

# QUALITY CONCERNS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Mrs. Amrita Pandey

Asst. Professor

Bachelors in Education

Hadi Rani Teachers Training College, Udaipur, India

**Abstract:** Effective curriculum frameworks for initial teacher education aimed at developing professionalism in teachers so as to have their base in well-defined standards for various categories of school-teachers. A number of countries have developed standards for various levels of school-teachers, which provide the basis for the formulation of the courses of studies. In India, development of teacher education curriculum framework is mostly an academic exercise due to the absence of such notified standard for school-teachers. Two important documents that influenced the process of teacher curriculum reform in the country are: the report of the Education Commission (1964-66), and the National Policy on Education 1986. All subsequent efforts to modify teacher education curriculum to address the national aspirations for education have tried to integrate and incorporate various recommendations of these two documents. Education of teachers in the country has been considered crucial, not only for ensuring greater professionalism in teachers but also for facilitating school improvement and effectiveness. The teacher education curriculum in India has been revised in 1978, 1988, 1998 and 2009 to reflect and incorporate the cultural, linguistic and geographical diversities of the country and keep abreast with the changing knowledge structure of the world as the result of sociopolitical, economic upheavals, and technological and communication advancements. This paper makes a systematic analysis of the teacher education curriculum vis-à-vis presenting the constitutional goals pertaining teacher education and proclaiming the fostering drawbacks in the existing educational curriculum.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The status of teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society. In my childhood days in folklores I used to hear "No people can rise above the level of its teachers". Also teachers used to be tantamount to god that's why hymns and mantras were composed to honour gurus in ancient times. In our pious land people never demurred to choose teacher even if he was asked to choose between god and teacher. This was because teachers were replete with knowledge, professionalism, and ingenuity and last but not the least their curriculum was impeccable, objective-oriented and visionary. So to meliorate, maintain and make teachers to reach the summit of their capabilities we have to analyse, reassess, and rejuvenate with each neo-curriculum like a cascading mechanism.

Post independence India saw several commission and education policy/program and committees for raising the level of teacher education of which the major commission was Kothari Commission, Yashpal committee, Chattopadhyay committee, Acharya Ramamamuthy committee etc.

In National Policy on Education (NPE)-1968 for the first time "teacher education" came into limelight and was given a primordial shape as per the fast changing social, political and economical milieu. In NPE-1986/92 again "quality of teacher education" was given some shape in its botched state. Then under NCTE Act 1993 NCTE was formulated and then in 2009, National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education came into existence to propose changes and updates to NCTE. This framework was an assiduous endeavour of NCTE to incite parties and stakeholders to give their views on qualitative and quantitative improvements that could be achieved in educating teachers at school, graduate and higher levels.

## **Constitutional goals of Teacher education**

Constitution of India solemnly resolves "to constitute India into a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic republic and secure to all its citizens: justice-social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, faith, belief and worship; equality of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the integrity of the nation." These are the main goals, which the nation expects to be realised through education. Teacher preparation must not lose sight of this basic thrust so as to empower

teachers to inculcate the same among the students. In order to reinforce faith in democratic socialism, secularism, justice, liberty, freedom etc. the role of education needs to be understood in its true perspective. Democracy is a process of building consensus among the citizens on matters of common concern. It expects high morality from them, protects the interest and preserves their uniqueness, dignity and individuality. Quality of democracy depends on its citizens willing to discharge their responsibilities towards the self, the family, the community, the nation and humanity at large. Democracy is a way of life and its values need to be imbibed through education and practised in the day-to-day life. Democratic socialism attempts to achieve a synthesis between individual freedom and social compulsion and combines liberty with responsibility and authority with accountability. The Indian situation demands citizens capable of making conscious and purposive efforts directed towards social cohesion and living together harmoniously.

Indian Society is plural and heterogeneous with an underlying current of unity. The imposition of a homogeneous and uniform curriculum of teacher education may prove counter productive under this situation. Except for identifying certain basics and essentials, regional autonomy must be exercised for developing region/culture specific curriculum of teacher education. Indian reality demands that plurality should be used for strengthening national solidarity and social cohesion.

The Indian state is secular. The Indian society, however, is religious. To resolve this dichotomy between the state and polity, the principle of equal respect for all the religions\* has been accepted. This is the essence of Indian secularism. The teachers themselves have to internalise the imperatives of secularism in national context and interpret the same effectively to the learners. That alone would develop the right attitudes among all citizens irrespective of their own backgrounds. In India religion is also the source of value and morality. The teachers have to develop values and morality in a different context. Teacher education has to respond to this reality. Justice, liberty, equality of status and of opportunity and promoting fraternity constitute another set of inter-related goals. Justice protects the rights of the weak and ensures impartiality. To ensure justice and fulfil the constitutional commitments in this regard, certain positive and legal provisions have been made by the state. Special measures such as reservation in educational institutions, financial support, scholarships, hostel facilities, etc. have been extended to the under-privileged groups like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes etc. It implies change in attitudes and values through education, in which the role of teachers needs to be stressed. Liberty of thought, expression, faith, belief and worship is another constitutional goal which education is expected to help realise. Indian Constitution ensures equality of status and opportunity to all its citizens. The objective is to minimise social and economic disparities, inequality of power and life chances by positive discrimination in favour of the weak. The education of teachers should equip them with the competencies needed to deal with discrimination, disparities and inequalities. Fraternity stands for acceptance of universal brotherhood, respect for human personality and feeling of oneness irrespective of linguistic, racial, cultural and religious diversities.

