

TEACHER EDUCATION THROUGH INNOVATIVE PRACTICE IN EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The teacher training in India was first started in Vedic period. In that period the senior students among the Brahmins were given the chance to teach junior students and thus were trained in teaching. The modern teacher training in India was first started by European missionaries. In the beginning they trained the students in teaching different subjects but later on they also started to develop in the trainees some basic concepts regarding education and teaching. 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. 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. . Innovations in teacher education include IT literacy, interactive teleconferencing etc. NPE (1986) stated "The ex 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 There are some resisting factors in our education system prevents the teachers 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.

The success of educational reforms cannot be achieved without teachers' efforts. Teacher education has enjoyed an increasingly important status in the strategic planning and development of our country. Teacher education, which is in itself a kind of vocational education, should satisfy the needs of teachers' professional progress and career development, and help establish a new system for teacher training and development. Higher Education Institutions, normal universities in particular, should bear the responsibility to reform the mechanism and training patterns of teacher education, promote teachers' professional development, improve the quality of teaching faculty, and construct an integrated teach training system in India. The effectiveness of any educational reform is ultimately achieved through teachers. With teachers' roles and behaviors being increasingly emphasized, the reform and innovation of teacher education has attracted widespread focus throughout the whole world. Teacher education and development has become an essential part in improving the quality of education. Actually it has been widely accepted that innovations of teacher education and teacher development have taken top priority in the circle of education. This paper indicates to the some Innovative practices in Teacher Education, Features of Innovations required in Teacher Education, Problems of Raising the standard of Teacher Education, Preventive Factors and have also given suggestions to overcome those factors.

Keywords: Teacher Education, innovation, Innovative practices, Educational Standards, Preventive Factors, Training.

INTRODUCTION:

The demand of teacher the process to establish teacher training institutions began and along with it began the process to reform the teacher training programmes. The first to suggest reform in this field was Radha Krishnan Commission (1948-49). Problems in education have no fixed answers. No teacher education program can prepare teachers for

all the situations they will encounter. Teachers themselves will make the final decisions from among many alternatives. Such judgments may be good or poor. Although, it is important for teachers to constantly reevaluate their decisions. This can be achieved through collaborative in teacher education. Co-operative learning in teacher education can instill in future teachers the value of

social interactions. The current level of the learning technology development provides opportunities for collaborative engagement, access to information, interaction with content and individual empowerment. collaborative learning is a team process where members support and believe on each other to achieve an agreed upon goal. Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject.

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 lot of the nation. A teacher helps a child in bringing out the hidden capabilities. 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. What are the new dimensions of his [or her] role, and how is the teacher to be trained to fulfill that role.

Innovation 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. No innovation or change can be implemented without teachers' awareness, involvement and commitment. Teachers have to be innovative and their grooming has to start from their training institutions. For having

innovative teacher education, we have to reconstruct our educational system. Reconstruction of educational system started in India from the beginning of independence and to improve teacher education can be traced back to that period. The University Education Commission (1948-49), Indian Education Commission (1964-1966), Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), The Study Group of the Secondary Teachers in India (1964), Indian Association Teacher Educators (1973), National Policy of Education (1986) and National Council for Teacher Education (1998) have all recommended innovations in India in order to meet the present day requirements and to strengthen all aspects of teacher education system.

Concept of Innovative Practices in Teacher Education:

There is a wide variation among countries with regard to what they believe constitutes an innovation, reform or development in the teaching learning process. For example, the use of colored chalk and basic audio-visual materials may be regarded as being an educational innovation in some developing regions, since in other more prosperous countries innovations may refer to the development and use of sophisticated technologies, methods and practices etc. Today's children have grown up with remote controls and they spend more time in computers, internet, playing video games etc. than reading books; even toys are now filled with buttons and blinking lights. In such a condition, it is very important to focus on "How can we educate this New Generation?". To answer this, a supportive environment, one in which they can create their own ideas; both individually and collaboratively, must be provided. **Etymologically**, the word "**Innovation**", is derived from the **Latin word "Innovate"** which means to change something into something new. It is a promotion of new ideas and practices in education and training. There has been seen a horrendous shift in the ways and means of education services over the years. Research and innovations play an important role in improving the quality of teachers and the training imparted to them for all levels of teaching. The purpose of teacher education is to prepare teachers who have professional competencies to lead the nation forward through their manifold roles.

