

TEACHER EDUCATION AT CROSSROADS: ROLE OF NCTE

Prof. Manoj Kumar Saxena¹, Ph. D. & Sumit Chauhan²

¹School of Education, Central University of Himachal Pradesh

Dharamshala., drmanojksaxena@gmail.com

²ICSSR Doctoral Fellow, Department of Education, Central University of Himachal Pradesh

Abstract

In the whole world, Indian school network is having one of the leading networks. School education is the first step towards the whole education system, which has transformed Independence. India under British rule was having a colonial education system. Later 1947 Indian govt. emphasized to open more schools to provide accessibility of education to every student at his doorsteps. Later, the main aim of education was shifted to improve the quality and excellence of school education. The quality of school education does not depend only on content but also depends upon how to deliver the content to our students. It is equally important for implementing good education system in our schools. This is possible on the bases of teachers' abilities and their aptitude, infrastructural and teaching aid provided in the school. To fulfill these objectives at all level of education, Govt. of India has to be focusing its attention on quality and excellence in teacher education. To meet this objective, NCTE set up an independent body. The role of NCTE is to look after the Teacher education in the country and also to create excellent environment for the teachers in the country. NCTE has taken various initiatives such as Standards-based syllabus, balanced in theory classes and training, enhancement in duration of B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes etc. NCTE was formed to monitor the whole teacher education system in the country, so that effective and quality teachers could be produced. This paper focuses on the role of NCTE in the present scenario of Teacher Education System and the analysis of the recent steps taken by NCTE for the preparation of the teachers.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Role of NCTE, Education system



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INTRODUCTION

The role of the teachers is pivotal in the field of education and the development of the nation and people. We can say that quality education depends upon the potential of teachers and the potential of a teacher depends upon the effective training skills in the teacher education institutions. Singh and Kapri (2018) reported the responsible factors for quality education and learner achievement such as knowledge, dedication, quality, professional commitment. In India, the history of education and teacher education dates back to ancient times when the whole erstwhile world looked towards India for knowledge and glory. From ancient times to the present era, the field of education and teacher education saw many ups and downs. In the 21st century, we not only need qualified staff in the academic field but also having more

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knowledge to uplift the career of the students to make them self-reliant. Teacher's contribution to the nation and society is very important because all sections of society are groomed by the teachers in their budding. The professional growth and development of the teacher educators are directly interrelated with the teacher education system. The teacher education system is connected directly with NCTE. NCTE regulates the institutions, maintains quality in the field of teacher education. NCTE was created in 1973 in response to a recommendation made by the Indian Education Commission which was constituted in 1964. At that time NCTE has its role as advisor for Central and State Governments for all issues related to teacher education in the country. NCTE framed a curriculum in 1978 for teacher training institutions but could not be implemented because at that time NCTE was only an advisory body. To ensure the standard- education in teacher education institutions, National policy of education 1986 recommended, NCTE as an independent institution to regulate the teacher training in the field to maintain the standard and professionalism in the field of education. NCTE as a statutory body came into existence in pursuance of NCTE act 1993 on the 17 August 1995. NCTE being the highest body of teacher education has to play some key role in curriculum designing, infrastructure and evaluation. NCTE as an apex regulating body laydowns various norms and standards, guidelines for teacher education institutions to achieve its objectives and standard for up-gradation of quality aspect in the prevailing conditions in the teacher education system, Rule, regulation and proper maintenance of norms should be checked by NCTE. In nutshell, it can be concluded that if the quality of teacher education is up to the mark, the quality of education will also improve (Saxena & Gihar, 2009).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Education

Ancient period:

India had a pioneer place in the world in the field of Education and its contribution was not limited to India only but it contributed to the whole world. This period belongs to the Vedic period (1500 B.C to 600 B.C). Vedas was the main subject at that time. Gurukul was the first institution to give Vedic education. In ancient India, teaching was considered as a holy duty which was performed by Brahmans. In this period spiritual education was given to the

student and its main aim was to get Moksha. At that time there are three universities i.e. Nalanda, Vikramshila and Takshshila. During this period, Takshshila University was the first centre for education in the world. Today Takshshila is in Pakistan and Nalanda and Vikramshila are situated in Bihar. In these universities, students from all over the world choose for their studies.

Buddhist Period:

In Buddhist period, Indian education dates back to 600 B.C. Buddhist education focused on the teachings of Mahatama Buddha. In this period the spiritual education was imparted to the students in Mathas.

Medieval Period:

In Medieval Period the system of education up to British rule was through Makhtabs and Madrasa. This continued from 10th century A.D. to the middle of the Eighteenth century, Makhtabs were imparted elementary education to children while Madrasa were meant for secondary and higher education. They taught Muslim philosophy and law to the students.

