



Improvement of Teacher Educators: A Qualitative Action

Dr. (Mrs.) Vipinder Nagra

Assistant Professor, D.A.V. College of Education, Hoshiarpur, India

Abstract

The development of a nation along with a conscious and productive citizenry is dependent upon the standards of education. It is true over the years that the turbulent millennium has brought major transformations in the area of education and is assuming new meaning and dimensions in the society. To sustain the pressures and to make the system vibrant, reliable and realistic there is an urgent need for reviewing the requirements of the learners learning, materials and instructional strategies, teachers and techniques and all other such aspects. Amongst all these aspect teacher education is a critical area in which adequate inputs and investments have to be made for developing not only human resources but also physical resources.

Keywords: *Qualitative improvement, Professional competence, Commitment, Human resources, Physical resources.*

Introduction: Teacher educator in the teacher education programme is an inevitable part, which needs to be conceived as a 'change agent' and not as a mere transmitter of knowledge and culture. At a time when unprecedented transformation of knowledge and action manifest in all diversions of worldly life, the role of the teacher educator need to take a positive direction commensurate with the dramatic change. What we require today is a self-illuminating personality having knowledge, skill (communicative, manipulative and analytical skill), the presence of mind, attitude, values and a sense of humour. Teacher educators are responsible to serve as role models both in terms of competence and commitment to teaching.

Professional Competence: Teacher education cannot be improved unless we improve the professional competence of teacher educators. The remarks of Kothari Commission also highlight that 'a sound programme of professional education of teachers is essential for the qualitative improvement of education'. To be regarded as professionals, teacher educators have to be highly competent, committed to the delivery of quality service, and seek autonomy for decision-making in the discharge of their professional duties. They have to set their own goals and agenda within the context of the employing institutions, determine their plans of action, and assess their performance.

Professional Commitment: Inculcating professional commitment in our teachers is a matter of national concern. As far as the role of training college is concerned, the right type of teacher educators in our institutions is must. They should be committed to their profession, to learner, to society, to basic values and to professional actions for attaining excellence. Professional commitment is more caught than taught. As soon as a teacher educator teaches with conviction (and not from merit only) the results come out to be immediate and miraculous. The very presence of such great teachers in colleges of education stimulates and inspires the perplexed teachers to live a better, noble and professionally committed life.

Professional competency and commitment both affects the performance level of the teacher educators. So, the basic criterion is to provide greater attention for providing necessary resources for their qualitative enhancement. The nation needs general teachers, subject specialists, experts in management, planning, finance and administration, teachers for guidance and counseling, physical and aesthetic education etc. The educational administrators and universities therefore, must take initiative in starting alternative models/programmes of teacher education.

Work Place Environment: The performance of teacher educator is dependent upon and the climate prevailing all around. A sound and congenial environment at the work place increases the capacity

and capabilities of teacher educators. Teacher educator's performance can also be greatly enhanced if he is kept free from professional and personal worries. The role of department should be motivating, encouraging and rewarding. They should try to establish a proper balance between rights and responsibilities of teacher educator's. This will in turn depend upon the support of the head of the institution where he works. A healthy, democratic work place environment can bring prolific results to the department as well as to the teacher educator.

Attitude: The teacher educator should remain an optimist; do his work with zeal and determination. An optimistic attitude develops in the teacher educators that every thing is for their welfare only. That attitude will develop only when the teacher will put his head and heart into his work and when he tries to teach sincerely at his best. His qualities should become an integral part of his personality. He should always bear in mind that teaching is a highly skilled, complex and comprehensive job. It is a profession, not simply an occupation. This attitude is must and thus, can bring confidence and competence in them.

Recruitment: Recruitment of teacher educators should be according to the norms of University or UGC. The method of recruiting teachers has to be reorganized to ensure merit, objectivity and conformity with spatial and functional requirements. The qualification and experience must be strictly taken into account. Along with this research experience must be given utmost consideration. Situational test in the form of actual teaching must be taken into account while recruiting.

Service Conditions: The pay and service conditions of teachers have to be commensurate with their social and professional responsibilities and with the need to attract talent to the profession. Efforts must be made to reach the desirable objective of uniform emoluments, service conditions and grievance-removal mechanisms for teachers throughout the country. Guidelines should be formulated to ensure objectivity in the postings and transfers of teachers. A system of teacher's evaluation (open, participative and data-based) should be created and reasonable opportunities of promotion to higher grades provided. Norms of accountability have to be laid down with incentives for good performance and disincentives for non-performance.

Mastery of Knowledge and Skills: Teacher educators should keep their knowledge up-to-date. In this regard, in- service programmes play versatile role. They should make use of those methods of teaching, which they ask their students to follow. This way they can foster practicability and immense educational value. Teacher educator must teach the subject with a vision and should try to follow the objectives of subject. Exploiting pedagogical research effectively and making relevant use of existing information in both the teaching and learning process and in the decision making process can enforce strong teacher taught relationship. Apart from knowledge domain they must lay emphasis on mastery of skills also. Teacher educators should formulate and implement various educational programmes as a means of their quality improvement practice.