Some Innovative Practices In Teacher Education:

Following are some of the innovative ideas that

need to be focused-

➤ **Team Teaching, Cooperative or collaborative learning process:-** When teacher and students have to work under so many constraints, then the practice of “Team teaching or cooperative or collaborative teaching” is always a good option. Team teaching or cooperative learning process is a team work where members support and believe on each other to achieve an agreed-upon goal. Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject.

➤ **Constructivism and Teacher Education-** The concept of Constructivism has evolved from cognitive psychology. Constructivist paradigm is based on the contributions of Piaget, Vygotsky, Gardner, Dewey, Tolman and many others. Thus, it is a synthesis of many dominant perspectives on learning. It is believed that the key element of constructivist theory is that people learn by Innovative Practices in Teacher Education. Constructivist learning is based on student's active participation in problem-solving and critical thinking regarding a learning activity. Students construct their own knowledge by testing ideas and approaches based on their prior knowledge and experience, applying them to new situations and integrating new knowledge gained with pre-existing intellectual constructs.

➤ **Blended-Learning and Teacher Education -** Blended learning is a term used to describe the way E-learning is being combined with traditional classroom methods and independent study to create a new, hybrid teaching methodology. It represents a much greater change in basic technique than simply adding computers to classrooms, rather it is a fundamental change in the way teachers and students approach the learning experience.

Terms like hybrid or integrative are used widely to describe this form of learning. In 2010, more than 3 million people have benefitted by the use of this kind of learning.

The three components of blended learning:-

- 1 In person classroom activities facilitated by a trained educator.
- 1 Online learning materials after including prerecorded lectures given by the same instructor.
- 1 Structured independent study time guided by the materials in the lectures and skills developed during the classroom experience.

Blended-learning commonly describes learning that combines traditional teaching and learning approaches with information and communication technologies. It is anticipated that blended learning will enhance the student learning experience, at the same time it also requires that the teachers should be trained as online facilitators.

➤ **E-learning and Teacher Education:**

E-Learning or technology in learning has become a buzz in the education industry and today it caters to the needs of modern-day learners. Infusing technologies in classroom learning have added to stimulus and enhanced learner's interaction within the classroom. E-Learning has a vast presence in almost every field. Language teaching is one such field where technology has taken over and improved the ways of learning. Take for example, the English language. Teachers today use different techniques like movie-clippings, advertisements, commentaries, dramatics and more. Not only it makes the session much more interesting than the old book style teaching but also keeps the learner attentive during the class. E-Learning has also changed the perspective of distance learning. The modernization lets the students be equally interactive like someone present physically.

Future or in-service teachers can access learning resources, courses, online communities or training programs at any time that is convenient for them, whether early morning, late night, or on weekends. E-Learning provides new opportunities for educators to work and conduct research together, or to share problems, innovations and lesson plans.

INITIATIVE STEPS OF INNOVATION IN TEACHER EDUCATION SYSTEM:

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

➤ **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.

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

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

➤ To acquire **ICT literacy**, the NCTE has produced a **CD-ROM** entitled '**IT Literacy**'.

➤ **NCTE** has developed self learning modules on '**Human Rights and National Values**' with a view to familiarize entrant teachers with values enshrined in our constitution.

Characteristics of Some of the Innovative Programs:

➤ **Personalized Teacher Education:-** Activity based Teacher Education Program (Zero Lecture Program) originated and institutionalized at the School of Education,) Some of the features of this Program are:

- l Choice of Volunteers
- l Learner Centered
- l Personalized Classroom Setting
- l Participatory Approach
- l Successive Discussions
- l Evaluation- Self, Peer, and Teacher Emergence of Humanistic, Friendly, Confident, Open, Resourceful, Dedicated, Creative, Constructive, Innovative and Wholistic Masters.