British period:

East India Company also played an important role in spreading education. In 1781 Warren Hasting established Madrasa in Calcutta. This Madrasa taught Muslim law and other Islamic education. They were a religious educational institution. In 1791 Jonathan Duncan established Sanskrit college at Banaras for teaching laws, literature and religion to the Hindu and especially to supply qualified assistants to European judges in Banaras. It only aimed to give knowledge related to Hindu law and their philosophy. Charter Act of 1813 gave the grant to establish educational institutions and their development. The company sanctioned one lakh rupees annually for education. Thus before 1835, there existed three kinds of school- (1) Vernacular schools (2) Christian Missionary school, which had arrangements for the English education, and (3) the school of East India Company, Which imparted education through the medium of English and Hindi or Urdu. Later on, many commissions and policies were formulated to focus on the development of education in India.

Teacher Education:

Teacher Education here means training for prospective teachers. In the education system teacher play important role in the development of the nation. Teacher's contribution towards society and nation is very important because all member of the society are groomed by the teachers. In modern times the fast and broad influx of knowledge/information requires optimization for the use of teachers and further transmission to the students in various areas of sciences and humanities. Thus teacher education training is strategic for human resource development of a country. From the pre-independence era to date many recommendations/interventions were made in the field of teacher education. Formation and empowerment of NCTE are most notable.

Teacher Education in Pre-Independence Era

History of education is very old. It started in the Vedic period around 1500-600 B.C. But Teacher Education is not that much old. Danish missionaries established a training institution in 1716 A.D. at Tranquebar (Tamil Nadu). The objective of missionaries for establishing teacher education institution in India was to improve the quality of teacher education which in turn enhances the quality of education in general. Further the British Government appointed several commissions and committees related to Education, which are as under-

Wood's Despatch (1854):

In 1853 to review the condition of education in India. British Government appointed a special parliamentary committee to suggest a suitable educational policy for India. Thus a committee was set up under the chairmanship of Sir Charles Wood. Sir Charles wood came to India; consulted Governor General of India, Mr. Lord Dalhousie went back to England and dispatched recommendation that why this document is known as "Wood's Despatch". Wood's Despatch is known as the Magna Charta of Indian education because "it is corner stone of Indian education". The Wood's Despatch laid attention to provide training to teachers in normal schools and suggested for the sufficient salary for the school teachers so that the good caliber people may come to join schools as teachers.

Indian Education Commission (1882):

The Indian Education Commission was appointed by Lord Rippon on 3rd February 1882 under the Chairmanship of Sir William W. Hunter. Hunter suggested that training of the teachers and raising the standard of the education, further they suggested that they made separate provision for training of graduate and undergraduate teachers.

Calcutta University Commission (1917):

This commission was appointed by Government of India under the Chairmanship of the Vice Chancellor of University of Leeds, Mr. Michael Sadler in 1917. This commission is also known as Sadler Commission. The commission suggested expansion in teachers' training and education as a subject must be added in Bachelor of Arts.

Wardha Scheme of Education (1937):

On 22 and 23 October 1937 at Wardha a conference was held under the president of Mahatma Gandhi and he suggested the formulation of committee and the same was constituted under the chairmanship of Dr. Zakir Hussein to formulate the scheme of basic education in India. In March 1938 report was submitted by committee which is known as Wardha Scheme of Education. This Scheme recommended free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 years for all, craft centric education and medium of instruction should be mother tongue.

Sergeant Report (1944):

John Sergeant was the educational adviser to the Government of India, published comprehensive educational plan for Central Advisory Board of Education in the year 1944. The aim of the plan was to tackling the educational problems as a whole. Further Sergeant Report suggested the establishment of training colleges and training institutions, so that the well trained teachers may be available to teach the students.

Teacher Education in Post-Independence Era

Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-1949):

The University Education Commission which is popularly known as Radhakrishnan Commission was appointed on 4th November 1948 under the Chairmanship of a distinguished scholar Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, a former Vice Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University. After independence University Education Commission was the first education commission, which

had suggested that school internship program is very much important for teacher training institutions and more time should be given to school practice.

Secondary Education Commission (1953-1954):

The Secondary Education Commission was constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar Vice-Chancellor of Madras University on 23rd September 1952. Secondary Education Commission recommended the training of two years for those who had completed higher secondary school and further suggested that those who had completed graduation should go for one year compulsory training in teacher training institutes.

Kothari Commission (1964-1966):

The Kothari Commission, popularly known as Indian Education Commission, was constituted on 14th July 1964 under the Chairmanship the then Chairman of University Grants Commission Dr. D. S. Kothari. This was the third commission on Education after Independence of India. This commission made several recommendations for enhancing the status of teachers and their pay scales. Further, this commission suggested three language formulas in teaching learning process as reinforced in national education policy-2020.

NCTE as a Regulator for Teacher Education in the Country

National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) prepares suitable plan and program related to teacher education and provides to the nationwide institutions offering teacher education programmes. It monitors the progress and quality of teacher education institutions in the country. Further, it also gives guidelines for minimum qualification of teacher educators and teachers who are working in teacher education institutions and in recognized schools. NCTE also decides criteria for admission, the procedure for selecting the students, course duration, curriculum for teacher education programmes, physical and instructional facilities, eligibility criteria and guidelines for recruiting staff etc. NCTE is also responsible to give recognition for starting new course in teacher training and existing teacher training institutions. After implementation of National Education Policy, the role of NCTE will be limited only to work as Professional Standard-Setting Body.

