



## QUALITY ISSUES AND CRISIS IN INDIAN TEACHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

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### ABSTRACT

Every nation gives stress on teacher quality. Because teacher is the key person through which Education is imparted and knowledge is passes through one generation to the next. In Indian tradition it is believed that it is the teacher who illuminates the light of knowledge and removes the darkness of ignorance from student's life and educates them properly. After all it is education that brings together these two personalities. So there should be such system through which we can prepare committed and accountable teachers who contributes in national development. The existing system does not satisfy the needs of our society and nation as well. There are many quality crisis and issues in existing teacher education system which needs to be address well.

In this article, the author has tried to mention and discuss the major quality issues and crisis of teacher education. The author also presented his views on need of change and improvement in teacher education, the challenge of the profession, the importance of vision and commitment, continuing professional development and opportunities for teacher's development in brief.

**Keywords:** Quality Education, Teacher Education, Crisis, Issues, Challenges.

### Introduction

Enlightened, emancipated, and empowered teachers lead communities and nations in their march towards better and higher quality of life. They reveal and elaborate the secrets of attaining higher values in life and nurture empathy for the fellow beings. Teachers are the torch bearers in creating social cohesion, national integration, and a learning society. They not only disseminate knowledge but also create and generate new knowledge. They are responsible for acculturating role of education. No nation can even marginally slacken its efforts in giving necessary professional inputs to its teachers and along with that due status to their stature and profession. The educational expansion, universalization of elementary education, vocationalization of secondary education, higher and professional education and overall quality of education are major challenges before the country. Evidently the quality of education is a direct consequence and outcome of the quality of teachers and teacher education system. The task of bringing qualitative change in institutional efficacy of the teacher education system in itself is a huge and challenging one. The last five decades have witnessed several attempts to change, modify and indigenize the inherited system of teacher education. The system however continues to function more or less on the same principles, similar content and approaches characterized by continuity and unwillingness to change.

There are many problems, issues, and crisis in teacher education that brings hurdles in the way of quality out come. Contemporary teacher education system suffers from many problems. Our universities and institutes runs defective teacher education program. If the teacher education system itself is defective, how can we produce quality teachers from the same system? So there is an urgent need to reform, redesign, modify, and bring major changes in existing teacher education system.

If we want all round and over all development of our country and citizens, we need to have great teachers. Only great teachers can develop our country and its citizens. Without great teachers we can't develop our country and its citizens. So it is the first and foremost accountability of the government to produce great teachers for the country. Right from the independence the government of India started working upon it and established various committees and commissions to find out major problems, issues, and crisis in education and teacher education. The reports of most of the committees and commissions suggest that there is lack of quality teachers in India, the reports further suggest that the government should take some steps and to form some centralize agency that manage and monitors all these issues and works to produce quality teachers. National agencies like N.C.T.E and N.C.E.R.T are the result of the recommendations made by these agencies.

India has a large system of education. There are nearly 5.98 lakh primary schools, 1.76 lakh elementary schools and 98 thousand High/Higher secondary schools in the country, about 1300 teacher education institutions for elementary school teachers and nearly 700 colleges of education/ university departments preparing teachers for secondary and higher secondary schools. Out of about 4.52 millions teachers in the country nearly 3 millions are teaching at the primary/elementary level. A sizeable number of them are untrained or under trained. In certain regions, like the North East, there are even under qualified teachers. As far as in service education is concerned the situation is not very encouraging. It is estimated that on an average 40% of the teachers are provided in service teacher education once over a period of five years. In this kind of situation how can we impart quality education and teacher education?

## Attempts in the Improvement of Teacher Education

Development in a country depends greatly on the quality of its teachers. There are some major concerns which call for an immediate action. A comprehensive, dynamic and responsive system of teacher education needs to be continually evolved keeping the overall scenario in view. The government of India recognizes the importance of quality teachers and formed many commissions and committees and also follows the suggestions and recommendations made by these agencies. The Secondary Education Commission (1953) observed that a major factor responsible for educational reconstruction at the secondary stage is teachers' professional training. The Education Commission (1964-66) stressed that in a world based on science and technology it is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people and that a sound program of professional education of teachers is essential for the qualitative improvement of education.

