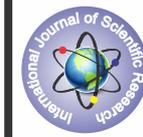


QUALITY VERSUS QUANTITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION



Education

KEYWORDS:

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ABSTRACT

Research and policy makers agree that teacher quality is a pivotal policy issue in education reform. Teacher quality play a vital role in ensuring optimum human resource development. Increasingly demanding and complex market forces require revitalized teacher education systems. The questions of quality assurance and relevance gained some necessity as a result of NPE (1986). Quality assurance needs to be pursued in all field of education, particularly teacher education, by finding the empirical basis for relevant and efficient teacher preparation programmes. It is in this context that research in these areas to explore not only what exists today but what is required for the future becomes a priority. Relevance of research in the field of quality, relevance and efficiency has become all the more urgent as NCTE and NAAC have taken up assessment and accreditation of teacher education institutions in India. The parliament appreciated the role of quality teacher education in provided quality teachers for quality school education and passed an Act. In 1993 for setting up of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) as a statutory body. This paper highlights the various endeavours made by the central and state governments to augment the quality of education, teacher preparation and professional development of teachers.

INTRODUCTION:

Globalization has led to greater awareness of the value of specialized knowledge and advanced skills world-wide. As a result, the public in many countries has come to demand higher quality at all levels of the education system. Very often, the question of the quality of teacher education is raised. Education professionals as well as members of the public have expressed concern over a perceived lack of accountability among teacher education institutions for the actual teaching ability of their graduates. Teacher preparation over the past decade has increasingly become the focus of many universities due in part to numerous state reform initiative and as the result of attention generated by several national reports and calls to action.

Today, teaching is a profession requiring specialization in terms of knowledge and skills. There exists a wide gap between theory and the knowledge and skills of teaching required in the actual classroom curriculum transaction. Error this reason, a routine bound teacher cannot act in accordance with the emerging needs unless he or she is trained and frequently oriented. One of the most important requirements to promote and strengthen education is the training of teachers who are the key resources in the reform, redirection and renewal of education. The teacher education policy in India has evolved over time and is based on recommendations contained in various reports of committees/commissions on education, the important ones being the Kothari.

Meaning of Quality: Quality became very common word nowadays. What actually quality means. It is very familiar term but its meanings and uses vary widely. In general term, quality is the position of a product or a process attribute on good bad scale. It is often associated or linked with defects and deficiencies in products or process. Quality management system starts with certain steps as follows:

Quality Inspection: This is very initial step and through this, defects are observed and communicated for quality improvement.

Quality Improvement: It is the commitment and approach used to continuously improve every process in every part of an organization. Quality improvement is long term approach, established through incremental steps. Quality improvement is a way of working that facilitates change and influences teaching and learning by quality providing the stimulus and support for further assurance of quality.

Quality Assurance: Once quality is assured at reasonable level it needs to be controlled from deviations to ensure quality management. Due to social or professional reasons, the same may be communicated at the appropriate level for compliance. Thus quality

assurance acts as a backbone in the total system of quality management and hence requires more concern.

Issues and challenges in relation to quality in teacher education:

1. The issue of quality has become critical in many countries. In countries like India where with constrained resources, the successful effort to increase access to basic education has often led to declining quality of education.

2. The rapid changes in society and increasing number of teacher educational institutions led to teachers facing new and complex issues, resulting in changes in the area of teacher education. One of the most significant developments was the creation of special education for children with special needs. Special education teachers must be taught how information, especially more advanced and complex subject material, can be effectively taught to students in non-traditional ways. Special education teachers also often are required to study additional aspects of psychology and sociology.

3. Advances in technology have also posed an issue for future educators. Many educators have focused on ways to incorporate technology into the classroom. Television, computers, radio, and other forms of mass media are being utilized in an educational context, often in an attempt to involve the student actively in their own education. Hence, many teacher education programs now include courses both in technology operation and how to use technology for education purpose.

4. As India's population or worldwide populations are increasing and which turn up to increasing demand for new teacher, while poverty political instability and other major issues have hindered governments around the world from meeting new educational demands. In some parts of the world, programmes have been initiated to draw new talent into teacher educational programmes.

NCERT as an agency for Revitalization and Modernization of Pre-service Teacher Education: The NCERT working group, preparing a scheme for revitalization and modernization of pre service teacher education (NPE 1986) and made the following important recommendations.

1. Admission to the teacher training institutions in a State should be made on the basis of results of a common entrance test given by a state Agency.

