

QUALITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION : NEED OF AN HOUR

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Abstract

The development of the country rests on the shoulders of teachers because they shape the youth in the classrooms of schools and colleges. Thus the quality of teachers is directly dependent on the quality of teacher education. The challenge of teacher education today is that of building into its structure the capacity for adaptability to the rapidly changing needs of our schools and communities. In order to survive and to be worthy of its name teacher education programmes need revolutionary changes and will have to expand horizontally as well as vertically.

The development of nation along with a conscious and productive citizenry depend upon the standards of education. To a large extent, this depends upon the standard of teachers because teachers are undoubtedly the most important component of our educational system and infact, he is the top most academic and professional person in the educational pyramid under whose charge the destiny of our children is placed by the parents and society. Longback it has been remarked by the Kothari commission that a sound programme professional education of teachers is essential for the qualitative improvement of education Thus the quality of education largely depends upon the quality of teachers, he is the person who makes or mars the nation.

There are only a few of the important values expected of proper teacher training. In addition to theoretical training the teacher must undergo a rigorous practical training in order to acquire effectiveness in the class-room, organising and imparting training in crafted and other activities.

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Following are the weaknesses, in the education of our teachers which demand basic reform or revolution.

- **Inadequacies and irrelevance of subject matter which constitute the general studies:**

In terms of both content and process, general studies often fail to provide students with opportunities of experience personally. Instead, they afford narrow, formalised instruction to a string of disconnected subjects, superficially considered through emphasis upon nomenclature, classifications or the manipulation of paraphernalia. There is separation of information and the problems and issue to which it applies. This dichotomy represents a serious short student. For the prospective teacher it is of critical importance, for he will himself soon become an agent of general education in the elementary of secondary school and likely to perpetuate the splintering of knowledge and the gap between ideas and action. Therefore, re-examination of the traditional separation of liberal or general studies from professional studies is a long over-due. Liberal education can invest professional studies with more personal and human qualities.

- **It is important to note that our curricula is not relevant and it is not modern:**

It is an unfortunate fact that the expertise associated with framing of syllabi unfortunately is not always so modern and contemporary. The syllabi, framed therefore tend to remain patterned on old structures. What is worse is, changes which are attempted merely tinker with structures seldom specify new contents justified by the advances or changed orientations. We must, therefore, stress contemporary contents. But they have to be structured so that it will meet the needs of the profession.

- **The hostile academic atmosphere in which Teacher Education is conducted:**

We have been observing that some colleges and universities have been so hostile and grudging toward teacher education. Many college students are negatively inclined towards teacher education before even commencing them. It is a fact that certain professors advise their able students that they would be wasting their talents by going into preparation for elementary of secondary teaching. James Stone in his book "Breakthrough in Teacher Education" describes teacher education as a unwanted by the colleges.

- **Lack of Conceptual frameworks for Teacher Education:**

Without the identification of some unifying theories or conceptual frameworks for structuring teacher education most of our efforts, improvement result in mere 'tinkering'. An appropriate balance must be struck between theory and practice. Adequate recognition must be given to the broad range of objectives in teacher preparation from fundamental skills to a body of systematised that permits teachers to become analysis and diagnosticians of the teaching-learning process.

- **Simplistic view of teaching and teacher Education:**

"Teachers should be taught as they are expected to teach what does it matter how much a person knows about a subject if he cannot build an effective relationship with children?". He must have the ability to distinguish fact from opinion or the capacity to pose open rather than closed structure questions which need higher order thinking among students. Teaching is a complex, demanding profession to cultivate affection for children or develop subject matter knowledge or have specific teaching skills. Teachers education programs should take cognisance of these facts.

- **Inadequate inter lacing of theoretical and practical study:**

Effective teachers interpret class-room events by means of theoretical knowledge but again an appreciation of the significance of key concepts as they see them applied in school situations. It is essential, therefore, that teacher preparation programs give attention to each and to their appropriate integration. Improved opportunities to see the teaching ideas in action and thus better understand them is highly important.