Various attempts have been made to improve the status of teacher education in India. The National Policy on Education (1986) has suggested establishing District Institutes of Education and Training (D.I.E.T), College of Teacher Education (CTE), and Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) for providing teacher education at various levels. DIETs cater to the pre-service and in-service education of elementary school teachers for each district level. Whereas the CTE and IASEs are responsible for teacher education at the Secondary and Higher Secondary levels. Besides these, University Departments and National level organizations are also conducting in-service education programmes. However, there are no systematized and institutionalized in-service educational programmes that are operating on a continuous basis meant to serve all the teachers in the country. According to the NCTE (1998), in-service education is not very encouraging. It is estimated that on an average 40% of the teachers are provided in-service teacher education once over a period of four to five years. Therefore provision for in-service education on a continuing basis ensuring quality, adequacy and the required frequency is a challenge. Apart from these, the national agencies NCTE and NCERT have brought many innovations in pre-service and in-service teacher education program. NCTE and NCERT introduced four years integrated Bed course but the situation remained the same because apart from NCTE and NCERT no other university and Bed college accept this model. There have been many efforts made by the government but it does not help to produce quality teacher and teacher education programme, because government is totally failed to implement rules and regulations.

Recently in 2011-12 the government of Gujarat has established Indian Institute of Teacher Education (IITE) in Gandhinagar. IITE is a teacher education institute just like IIM and IIT. It is meant to prepare quality teachers for our secondary and higher secondary schools. I think this is very good step taken by government of Gujarat and I think this institute is the model for other states to prepare quality teachers. I believe that MHRD of India must make it compulsory for each and every states of India to establish IITE in their respective states and for that central government should pass the amendment for the same. The second great step to improve the quality of teacher, teacher

education and education is taken in 2014 by central government. In 2014 the central government and department of MHRD declared that from the academic year of 2015-16 the time duration to prepare teachers through formal institutes will become of 2 years. Right from the independence up till now the time duration of Bed course is of only 1 year, but now from the new academic year it will increase to 2years.

## The Challenge of the Profession

There are many challenges that create hurdles to quality education and teacher education as well. The world of today is going through difficult situation. There are many worse situations stand in way to develop quality education, quality teacher education and quality life. The problem of in-security from the terrorism, the problem of poverty, the problem of health and hygiene of human being, the problem of violence and the problem of recession the problem corruption and problem of wars between different countries. All the philosophers and scholars of the world believed that these problems and challenges can be removed only through quality education system but to develop quality education system is itself is a big problem. The act and the profession of teaching is not easy and simple but is the most complex function because in teaching the teacher has to deal with the living organism called student. Student or learner is not like machines. Learner is an active member in the process of teaching and learning and responding to his environment. So the profession of teaching is very much complex and challenging one. To meet the challenges of this profession we need to have very special, dynamic, and comprehensive teacher education system.

### ➤ Economical Challenge

Poverty, unemployment, and low rate of growth and productivity are some of the major economic problems of the country which have led to the compulsions of the backward economy. These problems seek immediate solution and demand a realistic co-ordination between economic planning and manpower planning. Education can help to find the solutions if it is properly co-ordinate with manpower needs. Introduction of work education and vocationalization of work education in secondary schools will have to be given a modern and meaningful direction. The attitude towards the work culture needs a transformation. The Indian society needs education with special emphasis on science and technology, vocational inputs and realistic work experiences. Teacher education curriculum, therefore, has to promote such attitudes as are necessary for the emergence of a new economic order. Along with the vocational competencies and skills a new work culture will have to be created which necessarily involves the inculcation of dignity of work, the spirit of self reliance and scientific temper among students. The course of teacher education needs to be enriched to enable teachers to understand the attributes of modernity and development.

