

Quality Assurance in Teacher Education in 21ST Century

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ABSTRACT:

Quality is called contextual as well as multi-dimensional concept. Quality assurance is one of the fundamental issues in teacher education discussions today. The concept of “quality assurance in education” is an enormously important concern for academicians and academia universally, and lately this notion has also firmed in the realm of Teacher Education in India. Teacher education plays vital role in reforming and strengthening the education system of any country. Training of teachers has emerging global trends in education and the overall needs and aspirations of the people in India. This paper presents a theoretical framework of the concept of Quality in Teacher Education by identifying the parameters which are central contributors towards quality of Teacher Education in the 21st century. Education is a lively and active process of human advancement and empowerment. Teacher education has been widely sponsored as the single important element in the economic, social and political and cultural development of developing/ developed society. Quality of teacher education depends basically on a number of factors such as infrastructure, learning environment, curriculum, teaching learning materials (TLM) and teacher’s participation with demand of changing society. Quality improvement in teacher education is a deliberate process of change that leads to enhancement. Discussion on what it is, how it is developed, and its connection to student achievement have become the feature of educational slang in the 21st century. These seek to look at as a means to review how the terms excellence and quality are shaped by policy, identify how educators perceive teaching quality and to review how quality is cultivated in teachers to meet the rapid changes of learner’s attitude.

Key Words: Quality Assurance, Teacher Education

Introduction:

Teachers are the aces of any educational system. It is said that teachers affect eternity; nobody can tell where their influence stops. According to our new National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986/1992, no nation can rise above the level of its teachers. Therefore, the utmost importance of teacher education to produce teachers of high quality. Detailed and in-depth studies undertaken in recent years have shown that the quality of pre-service and in-service teacher education programs in our country is deteriorating and that the professional commitment and overall competence of teachers are declining subsequently. Therefore, every pertinent and possible effort necessarily has to be done to ensure that our teacher education institutions can produce teachers of high quality and caliber. In this concern, conscious initiatives are necessary to influence the quality of teacher education at various levels.

MEANING OF TEACHER EDUCATION:

Teacher education refers to the policies and procedures planned to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the school and classroom. In early times, teachers were often scholars or clergymen who had no formal training in how to teach the subjects of their expertise. In fact, many believed that "teachers were born, not made." It was not until the emergence

of pedagogy, the "art and science of teaching," as an accepted discipline that the training of teachers was considered important. Although there has been continued controversy about whether teaching is a "science" that can be taught or whether one is "born" to be a teacher, it has generally been settled, at least since the nineteenth century, that certain characteristics are needed to qualify a person as a teacher: knowledge of the subject matter to be taught, knowledge of teaching methods, and practical experience in applying both. Most educational programs for teachers today focus upon these points. However, the internal character of the individual is also an important aspect of teaching; whether that is something one is born with or can be taught, and what are the qualities that are needed for the role of teacher, are also a matter of debate.

Meaning of Quality:

Quality is a term very frequently used in every society but very few could ensure it. The term is used to suggest an assurance of satisfactory service on product in the area of both management studies and development studies. It is a significant dimension as following manner:

- 1. Quality is relative and perceptual:** It is universally accepted that quality is not absolute, it is relative. Quality may lead to the branding of the product on service and provide satisfaction to the consumer that he/she is getting the best for price offered. It is also very much an organizational perception. Extending this argument of perception, the domain of educational institutions, what is quality for Stanford may not be accepted as quality for Harvard or Oxford.
- 2. Quality is both process and product:** Product carries the quality manifestation whereas the process provides product. The learner is intrinsic to derive quality education. In the educational institution, it means as much as desire the student's performance (both quantitative and qualitative).
- 3. Fitness to the purpose:** A group of quality scientists have defined quality as "fitness to the purpose". For example, the consumer of the product on service is increasingly becoming conscious of the quality of the same in the market. The supplier of the product or services has a commitment to satisfy the consumer with product on services of the best quality.
- 4. Excellence:** Defining education quality as excellence means delivery of every improving value students and stockholders contributing to improved education quality. Education quality is the goodness or excellence of education delivery. It is both absolute and universally recognizable, a mark of uncompromising standard and high achievement (Garvin 1988). The highest degree of expertise or most perfect of goodness is quality.
- 5. Quality education is value:** One cannot define quality without considering price value is not assessment by quantity but by quality and judgement. So, for increasing value the planning and designing should be qualitative.
- 6. Quality education is students and stockholders' satisfaction:** It is defined as student and stakeholder satisfaction. This definition is derived from Juran's (1995) definition of quality. "Quality is customer satisfaction" in higher education students and stockholders are regarded as the customer. They are key beneficiaries of educational service.

