

REFORMING TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME: NEED, PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Teacher Education needs a lot of reform. NCTE has suggested certain reforms. The authors have given their views in connection with the reformation process of teacher education. They have given more emphasis on new technologies to be adopted in the process of reformation.

INTRODUCTION

The entire educational system of our country is in the process of change. We all know that no educational reform can be successful unless the quality of teacher is improved. In turn, the quality of teacher depends to a large extent on the quality of teacher education. Teacher education system is an important vehicle to improve the quality of school education. The revitalization and strengthening of the teacher education system is therefore, a powerful means for the upliftment of educational standards in the country.

To improve the quality of teacher education, many reforms are brought in it, particularly after independence. To acquire ICT literacy, the NCTE Yet there are many more emerging issues and concerns that need urgent attention for improving the quality of teacher education Programme.

For having improved teacher education, we have to reconstruct our educational system. Reconstruction of educational system started in India from the beginning of independence and efforts to improve teacher education can be traced back to that period. The University Education Commission(1953), Education Commission(1964-1966), International Secondary Education Project Team(1954), The Committee on Plan Projects(1963), The Study Group of the Secondary Teachers in India(1964), Indian Association Teacher Educators(1973), National Policy of Education(1986) and National Council for Teacher Education(1998) have all recommended innovations in India in order to meet the present day requirements and to

strengthen all aspects of teacher education system.

INITIATIVES TAKEN FOR REFORMING EDUCATION SYSTEM

NPE (1986) stated "The existing system of teacher education needs to be overhauled or revamped."

This has resulted in a number of initiatives being launched and they are-

1. Establishment of NCTE by the government of India on August 17, 1995 as a statutory body responsible for the regulatory as well as professional aspects of teacher education.
2. Programme of Mass Orientation of School teachers (PMOST) was launched as a centrally sponsored scheme in all the states and Union Territories during 1986-1990.
3. Special Orientation Programme for Primary Teachers (SOPT) was taken up in 1993-94 to provide orientation to primary school teachers.
4. In the light of recommendations of NPE 1986, Block and Cluster Resource Centers were established for professional growth of elementary school teachers and heads.
5. Interactive teleconferencing has been successfully tried in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh in in-service training course.
6. Three National Curriculum frameworks on Teacher Education have been brought out by the National council of Teacher Education (1978, 1988, and 1998).
7. To acquire ICT literacy, the NCTE has produced a CD-ROM entitled 'IT Literacy'.
8. NCTE has developed self learning modules on 'Human Rights and National Values' with a

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view to familiarize entrant teachers with values enshrined in our constitution.

After all these initiatives, the teacher education system is still overloaded with components which have become obsolete and anachronistic with a tendency to defend the indefensible.

NEED OF REFORMATIONS IN PRESENT SCENARIO

The present state of secondary teacher education in the country presents a mixed picture of far sighted intentions and innovations coupled with alarming distortions and structural shortcomings. Looking back from past to present, it appears that although nomenclature has undergone a change from 'training' to 'education', the system by and large remained unchanged.

The major weaknesses have been successively pointed out by University Education Commission (1948-49), Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) and Education Commission (1964-66). It has been observed that the existing system of teacher education is rigid and static.

Understanding of the sociopolitical and cultural issues like globalization, free market, information technology revolution etc. require in depth study and understanding by the student teachers in teacher education institutions. The strategies for transactional curriculum are changing fast and can not be utilized without innovations for decades. The student teaching, practical activities, community experiences, practical works and work education all require a high level of professional activity in teacher education institutions to ensure that expected behavioral changes have been internalized in the student teachers.

In year to come, the credibility of teacher education institution would depend upon the innovativeness of the Programme which is planned, developed and implemented. Unfortunately, however the secondary teacher education institutions in India are stated to be largely not innovative. So there is a dire need of innovations in teacher education Programme.