### ➤ Social Challenge

Casteism, communalism and regionalism are some of the problems in the society which misguide the youth. Increasing

violence, terrorism, corruption, delinquency and fissiparous tendencies and use of inappropriate means to get ones ends served are threats to the national integration and social cohesion. Education has to develop a peace loving personality and the program of teacher education has to contribute in this regard. The explosion of population with all its allied disturbing trends is not only neutralizing the economic gains but also creating many problems for the country. Indian society still suffers from evils like child labors; child marriage, untouchability, discriminatory treatment to women, violation of human rights etc. and most of the people are unaware of their legal rights. Strengthening national and social cohesion in a diverse and plural society, accelerating the process of economic growth, improving the life of the downtrodden and the people living below the poverty line, removing the widely prevalent ignorance, superstitions and prejudices from the masses, inculcating scientific temper and developing a critical awareness about the social realities of Indian life are some of the issues which call for immediate attention. Teachers and teacher education and teacher educators have a special role to play in such efforts.

### ➤ Crisis of Values and Morality

There has been a persistent erosion of values in the society. The human being of 21<sup>st</sup> century seems to have less values and morality in his/her life. In the present day context certain values need to be redefined and reinstalled. There are situations when the values imparted and inculcated in schools are not generally practiced in the society. Value education demands a planned and purposive approach. It is through education and as of necessity through teacher education programmes that the task of inculcating values can be substantially accomplished. Whereas values are emotive, the other related significant dimension is that of moral education which is essentially cognitive in character. Morals are situation specific and demand immediate decision and action and yet there are morals which are considered to be eternal and universal. Through committed teachers, the art of ensuring moral development in a secular, multi-religious and multi-ethnic society needs to be cultivated.

### The lack of Vision and Commitment

To become a successful in the entire sphere we need a specific vision. Vision provides us the actual guideline to function. Vision shows us the actual path through which we can have our success. In other words we can say that vision is the road map to get the success. If we closely analyze the teacher education system of our country we will find that our teacher education system does not have clearly defined vision. So it is very much important to have a well defined vision. Any government or person aspires to establish an effective teacher education institution need to have clearly and well defined vision. The teacher education curricula should also have a well defined vision, not only that, a school or a teacher should also have a vision.

Having a well defined vision does not give any guarantee to become successful. Vision without commitment is of no important. You have a well defined vision but you don't have a

commitment and you are not committed to your vision then you don't get success. Vision is a seed and commitment is a fertilizer. You sow seed but you don't apply fertilizer does your plant develop? No obviously not. So first, any teacher education institutes have to define its vision and then work hard upon it, become committed to it and definitely that institute will become successful and definitely reach to its goal.

### Continuing Professional Development

To promote professionalizing of teaching, to sharpen the skills and to update our self from the latest inventions and innovations there should be longer and more rigorous teacher preparation program both pre-service and in-service for teacher education is required. Today Information and communication technology become very useful in this regard. In formal teacher education institute ICT can be used effectively to impart knowledge. Training can be given with the help of tele-vision, computer, internet, over head projector, virtual class, and smart class. In-service teacher training can also be imparted through this information and communication technology. Today teachers and teacher education institutes have unprecedented opportunities to enhance their professional status. The government must make available every opportunity for professional development in respective teacher education institutes. Every prospective teacher must take the opportunity to continue his/her professional development throughout his/her career. Learning is a lifelong, long lasting and continuous process and it must not end upon completion of a course of study. Teachers should be alert to new ideas, to refine decision making skills and to become more effective in integrating theory and practice.

### Lack of Opportunities for development

If we closely analyze the teacher education system and teacher education colleges of our country we will find the lack of opportunities for development in it. The colleges of teacher education do not provide opportunities for development to their prospective teachers. Opportunities for the development are very much necessary for the quality out come. Colleges of Teacher Education should provide opportunities for professional development through the following factors.

