

INNOVATIVE PRACTICE IN TEACHER EDUCATION : A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Teacher education system is an important vehicle to improve the quality of school education. The revitalization and strengthening of the teacher education system is a powerful means for the upliftment of educational standards in the country. There are many issues that need urgent attention for improving the quality of teacher education programme. One of them is the need of innovations in teacher education programme. Innovativeness means the ability to think beyond the boundaries and create something which is different from that which already exists. Without innovations, no progress is possible. Teachers have to be innovative and their grooming has to start from their training institutions. Innovations in teacher education include IT literacy, interactive teleconferencing etc. NPE (1986) stated "The existing system of teacher education needs to be overhauled or revamped." Unfortunately, the secondary teacher education institutions in India are stated to be largely not innovative. There are some resisting factors in our education system which prevents the teacher education institution from being innovative such as lack of physical facilities and funds, lack of diffusion of innovations among teacher educators, rigid framework, lack of research orientation etc. In this paper the authors have tried to throw light on the need of innovations required in teacher education, the resisting factors and have also given suggestions to overcome those factors.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Innovation, Resisting Factors

Introduction

The quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizens. The quality of the citizens depends upon the quality of education system and the quality of education depends upon the combined efforts planners, educationists and administration, however, the most significant factor is the quality of the teachers. It means excellent and efficient teachers can change the fate of the nation. A teacher helps a child in bringing out the hidden capabilities. He/she unfolds what is within, hidden and untapped. He/she makes explicit what is implicit in the students. So teachers' importance in teaching-learning process is very much. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-1953) report stated, "We are convinced that the most important factor in the contemplated educational reconstruction is the teacher, his personal qualities, his educational qualifications, his professional training and the place that he occupies in the community." It is very right that, "no people can rise above the level of its teachers." (NPE, 1986). The Teacher is the real and dynamic force of any institution. A UNESCO

publication, The Changing Role of the Teacher, states: 'There was a time when the teacher's role was to pass down to the younger generation the knowledge, experiences and mythology of a slowly evolving society. The pace of change in contemporary society has made this role redundant. The modern teacher must be, among other things, a change-agent. It does not matter whether one is addressing the situation in a developing country or an industrialized nation, the problem remains the same. How teachers can be prepared to take up these new roles and perform teaching effectively to meet the challenges and expectations from education reforms is crucial to the reform and practice of teacher education and professional development (Cheng, Chow & Mok, 2004).

INITIATIVE STEPS OF INNOVATION IN TEACHER EDUCATION SYSTEM:

NPE (1986) states "The existing system of teacher education needs to be overhauled or revamped." This has resulted in a number of initiatives being launched and they are-

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➤ Establishment of NCTE by the government of India on August 17, 1995 as a statutory body responsible for the regulatory as well as professional aspects of teacher education.

➤ Programme of Mass Orientation of School teachers (PMOST) was launched as a centrally sponsored scheme in all the states and Union Territories during 1986-1990.

➤ Special Orientation Programme for Primary Teachers (SOPT) was taken up in 1993-94 to provide orientation to primary school teachers.

➤ In the light of recommendations of NPE 1986, Block and Cluster Resource Centers were established for professional growth of elementary school teachers and heads.

➤ Interactive teleconferencing has been successfully tried in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh in in-service training course.

➤ Three National Curriculum frameworks on Teacher Education have been brought out by the National Council of Teacher Education (1978, 1988, and 1998).

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION:

➤ B.C.Ed. (1989) by DAVV, Indore

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➤ Master of Educational Technology (Computer Applications) by SNDT, University, Mumbai

➤ M.Tech. (Educational Technology) by Kurekshetra University, Kurekshetra

➤ B.Sc. in Teaching Technology by Sikkim Manipal University

➤ HSTP Training Teachers, Eklavya, MP (1982)

➤ Activity Based Teacher Education Program, DAVV, Indore (1991)

➤ Personalized Teacher Education Program, Lucknow University, Lucknow (1996)

➤ Comprehensive Teacher Education Program, Gandhi Shikshan Bhavan College of Education, Mumbai University, Mumbai (2000)

➤ Four Year Integrated Program of Teacher Education, Kurekshetra University, Kurekshetra (1955)

➤ Four Year Integrated Program of Teacher Education, RIE, NCERT (1963)

➤ B.Ed. (Educational Technology), AEC Teacher Training College, Pachmadi, MP

FEATURES OF SOME OF THE INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS:

1. Personalized Teacher Education (DAVV, 1991):

Activity based Teacher Education Program (Zer

Lecture Program) originated and institutionalized at the School of Education, DAVV, Indore (1991) was deployed at Lucknow (1996). Some of the features of this Program are:

➤ Choice of Volunteers

➤ Learner Centered

➤ Personalized Classroom Setting

➤ Participatory Approach

➤ No lectures by Teacher Educators (ZLP)

➤ Freedom for what to study, how to study, where to study, and when to study Peer Teaching-Learning-Evaluation.

