



## **Empowering Teacher Education for Better Tomorrow**

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### **Abstract**

*Indian educational system is at the threshold of dynamic change. With Right to Education act being implemented; all the educational institutions are under the purview to provide quality education and the education which will fulfill needs of the students as well as the society. Thus, there is need to reorient the educational process based on this new vision, new values and new hopes. There is need to cater to the in-service and continuous professional development of all educators to provide quality education to all. In this paper the authors have tried to suggest new ideas to reorient the educational process based on new vision, new values and new hopes. For this the authors have taken reviews of the past situations and then they tried to suggest reforms which are main focus of this paper these reforms are in the form of structural reforms, curricular and transactional reforms and administrative reforms which the authors think will be helpful to reconstruct teacher education.*

**Keywords:** teacher education- empowerment -reforms

### **Introduction**

India has a long tradition of teaching and learning. Its ancient scriptures are an outcome of sustained quest for understanding self, society, and nature and to establish their inter-relationships. Traditionally, the society entrusted young ones to the learned scholar known as *guru* with full confidence and faith: the *guru* looked after all the learning needs of the learner, including the total development of the personality. Over centuries the system has evolved and established itself. A sense of commitment to the learner and obligation to acquire, create, and

disseminate knowledge continue to be the hallmark of Indian tradition of teaching and learning. The present system of teacher education is still expanding and extending its support to the expansion of school education, which is currently the uppermost priority in India.

An overview of the numbers of schools, teachers, teacher educators, teacher education institutions, and enrolments in schools and in teacher education institutions would give an idea of the enormous expansion of the school education system and of the problems which the teacher education system needs to handle. While the percentage of trained teachers in schools is around 90%, the issue of providing in-service education to more than 4.5 million teachers at regular intervals imposes heavy demands on the system, which becomes all the more acute as capacities of teacher education institutions are limited and are suffering from lack of resources, infrastructure, training materials, and professional expertise.

Number of educational committees, commissions, professionals who have been advocating for achieving or enhancing quality in education will have to acknowledge the importance of the role of teacher in bringing about the expected change. More than thirteen decades have passed since the Hunter Commission (First Indian Education Commission) has made its recommendation for having trained teachers followed by a variety of recommendations by various committees. The NPE, 86 has provided the greatest momentum in bringing about revolution in teacher education. It has resulted in the establishment of a statutory body of teacher education, the NCTE, the DIETs, the CTEs and the IASEs. But we still find that somewhere the gap is still continuing reflecting on the present system of education. Who can offer an explanation to this? The answer lies in the observations of the University Education Commission that 'Teaching' in this country is not recognized as a profession and that of the Kothari Commission that teacher training is conducted in 'isolation'.

Breaking this isolation and making teacher and teaching dynamic in its true sense is not an easy task because

1. The role of the teacher was previously confined to teaching and to be more precise to completion of prescribed syllabus but now it is multifaceted as a facilitator, care taker, community leader, guidance counselor, researcher, etc.
2. In the attempt to achieve the various goals relating to education, a number of policies have evolved and teacher education has to align itself to these various compulsions.
3. Education system has witnessed tremendous change in orientation styles from being subject centered to teacher centered to child centered.
4. Over the past years from when teacher preparation is viewed as one of the essential features of education system a lot of changes have taken place in Science & Technology, Society, Social living, study of child development etc. and all these need to be addressed by teacher education system.
5. With growing influence of globalization and mass media, the value system among the young children has gone for toss, so it is imperative to have teacher education which is imbedded with value based education.

6. Teaching profession unlike others is an all inclusive profession. For e.g. a doctor confines to the medical field, a lawyer to legal field, an engineer to technical field, a psychologist to behavioral field but a teacher though not a specialist should have the knowledge of all these and other varied disciplines.