- a) Teacher Workshops: Teacher workshops which can benefit teachers and future teachers at all levels and the most effective pre-service and in-service programmes tend to be the ones that teachers request.
- b) Teacher Centers: Colleges of Teacher Education can arrange centers where teachers can come together with other teachers and perhaps with other useful persons to do things that will help them teach better. Center should cooperated with a local or neighboring College of Education and include faculty members on planning committees. Their goals range from providing a setting for teachers to exchange ideas, to offering information on education products and procedures, to arranging instruction in new areas of responsibility, such as supervision of student teachers and teaching students with special needs. Teacher centers should be stimulating

because they can offer opportunities for collegial interaction in a quiet professionally oriented setting.

- c) Supervision of Student Teachers: After several years in the classroom, teachers may be ready to stretch themselves further by supervising student teachers. Some of the less obvious values of doing so are that teachers must rethink what they are doing so that they can explain and sometimes justify their behavior to someone else, learning themselves in the process. Furthermore, because they become a model for their student teachers, they continually strive to offer the best example.

### Problems within Teacher Education System

There are many problems from which the contemporary teacher education system of our country is suffering right now. In this portion I have mentioned and discussed the problems, such as, isolation of the teacher education from the main stream, expanding scope of teacher education, lack of culture specific pedagogy, lack of coordination between pre-service and in-service teacher education and lack of research and innovation in the field of teacher education.

#### ➤ Isolation of Teacher Education from the main stream

Teacher education institutions which were considered island of isolation have gradually developed linkages with schools, peer institutions, universities and other institutions of higher learning as also the community. However, much remains to be done in this direction. The curriculum of the schools, its actual transactional modalities, examination system, management process and its ethos needs to be the main thrust area of teacher education program. To achieve these ends, teacher educators need to be made conversant with various aspects of school experiences. It is observed in a day to day functioning that teacher educator often tend to lose contact with content areas relevant to their own disciplines resulting in to gaps in communication and latest information. It is, therefore, a felt need in the present day context that teacher education institutions keep in continuous touch with institutions of higher learning and peer institutions for effective transmission of knowledge and it's up gradation.

The breaking of isolation from the community is essential for enabling teachers and teacher educators to reconstruct pedagogical and educational principles and practices in the light of experiences gained from mutually beneficial community interactions. Teacher as a professional and intellectual cannot remain indifferent to the events that are taking place in the society. The academic and social issues are inter-related and inter-dependent. In contemporary context, the role of the teacher is no longer confined to teaching alone. The teachers are expected to play an active role in the developmental activities responding to progress of the community.

#### ➤ Expanding Scope of Teacher Education

Education of teachers is not an end in itself. Its target is school. Any change in the nature purpose quality and character of the school demands a concomitant change in teacher education, especially in its curriculum. The implementation of the 10+2 scheme at the school level has transformed the complexion of

education to a considerable extent from pre-primary to +2 stage. There has been an increase not only in the quantum of knowledge, but also in its nature and purpose. In addition, new transactional techniques and strategies have also been evolved. Certain new subjects have replaced the old ones whereas some others have changed their context, content, orientation, theme and philosophy. These changes at the school level, out of necessity, demand a new pedagogy and evaluation techniques. But the changes at the level of teacher education have not adequately responded to the emerging realities at the school level. All that the teachers are expected to do in their work places need to be reflected in the teacher education activities and programmes.

The teaching community has to face the challenges thrown by science and technology. There has been an explosion not only of scientific and technological knowledge but also in the means and techniques of acquiring knowledge. The scientific researches and development related to theories of heredity, learning, mental health, neurology, attention, motivation etc. can no longer be treated alien to teacher education program.

#### ➤ Lack of Culture Specific Pedagogy

Every region and state has its typical cultural identity, and there is a need to utilize the same as a basis for developing meaningful, relevant pedagogies. Since there is no one universal way in which the children learn, there is a strong need to look in to the cultural context in which a child is placed. A child in a tribal society may process information in an altogether different manner as compared to the one from the urban area and a high socio-economic status. Pedagogy, therefore, should be culture specific. Cultural practices such as storytelling, dramatics, puppetry, folk play, community living etc. should become a strong basis of pedagogy instead of using one uniform, mechanistic way of student learning. Culture specificity should get embedded in the pedagogical practices which should be evolved for tribal, rural, urban communities and other ethnic groups.

