



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

QUALITY PARAMETERS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

KEY WORDS:

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ABSTRACT

No innovation or change in education can be brought without teachers' awareness, involvement or commitment (NCTE, 1998). The quality of education determines the national development which rests on the competence of teachers and their competence further depends on the quality of teacher education received by them. Thus teacher education institutions have a vital role in improving the standard of the system of education by preparing competent and effective teachers. In the present scenario, maintaining the quality in our teacher education system has become a challenging task. We have mushroom growth of teacher education institutions all over the country. But these institutions need to be overhauled making them more lucrative in the world market. As the role of teachers is not confined to impart information only, they need to be through professionals, fully equipped with high academic standards, pedagogical skills, values etc. With the globalization of economic activities, the demand for quality teacher education at nationally comparable and internationally acceptable standards has increased (Sharma, 2013). This demands the teacher education institutions to be more innovative and creative. The quality indicators or parameters have to be identified and be implemented to maintain the quality of teacher education. The present paper focuses on the issues related to the various quality parameters for teacher education in India.

Introduction:

We are entering a new era in quality management for higher education which has moved away from mechanistic to a holistic view of quality in education. A professional culture of collaboration has yet to be implemented in teacher education in India. There is a dire need to advance the development of quality cultures based on career perspectives of teacher development which includes initial teacher preparation program, induction, and continuous professional development. The purpose of teacher preparation program is to develop students' general personal culture, their ability to educate others, an awareness of the principles which underlie good human relations within and across national boundaries and a sense of responsibility to contribute, both by teaching and examples, to social, cultural and economic progress (UNESCO Recommendations concerning the Status of Teachers, 1966).

Teacher Education:

Quality in Teacher Education envisages the teacher educator's role as a knowledge worker, consultant, and counselor to create a learning society. According to International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education (1987) – Teacher education can be considered in three phases: Pre-service, Induction, and In-service. These three phases are considered to be the important part of a continuous process. Teacher education is a program which is related to the development of teacher's proficiency that would enable him to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein. Teacher education is more likely to lead to diversity in practice at all levels of the instruction. There are several outcome areas potentially affected by teacher training programs in India (Asu, 2004):

1. Knowledge of teacher
2. Attitude of teacher
3. Practice of Teacher
4. School level practice
5. Achievement of students

Quality in Teacher Education:

Quality is considered as the driving force behind human endeavors. As defined by the British Standards Institution (1991) – quality is the totality of the features of a product that bear on its ability to satisfy the implied needs. In the field of education – students, faculty, management etc. are the internal customers to receive the output of another person or department within an organization whereas the community, government etc are the external customers to receive the output but not as the part of supplying organization. In view of the importance of quality, there is an urgent need in the country towards the development of knowledge and understanding of the practice of quality assurance

in higher education (Dahiya, 2001). The quality criterion in the context of teacher education is multidimensional, more subjective and complex. Here quality refers to the pursuit of excellence, consistency of fairness, the satisfaction of pupil's needs, appropriate identification, utilization of various resources and also the further generation of resources leading to achievement if institutional goals (Arya, 2006). The primary concern of developing countries like India is to provide quality education to a large number of people at affordable costs.

Quality Parameters for Teacher Education (NAAC):

Quality teachers are indicated by their educatedness that they have achieved through their education and training. Teachers should achieve the best of potential already in them. However, if the following questions are answered, teacher education institutions may be thought to have quality:

1. What key terms have we achieved?
2. How good is our delivery of education process?
3. How good is our management?
4. How good is our leadership?
5. What is our capacity for improvement?

Researchers have identified major quality indicators in the field of education namely – curriculum design, curriculum transaction, evaluation system, research and development, infrastructure, learning resources, student's support, organization, and management etc.

- Curriculum design includes goal orientation, curriculum development, program option, academic flexibility, and feedback mechanism.
- Curriculum transaction and Evaluation include admission process, teaching learning process, teacher quality evaluation of teaching and learning and examination reforms.
- Research, Development, and Extension include promotion of research, research output, publications, consultancy activities, participation in extension and linkage.
- Infrastructure and Learning Resources includes physical facilities, maintenance of infrastructure. Library as a learning resource and other facilities.
- Student's support includes student's profiles, their activities, and facilities available to them.
- Organization and management include goal orientation and decision making.
- Healthy practices include total quality management (TQM), innovations, value based education, social responsibilities, overall development and institutional initiatives.

