universal access and enrolment in schools. The major developments that have taken place in recent years form the background to the present reform in teacher education. These are the political recognition of the Universalization of Elementary Education that led to the Right to Education Bill, 2008 and the National Curriculum Framework for school education, 2005. The Bill has been passed by the Parliament and the

Right to Education Act, came into being, making it compulsory to make provision of education to the children, belonging to the age group of six to fourteen years. The Act mandates the functioning of the schools, which includes the teacher-student ratio of 1:30 till a student population of 200 students at the primary stage (Concept of Teacher Education, n.d.).

Developments in School Education

Since India achieved its independence, there have been developments in school education. It has been estimated that 82 percent of 20 crore children, within the age group of six to fourteen years were enrolled in schools. This is a fact that 50 percent of these children dropped out, even before reaching class eight. Regional, economic, social and gender disparities are leading to new challenges and problems. The continued fragmentation of the school system poses a challenge to the national declaration of meeting the basic needs and requirements of the children within the age group of six to fourteen years (Concept of Teacher Education, n.d.). However, increasing privatization and differentiation of the schooling system have recognized the Right to Education for all children, irrespective of their categories and backgrounds.

Changing Role of the Teacher

Within the course of time, the teachers are bringing about changes and transformations within their roles and job duties. The teachers are required to focus upon rendering their job duties in a manner that would not only lead to enhancement of academic knowledge among the students, but also in leading to development of morality and ethics among them. The students get enrolled in educational institutions, not just to hone their academic skills and abilities, but also to acquire the knowledge of principles, standards, values and norms, so that they can contribute effectually towards promoting well-being of the community and nation. Hence, for this purpose, it is vital for the teachers to put into practice modern and innovative strategies and methods that would lead to overall growth and development of the students.

Challenges in Teacher Education

Teaching is a hard job. Within the course of teacher education, the teachers are required to undergo number of problems and challenges. These are primarily in concern with the environmental conditions of the educational institutions, performance of job duties, management of the classroom, coping with the needs and requirements of the students, getting along with the colleagues, principals and other staff members of the educational institutions and so forth. In order to cope up with these challenges, it is necessary to possess the essential skills, abilities and knowledge. One needs to be aware that one should

possess effective communication skills and not depict the feelings of anger and frustration upon anybody. Within the teaching jobs, the teachers are required to augment their professionalism.

Research and Innovation

Research and innovation are regarded as the aspects that enable the individuals to bring about advancements and improvements in their tasks and functions. Research is primarily carried out in three ways. First is through the use of books, articles, reports and other documents, second is through the use of the internet and third is through field research. The teachers make visits to other educational institutions and observe and generate awareness in terms of the approaches and strategies implemented by them. Therefore, research is regarded as one of the imperative aspects that helps in augmentation of one's knowledge. Innovation is regarded as bringing about modernization and creativity in one's tasks and functions. In the system of education, research and innovation renders a significant contribution in bringing about improvements.

Inclusive Education

There are two types of exclusion prevalent in schools. One is exclusion of the child with disabilities and another is exclusion of children, who belong to deprived and marginalized sections of the community. The need to equip the teachers to promote inclusive education and not discriminate against any student on the basis of caste, creed, race, religion, gender, ethnicity or socio-economic background is of utmost significance. Any types of biases need to be overcome and one needs to handle the challenges in a positive manner. The Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Act of 2005 makes provision of free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 18 years. The education of the economically backward sections of the society has remained a major concern for several years. The teachers need to be aware of the measures that need to be formulated to overcome social deprivation.

Perspectives of Equitable and Sustainable Development

The perspectives of equitable and sustainable development of the community and nation are influenced to a major extent through acquisition of education. Attaining education helps in the development of skills and abilities among the individuals to promote equitable and sustainable development. It is necessary for the individuals to implement all types of tasks and functions within their daily lives in an appropriate manner. These are, management of household responsibilities, carrying out job duties within the employment setting satisfactorily, forming effective terms and relationships with the individuals within as well as

outside the home and so forth. On the other hand, one also need to be educated to preserve the environmental conditions, alleviating their conditions of poverty and backwardness and meeting the livelihoods requirements.

Role of Community Knowledge in Education

The main purpose of community knowledge in education is primarily focused upon training the students in such a manner that they are able to implement the tasks and functions in such a manner that are geared towards promoting well-being of the community. The teachers need to train the students in a manner that they learn to apply the academic knowledge within their daily lives. On the other hand, adult learners bring their daily life experiences in order to enrich the academic knowledge that they are acquiring within the classroom setting. For instance, when the students are learning in terms of morality and ethics or effective communication skills and communication processes, then it is vital for them to ensure that they implement these traits within their daily lives. The NCF 2005 promotes the inclusion of locally relevant content within the curriculum and the instructional systems as well as pedagogy.

