

## EMERGING ISSUES AND PROBLEMS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

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**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.34293/eduspectra.v5i2.07>

### **Abstract**

*Teacher Education is a program related with Teacher Proficiency and Competence that would make them competent enough to face new challenges in the Education. Now a days the field of Education is not only limited with books but has broadened in various new horizons. Teacher Education can be considered in three phases: there are Pre-service, Induction and In-service. The three phases are considered as parts of a continuous process. The scope of Teacher Education can be divided into three ways; there are Teacher Education at different levels of Education, Triangular basis of Teacher Education and Aspects of Teacher Education. Major issues in Teacher Education concern may be Proliferation of Colleges of Education, Isolation of Colleges of Education, Regional imbalances, Alternative modes of Teacher Education and etc... Emerging problems of Teacher Education may be Economic, Social, Cultural, Political, Moral, Ecological and Educational. Some suggestions here for improving the condition of Teacher Education are given below. It also discusses the need of Teacher Education program to be innovative and various practices that can be included. It has been recognized that Teacher Education Program should be structured and modified in a way that enables them to respond dynamically to the new problems and challenges in the field of Education, then only Teacher can help in National Development.*

### **Introduction**

According to NCTE (1998) Teacher is the most important element in any educational program. Teachers play a central role in implementation of educational process at any stage. The level of achievement of learner is determined by Teacher Competence. So the quality of Education basically depends on the quality of Teachers. Kothari Commission has very rightly said, "The destiny of India is being shaped in its classrooms." As the population in India is growing very rapidly day by day the need of well qualified and professionally Trained Teachers will also increase in the coming years. So lots of efforts should be made to improve Teacher Education. Teacher Education is a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components are complimentary to each other. Education is instrumental in the preparation of teachers who can in their practice ensure transformative learning, where teacher and learner, learner and learner are co-constructors of knowledge.

Today there are new expectations for education where the focus is on having teachers - be futurist leaders to ensure sustainable education. The paradigm shift is from teacher dominated classroom practices to that of partnership between the teacher

and the learners and their peers. The key role of educational institutions is reflected in a variety of initiatives taken to transform the nature and function of education-both formal as well as non-formal. Universal accessibility to quality education is considered essential for development. This has necessitated improvement in the system of Teacher Education so as to prepare Quality Teachers.

### **Nature of Teacher Education**

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'.

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'.

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.

### **Need of Teacher Education**

Teacher Education is common knowledge that the academic and professional standards of teachers constitute a critical component of the essential learning conditions for achieving the educational goals of a nation. The focus of teacher preparation had to shift from training to education if it had to make a positive influence on the quality of curriculum transaction in classrooms and thereby pupil learning and the larger social transformation. 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 that teachers possess to meet the needs of diverse learning situations,
- The degree of commitment to the profession,
- Sensitivity to contemporary issues and problems
- The level of Motivation.

This is not possible if teacher preparation focused only on training. Holistic teacher building is necessary and therefore Teacher Education needed more emphasis than mere training.

## **Scope of Teacher Education**

Scope of Teacher Education can be divided into three ways, there are (A) Teacher Education at different levels of Education, (B) Triangular basis of Teacher Education and (C) 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.

### **Triangular Basis of Teacher Education**

Teacher Education derives its content from the disciplines of Philosophy, Sociology and Psychology. These disciplines provide the base for better understanding and application of Teacher Education.

- (i) **Philosophical** basis provides insights to the student teachers about the implications of the various schools of Philosophy, Ancient and Modern Philosophical thoughts, educational thoughts of Philosophical Thinkers on education and its various aspects such as Curriculum Construction and discipline.
- (ii) **Sociological** basis helps the student teachers to understand the role of society and its dynamics in the educational system of a nation and the world at large. It encompasses the ideals that influence National and International Scenes.
- (iii) **Psychological** basis helps the student teachers develop insights into students' Psychological make-up. This enables the student teachers to understand their self, their students and the learning situations such that they are able to provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences to their students.

### **Aspects of Teacher Education**

Teacher Education reaches out to the student teachers by providing the relevant knowledge, attitude and skills to function effectively in their teaching profession. It serves to equip the student teachers with the conceptual and theoretical framework within which they can understand the intricacies of the profession. It aims at creating the necessary attitude in student teachers towards the stakeholders of the profession,

so that they approach the challenges posed by the environment in a very positive manner

### **Emerging Issues in Teacher Education**

Emerging issues in Teacher Education concern the following,

- Proliferation of Colleges of Education
- Isolation of Colleges of Education
- Regional imbalances
- Alternative modes of Teacher Education
- Duration of Teacher Education Programmes
- Examination System
- Personal and Social Skills
- Competencies
- Subject Knowledge
- ICT Skills
- Context Sensitivity
- New Pedagogy for the Global World

### **Problems of Teacher Education**

It is universally acknowledged that education is an effective means for social reconstruction and to a great extent it offers solutions to the problems a society is faced with. These problems may be Economic, Social, Cultural, Political, Moral, Ecological and Educational. Since the teachers play a major role in education of children, their own education becomes a matter of vital concern. Various problems in the way of Teacher Education are following:

- Short Duration of Teacher Training Programs
- Incompetency of Student- Teachers
- Teacher Education Programs have narrow and rigid Curriculum
- Superficial Practice Teaching
- Problem of Supervision of Teaching
- Deficient in content of the Teaching Subject's Knowledge
- Methods of Teaching are lacking in Innovation - Segregation of Teacher Education Department
- Poor Academic Background of Student-Teachers
- Deficient in facilities for Student-Teachers
- Lack of Regulations in Demand and Supply
- Lack of facilities for Professional Development
- Insufficient Financial Grants
- Narrow Scope of Teacher Education
- Lack of Culture-Specific Pedagogy

Teacher education must, therefore, create necessary awareness among teachers about their new roles and responsibilities. Teacher Education needs to strengthen and stress upon the main attributes of a profession, such as, the systematic theory, rigorous training over a specified duration, authority, community sanction, ethical code and culture, generating knowledge through research and specialization. It is acknowledged that formal professional training on continuous basis is necessary for becoming a good teacher as it caters to the development of one's personality and sharpening of communication skills and commitment to a code of conduct.

### **Suggestions for Improving the Condition of Teacher Education**

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 Teacher Education Institutions 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 language proficiency.
- Teacher Educators to be trained in the use of ICTs.
- Privatization of Teacher Education should be regulated.
- 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.
- 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.
- Duration of Teacher Education should be increase to two years.
- Evaluation in Teacher Education should be objective, reliable and valid.
- Teacher pupil ratio should be ideally 1:8.
- 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 year.

## Conclusion

Since the teacher is the pivot of the entire educational system and is the main catalytic agent for introducing desirable changes in the teaching learning process, all attempts need be made for motivating teachers to become innovative and creative. It goes without saying that a self motivated and really industrious teacher can utilize his own resources to keep himself abreast of new knowledge and skills. It has been recognized that teacher education program should be structured and modified in a way that enables them to respond dynamically to the new problems and challenges in the field of education, then only teacher can help in national development.

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