RESISTING FACTORS IN REFORMATION

There are some resisting factors in our education system which prevents the teacher education

institution from being innovative and they are-

1. **Lack of Physical facilities and Funds-** Majority of colleges suffer from lack of facilities in terms of space, equipments and personnel. Consequently, they have not been able to adopt innovations. For want of these facilities, many creative ideas are shelved.
2. **Lack of Diffusion of Innovations among teacher educators-** Most of the teacher education institutions is poor and indifferent towards the professional growth of their teacher educators. Many of the teacher educators are ignorant of the new trends in their area of studies due to lack of diffusion of new ideas among them.
3. **Lack of Service-** Due to administrative difficulties, teacher educators are not able to try, adopt and maintain innovations in teacher education institution. For any new experimentation, facilities are not usually provided by the administrators.
4. **Lack of Support-** It is unfortunate that teacher educators have not been able to adopt innovations due to non cooperation of practicing schools. The schools are not always willing to extend their facilities to the teacher educators for trying out new ideas because they do not want any disturbances in their daily routine.
5. **Rigid framework-** It is found that the rigid system of syllabus framing and theory respectively are responsible for the continuance of the traditional practices in teacher education Programme. The present examination system under a rigid framework is a big stumbling block in the process of innovation.
6. **Lack of Expertise of the staff-** Majority of secondary teacher education institutions are manned by teacher educators who have not been exposed to the functioning of institutions inside or outside the country. Moreover, it is found that due to lack of expertise of the staff members, innovations have not been diffused in the training institution.
7. **Lack of Research Orientation-** A vast majority of teacher educators have not yet developed research mindedness. Whatever

Programme and practices have been adopted in the training institutions, they have been adopted on commonsense basis not on research findings.

8. **Interpersonal Relationship Crisis-** teacher educators feel that there is a lack of cooperation among members of the staff. There are professional rivalries among co workers and there is no initiative from teacher educators for creative works. It appears that lack of interpersonal relationship is yet another factor preventing the spread of innovation in the training institutions.
9. **Decision making by external agencies-** Teacher educators simply follow the decisions taken outside by the university and government authorities for the adoption of innovations in their teacher training institutions. Teacher educators lose initiative and desire to venture innovation even in the areas which fall within their purview such as methods of teaching, supervision and guidance to student teachers.

SUGGESTIONS

The above observations clearly indicate that teacher education programme at secondary level needs to be examined critically in terms of its innovativeness. Here are some suggestions which can be used to overcome these problems-

1. Physical facilities and funds should be adequately provided to the institutions by the government, local bodies and organizations.
2. The internship model of practice teaching should be adopted. As some private universities such as Institute of Education and Research in Manglayatan Univesity, Aligarh, G.E.A.R. (Gifted Education and Research) Innovative B.Ed. College, Banglore, Prince Institute of Innovative Technology, Greater Noida etc. have already adopted. In the same way, government universities should include it in their teacher training programme.
3. The conventional system of a few demonstration lessons given by a few teacher educators at the beginning of the practice teaching may be replaced by display of some video recorded good lessons in

each subject delivered by expert teacher educators, teachers and teacher trainees.

4. Relevant methods of instruction such as tutorial, discussion seminar, team teaching and interactive teaching learning should be adopted.
5. More co curricular activities such as physical education, social services, tree plantation, and formation of eco club should be organized.
6. Modern technological gadgets like computer, video, mass media, OHP should be used at the time of instruction.
7. Counseling and follow up programmes should be initiated and made effective.
8. In service and extension services should also be organized frequently.
9. Teaching staff should be given adequate representation in the management.
10. The teacher educators should be made mobile so that they can see their professional world outside their institutions.
11. The service and support from practicing schools, administrators, students- teachers, guardians and community should be encouraging.
12. Teacher educators shall be given proper incentives for the professional growth.
13. Publication and subscription to professional journals by the institutions should be encouraged.
14. Research wings in the university departments and selected government colleges should be started.
15. A healthy relation among teaching staff would evolve new procedures and move towards new goals.
16. The management and administrators should be watchful in maintaining the health of the institutions so as to make them innovative and progressive.

CONCLUSION

To meet the challenges of the new millennium, teacher education in India needs a tremendous change. The teacher educators need intensive training in various aspects related to new innovations. The above stated problems are challenging and strategies to overcome these

problems are the need of the hour. Therefore NCTE, SCERT/SIE and university department of education should take immediate action for making education system more improved.

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