#### ➤ Lack of co-ordination between Pre-service and In-service Teacher Education

Learning is life long, long lasting and continuous process. Right from his birth man starts learning which continue till his death. A person who aspires to become a teacher should never stop learning in his life, because it is said that a man who stops learning can never teach. Therefore after having pre-service teacher education the learning doesn't stop, but the government should have to develop an intense in-service teacher training programme for teachers. If we closely analyze the contemporary education and teacher education system we will find the lack of co-ordination between pre-service and in-service teacher education.

A learning society visualizes education as a continuous activity. This is equally applicable to teacher education. The policy stipulation on inseparability of the pre-service and in-service teacher education and emphasis on continuing education need to be given pragmatic shape at the implantation stage. The curriculum of pre-service and in-service teacher education has to be redesigned to maintain continuity between the two. Teachers who are being educated today will have to devote major part of their life to educate during the 21<sup>st</sup> century. If the

present rate of explosion of knowledge continues, in a few years the teacher will find themselves in a world where their present knowledge and teaching skills to an extent would become absolute. They will have to face the challenge of electronic media and information technology.

### ➤ Lack of Research and Innovation

Research and innovation are the most important elements for the development. Research opens the gate of knowledge and innovation tells us how to use this knowledge for the welfare of humankind. Research and innovation are the most useful element for the entire sphere. Research provides us the solution of our complex problem in a scientific way. If we keenly observe our contemporary teacher education system we will find that it suffers from many defects. There are many problems in our existing teacher education system and if we want to remove all the problems and want to make it healthy and qualitative we will have to find out those problems with the help of research and then make it proper and healthy by bringing innovations in it. But it is our bad luck to have lack of research and innovations in the teacher education.

One of the major inputs towards enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in schools as well as the teacher education institutions would be the extent to which research output and outcomes of innovations are utilized by the system. Researches on the teacher education have been and are being conducted in universities, national level institutions and other establishments but their utility for the teacher educators or the classroom teacher remains rather low. Majority of the researches are undertaken to obtain a degree and hence the focus on its possible utility and relevance gets misplaced. The situation is compounded by non availability of appropriate dissemination mechanisms like journals, publication of findings in different forms and opportunities to the target group to get an access to these. Institutional capabilities and resources need to be augmented, enabling them to undertake relevant researches.

There is a definite requirement of bringing in research methods and methodologies in appropriate form in teacher education at pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes. To an extent, it finds a place in master level courses in education though in some universities the same is not insisted upon. The structure and design of future courses and programmes need to take this aspect in to account. Preparation of teacher educators can no longer be completed without adequate grounding in various aspects of research. Researches must respond to policy issues, curriculum issues, evaluative procedures and practices, training strategies, classroom practices etc. the areas of teacher preparation for children with special needs, gifted children and children from groups with specific cultural, social and economic needs can no longer be ignored. Surveys and studies also need to be encouraged. These may be exploratory or diagnostic in nature. The new initiatives and innovations need to be encouraged and studied. Wherever considered appropriate these could be brought in to the system of teacher education for wider and gainful use.

### Conclusion

Thus, teacher education is suffering from various crisis and problems and is also undergoing rapid changes in keeping pace with the demands of learning and expectations of learners, community and society as a whole. Various efforts have been made to improve teacher education. But gaps can still be seen. Teacher education must aim to build a national system of teacher education based on Indian cultural ethos, its unity and diversity synchronizing with change and continuity. It should facilitate the realization of the constitutional goals and emergence of the new social order. It should prepare professionally competent teachers to perform their role effectively as per the needs of the society. It should also aim to upgrade the standard of teacher education, enhance the professional and social status of teachers and develop amongst them a sense of commitment.

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