Thus, the vision of Teacher Education as given by the NCF, 2005 document as that of preparing teachers for the dual role of

1. Encouraging, supportive and humane facilitator in teaching-learning situations who enables learners to discover their talents, to realize their physical and intellectual potentialities to the fullest, to develop character and desirable social and human values to function as responsible citizens and

2. An active member of the group of teachers who make conscious effort to contribute towards the process of renewal of school curriculum to maintain its relevance to the changing social needs and personal needs of learners, keeping in view the experience gained in the past and the concerns and imperatives that have emerged in the light of changing national development goals and educational priorities.

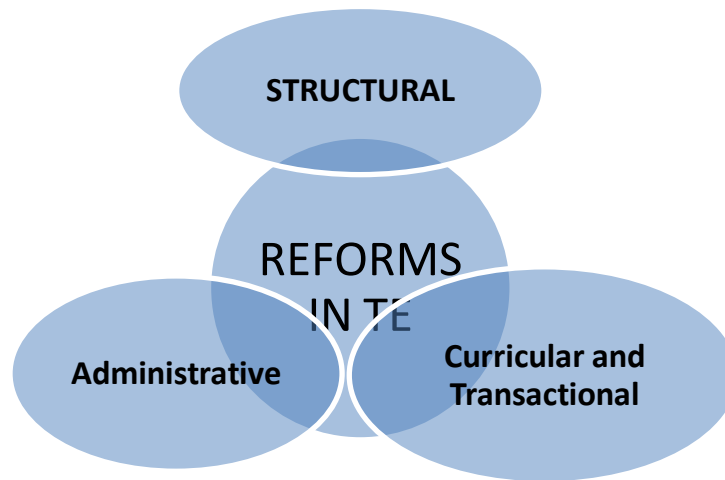
The objectives of Teacher Education which are built on the vision stated above are expressed as -  
To develop teachers

- a) Who are sensitive to the needs of children and community.
- b) With an understanding nature who build an emotional binding with the child.
- c) As persons of concern who support the child in discovering himself and strive for their all round development
- d) Of patience who encourage and nurture the inquisitiveness and creativity in the child and promote learning.
- e) As facilitators for helping the children construct their own knowledge.
- f) As community leaders who feel the responsibility towards the society and make all attempts for the good of the society and the nation
- g) As patriots who respect our country and constitution and work to inculcate patriotism and the values enshrined in our constitution among children
- h) As conservers of our culture who preserve and transmit the cultural heritage of the country to the next generations.
- i) As researchers who attempt to be scientific in all the tasks they take up.
- j) As good analyzers who constantly evaluate contemporary issues and reason their impact on the education system and the society.
- k) As good subject experts and pedagogues providing exact and relevant information in perfect ways to build a strong knowledge base among the students
- l) As inspiring persons who model to the children of being humane, considerate and at the same time achievement oriented
- m) As perfect professionals who take good lead in all areas like curriculum development, transactional innovations, public relations etc.
- n) As all rounder who can handle non-academic areas along with academic issues

- o) As good guidance and counseling experts who can guide the students and parents in dealing with all kinds of personal, educational and vocational problems.
- p) As good motivators who keep up the interest of the children in remaining active in learning and keep growing constantly
- r) As persons with good communication skills with outstanding proficiency in language
- s) As lifelong learners updating their knowledge and skills to evolve as best professionals.
- t) As good evaluators who can assess the progress of both their students and their self showing the path for future development.

### **Teacher Education – Systemic Reforms**

In order to make teacher education more comprehensive and effective, systemic reforms need to be brought in teacher education which can be categorized in the form of Structural reforms, Curricular & transactional reforms and Administrative reforms.



### **Structural reforms**

At present we have separate courses for elementary and secondary levels. Elementary level course is a two year diploma course after Intermediate while secondary teacher training is a one year bachelor degree course after Graduation. Apart from these there are separate courses for Physical Education and M. Ed is a P.G. level course in education. Of these the major courses of concern are D. Ed and B.Ed. In this connection the following reforms are suggested:

- ✓ The duration of both D. Ed and B. Ed courses is not sufficient to make the teacher competent for all the roles expected from them. Hence it has to be enhanced. The best option would be to have four year integrated courses. This also helps in attracting students who are really interested and have the aptitude in teaching in this profession eliminating the financial reason for selection of teacher job.
- ✓ Another option is to have a common course for elementary and secondary levels where the trainees will be prepared to handle both in a four year course.
- ✓ Teacher education syllabus all over India caters only to state board curriculum schools, but the myriad of other boards like CBSE, ICSE, IGCSE and IB schools have increased tremendously over last few years. The teacher education should gain momentum in this particular issue at the earliest.