2. The teachers-pupil ratio in a teacher training institution should be 1:10 subject to minimum of ten teacher educators. There should be at

least one teacher educator in each school subject and at least three in pedagogical subjects. There should be at least two teacher educators in Science methodology; one in physical Science and one in Biological Science.

3. Every teacher training institution should have a good library with at least 5000 books in all subject areas.

4. There should be a separate laboratory for educational technology where trainees can do practical work for resource material development for teaching different school subjects.

5. Every teacher training institution should have adequate hardware and software in educational technology and trainees should be provided practical work in the educational technology under micro and mini-teaching sessions.

6. Every teacher training institutions should provide practical work in games and physical education in groups for at least two hours a week for each group.

7. Every teacher training institution should have facilities for practical work in art, music and other aspects of culture.

8. Every teacher training institution should have facility for organizing practical work in some locally relevant socially useful productive work.

9. The four-year integrated programme of teacher education is a better model of teacher education

10. The minimum qualifications for a teacher educator in a teacher training college or university department of education in the methodology subject should be master's degree in the concerned subject together with Master's degree in Philosophy, Psychology or Sociology together with Master's degree in Education and should have M.Phil./Ph.D. in education.

11. The minimum instruction in time in one year B.Ed. Course should be 6 weeks after the last date of admission. Out of the 36 weeks instruction at the college, not more than 4 weeks should be spent in teaching practice no candidate should be allowed to appear at the B.Ed. degree examination unless he/she has completed 36 weeks instruction a college.

Role of the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) in Teacher Education:

The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) suggested some reformations regarding teacher education:

1. Undertaking surveys and studies relating to various aspect of teacher education and publishing the result.
2. Developing guidelines for general teacher education programme.
3. Developing norms for various courses or training in teacher education, including minimum eligibility criterion for admission.
4. Establishing international relations in the area of teacher education.
5. Preparing programmes for in-service teacher-education for orienting teachers for latest development.
6. Developing methodology of teaching and techniques of evaluation procedures,
7. Improving role of the teacher in social and vocational areas.

Suggestions for Improving the condition of Teacher Education on the basis of following recommendations: There are some suggestions here for improving the condition of teacher education:

- * Teacher education like higher education and technical education must be the responsibility of the central government.
- * Uniformity among teachers education institution must be ensured and maintained in terms of curriculum, duration and timings of the

programme.

- * Curriculum development on a continuing basis to keep pace with current trends.
- * Government should look after the financial requirements of the institutions.
- * Teacher educators must be well qualified and experienced with languages proficiency.
- * Teacher educators to be trained in the use of ICTs.
- * Institutes of low standards should be reformed or closed.
- * Conditions for affiliation should be made strict.
- * Regular and rigorous inspection by NCTE should be done on a regular basis.
- * Selection procedure must be improved and interviews, group discussions along with common entrance test and marks should be introduced.
- * Duration of teacher education should be increased to two years.
- * More emphasis should be given on practice teaching till mastery is reached with appropriate feedback.
- * Internship should be of sufficient time (six months) and student teachers must be exposed to the full functioning of the school.
- * Evaluation in teacher education should be objective, reliable and valid.
- * Several types of co-curricular activities should be included in the curriculum.
- * Professional development of teacher educators as ongoing ritual.
- * Refresher course should be organized frequently for teacher educators.
- * Research in teacher education should be encouraged.
- * Number of teaching days to be increased to 230 per years.

CONCLUSION:

To conclude, any effective teacher education curriculum calls for systematic task analysis of teachers at various levels and inclusion of relevant contents, which alone can infuse confidence among the prospective teachers to negotiate the school curriculum in classroom. Quality assurance in teacher education plays the central role in the total quality assurance can be ensured by its application in all parts of customers. The main focus is on primary customers i.e. learners. Similarly equal attention needs to be paid on the total education system and slight deviation in any part of sub system will disturb the way of quality assurance. The present teacher education programme is inadequate to meet the challenges of diverse Indian socio-cultural contexts and the paradigm shift envisaged in the NCF 2005. The pedagogic reform from this perspective needs to invest on building of teacher capacity to act as autonomous reflective groups of professionals who are sensitive to their social mandate and to the professional ethics and to the needs of heterogeneous groups of learners. The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009) promises to translate the vision into reality and prepare a humanistic and reflective teacher that have the potential to develop more professional teachers to improve the quality of education. To conclude, professionalism needs to be instilled in each and every phase of teacher preparation starting from conceptualization to evaluation and appraisal to prepare professionals and improve the quality of education.

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