ICT in Schools and E-Learning

With the onset of the creation of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT), there is an increasing demand that it will be included in school education. The use of ICT in school education primarily involves the use of technology within the teaching-learning methods. In the present existence, in educational institutions at all levels, there has been implementation of technology. In making provision of teaching and learning processes within the classrooms, mostly computers are made use of. In higher educational institutions, the professors conduct classes and provide lectures to the students, but they are required to prepare their assignments and projects through the use of technology. Teacher education has been used to equip the teachers to differentiate between developmentally appropriate and detrimental uses of ICT. The teachers are required to be competent enough to lead to their own professional development.

Teacher Education Programs

The teacher education programs are comprehensive. In the present existence, there have been initiation of teacher education programs that are primarily focused towards promoting the skills and abilities among the individuals in such a manner that they are able to perform their job duties within the educational institutions in accordance to the established standards. The teachers have number of job duties to carry out within the educational institutions. These are, imparting academic knowledge

and skills to the students, putting into practice effective teaching-learning methods and instructional strategies, maintaining good terms and relationships with the other members, and possessing leadership skills. Furthermore, they are also equipped to carry out the managerial functions of planning, organising, directing, controlling and co-ordinating. These functions are mostly applied in the case of teaching methods, organization of competitions, workshops, seminars and so forth. The teachers are required to put into operation their job duties with diligence and enthusiasm. The teacher education programs enables them to acquire the essential knowledge that are needed to develop their skills and abilities.

Challenges of Teacher Education

The expansion that has taken place in the teacher education scenario during the last decade has reflected the teacher education scenario of the present. There have been developments taking place in the system of education and there has been an increase in the enrolment of students. The demands of the teachers have increased due to the programs such as, Operation Blackboard, District Primary Education Program, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Universalisation of Elementary Education (Kumar, & Azad, 2016). The major challenges encountered in teacher education have been stated as follows:

Insufficient Research – Implementing research is regarded as one of the aspects that helps in conducting an analysis of the areas that are needed to get improved. In the area of teacher education, there has been insufficient research, particularly with regards to classroom practices. Additionally, there have not been much developments made in educational research regarding the studies, and others areas in the system of education. There is a need to bring about collaborative design and development of the teacher education programs. The trainers, who perform the job duties of training the teachers need to develop as researchers on teacher education. They are required to conduct research in terms of all areas and fields that are necessary to enhance teacher education programs (Toom & Oancea, n.d.).

Lack of Quality Teachers – Teacher quality is regarded as one of the most important determinants in leading to improvements in the quality of education. One of the most important factors determining student achievement is teacher quality (Azam, & Kingdon, 2014). In the system of education, lack of quality among the teachers signify that they merely lack the skills and abilities that are needed to perform the job duties in an appropriate manner. The teachers either do not possess the essential educational qualifications, or they do not perform their job duties with interest and enthusiasm. Hence, lack of quality teachers is a major

hindrance in the achievement of the desired goals and objectives.

Lack of Motivation of Teachers – Motivation is regarded as an important aspect that enables the individuals to develop interest and enthusiasm towards their work. When the aspect of motivation among teachers is emphasised upon, then the terms such as, commitment, satisfaction, morale and attitudes are taken into consideration. On the other hand, factors such as, absenteeism, misconduct and attrition are the reflections of low motivation (Richardson, 2014). In India, there is deficiency of the motivating factors among the teachers. Due to which they are unable to satisfactorily meet the job requirements. It has caused an increase in the rate of absenteeism and there is shortage of teachers in schools, primarily within rural communities.

Inadequate Infrastructure – School infrastructure is regarded as the key aspect for teaching and learning in schools. The main objective of the infrastructure is to lead to an increase in enrolment of students, improve motivation among the students and improve the academic achievement of students (Mokaya, 2013). There is lack of proper infrastructure and equipment in schools in various regions throughout the country. This has had a negative influence upon the learning of students and they even get compelled to drop out, before their educational skills are honed. Inadequate infrastructure is a major challenge as well as an impediment within the course of increase in enrolment and retention of students.