- ✓ Like the regular universities and the IGNOU, the teacher education institutions should conduct various short term courses in which the teachers can join and build their capacities as per their interest like ICT, ET, Inclusive Education, Evaluation Techniques, Vocational Education, Guidance Counseling, Planning etc. for teachers. These courses can be used as Refresher courses for Career Advancement of Teachers.
- ✓ Because of plethora of problems faced by today's children related to nuclear family, broken family, socio – psychological problems, mental health etc, and inclusive education should become the focal point in teacher education.

**Curricular and Transactional Reforms:**

- ✓ Comprehensive changes need to be made in the curriculum of teacher education. It should be aligned to the present needs and emerging changes. It should be all inclusive reflecting various ICT, boards like State, ICSE, CBSE, IGCSE, IB and others, diversities among children and society, experiential learning, Life skills, Vocational training etc. Teacher education curriculum should also incorporate non-academic components like yoga, art, craft, music, sports etc. Only then can it come out of the isolation it is said to be caught in.
- ✓ Education system has witnessed tremendous change in orientation styles from being subject centered to teacher centered to child centered, constructivist approach and cooperative learning have become mantra in teaching – learning process, thus for the same, teachers need to well oriented through teacher training courses.
- ✓ The curriculum of teacher education should help in achieving the goal of teacher education in preparing teacher as a perfect professional who is a facilitator, communicator, content and language expert, child psychologist, sociologist community leader, researcher etc.
- ✓ The curriculum designed should be the result of research and experimental findings.
- ✓ The curriculum should include important policy acts relating to child and education.
- ✓ The practicum aspect should form the major part of the curriculum. Enough time should be allotted to translate the knowledge gained through theory into practice. Experiential learning helps in fine tuning the skills of the trainee.
- ✓ Teacher trainee should be given an opportunity to conduct research and have first hand information of the present position of the component under study be it the child, the curriculum, the text book, the methodology, the school, the community etc.
- ✓ Teaching profession is facing the allegations of degraded value system. Teacher education curriculum should aim to eliminate this allegation.
- ✓ Teacher Education institutions should also function with commitment to achieve the aim of teacher preparation in its totality thereby fulfilling the needs of education system and achieve progress.
- ✓ In service teacher education programmes should also be related to contemporary issues. They should be need based.
- ✓ All teaching skills should be practiced through micro teaching. Teacher educators should also guide and equip the teacher trainees with all teaching skills through demonstration lessons in

training institutions and also by observing the lessons given by trainees in schools. Senior Teachers in schools should also observe the classes of trainees and guide them.

### **Administrative reforms**

- ✓ Teacher and Teacher Education courses should be given professional status.
- ✓ Selection of teachers needs procedural changes. The entrance and recruitment tests instead of testing the content knowledge should test the teacher's perspective, interests and attitudes towards teaching profession.
- ✓ All teacher education institutions should mandatorily have model schools.
- ✓ Teacher Educators should be made to work for at least one hour in a school so that the experience gained from working with children will be utilized in guiding the trainees.
- ✓ All teacher education institutions should be strengthened to enable them to handle four year integrated courses.
- ✓ In-service refresher courses should be made mandatory for all teachers and their career advancement should be linked to such courses. The system should allow teachers to pursue courses of their choice that help in their professional development

### **Conclusion**

Teacher preparation is a dynamic activity which operates in a self learning environment through participatory mode in the context of changing learner and social needs. It should emphasize experiential and constructivist approach in learning. It should cater to the development of teacher for the multifaceted role ranging from a class room manager to that of a community leader. The curriculum and methodology cannot be patterned so that teacher education could take the shape of the current needs. However, it has to function within the broader outline of the objectives of education.

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