➤ **Wholistic Teacher Education (CASE, 2008) Problem solving in higher education through participatory approach:-**The Centre for Advanced Studies in Education (CASE), Vadodara has been strengthening Wholistic Teacher Education through seminars, research and publications. Some Research Studies are being conducted on Wholistic Science Education Program and Wholistic Development through Leisure Time Activities. Some of the features of the program are:

- l Subject Knowledge
- l Inter-disciplinary
- l Environmental Attitude
- l Health development
- l Integrated development

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

- l Recitation of Model Poems by the Teacher in Class situation.
- l 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.
- l Participatory approach of creative writing facilitates expression of the latent creative faculties in terms of original production.

➤ **IGNOU Institute of Professional Competency Advancement of Teachers (IIPCAT,**

2009), IGNOU, India:

Vision & Mission:-

The vision of IIPCAT encompasses improvement in the quality of education by continuously striving for competency advancement of teachers of different disciplines at all stages of education, that is, **Pre-School, Primary, Upper Primary, Secondary, Senior Secondary, and tertiary stages of education.** It shall endeavor to develop itself as an effective vehicle to transform the modality of curriculum transaction in educational institutions so as to improve the quality of education in particular and of human life in general.

The mission of the IIPCAT shall include competency advancement of teachers of all levels and in all aspects of teachers' functions and responsibilities. To accomplish this mission, the IIPCAT shall use multiple strategies, such as, **organization of in-service education, preparation of quality reference material, making arrangements for practical training.**

➤ **Integrated Teacher Education:-** The Integrated Teacher Education Programs offered by the Regional Institutes of Education since many years have self -recognition and accreditation. There is a need to conduct research on the integrated Teacher Education Programs offered by the various institutions. There is also a need to mentor and monitor the **Innovative Teacher Education Programs** in all the regions.

Problems of Teacher Education:

Some of the problems concerning teacher education are discussed below-

➤ **Defects of selection procedure:-** Defects of selection procedure lead to deterioration of the quality of teachers. Better selection method would not only improve the quality of training but also save the personal and social wastage. Some suggestions are mentioned: (a) Candidates should be interviewed (b) Test of General Knowledge should be applied. (c) Test in school subjects. (d) Test of language (e) Test of intelligence should be administered (f) Aptitude; interest and attitude inventory should be administered. (g) A well direct guidance service should be provided.

➤ **Teacher – Student Incompetency:-** The existing training program does not provide adequate opportunities for the student teachers to develop competency because the organizers of teacher's training program are not aware of the existing

problems of the schools. Therefore, there should be a close matching between the work schedule of the teacher in a school and the program adopted for teacher preparation in a training college.

➤ **Problem of Teaching Supervision:-** The supervisory organizations for practice teaching aims at bringing improvement in the instructional activity of the student teachers by using various techniques and practical skills in teaching and help them to develop confidence in facing the classroom situations. It aims at guiding in planning their lessons, learning to organize contents, formulating suitable gestures and developing other related skills. At present the lesson plans are checked superficially and no discussion is made by the subject method specialist.

➤ **Problems of School Internship:-** School Internship is the most important part of this programme but inspire of all kinds of elaborate arrangements regarding practice in teaching, student teachers are non-serious to the task of teaching, deficient in sense of duty irresponsible, aimless, indifferent to children, lacking an innovative measure in teaching which are great obstacles in the development of pedagogical skills.

➤ **Faulty Teaching Method:-** In India teacher educators are averse to experimentation and innovation in the use of teaching methods. Their acquaintance with modern class-room communication devices is negligible.

➤ **Lack of Subject Knowledge:-** The teacher training programme does not emphasize the knowledge of the basic subject. The whole teaching practice remains indifferent with regard to the subject knowledge of the student teacher.

➤ **Deficient in Curriculum of the Teaching Subject:-**Curriculum of teacher education programme in India has been criticized much. Some educationists feel that it does not fully address the need of contemporary Indian Schools and society and it does not contain relevant contents for teachers who are to impart quality education in school.

➤ **Lack of Research Orientation:-** A vast majority of teacher educators have not yet developed research mindedness. Whatever Programme and practices have been adopted in the training institutions, they have been adopted on commonsense basis not on research findings.

➤ **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.

➤ **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.

➤ **Isolation of Teacher's Education Department:-** As has been observed by education commission, the teacher education has become isolated from schools and current development in school education. The schools consider the teacher education department as an alien institution and not a nursery for the professional development of school teacher. These departments only observe the formality of finishing the prescribed number of lessons no caring for the sounders of pedagogy involved in the procedure.

