



## QUALITY ENHANCEMENT IN TEACHER EDUCATION: NEED OF THE HOUR

### Education

**Shiva Kumar  
Tunguturi**

PGT – Physics T S Model School, Tekurthy Karimnagar District Telangana State

### ABSTRACT

Teachers make the highest impact on quality in the classroom. They are at the heart of education. There is a need for high quality teacher educators. For teachers, learning and teaching are a complementary process. No profession is free of challenges. Teachers have to face several hurdles in their careers. Teachers have to recognise/understand children needs & their requirements, deficiencies, weakness, difficulties, problems & strengths etc to make teaching & learning more interesting and qualitative. Teacher Education has always been an important component of education since time immemorial. This is because all societies in the world have always needed teachers to propagate/transmit their cultures from one generation to another. Teachers need to be seen as creators of knowledge and thinking professionals. A teacher needs to be an information provider, role model, facilitator, assessor, planner, resource and developer. Educated teachers, with wide knowledge, command the respect of fellow teachers and the people in their communities. They need to be empowered to recognise and value what children learn from their home, social and cultural environment and to create opportunities for children to discover, learn and develop. Teacher education has attracted severe criticism from different sources as documented in policy documents and commission reports on education. A quick glance through surveys of educational research in India conducted periodically over the years substantiates the point that teacher education programmes have remained unchanged in terms of their substance, experiences offered and modalities adopted. Policy makers must really feel guilty of their individual and collective failures in promoting desired access, infrastructure, teachers and outcome at each level of education. This paper discusses the role of quality enhancement in Teacher Education.

### KEYWORDS

Teacher Education, Policy Makers, Quality.

### Introduction

Teacher education as a whole needs urgent and comprehensive reform. There is a need to bring greater convergence between professional preparation and continuing professional development of teachers at all stages of schooling in terms of level, duration and structure. Considering the complexity and significance of teaching as a professional practice, it is imperative that the entire enterprise of teacher education should be raised to a university level and that the duration and rigour of programmes should be appropriately enhanced. Teaching is deemed as a noble career. Teaching is a career only for those, who do not hold money in high regard and have passion for knowledge. Genuine interest in the profession is the most important virtue that one must possess. For teachers, learning and teaching are a complementary process. No profession is free of challenges. Teachers have to face several hurdles in their careers. Teachers have to recognise/understand children needs & their requirements, deficiencies, weakness, difficulties, problems & strengths etc.

The purpose of teacher education programme should be to develop in each student his general education and personal culture, his ability to teach and educate others, an awareness of the principles which underlines good human relations and a sense of the responsibility to contribute both by teaching and leading as an example to social, cultural and economic progress. The nation building task will be performed under the leadership of a brilliant set of teacher educators and master educators who will prepare the teachers and who in turn will develop the creative abilities of the teeming millions of the country. Demand for qualified teachers has been high and will continue to be so as countries around the world work to ensure that all their citizens can access education through to high school level as a minimum, and beyond – a highly desirable goal.

**Changes in the Curriculum:** If we focus on the *teaching process*, we still realize that there are a great number of changes in this field as well, and all of them have an influence on the role of teachers. First of all, teachers in modern classrooms are no longer lecturers, they are facilitators, their main task is to set goals and organize the learning process accordingly. Then, in the past, teachers used to follow a syllabus which was compulsory for them. Now a days, teachers have a National Curriculum, a Core Curriculum and a local (school) curriculum that they have to consider, but - on the other hand - they have independence to choose the teaching materials (textbook), make up a syllabus of their own and teach their pupils so that they can perform well both at examinations and in life. Curriculum design is a task teachers have to be prepared for, although the present generation of teachers has been growing into making up syllabi for years. Another

difference between the past and present tasks of teachers is represented by the technical background they need to be able to use and handle effectively (computer, photocopier, power point, projectors, etc). Instead of teaching chalk face, they need to be an information technology expert, a technician or/and a photocopy master.

