Research Paper Education

Changing Role of Teachers and their Education

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KEYWORDS

School teaching is the single largest professional activity in the country.

There are 4.52 million teachers in the country. The significance of competent teachers to the nation's school system can in no way be over emphasized. It is well known that the quality and extent of learner achievement are determined primarily by teacher competence, sensitivity and teacher motivation. The length of academic preparation, the level and quality of subject matter knowledge, the repertoire of pedagogical skills the teachers possess to meet the needs of diverse learning situations, the degree of commitment to the profession, sensitivity to contemporary issues and problems as also to learners and the level of motivation critically influence the quality of curriculum transaction in the classrooms and thereby pupil learning and the larger processes of social transformation. Teachers operate in a larger context and its dynamics as well as concerns impinge upon her functioning. There is a need to-bring greater convergence between professional preparation and continuing professional development of teachers at all stages of schooling in terms levels.

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Curriculum, at any level, should be conceptualized as a structure that articulates required experiences in order to realize educational objectives. At present the programmes have come under severe criticism for not addressing the needs of contemporary Indian schools and not preparing teachers who can impart quality education in schools. Their design practice is based on certain assumptions which impede the progress of ideas and professional and personal growth of the teacher. They train teachers to adjust to a system in which education is seen as transmission of information. They take the school curriculum and textbooks as 'given' and train teachers to adjust to the needs of the existing school system through fastidious planning of lessons in standardized formats and fulfilling the ritual of delivering the required number of lessons (NCERT, 2005). Institutes of teacher education have become breeding grounds of academic stagnation and resistance to change. The training of teachers happens in insular, intellectually impoverished environments that are severed from ground realities as well as the aims of education they espouse. 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 levels.

Role of Teachers

Teaching is not a job; it is an attitude. Teacher is a source of information, a guide, a mentor, a surrogate parent, a motivator, all at the same time. Teaching is the only profession which always deals with the future. To be an ideal teacher, who can be a role model, one should ask himself three questions before taking up this noble profession.

(i) Do you love your subject? Anyone who does not love his subject can never be a good teacher and cannot inspire his students.
(ii) Do you love your profession? If one does not have the respect for his vocation, he can never have self- esteem of himself. Such teachers do not exude confidence and assurance.
(iii) Can you love your students as intensely as your own children? Anyone we cannot answer this question in the affirmative cannot become a great teacher. All the greatest Masters in the world have demonstrated this remarkable quality of loving their disciples unconditionally.

The role of a teacher in the changing social scenario is becoming very challenging. In the earlier times teacher was the only source of information and commanded respect on this count. Anyone desirous of gaining knowledge had to bow down to him. Today, we have multiple information centers. There are books, coaching centers, the audio visual aids such as audio cassettes, video tapes, microfilms and internet services that provide a flux of information to those who need it. Thus teacher' role -as the only source of information is marginalized. The society is becoming more materialistic and values appear to be pushed into the background. There is nothing unusual about it. Each era throws up a role model and the whole society tries to emulate this model.

Consider the Vedic times when wise man or a Rishi was an icon. Even the kings and the princes came down to his hermitage, sat at his feet to get knowledge. When you look into the period of Mahabharata, the role models had changed. The heroes of this era are undoubtedly the mighty warriors such as Bhishma, Drona, Kama, Arjuna etc. The Brahmin Dronacharya was teaching the princes warfare instead of philosophy. Everyone wanted to be a great warrior.

Before independence of India, our role models were Gandhi, Patel, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and other freedom fighters. It was the dream of every youngster to be a freedom fighter and every school in the country was a training ground for freedom fighting. All school campuses reverberated with the chanting sounds of vande mataram. After independence, unfortunately, the icon of the society has been a rich man. Everyone in the society is aspiring to become rich, as much as possible and as quickly as possible. Getting rich at any cost has

been the motto. Invariably this process of getting rich instantly is at the cost of values.

Changing Role of the Teacher

As is the teacher, so is the nation. In fact he is the top most academic and professional person in the educational pyramid. He is the pivot around all the educational programmes which rotate in so far as their implementation is concerned. Achieving the goals of teacher education will depend on teacher's abilities to meet great challenges, devise and use effective learning strategica, and work with many partners to enable to all children to meet there full potential. Teacher educators should work to provide their students with the necessary skills to med the demands of tomorrow's classrooms. The NPE (1986) said "the status of the teachers reflects the socio-cultural ethos of society and no pepole can rise above the level of its teachers." What should be the role of a teacher in achieving goals of teacher education is given below:

Access: Teachers must have access to current technologies, software. and telecommunications network').

