
THE CHALLENGES AND QUALITY OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract: Teachers play a vital role in helping people to develop their talents and fulfill their potential for personal growth and well-being. They acquire the complex range of knowledge and skills that they will need as citizens and as workers. It is school teacher who mediate between a rapidly evolving world and the pupils who are about to enter it. The success of a student depends most of all on the quality of the teacher. With the advent of standard-based reforms, the quality of teachers has become a major concern of policy-makers, college and university presidents, especially at the colleges of teacher education and the public in general. Every child deserves a quality teacher. In an era of increasing standards and accountability in education, teacher quality and teacher training will be more important than ever. This article aims at making contributions to the ongoing debates in the challenges and quality of teacher education and the creation of a new knowledge base that can serve all endeavors at different levels for teacher quality and development in different parts of the world. In facing up to the numerous challenges to teacher education in the era of digital technology and globalization, this article will facilitate the quest for new teacher education for the future. This is emphasized for teacher educators, educators, graduate students, researchers, policy-makers and those interested to reform teacher education for the future.

Introduction: Measuring quality in teacher education perspective that favors equal opportunity in education; Comfort with diversity, which is a reported ease of interacting with other. Providing information on a dispositional measurement system for teacher education will help ensure the development of quality professionals. As professionals we are charged with responsibility to not only teach dispositions but develop a way for systemically measuring it as well. Relevance of teacher educator has always measured the dispositions of their candidates. Recently, NCTE has specified that the process must be formalized and the documentation of candidates' appropriate dispositions is now required. Many teacher education institutions have hesitated to aggressively pursue measuring the dispositions of their candidates. One reason maybe that these institutions may be facing a dilemma in clearly defining which dispositions to measure, others may be fearful of legal liability. It is not easy to inform candidates that they are dispositional deficient; however, teacher educators have an obligation to protect students who attend the public and private schools. It is hoped that the proposed model for the development of dispositional evaluation will be of assistance as programs develop better dispositional evaluations. However, it is tantamount to be mindful of teaching and measuring dispositions when preparing quality professionals. This proposed model describes activities and processes that may be useful to develop assessment and evaluation practices related to dispositions in many teacher education programs. Outcomes and methods learner/participant outcomes. It is anticipated that the participant will 1. Understand the rationale for dispositions in teacher education. 2. Understand the legal implications for assessing dispositions. 3. Understand a model for systematically measuring dispositions methods the participants will receive a copy of the "Proposed Model for Developing Dispositions Evaluation in Teacher Preparation Programs".

Meaning of Teacher Education: It is well known that the quality and extent of learner achievement are determined primarily by teacher competence, sensitivity and teacher motivation. The National Council for Teacher Education has defined teacher education as – A programme of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher education level. Teacher education is a programme that is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein. According to Goods Dictionary of Education Teacher education means, all the formal and non-formal activities and experiences that help to qualify a person to assume responsibilities of a member of the educational profession or to discharge his responsibilities more effectively.

In 1906-1956, the program of teacher preparation was called teacher training. It prepared teachers as mechanics

or technicians. It had narrower goals with its focus being only on skill training. The perspective of teacher education was therefore very narrow and its scope was limited. As W.H. Kilpatrick put it, Training is given to animals and circus performers, while education is to human beings. Teacher education encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory and professional skills.

Teacher Education = Teaching Skills + Pedagogical theory + Professional skills.

Teaching Skills: Would include providing training and practice in the different techniques, approaches and strategies that would help the teachers to plan and impart instruction, provide appropriate reinforcement and conduct effective assessment. It includes effective classroom management skills, preparation and use of instructional materials and communication skills.

Pedagogical Theory: Includes the philosophical, sociological and psychological considerations that would enable the teachers to have a sound basis for practicing the teaching skills in the classroom. The theory is stage specific and is based on the needs and requirements that are characteristic of that stage.

Professional Skills: Include the techniques, strategies and approaches that would help teachers to grow in the profession and also work towards the growth of the profession. It includes soft skills, counseling skills, interpersonal skills, computer skills, information retrieving and management skills and above all life long learning skills.

An amalgamation of teaching skills, pedagogical theory and professional skills would serve to create the right knowledge, attitude and skills in teachers, thus promoting holistic development.