Lack of Skills – The teachers are required to possess certain skills and abilities among them, which are imperative to perform their job duties well. The important skills are communication skills, problem solving abilities, soft skills, decision making skills, and leadership skills. These skills render an indispensable contribution in enabling the teachers to achieve the goals and objectives. Lack of any of these skills may have a negative influence upon the job performance of the teachers. Lecture technique is the one that is most commonly used in teaching (Ogalo, 2011), hence, it is necessary for the teachers to work towards honing their skills on a continuous basis.

Lack of Subject Knowledge – In some cases, the programs that focus upon the teachers training such as, B.Ed. does not put emphasis upon the subject knowledge. Subject knowledge has an important role to play. The good-quality teaching rests upon the teachers having an efficient understanding of the subjects and the concepts that they are teaching (Subject Knowledge: Leading Teaching, n.d.). The

lack of subject knowledge among the teachers would have a detrimental effect as, they would not be able to provide adequate explanation of the concepts to the students. Hence, in this manner learning and academic performance of the students would get affected in a negative manner.

Problem of Selection – When recruitment and selection of teachers takes place, it is necessary to take into consideration number of factors. These are their educational qualifications, skills, abilities and personality traits. Not all schools have equitable access to good quality teachers. This fact can be attributed to the recruitment challenges that are experienced by the school administrators, school districts and the provincial school departments, not only in India, but throughout the world. With experiencing problems and challenges in the recruitment and selection of the teachers, there is an emerging need to examine the processes of teacher recruitment and selection (Abdou, 2012).

Incomplete Competency Development of Teachers – There are teachers within schools as well as in training centres, who do not possess the competency traits. As a result, their job performance suffers and they even experience problems in retaining their job duties for long. The commitment and competency of the teachers are associated with the feelings of interest and enthusiasm towards one's job, development of the feeling of job satisfaction and attitude towards the working environmental conditions (Shukla, 2014). In some cases, the teachers do not feel satisfied with their jobs, as they do not take interest and enthusiasm in the performance of job duties, hence, incomplete or lack of competency development of teachers is one of the major challenges.

Improper Practice Teaching – The teachers at all levels of education are required to obtain adequate practice in terms of teaching. Teaching is regarded as an art and teachers are required to generate awareness in terms of particular strategies and methods. Improper teaching practices are regarded as challenges that hinder the abilities of the teachers to impart adequate knowledge and information to the students. Teaching is regarded much as an art form as it is a technique (Helping Colleges Improve Student Success and Retention, 2018). The teachers are required to master this technique appropriately and be well-prepared before they initiate their class lectures or other training methods.

Inappropriate Teaching Methods – The teaching methods are implemented by the teachers in accordance to the level of education and the needs and

requirements of the students. Making use of improper teaching methods are regarded as one of the major challenges that would impede the learning of students. For instance, if students are able to learn well through verbal explanation and dictation of notes, then the teachers should explain them the concepts as well as give notes. The other methods and tools that are used in most cases by the teachers include, demonstrations, discussions, role plays, laboratories, contests, practices, projects, assignments, fieldwork, and supervised experience (Shinn, 1997).

Conclusion

Teachers render an indispensable contribution in the case of functioning of the educational institutions and in imparting education to the students. The learning of the students within the educational institutions primarily depends upon the teaching methods put into practice by the teachers. In other words, the teachers have an important role to play in leading to effective growth and development of the students. The scope of teacher education centres upon teacher education at different levels of education, triangular basis of teacher education and aspects of teacher education. The changing context of teacher education in the Indian scenario focuses upon, impact of national policies, developments in school education, changing role of the teacher, challenges in teacher education, research and innovation, inclusive education, perspectives of equitable and sustainable development, role of community knowledge in education, ICT in schools and e-learning, and teacher education programs.

In India, teacher education is experiencing numerous challenges in terms of the following areas, insufficient research, lack of quality teachers, lack of motivation of teachers, inadequate infrastructure, lack of skills, lack of subject knowledge, problem of selection, incomplete competency development of teachers, improper practice teaching and inappropriate teaching methods. In order to successfully perform their tasks and functions, recognise the significance of teaching and to achieve professional as well as personal goals, it is vital to formulate the measures that would enable the teachers to overcome these challenges. To perform ones job duties well and to recognize the responsibilities, it is necessary for the teachers to develop motivation and enthusiasm towards their professions. Apart from the possession of enthusiasm, it is necessary for especially the recruitment and selection committees of the educational institutions to ensure that they possess the required educational qualifications and experience. The teachers within the course of their job duties also

go through training programs to acquire efficient knowledge in terms of modern and innovative techniques and methods.

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4/22/2024