### **Curriculum Frameworks**

In the year 1978 1<sup>st</sup> Curriculum Framework was framed which laid emphasis on skill development but it lacked will and gumption. 1988 Curriculum Framework focussed on revitalisation and modernisation of Pre-service Teacher Education. It suggested 3 major components of teacher education, namely:

- (a) Foundation Courses
- (b) Stage relevant specialisation
- (c) Field-work or practicum

In the year 1998 curriculum framework for quality teacher education was mooted. It sought the need for creating and ensuring autonomy to institutions, organisations and bodies involved in curriculum development for teacher education.

It also stressed upon use of information technology and emerging communication system in imparting education. Transaction strategies were also devised for exploiting its tremendous scope in refinement of teacher education.

### **Curriculum Dimensions**

The major efforts in teacher education curriculum are articulated in terms of the following:

- (a) Conceptual considerations: It revolves around field relevance comprehensiveness, and feasibility in implementation.
- (b) Curriculum framework: Its development is gradual and unremitting and it focuses on revitalisation, modernisation, enhanced efficiency, and other quantitative and qualitative aspects of teacher education.
- (c) Modes of transaction: It can be face-to-face mode, distance mode or through correspondence courses.
- (d) Practice Component: It encompasses operational and live context for understanding theoretical concepts on field. It is very important to furnish their pedagogic technique and spirit.
- (e) Evaluation Concept: It includes evaluation techniques to assess one capability and skill..
- (f) Innovative Efforts: It signifies the ingenuous approach towards making teacher education a more renowned, revered and productive profession.

### **A Scrutiny:**

During the last six decades after independence teacher education has come a long way from its initial bleak stature to an identity of complex network of institutions and program with unmistakable relevance. In the context of evolving scenario the cardinal points of concerns of teacher education have pertained to (a) access (b) quality (c) generation of appropriate knowledge buttress for trainee teachers as well serving teachers (d) enhancing responsiveness

**Access.** To increase access to a large multitude following multi-pronged action needs careful deliberation and implementation:

- (a) Expansion of sterling quality preservice teacher education
- (b) Opening of supplementary channels for diminishing the backlog of untrained teachers.
- (c) Stabilisation and expansion of in-service teacher education.

**Quality.** The concern for quality in teacher education surfaced quite vehemently with surge of schools and radical changes in our educational infrastructures. This was consequent to tremendous expansion not only in terms of the number program, institutions, personnel and clientele, but also in the knowledge base that developed around it and its aspects. The heterogeneity of background, ability, motivational level, brought into limelight the need for effective mechanisms for ensuring quality in the implementation of teacher education program. Enhancing quality is a necessity because teachers contribute to the wringer of overall societal and national development. To improve it we need:

- (a) Composite conceptualisation.
- (b) Program-specific and stage specific study
- (c) Integration of latest technological advancement with teaching techniques
- (d) Increasing the level of motivation amongst trainee teachers as well as serving teachers
- (e) Giving a materialistic as well as philosophical touch to our existing system.
- (f) Concentration on personality development of teachers.

**Knowledge-Base.** The endeavours for generating a knowledge base for teacher education must go on continuously. Continuous research, revision at micro and macro level has made its knowledge base more varied in terms of perspectives and other considerations like field relevance and teacher's role.

**Enhancing Responsiveness.** Successful attempts, scrutiny, concerted efforts and research have been made to include certain components of teacher education which should enhance their responsiveness to field needs. Addition of recent programs like Satellite instructional television, computer assisted learning and teaching, orientation programs etc, verily indicates striving towards response wherever it appears necessary and feasible to actualise the teacher education component in various development processes.

## **DRAWBACKS FOSTERING IN THE EXISTING CURRICULUM**

The major drawbacks that become supernatant on perusal of existing plight and practical aspects of present day curriculum are put forth for consideration. These are:

- (a) B.Ed courses are just pecuniary way of adding surplus funds to universities and affiliated institutions conducting it.
- (b) There is no “**omnibus technology**” of teaching because of diverse objectives of state governments and institutions.
- (c) Practice teaching and also at schools techniques employed and resources procured enhances only cosmetic value rather than provide technical basis for the incumbent to recognise and act upon e.g. in place of installing cameras in every classroom management can give laptops to teachers which will improve the quality of education with certitude.
- (d) Less emphasis on objectives, standardisation, and fair assessment.
- (e) Evaluation is still quantitative rather than qualitative and is still mostly theory oriented.
- (f) Teaching profession still doesn't attracts creative and intellectual minds
- (g) Assessment methodology has got many loopholes resulting in less capable students getting good marks which results in the de-motivation of capable teachers and trainees.
- (h) Institutional isolation still persists resulting in the stalemate for exchange of ideas, which could otherwise lead to refinement with the influx of new and efficient ideas.
- (i) Present day teacher education curriculum doesn't lay emphasis on personality development of trainee teachers.
- (j) Teacher education still has no room for the development of administrative, technical and productive skills in teachers.
- (k) Less amalgamation of advanced technology with modes of imparting education e.g. no Internet facilities at institutions still non-existent in several institutions.

## **CONCLUSION**

To conclude, any effective teacher education curriculum calls for systematic task analysis of teachers at various levels and inclusion of relevant contents, which alone can infuse confidence among the prospective teachers to negotiate the school curriculum in classroom. The present teacher education programme is inadequate to meet the challenges of diverse Indian socio-cultural contexts and the paradigm shift envisaged in the NCF 2005. The pedagogic reform from this perspective need to invest on building on teachers capacity to act as autonomous reflective groups of professionals who are sensitive to their social mandate and to the professional ethics and to the needs of heterogeneous groups of learners. The drawbacks in National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009) that was brought forward, if effaced out completely then it can translate the vision into reality and prepare a humanistic and reflective teacher that has the potential to develop more professional teachers and improve the quality of education. To conclude, professionalism needs to be instilled in each and every phase of teacher preparation starting from conceptualisation to evaluation and appraisal to prepare professionals and improve the quality of education.