2. Holistic Teacher Education (CASE, 2008)

Problem solving in higher education through participatory approach (DAVV, 1992):

The Centre for Advanced Studies in Education (CASE), Vadodara has been strengthening Holistic Teacher Education through seminars, research and publications. A Research Study has been conducted on rehabilitation of Street Children through Holistic Approach. Some Research Studies are being conducted on Holistic Science Education Program and Holistic Development through Leisure Time Activities. The holistic teacher education program is quite promising. Some of the features of the program are:

a. Subject Knowledge

b. Inter-disciplinary

c. Environmental Attitude

d. Health development

e. Emotional development

f. Spiritual development

g. Integrated development

3. Problem solving in higher education through participatory approach (DAVV, 1992):

The M.C.Ed. Class (1992), DAVV, Indore was very often given a problem to be solved through a computer program. Number of different programme would emerge from the entire class. Each program was presented by one of the programmers to the rest of the class and rated by all the students on different criteria, namely, compactness of source code, fetch and execute cycle size, response time, memory used, programming discipline level and programme intelligibility. Also, the students developed programme to calculate Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance through 'C' language. They then computed Kendall's coefficient of concordance individual criterion wise and with respect to the comprehensive criteria. There is a significant cognitive development through cognitively

mapping the algorithms and solution to a problem.

4. Development of Creative Writing Ability Amongst Students Through Participatory Approach (CASE, 2010):

a. Recitation of Model Poems by the Teacher in Class situation

b. Appreciation of the poem by the class and identification of the various components of creative composition

c. Composition of a variety of poems by the students individually, and in groups Recitation of the self-composed poems by the classmates and appreciation by rest of the class

d. Participatory approach of creative writing facilitates expression of the latent creative faculties in terms of original production.

5. The Indian Institution of Teacher Education, Gujarat (Bill, 2010):

This is a Bill to establish the Institute of Teacher Education to promote teachers' development of integral personality, wide vision of nationalism and internationalism and to fulfill their role as exemplars, as friends, philosophers and guides, as scientists, psychologists, artists and technologists and above all as ideal communicators who can spread uplifting influence by the processes of awakening, inspiration, and enthusiasm, also to new trends of syntheses of the East and the West and agents of change from old to the new and to confer the status of a University thereon and for matters connected therewith or incidental there to.

RESISTING FACTORS IN INNOVATION:

Although there are so many innovative practices existing in Teacher Education Programme in India, but still there are some resisting factors in our education system which prevents the teacher education institution from being innovative and they are-

1. Lack of Physical facilities and Funds - Majority of colleges suffer from lack of facilities in terms of space, equipment and personnel. Consequently, they have not been able to adopt innovations. For want of these facilities, many creative ideas are shelved.

2. Lack of Diffusion of Innovations among teacher educators - Most of the teacher education institutions is poor and indifferent towards the professional growth of their teacher educators. Many of the teacher educators are ignorant of the new trends in their area of studies due to lack of

diffusion of new ideas among them.

3. Lack of Service - Due to administrative difficulties, teacher educators are not able to try, adopt and maintain innovations in teacher education institution. For any new experimentation, facilities are not usually provided by the administrators.

4. Lack of Support - It is unfortunate that teacher educators have not been able to adopt innovations due to noncooperation of practicing schools. The schools are not always willing to extend their facilities to the teacher educators for trying out new ideas because they do not want any disturbances in their daily routine.

5. Rigid framework - It is found that the rigid system of syllabus framing and theory respectively are responsible for the continuance of the traditional practices in teacher education Programme. The present examination system under a rigid framework is a big stumbling block in the process of innovation.

SUGGESTIONS:

The above observations clearly indicate that teacher education programme at secondary level needs to be examined critically in terms of its innovativeness. Here are some suggestions which can be used to overcome these problems-

➤ Identification of the innovative research could be done if all the Departments of Education Countrywide contribute in this area. They may periodically produce the Research Abstracts of the Studies conducted in their respective Departments, which may be made available on the World Wide Web.

➤ Every Teacher Educator may be given Unique Identification Number. It will facilitate Manpower Planning in Teacher Education.

➤ There should be networking amongst all the Teacher Education Institutions to learn from the innovative practices of each other.

➤ It is imperative to strengthen Vocational Teacher Education in almost all the domains of Vocational Education, such as, agriculture, horticulture, sericulture, servicing of the electric and electronic appliances. Innovative approaches need to be evolved.

➤ Physical facilities and funds should be adequately provided to the institutions by the government, local bodies and organizations.

CONCLUSION:

To meet the challenges of the new millennium,

teacher education in India needs a tremendous change. The teacher educators need intensive training in various aspects related to new innovations. The above stated problems are challenging and strategies to overcome these problems are the need of the hour. Therefore NCTE, SCERT/SIE and university department of education should take immediate action for making education system innovative. There is nothing to get disheartened. Indian Education is a state of flux. Attempts are being made for enhancement of professional competencies of teachers through ICT mediated Constructivist Approach. India is committed to compatible education for all, which is being realized through the various dedicated programs, essentially innovative in nature.

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