**Challenges Ahead:** One of the biggest challenges for teachers is that their role in the *school management* has also changed. The school needs them as individuals, who can make decisions and cope with the stress of the changing world of schools. At the same time teachers need to be able to work in teams, co-operate with colleagues and parents, they have to write projects to gain money for the school programmes, they have to be PR experts and need to do all these things for a modest monthly income. The main question is how these changes manifest themselves for the society, for the participants (teachers, learners, parents) of education. One of the mentioned European Union documents deals with teachers' role in the changing process. This summarizes the characteristic features of future teachers who are to face a brand new situation in future education. According to the document, teachers realize the changes, but it is not sure whether they are able to face the new requirements or not. In the EU documents, a great emphasis is placed on both initial and in-service teacher education programs which are to prepare teachers to meet new demands. The 21st century is witnessing remarkable changes all over the world. These changes, which have taken place, have highlighted the fact that no nation can isolate itself completely from the rest of the world and survive for long. The world today is different from what it was a decade ago. With the increasing popularity of globalization, the debate at present is what is or should be the extent of globalization in education. It is evident that due to globalization there is explosion of knowledge. Access to knowledge has been made easier through Information Technology, satellites, supersonic travel etc, No country can afford to erect walls around it. A country like India for example, has no reason to discard globalization because it has a large potential for natural resources, large national market, strong industrial base, a powerful R & D infrastructure and above all a highly knowledgeable and skilled manpower that can stand on its own in global competition and rise to any challenge. If the process for a vibrant and positive change is to begin in our country, the first priority should be given to education because education is the fundamental necessity for human development.

But unfortunately the speed of change and reform in the field of education is extremely slow and inadequate to keep pace with the rest of the developed countries. The reason to this slow speed of educational reforms process is the mindset that is not bold enough to

experiment with new and unconventional ideas. Today, we can see that some prerequisites to globalization in education has been ignored because to fulfill these prerequisites some radical changes in our policy is needed which our mindset does not allow. But the policy makers should know that if we do not go for globalization wholeheartedly, the benefits would not become satisfactory.

**Values for Reflexion:** College of Education is committed to a core set of values that are reflected in a culture that promotes development of personal and professional integrity and engagement for the benefit of our society. As an academic community, the faculty and staff of College of Education values:

- The Pursuit of excellence in discovery, learning, and engagement
- Respect for the individual and divergent perspectives that challenge us
- Diversity in all of its manifestations
- Creativity in thought and action
- The entrepreneurial spirit
- Collaboration

### Teacher Education: Looking Ahead in Present Times

As a result of quick economic growth, influence of western culture, over mechanization, urbanization and craving for materialistic life there has been a loss of values and of the value system at the individual level and in the society as a whole. History speaks and universally accepted, the teachers are unchallenged custodian of the society and embodiment of evolutions and revolutions of the world. The kingpin in the schooling process is the teacher. If the teacher is personally committed to the values and practices them in his/her own life, the students will imbibe the values for which teacher stands. It is for this reason only those teachers who leave deep impact on their students are remembered and also revered. Therefore, if values have to be nurtured in children it would be crucial that their teachers function as role models. The participation of teachers in the formulation and implementation of educational plans can yield rich dividends, especially in institutional planning and programmes of qualitative improvement. Several of the community improvement programmes and school programmes such as improvement of text books, adoption of better methods of teaching and evaluation, intensive utilisation of available facilities, maintaining contact with community, individual guidance to students, inculcation of social and moral values etc do not need much investment in physical or monetary terms. But their success depends essentially upon the competence of the teachers, their sense of dedication and their identification with the interests of the students committed to their care. But unless they make every effort to cultivate these skills and values they shall not be able to participate effectively in educational programmes and to discharge their responsibility to students and the society.

### Conclusion

Teacher education as a whole needs urgent and comprehensive reform. There is a need to bring greater convergence between professional preparation and continuing professional development of teachers at all stages of schooling in terms of level, duration and structure. Considering the complexity and significance of teaching as a professional practice, it is imperative that the entire enterprise of teacher education should be raised to a university level and that the duration and rigour of programmes should be appropriately enhanced. The challenge of quantity must be met head-on, while ensuring quality and equity. Teachers need to be seen as creators of knowledge and thinking professionals. A teacher needs to be an information provider, role model, facilitator, assessor, planner, resource and developer. Educated teachers, with wide knowledge, command the respect of fellow teachers and the people in their communities. They need to be empowered to recognise and value what children learn from their home, social and cultural environment and to create opportunities for children to discover, learn and develop.

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