Need of Quality Parameters:

The focus of teacher training has shifted to teacher education to make a positive influence on the quality of curriculum transaction in a classroom and thereby pupil learning and the larger social transformations. The aspects that need greater emphasis are – the length of academic preparation, the level and quality of subject matter knowledge, the repertoire of pedagogical skills to meet the diverse needs of pupils, the degree of commitment to the profession, sensitivity to contemporary issues and the level of motivation. A teacher needs to know how to take the steps to gather additional information to make more grounded judgments in teaching learning process.

Quality Assurance and Competencies in Teacher Education :

Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education (CFQTE) of NCTE (1998) highlighted 10 competencies (Contextual, Conceptual, Content, Transactional, Preparation of activities, Use of aids, Evaluation, Management, Relation with Parents and community Rapport) for a teacher, in five performance areas (Classroom, School, Out of school, Parents, and Community related duties) with commitment to five beneficiaries (the learner, Society, Profession, attainment of Excellence and the basic Values). The professional knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities get subsumed in the competency element of CFQTE as a value dimension.

Mukhopadhyaya (2002) enumerated 3 types of exercises to assure quality in teacher education:

1. To identify and specify indicators, e.g. transactional competencies in classrooms in terms of smaller observable components.
2. To develop the minimum acceptable level of performance against each indicator.
3. To develop the organizational mechanism for ensuring achievement of predefined standards and developing the quality culture.

Quality Parameters for Teachers (Pre-service and In-service):

The National Curriculum Framework of School Education (NCFSE, 2000) expected teacher educators and teachers to take new responsibilities to accelerate the development of future citizens. To serve this purpose the each phase of teacher education program (Pre-service, Induction, and In-service) in India need quality parameters to enhance its level. Pre-service teacher education includes quality in teaching practice component, micro teaching, short-term teaching practice, teaching practice of a longer duration (internship programs), research development and school development activities. Whereas the in-service teacher education must provide sufficient skill practice, transfer of training, ensure clear performance goals, introduce only a few basic rules during early learning stages.

Following are some other quality parameters for teacher education which should be considered for providing quality teacher education in the country:

- Creation of innovations to develop enterprising minds. Appointing professional, committed and qualified faculty.
- Educational reforms and facilities to adopt a sincere work culture.
- Granting autonomous status and academic freedom to colleges.
- Keeping institutions free from political interferences.
- Networking with other colleges and universities.
- Creating facilities for faculty exchange.
- Providing values-based education Promoting leadership qualities.
- Adaptation of Government policies and regulation.
- Integration of research and recreational activities.
- Adaptation of innovative methods of teaching.
- Creating opportunities for enhancement of high-level thinking.
- Analysis of SWOT – Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in Teacher Education.

How to Enhance the Quality of Teacher Education:

With the globalization of economic activities, the demand for

teacher education at nationally comparable and internationally acceptable standards has increased (Sharma, 2013). This demands the teacher education institutions to be more innovative and creative. To maintain an overall quality of teacher education institutions, all the quality components need to be integrated. Various essential steps to be taken for an effective quality management program in teacher education have been suggested as follows:

- Teacher education institutions have to shoulder the responsibility of inculcating the desirable value system among the pupil-teachers.
- Effective use ICT in teacher education institutions can improve the quality of teacher education.
- States should manage to have separate Directorate of Teacher Education to plan teacher education facilities in terms of teacher requirement of various subjects and grades.
- The flexible assessment procedure of NCTE, NAAC etc. should help the teacher education institution to know its strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Continuous in-service programs are to be organized through both faces to face and distance mode.
- Alternative models of teacher education should be experimented such as 4 years integrated B.Sc., B.Ed. (NCERT), activity B.Ed. (zero lecture program) etc.
- Each teacher should be involved in undertaking action research and development of instructional material.
- Scientific research capacity must be enhanced.
- Teacher educators should practice innovations in teaching learning process to seek novelty.
- Nobel professional ethics like social morality, rapport with students, dedication, keen learning, creativity, good conduct should be possessed by the teachers.
- Teachers should be physically and mentally fit and emotionally strong.
- Quality assurance cell should be established by each institution.

Conclusion:

The question of quality become critical when confronted with declining standards of higher education system. Teacher education system cannot be excluded from it. The quantitative expansion can be blamed for declining qualitative values of teacher education. Hence, to ensure a quality outcome, quality management helps in framing the program to react to worldwide challenges in order to serve better for its stakeholders. Teacher educators, being key stakeholders, play important role in reforming and improving quality of teacher education programs. The above mentioned quality indicators may also be used for assessing quality of the academic programs at Teacher Education Institutes and other institutions of higher education. For this purpose, it is recommended that practitioners, academicians, and experts from diverse areas must contribute and share their valuable suggestions towards developing teachers holistically.

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