Parameters of quality

1. Basic information
2. Learning environment
3. Curriculum and T.L.M

4. Teachers' participation with demands of changing society
5. Management and curriculum support
6. Class room processer and practices, opportunities of time
7. High exception
8. Develop a quality culture in the institution
9. Teacher's accountability
10. Positive reinforcement

Multiple role of Teacher in the present context

The teacher has to play a multidimensional role to attain the desired goals and objectives through his optimistic frame of mind to implement in the classroom. The world conference of E.F.A. (Jomtin, Thiland 1990) and world forum on E.F.A. (Dankar 2000) acknowledged that the new functions of schools call for teacher with a variety of skills. A teacher is no longer envisaged as someone who has the ability and capacity to organize. Quality assurance in teacher education is necessary to preface teachers who one 'Professional'. Teacher in India today is expected to be a:

1. Facilitation of Learning and classroom manager
2. Mobiliser and manager of resources
3. Mention and counsellor of pupils

QUALITY & EXCELLENCY IN TEACHING:

Teacher's quality and the strength of educator's leadership are recognized as the greatest determining elements of educational success. Quality teaching has an assessable impact on student outcomes. The teaching profession in India has much to rejoice. Our teachers and academic leaders are having a reflective impact on our society.

Teacher quality affects all stages of the teaching 'lifecycle', from attraction into the profession to ongoing development and retention in their own schools. To improve equity in educational outcomes, quality teachers must also work in schools where they are required most including, remote and disadvantaged schools.

Improving teacher and school leader quality requires action to:

1. Attract the 'best and brightest' entrants to teaching
2. Train our future teachers through world-class pre-service education
3. Place quality teachers and school leaders in schools where they are needed most
4. Develop teachers' skills and knowledge through ongoing professional learning; and
5. Retain quality teachers and school leaders in our schools

Quality education in developing countries has become a topic of intense interest, primarily because of countries' efforts to maintain quality or reverse the deterioration of quality in the context of quantitative expansion of educational provision. Many countries are concurrently executing reforms based on more active approaches to teaching and learning, further challenging education systems and, especially, teachers.

Agencies of Quality Assurance:

Various agencies are involved for assuring quality in teacher education, the significant ones are as follows: -

National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE):

The NCTE became a statutory body by an act of Parliament in 1993. The main objectives of the NCTE is to accomplish strategic and coordinated development of the teacher education system throughout the country. It is also involved in the regulations and proper maintenance of norms and standards in the teacher education system. NCTE has taken number of necessary actions for raising the standard and quality of teacher education system. It has formulated norms and standards for twelve teacher education courses in all at pre-primary, primary, secondary, senior secondary, physical and distance education courses. It is a mandatory for the existing and new institutions to seek NCTE recognition after fulfilling the NCTE norms. Further these recognized institutions have to submit the Performance Appraisal Report (PAR) annually. On the basis of the PAR, actions are taken to withdraw the recognition in case of violation of norms and standards. In 2002, the Council also developed “Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education” for upgrading the quality of teacher education programs at per with international standards. NCTE being aware of the importance of information and Communication Technology (ICT). Has made ICT literacy a compulsory part of B. Ed course. NCTE has been engaging in organizing number of workshops for teacher educators throughout the country to familiarize them with basics of computer usage. In addition, B.Ed. colleges were provided with CD-ROM’s to teach IT literacy.

In order to inculcate a sense of value judgment, value commitment and value transmission among the teachers, NCTE has published number of print material; and CD-ROM as well as put these publications on its website. Some of the significant publications are: Human Rights and National Values; Gandhi on Education; Sri Aurobindo on Education; Role and Responsibility of Teachers in Building Modern India; and Education for Character Development.

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC):

All over the world, since the 1980s the expansion of the system of higher education was involved with mounting criticism about the quality of education. As a result of this, establishment of quality assurance agencies has become a common phenomenon worldwide. India joined this trend in 1994 by establishing NAAC on the recommendation of NPE’ 86. The primary objectives of formation of NAAC is to assess and accredit institutions of liberal arts, science and other disciplines in order to help these institutions to work uninterruptedly to improve the quality of education, through self-evaluation of performance of an institution and/or its units based on self-study and peer review through defined criteria. Accreditation is the certification given by NAAC, which is valid for a period of five years. the process of assessment followed by NAAC, is in accordance with the globally accepted practice with certain modification to suit the Indian context. For quality assurance of teacher education institutions, the NAAC and the NCTE have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for executing the process of assessment and accreditations of all teacher education institutions coming under the provision of the NCTE. The three-stage process for assessment and Accreditations is as follows:

Preparation of the Self-Appraisal Report by the teacher education institution for submissions to NAAC. Validation of the Self-Appraisal Report by peers visiting the institution and the final decision of NAAC based on the Self-Appraisal Report and the recommendations of the team of peers.

Universities:

The university is responsible for providing affiliation to the teacher education institutions situated in its jurisdiction. It conducts combined entrance tests and grants admissions to students against non-management

seats to these teacher education institutions. It also designs curriculum, coordinates for quality teaching, and conducts examination. It also prescribes norms for certification of faculties. It is also engaged in capacity building through faculty development programme and research.

Teacher Education Institutions:

Teacher education institutions create adequate infrastructure for providing quality teacher education and grants admission against management seats. It organizes teaching as per prescribed curriculum of the affiliating university. It is also engaged in appointing faculties and overall management of the institution. It also coordinates with the affiliating university, NCTE and the State Govt. in all matters regarding teacher education.