Skilled: Teachers should be skilled in the use of technology for learning. They must be able to apply technology in the presentation and administration of their course work and facilitate the appropriate use of technology by their teacher candidates. The teacher educator should model and teach techniques for managing technology in the classroom and for communicating outside the classroom through electronic means.

Professional Development. Teacher must have consistent access to professional development in support of technology use in teaching and learning. It is not a one time event it should be focused on the needs of the faculty member, teacher, or administrator and sustained through coaching and periodic updates. Teachers need to update their knowledge and skills as the school curriculum and technologies change.

Technical Assistance: They must have technical assistance for maintaining and using the technology. The focus of the faculty member, teacher, and pre-service teacher should be on teaching and learning, not on maintaining and repairing the technology beyond basic trouble shooting procedures. When the technology does not function well, a learning opportunity is lost and faculty frustration grows. Timely technical assistance is imperative for faculty and candidates to feel confident that they can use technology in their teaching and learning.

Content Standards and Curriculum

Resources: Teachers must be knowledgeable in the content, standards, and teaching methodologies of their disciplines. They must provide technology rich experiences to pre-service teacher through out all aspects of the training prograrnmes Technology brings relevant resource from the real world to subject area content, provide tool for analyzing and synthesizing data and conveys content through a variety of media and formats. Pre- service teachers should learn to use technology in ways that meet the content standards and the technology standards for students and teachers.

Student centred teaching: Teaching in all settings should encompass student-centred approaches to learning. Technology should not be used only as a tool for demonstration, as an electronic over-head projector or black board; rather the use of technology by student should be an integral part of instruction. Teacher must prepare their students to apply strategies for problem solving and to use appropriate tool for learning, calculating, collaborating and communicating. ICT tools and resources can contribute dramatically in establishing new learning environment.

Assessment: In addition to assessing teaching and student outcomes, institutions should continuously assess the effectiveness of technology for learning throughout the entire teacher preparation programme.

Community Support: The visioning process includes the community and school partners who provide expertise, support and resources for technology implementation. The community must see that technology is a valuable tool for prospective teachers and their students and must be willing to support it in the political process from the board room to state house.

Support Policies: Policies can either support or hinder the implementation of technology. As decision makers develop new policies, they must consider, how the policies affect acquisition of and access to technology. Some major barriers to the use of technology relate to faculty expectations about incentives and reward structures. The expectation for the use of technology must cut across all subject areas and teacher preparation contexts so that faculty and teacher candidates are assured that their work will be valued.

Making Use of ICT in Achieving Goals of Education

ICT competencies must be integrated into the curricular and pedagogical content presented, preparing teacher, and candidates to create the new learning environments. A teacher must therefore model the use of these new leaning environments in their own classrooms. Curriculum developers for teacher preparation programmes must be vigilant in identifying appropriate ways to apply ICT tools throughout the course work and experiences planned for pre-service teachers.

To raise the professional status of teachers, develop among them greater commitment to society, their students and their profession, increasing their knowledge of professional competencies and. performance skills and empowering them to face new challenges are the goals of teacher education by NCTE. To implement ICT standards in a variety of course work taken by pre-service teachers across all subject disciplines, a number of methods and strategies have been identified by many scholars. Many of these strategies employ commonly used productivity tools such as word processing, data base, spread sheet, or browser applications.

Conclusion

Contemporary educational systems in Western societies are being redefined within the context of technological and scientific relation to socio-economic globalisation. Therefore, it is important for educational authorities to equip and empower their professionals to adjust their ideology and practice effectively in order to contribute to the implementation of a learning culture and the formation of the "knowledge-based society". The teacher education has to become futuristic. In India, Education course are admittedly not regarded as the most interesting on the campus. In some quarters they are even held in contempt. They 'take' less well than what teacher educators would wish. Then there are inadequacies associated with the pattern of the course which insulates it from other courses. This is one aspect which needs urgent attention. We need to move toward HYBRIDIZATIONS of our institutions and departments, making walls between people and programs more porous, collaborating more, building partnerships, drawing on resources from other colleges and institutions. This outward movement needs to be developed within departments and programs, among them and by the institution as a whole.

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