- **Absence of student opportunities for exploration and inquiry:**

Most teachers educators talk about the need for teachers to be experimental and exploratory in their work. Training programs however, are often narrowly prospective and didactic in form. Teacher educators should develop competence in some of their research and inquiry skills among student-teachers who are preparing to teach. Prospective teachers must be placed in situations that will afford them opportunities to act like researchers.

- **Continued acceptance of the single model, omniscient teacher:**

Nearly all teachers are still prepared to work as isolated adults with standard size group of children. Instead, we should be preparing them to assume different roles as members of instructional teams. Such roles might include aides, assistants, interns, beginning teachers,

ancillary specialist, personnel co-ordinating teachers, and more. While colleges producing professional teachers may not engage in training all such personnel, they should clearly participate in the design of appropriate instructional staffing patterns and ensure that preparation of those they do train provides for their effective integration in an instructional team.

- **Low selection and retention standards for teacher candidates:**

Operating in an economy of scarcity, teacher preparation programs frequently admitted, retained and recommended for teaching licenses, persons woefully weak in handling ideas, oral and written communication, sensitivity to others and management of their own personal lives. With many subject fields now producing more teaches than there are job openings, there is urgent need for the development of more effective means of predicting teaching success and screening out those with a low probability of effective performance.

- **Schedule rigidities and cumbersome procedures for curriculum change:**

Many opportunities for relating on campus and field experiences are blocked, because college scheduling practices cut days into fifty minute fragments. Block scheduling of general education and professional sequences, provision for dividing academic terms into on-campus and field experience segments, utilization of intersession of between semester periods and other alternatives must be explored. Sensible ideas cannot continue to be impeded because of mechanical rigidities.

The system of curriculum change in most colleges is extremely cumbersome clearly one which was designed originally to “keep the lid on” and maintain tight controls over programs. With the rapidity of contemporary social changes, however, it seems essential the curricular change be facilitated seldom utilize the “broken front” approach curriculum improvement which their curriculum sepecialises urge upon lower school faculties. To speed change and to facilitate experimentation rather than wholesale installation of programs, procedures must permit small group of school system and college staff to design and implement promising programs with promising adequate provision for evaluation and for communication of experience.

Following changes are immediately required to prepare teachers to meet the challenges of twenty-first century.

- The present admission criteria needs modification. Admission in B.Ed. training college should be limited to only those candidates who show high teaching aptitude and not only on the basis of academic scores.

- Curriculum of teacher education programme needs through revision keeping in view the flow of information technology and explosion of knowledge in twenty-first century. Use of multimedia should be encouraged in training colleges. New topics relevant to the needs of future society should be included instead of teaching old stereotype topics.
- There is need to put greater stress on the functional aspect of training. The duration of practice teaching should be increased to six month of rigorous internship in some allotted schools. During this period the trainee should be in full supervision of practicing school's principal and do all the work right from taking attendance to conduct of examination, and organization of cocurricular activities.
- All the trainees should teach at least five lessons using sophisticated educational technology available in training college in simulated situations.
- The present one year duration B.Ed. programme is quite inadequate and should be increased upto two year:
- All the teacher training colleges should essentially be residential and the scheme of CCE should be implemented right at B.Ed. level. The teacher should be evaluated on both scholastic, and non-scholastic achievement and conduct in the college during their stay besides regular summative evaluation.
- Last but not the least teacher education is a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components are inseparable. Therefore, continuous follow up and in-service training programmes on present innovations should be organised regularly to keep teacher abreast with current knowledge in their subject area.

CONCLUSION

Teaching is a noble profession and the quality of teacher preparation depends more on internship programme of the college which provides field experience to the student teachers under their mentors. Thus internship attempts at moulding a person into an effective teacher. The recent trend has been shift from teaching to learning considering the learner as a constructor of knowledge. If we believe in this philosophy, does our existing teachers to face this challenge? We have to bring changes in the teacher education programme and some of the core components of internship are required to be relooked into, with an intention of preparing right teachers who would shoulder the responsibility of preparing world citizens.

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