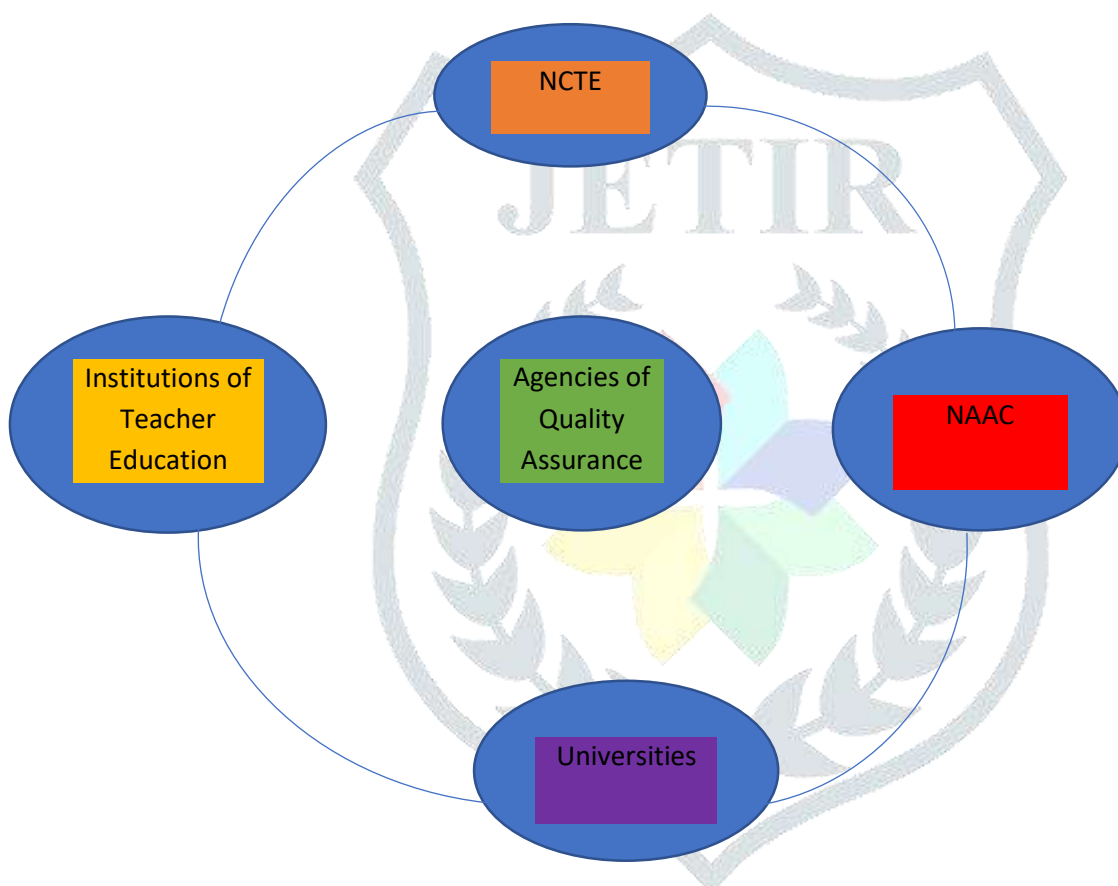


Fig: Agencies of Quality Assurance

Few Measures for Improving Quality of Teacher Education:

Quality of an institution or a course is generally considered on the basis of placement of its products. Various factors that affect quality are: finance, sincerity of faculty and students and management, skills of management, skills of teaching of faculty members, and quality of brain of students. The main indicator of the quality of teacher education can be visualized in terms of its products the learners' achievement both in scholastic and co-scholastic areas i.e. the performance in various subjects of study and habits, attitudes, values and life skills necessary for becoming a good citizen. The need of teacher man power planning has resulted

in mushrooming growth of teacher education throughout the country. The following measures may be helpful for improving quality of teacher education:

1. To provide professional development training for practicing in service teachers by updating their knowledge and skills.
2. Usefulness of the new initiatives of curricular reforms.
3. Intensive use of ICT for school education and also participation of the community
4. To implement innovative teaching strategies and techniques in teacher education and improving educational administration practices.
5. To develop strategies to enhance professional competency in teacher education.
6. To provide expert advice to local schools for the wholesome development.
7. To analyze the future of teacher education institutions.
8. To provide infrastructure facility in teacher education.
9. Spreading sense of ethical values in teacher education
10. Modern and latest communication and knowledge management for quality teacher education.

Conclusion:

Quality in Teacher Education is not only a predominant but also a recognized notion which is described minutely in terms of necessary characteristics of the activities undertaken, individuals involved, and infrastructure required. Confronted with declining standards, primarily due to expansion of higher education system, the question of quality become critical. Teacher education system is not the exception of it. For the higher education scenario in the local context, quality is achievable if the factors influencing quality are identified and then deliberately deploying these, will allow quality to be induced in the education system in our country.

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