Provision of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Facilities: Globalization has speeded up the progress in the field of technology which in turn has posed great challenges in the education sector also. The new technology has challenged the conventional ones in the field of teaching and learning methods and approaches. ICT is the need of the hour that has to be used frequently as a teaching learning resource. Teacher educators have to be trained and made literate with this technology to compete with the quality standards of education. To survive in the competition era they have to be well informed and communicative with latest technology.

Self-Learning: To equip themselves in a manner consistent with new theories of learning, extensive learning opportunities has to be exploited. They should also practice action research which is fundamental to teacher empowerment, quality improvement and educational change. The teacher educators to improve their practice should learn from their own experiences. A continuous effort on the part of the teacher educator to carry out self analysis and self study enhances the quality by making him/her self directed and self motivated through out life.

Proper Training: To foster positive strategies necessary resources has to be provided. Progressive training to pre-service teachers has to be provided to imbibe them with desirable innovations in the field of education. Orientation programmes for in- service teacher's foster desirable competencies in them which is helpful in achieving required quality. Although teacher educators attend these training programmes but these programmes does not provide any practical teaching learning outcomes. The Acharya Ramamurti Committee in its review of National Policy of Education, 1986 has also remarked

that teacher training is weak and has to be enhanced. In some cases, the teacher educators are themselves reluctant to attend such courses and if they do they do attend under compulsion.

Research Activities: More coordinated and intensive research efforts are needed in teacher education. Whereas NCERT and UGC provide funds for all areas in educational research, NCTE may have the provision to fund research projects especially on teacher education. If this function is to be discharged seriously, NCTE needs to be allocated separate funds for teacher education research support. Teacher education at the same time both at elementary and secondary levels should ensure that in pre-service programmes newer research methodologies are taught appropriately. It should embody action research, survey research, empirical research, phenomenological research, heuristic research, field visits and lab area projects etc. One of the objectives of research in teacher education could be to make critical analysis of policy initiative, and to offer suggestions that could be used in making new policy formulations.

Media: Teacher educators need attention on the issue of emerging media literacy, which is an essential tool and an essential topic in the new millennium. In service training programs should provide media input to orient and train them in their production and evaluation processes. Specific radio and television programmes should be broadcasted in a planned way to provide teacher educators with such knowledge in which they find themselves deficient. Even satellite programmes of UGC are of immense help for teacher educators of rural areas also. Implementing systematic strategies for drawing attention through the media to innovations and successful experiments carried out by teachers and group of teacher's is another way to quality improvement. This tool will surely enrich and modify the behaviour of teacher educators towards perfectionism and efficiency.

Training Agencies: The Government and the community should endeavour to create conditions, which will help motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines. The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE), The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), District Institute of Education (DIET), Council of Teacher Education, and other Non- Government Organizations etc. has the capability to organize pre-service and in-service courses for teachers educators and for the personnel working in non-formal and adult education. The National Council of Teacher Education provides the necessary resources and capability to accredit institutions of teacher-education and provide guidance regarding curricula and methods. Through appropriate techniques these agencies can uplift the quality of teacher educators by developing desirable competencies in them.

Teachers' Associations: Teachers' associations play a significant role in upholding professional integrity, enhancing the dignity of the teacher and in curbing professional misconduct. National level associations of teacher educators could prepare a Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers and see to its observance. There are statutory bodies for the maintenance and coordination of standards like the University Grants Commission, the National Accreditation Assessment Council and National Council for Teacher Education etc. The ministers of education assisted by secretaries from Indian Administrative Services and the bureaucrats are responsible for the administration of education and in the formulation of educational policies and their implementation. There are advisory bodies also with expert members on education but still the process needs democratization to achieve people's cooperation. In all, these associations develop self-belief in the teacher educators for enhancing their professional competence and commitment.

Incentives and Opportunities: Qualitative improvement to a great extent is enhanced by establishing performance incentives for teachers. These incentives need not be limited to monetary incentives but could include opportunities for advanced training, formal recognition and career opportunities. Teachers should be given the freedom to innovate, opportunities to devise appropriate methods of communication and activities relevant to the needs and capabilities of and the concerns of the community.

Conclusion: The quality of teacher education can be improved by making it more functional at all levels and for all stages. The teacher educators whose attitudes are positive towards the promotion of good teaching- learning situations is the result of the strong interaction existing between teaching competencies, commitment and attitudes, school and society. Every teacher can be successful only when every teacher educator will be a leader. The teacher education system has to be revamped and reorganized to keep moving towards the destined goal and only then we can meet the challenges of

the new millennium. So something concrete has to be done to sustain and survive in the coming era of competitive world

References:

Community Teacher Education in Papua New Guinea. Retrieved from:
<http://www.pngbuai.com/300socialsciences/education/training/teacher-ed-mclaughlin4of6.htm> -
Mohanty Jagganath, (2003). *Teacher Education*. Deep and Deep Publication, New-Delhi.
Quality enhancement in Teacher Education- NAAC. Retrieved from:
naac.gov.in/.../Quality%20Enhancement%20in%20Teacher%20Education...
Talesra, H.and Ruhela, S. (2001). *Agenda for Action*. Kanishka Publication, New-Delhi.