

**QUALITY CONCERNS IN TEACHER EDUCATION****Mr. Sunil Kalekar & Yogesh Patil***Assistant Professor, Adhyapak Mahavidyalaya, Aranyeshwar, Pune 9***Abstract**

There is a criticism from society that the teacher training institutes are preparing teachers of substandard quality and have thereby diluted standards of education in primary and secondary schools. The term quality is a relative term and means different to different people. The present paper tries to explain the meaning of quality in the field of education and especially in teacher education. There are several efforts taken at policy level to enhance quality of teacher education. But these measures are found superficial and ineffective. The paper discusses various parameters of quality in teacher education and suggests means to enhance it. Due to mushrooming growth of teacher training institutes, we are able to bring about the quantitative change but to bring about qualitative change; one must take sincere efforts in these parameters that will help to develop a teacher who will be able to serve to society in real sense.

Key words: *Quality, Quality enhancement, parameters, teacher training.*



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Introduction:

Quality is an elusive attribute, an attribute of values, which cannot be easily measured or quantified. The Webster's Dictionary describes it, amongst other things, as a 'degree of excellence' and 'superiority in kind'. In reality, quality is relative term and it means different to different people (Sallis1993, Green and Harvey, 1993, Green, 1994). In the field of education different stakeholders may have different focus e. g. for students quality is referred to teaching- learning and facilities provided whereas for teachers the curriculum offered and the learning environment for students and for management and parents the academic results of school or educational institution may be the indicators of quality. Green and Harvey (1993) have identified five different approaches to the viewing of quality in the field of higher education. According to them quality may be viewed:

1. In terms of exceptional (highest standards).
2. In terms of consistency (Without defects and getting it right the first time).
3. As fitness for purpose.
4. As value for money.
5. As transformative process (transformation of participants.)

Quality is defined as the "the totality of features and characteristics of product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied need" (bureau of Indian standards, 1988). Adopting this definition in the field of education, the definition in the field of education, the definition of quality is that of 'fitness for purpose'- the ability to meet the stated purpose, for which the service was offered. The other quality related terms are- Quality control, Quality

assessment, Quality Audit, Quality assurance, Quality Policy, quality management. Thus the quality involves various aspects. While using the term quality in the field of education, we must consider the goals of educative process, the changes or transformation that is brought about in students, the facilities and activities provided to bring about those transformations and the extent to which our product i.e. the student entering the society is fit to serve the society.

Quality and Teacher Education Programme:

Teacher education programme is the programme that trains student teachers to become future teachers. There are various levels of this programme viz. primary teacher education programme (D. T. Ed) Secondary teacher education programme (B. Ed. General and B. Ed. Integrated.) and masters programme (M.Ed.). Along with these there are programmes related to physical education as well. These teacher training institutes function under the control of UGC, state government, central government, NCTE and different universities. Different states have adopted different mechanisms to govern these institutes. There are some universities which run teacher education programmes themselves whereas some have affiliated colleges who run these programmes. Some colleges are run by government, NCERT, some are private aided colleges and some are private unaided colleges. From the onset of 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan', there is been mushrooming growth of teacher training institutes (TEI) in all the states. There is always a criticism that these TEI are preparing teachers of substandard quality and have thereby diluted standards.(Deshmukh, 2004) It is a common observation that the society and parents are not happy with the kind of education the children receive in schools. Teachers are held responsible for deterioration of quality of schools. If teachers are not able to satisfy the demands of schools and society, are they not equipped with knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, skills that are required to perform their tasks effectively in school and classroom? Here comes the question of quality of teacher education programme. Are our curricula not able to equip the prospective teachers with subject matter to be taught as well as teaching methods? Are our programmes failing to provide sufficient practical experience? Quality of teacher depends on quality of teacher education programme and therefore one must think about improving quality of teacher training.

Efforts To Improve Quality:

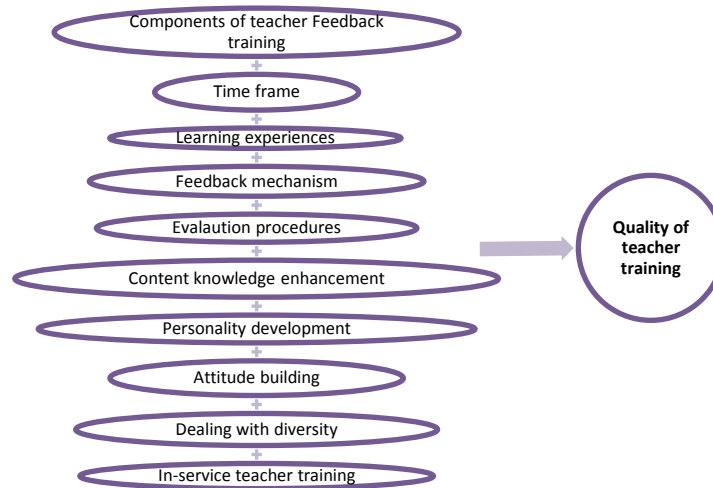
Several efforts are taken at National and state level to enhance the quality of teacher education. Some of them are listed below:

1. Accreditation of TEI by NAAC.
2. Change in the curriculum framework by NCTE.
3. Increased duration of teacher training programme.
4. Common Entrance test for admitting candidates to teacher training programme.