Nature of Teacher Education:

1. Teacher education is a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components are complimentary to each other. According to the International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher education (1987), Teacher education can be considered in three phases: Pre-service, Induction and In-service. The three phases are considered as parts of a continuous process.
2. Teacher education is based on the theory that Teachers are made, not born! In contrary to the assumption, Teachers are born, not made. Since teaching is considered an art and a science, the teacher has to acquire not only knowledge, but also skills that are called tricks of the trade.
3. Teacher education is broad and comprehensive. Besides pre-service and in-service programmes for teachers, it is meant to be involved in various community programmes and extension activities, viz adult education and non-formal education programmes, literacy and development activities of the society.
4. It is ever-evolving and dynamic. In order to prepare teachers who are competent to face the challenges of the dynamic society, Teacher education has to keep abreast of recent developments and trends.
5. The crux of the entire process of teacher education lies in its curriculum, design, structure, organization and transaction modes, as well as the extent of its appropriateness.
6. As in other professional education programmes the teacher education curriculum has a knowledge base which is sensitive to the needs of field applications and comprises meaningful, conceptual blending of theoretical understanding available in several cognate disciplines. However the knowledge base in teacher education does not comprise only an admixture of concepts and principles from other disciplines, but a distinct gestalt emerging from the conceptual blending making it sufficiently specified.
7. Teacher education has become differentiated into stage-specific programmes. This suggests that the knowledge base is adequately specialized and diversified across stages, which should be utilized for developing effective processes of preparing entrant teachers for the functions which a teacher is expected to perform at each stage.
8. It is a system that involves an interdependence of its Inputs, Processes and Outputs.

Scope of Teacher Education: The scope of teacher education can be understood in the following ways;

1. Teacher education at different levels of education
2. Triangular basis of teacher education
3. Aspects of teacher education

Teacher Education at Different Levels of Education: Teacher education reaches teachers at all levels of education, namely Pre-primary, Primary, Elementary, Secondary, Higher Secondary and the Tertiary. The needs and requirements of students and education vary at each level. Hence level and stage-specific teacher preparation is essential. Teacher education also helps in the development of teaching skills in teachers of

professional institutions. The teachers in professional institutions have only the theoretical and practical knowledge of their respective subjects. They require specialized teacher training inputs to deal with students entering their professions. Teacher education also reaches special education and physical education. Thus where there are teachers, there would be teacher education.

Aspects of Teacher Education: Teacher education is concerned with the aspects such as, who (Teacher Educator), whom (Student teacher), what (Content) and how (Teaching Strategy). Teacher education is dependent upon the quality of teacher educators. The quality of pedagogical inputs in teacher education programmes and their effective utilization for the purpose of preparing prospective teachers depend largely on the professional competence of teacher educators and the ways in which it is utilized for strengthening the teacher education programme. Teacher education, thus, first deals with the preparation of effective teacher educators.

Challenges in Teacher Education: Unprecedented expansion of teacher education institutions and programmes during the past few years characterizes the teacher education scenario of today. With increasing school enrolments and the launch of pan-Indian primary education development programmes like Operation Blackboard, District Primary Education Programme, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Universalization of Elementary Education, there was a natural increase in the demand for teachers. Added to this, the backlog of untrained teachers in the system and the essential requirement of pre-service teacher certification for appointment as a teacher led to mounting pressure on existing institutional capacity. The demand far exceeding supply, market forces have taken over unprecedented rise in the number of teacher education institutions in most parts of the country.

1. Time Management issues
2. Finding proper resources
3. Getting to know your students
4. Adapting class activities
5. Ease communication with parents

Quality Assurance: The quality of the work undertaken by a teacher has significant effects upon his or her pupils or students. Further, those who pay teachers' salaries, whether through taxes or through school fees, wish to be assured that they are receiving value for money. Ways to measure the quality of work of individual teachers, of schools, or of education systems as a whole, are therefore often sought. In most countries, teacher salary is not related to the perceived quality of his or her work. Some, however, have systems to identify the 'best-performing' teachers, and increase their remuneration accordingly. Elsewhere, assessments of teacher performance may be undertaken with a view to identifying teachers' needs for additional training or development, or, in extreme cases, to identify those teachers that should be required to leave the profession. In some countries, teachers are required to re-apply periodically for their license to teach, and in so doing to prove that they still have the requisite skills.

Feedback on the performance of teachers is integral to many state and private education procedures, but takes many different forms. The 'no fault' approach is believed by some to be satisfactory, as weaknesses are carefully identified, assessed and then addressed through the provision of in Teacher education policy The process by which teachers are educated is the subject of political discussion in many countries, reflecting both the value attached by societies and cultures to the preparation of young people for life, and the fact that education systems consume significant financial resources (of which teacher salaries is often the largest single element). However, the degree of political control over Teacher Education varies.

Conclusion: Teachers help young people to take responsibility for mapping out their own learning pathways throughout life. Teachers should be able to take charge of their own learning pathways also. Furthermore, as with members of any other profession, teachers have a responsibility to develop new knowledge about education and training. In a context of autonomous lifelong learning, their professional development implies that teachers:

Continue to reflect on their practice in a systematic way; undertake classroom-based research; incorporate into their teaching the results of classroom and academic research; evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and amend them accordingly; and assess their own training needs.

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