➤ **Poor Academic Background of Student-Teachers:-**Most of candidates do not have the requisite motivation and an academic background for a well deserved entry in the teaching profession.

➤ **Lack of Regulations in Demand and Supply:-** The State Education Department has no data on the basis of which they may work out the desired intake for their institutions. There are considerable lag between the demand and supply of teachers. This has created the problems of unemployment and underemployment.

➤ **Insufficient Financial Grants :-** In most of the states, the teacher education is still being run by the fee collected from student teachers, as the share of state grant is too small.

➤ **Lack of Facilities for Professional Development:-**Most of the programmes are being conducted in a routine and unimaginative manner. Even the association of teacher educators has not contributed anything towards development of a sound professionalization of teacher education in the country.

SUGGESTIONS:

Here are some suggestions for improving the condition of teacher education:

- Teacher education institutions should be put under strict control of this regulatory body (**NCTE**) for the selection of teacher, students and provisions of good infrastructure etc.
- Working of Teacher education institutions should be examined from time to time and strict action should be taken if they fail to come up to expected level.
- **Privatization of teacher education** should be regulated.
- Educational institution should be equipped with facilities for organizing various types of activities such as daily assembly programmes, community living, social work, library organization and other curricular activities, which promote democratic spirit of mutual appreciation and fellow feeling.
- Selection procedure must be improved and interviews, group discussions along with common entrance test and marks should be introduced.
- Teacher educators must be well **qualified** and **experienced with language proficiency**.
- The quality of teacher education programme should be **up graded**. Teacher education programme should be raised to a university level and that the duration of programme should be appropriately enhanced.
- 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**.
- The conventional system of a few **demonstration lessons** given by a few teacher educators at the beginning of the practice teaching may be replaced by display of some video recorded good lessons in each subject delivered by expert teacher educators, teachers and teacher trainees.
- Relevant methods of instruction such as **tutorial, discussion seminar, team teaching and interactive teaching learning** should be adopted.
- More co-curricular activities such as **physical education, social services, tree plantation, and formation of eco club** should be organized.
- Modern technological gadgets like **computer, video, mass media, OHP** should be used at the time of instruction.
- **Counseling and follow up programs** should be initiated and made effective.
- **Correspondence courses in teacher education**

should be provided, with a strict and high screen for admissions and a rigorous manner of assessment.

- **Evaluation Teacher education**, like technical education and higher education must be the responsibility of the central government.
- **Refresher course** should be organized for teacher educators frequently.
- **Teacher pupil ratio** should be ideally 1:8.
- **Internship in teacher education** should be **objective, reliable and valid**.

CONCLUSION:

Innovation is to take of research based knowledge and Education are the two sides of a same coin and their integration within single policy framework is necessary to achieve the culture of innovation which will energize and sustain the knowledge economy. Teacher education in India is at a new stake in view of the new policies laid down and the globalization processes. Indian Teacher education needs to orient itself to the new challenges and enable its pupil to compete level. The pupil who are pursuing teacher education are required to place community and future citizens at a higher place by possessing new skills and attitudes as well as competitive knowledge in the stream of education concerned. All these can be possible through practice of innovative teaching practices in Teacher Education. Therefore, in turn may initiate steps either to follow the existing innovative teaching practices in teacher education of innovative teaching at their respective institutions. To meet the challenges of the new millennium, teacher education in India needs a horrendous 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. Although **NCTE**, **SCERT** and university department of education should take immediate action for making education system innovative. Indian Education is a state of flux. The national vision mission will definitely nurture innovations as evident through the emergence of **National Curriculum for Teacher Education (NCTE, 2009)** and Teacher Education: **Reflections towards Policy Formulation (NCTE, 2009)**.

Even the general streams of Science and Arts have realized the importance of Teacher Education. Attempts are being made for enhancement of professional competencies of teachers through ICT mediated Constructivist Approach. India is committed to compatible education for all.

Now it is mandatory for every institution to accredit by **NAAC** otherwise the affiliation of that institute will be cancelled. **Kothari commission rightly remarks "The destiny of India is being shaped in its classrooms."** Therefore, great efforts were made and still are being made to improve the quality of teacher education.

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