These efforts to some extent have helped to initiate the quality enhancement in teacher education but still there are many lacunae in the system which doesn't help to really assure quality of these programmes. E.g. It is seen that TEI prepare themselves for NAAC accreditation or reaccreditation programmes, just facing the committees rather than making it a practice. Most of the private – unaided TEI have not gone through accreditation process. Teacher educators and students are not ready to accept two year B. Ed. And M. Ed. Programme. The common entrance tests are conducted only for name sake and even those candidates who fail in CET can get admission for the programme.

Quality Parameters Of Teacher Education Programme:

Looking at the present scenario there is a serious need to improve the quality of teacher education. To improve the quality one must understand various aspects of teacher education which when improved individually will help to contribute to the quality of teacher education. Some of these are listed below:



- a. **Components taught:** The curriculum of teacher education must give inputs to prospective teachers related to content knowledge, pedagogy, technology integration, child psychology, evaluation techniques etc. These components should be taught in such a way that they will have real life connections of these subjects while going through the curriculum. Student teacher should be able to apply all the knowledge gained in those components in real school life.
- b. **Time frame:** As per revised NCTE regulations 2014, the programmes like B. Ed and M. Ed are of two years duration. This change was long awaited and had to be forced on TEI. But now due to delayed admission process the course does not remain of two years. It shifts to one and half year's course. This does not give justice to the revised framework of curriculum. The student teacher must get full two years time (4 semesters) to accomplish all the courses successfully.
- c. **Learning experiences:** All our textbooks at primary and secondary levels have shifted to constructivist approach. The curriculum framework is based on constructivism. But for training the students in TEI's the approach used is very much behaviorist. We are still following techniques that are age old (microteaching, lesson note guidance etc). Student teachers should be provided with sufficient in situ practices that will help them to understand the concepts related to learning through observation and experiences. Hence more emphasis should be given on rigorous practice teaching and internship programme with adequate support from educators and practicing teachers.
- d. **Feedback mechanism:** To improve the teaching skills and other competencies of student teacher, there should be continuous mechanism for feedback from educators and experienced teachers and peers. The forum of peers should be established in TEI for providing constant feedback.
- e. **Evaluation procedures:** The evaluation of student teachers should not be focused only on content knowledge and teaching competencies. Their attitude towards teaching

profession, commitment for students and towards society also should be assessed. This may require additional evaluation tools (Qualitative tools).

- f. **Content knowledge enhancement:** It is of common observation that the students seeking admission for B. Ed. Course have low academic scores at their degree programme than those students who sought admission in the past. It is observed that content knowledge of school subjects of such students is very poor. If they are not good at content, they cannot teach well even though they know pedagogy. Hence the two year programme should focus on rigorous orientation of content of school subjects.
- g. **Personality development:** Along with other components one must understand the importance of teacher personality. For grooming the prospective teacher that will be able to cater the future classroom, the teacher must be well trained for use of language, use of technology, communication skills etc. therefore a component on personality development has to be incorporated.
- h. **Attitude building:** A teacher must have right attitude for his own teaching profession. Teacher should also have correct attitude while dealing with students, parents and with society. Training for development of right attitude is necessary for effective and efficient teacher. Inputs related to positive attitude towards profession needs to be given. Teaching should not be considered as the last choice of profession by students.
- i. **Dealing with diversity:** The student teacher has to face variety of students in future. India is a country with large diversity. The student teacher may get opportunity to work with students in urban areas or in rural areas. They may need to teach minority students, girl students or students located in remote places. They may also get opportunity to teach disadvantaged and economically backward students. They may also need to teach different curricula e.g. CBSE, ICSE, SSC or IB curricula. Thus the student teacher has to face variety of learners. The teacher education programme should acquaint student teachers with all such learning environments where they will have to cope up with diversity and disparity.
- j. **In service teacher training:** Along with pre – service teacher training, in-service teacher training also should be organized to enhance the quality of in-service teachers. Due to modifications in the school curricula, new strategies of evaluation, new theories accepted for teaching- learning, technology interventions etc, and the teachers must be updated regularly w.r.t. their content knowledge and teaching skills. Scaffolds must be provided to teachers in the form of teacher training programmes, workshops, online training etc to enhance their skills.

Conclusion:

Gone are the days when industry and education functioned independently. Today we live in the society that expect quality output. The output of the teacher training is quality teacher, a teacher who not only has good subject knowledge but also has skills to deliver it effectively. A teacher who will be able to carry out all other administrative functions related to students effectively, a teacher who can use modern technology tools for all his communications, a teacher who can assess student performance using self made assessment tools, a teacher who will be able to guide students in co curricular and extracurricular activities, a teacher who can establish good connections with neighboring society. To have such a teacher developed through teacher training programme is a challenge. To shape the prospective teachers in such

a way that the demands of society are fulfilled is a big task. But it is only when such teachers are shaped through teacher education programmes, we can say that we are providing quality teachers to society.

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