Evaluation of the Role and Responsibilities of the NCTE:

Many revolutionary changes have been brought by NCTE in the field of teacher education and added proficiency, competence and professionalism by making time to time required interventions and changes. NCTE has proposed a four year integrated teacher education programme to enhance professionalism in the teaching which needs appraisal. Four-year integrated teacher education programme (ITEP) will be offered after completing the plus two level of education with 50% marks to be eligible to get admission in this ITEP for Arts and science students. This programme will be offered at two levels. The first level will be for pre-primary to the primary and second level will be for upper primary to secondary level of education. The ITEP programme comprises of 8 semesters which include field-based experience, teaching practice and internship.

PROS AND CONS OF ITEP:

Positive Aspects:

Professionalism:

Four year period is enough time to develop professionalism which is a must in all fields in modern times. This can turn the probability of chance teachers to choice teachers. Further in four years, the focus on the different areas of teaching can be done in a detailed manner like Engineering and law courses.

Value Inculcations:

As the saying that the practice makes a man perfect holds good in this case also. Education improves living but value education boosts life in some meaningful ways (Ahuja, 2016). Since value crisis is the biggest challenge of modern times, enough space is there for the inculcation of values like honesty and integrity, discipline, appreciation, impartiality, cooperation along with competition and the like can be given. This will give boost to the ethical base of the prospective teachers for the benefit of students in particular and society in general.

Imbibing the Latest Teaching/Learning Techniques/Technology:

Science and technology have percolated in almost all walks of life. So the field of education cannot remain aloof from the latest development of science and technology. Today the educational institutions are using the latest techniques and technologies for teaching/learning

purpose. All this leads to the conclusion that these latest technologies are a must for teaching nowadays. A lot of developments and advancement is taking place in these areas.

Focused Approach:

As discussed in the preceding paragraphs for professionalism, focused approach is a must which can be skilled in four year period. It is worthwhile to mention here that after graduation mostly students used to join B.Ed. course under compulsion to have psychological security of getting job in future in the event of uncertainty of getting jobs in this competitive environment of modern times. So there was less professionalism and more opportunism in the earlier B.Ed. programme but in ITEP students come with choice with focus of being teachers in mind. Thus during four year period the trainee gets skilled in this field in a regular focused manner with more competencies and capabilities while passing out.

Time Saving:

After graduation student spends two more years to complete B.Ed. course thus total five years are being spent in completing B.A. and B.Ed. course but now proposed Four years integrated teacher education programme save precious one year of the students in case they opt for four years ITEP programme.

Cost Effectiveness:

Four-year ITEP will be more economical than two-year teacher course in terms of duration, infrastructure and manpower. It will also provide a common interactive platform with other faculties.

Negative Aspects:

Sudden Sweep over the duration of B.Ed. may be Suicidal:

The year 2015-2016 has witnessed the increase in duration of B.Ed. programme from one year to two years and now NCTE again proposed a new programme of four-year ITEP in December 2018. It appears that decisions are being taken and revised without giving due attention to the future perspectives, ground realities and also without doing pre-spade work. This can be suicidal because there will be a big problem to implement the proposed curriculum due to lack of textbooks, experts in teacher training institutions, laboratories, classrooms, technologies etc.

Creation of Infrastructure Immediately will be a Big Challenge:

Immediately creating the required Infrastructure will be a big challenge especially for those colleges who are standalone as is the case of Himachal Pradesh where there are more than 70 standalone colleges offering B.Ed. programme. In fact standalone colleges will have to invest more for four year course and probability of getting required number of students will be reduced as it will be costlier vis a vis Government institutions. Thus it may be setback to the private players in this sector of education.

Reducing the Opportunity for Trained Manpower Deployed in Teacher Education Institutions:

Implementation of the four-year ITEP will reduce the opportunity for trained men power deployed in teacher education programme in B.Ed. colleges. As per proposed Four-year ITEP, only two teachers who are having the M.Ed. degree are required for one unit, but in the two-year existing teacher training programme, eight teachers having M.Ed. degree are required for one unit. Thus the proposed four-year course will reduce the opportunity for trained manpower working in teacher education institutions.

Conclusion:

A relook into the history of NCTE since its inception leads to the conclusion that many new and due dimensions have been added to the system of teacher education in response to the fast-changing teaching/learning area having far-reaching implications on the Indian society. Today teachers from India are in demand even in developed countries like Britain etc. This proves the relevance of the Indian system of education in a modern context.

Follow up action of NCTE in response to the national council teacher education Act 1993 (no-73 of 1993) implemented during 1995 are notable and their impact is visible. However, any change especially in the modern fast-changing world cannot be smooth and definitely will have some unexpected impact as apprehended about the proposed four-year integrated teacher education programme. The endeavour should be to minimize the side effects. To sum up, there is always a scope for improvement and the mission should be kept sustaining.

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