

Problems of Elementary Teacher-Education in Nagaland

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Abstract

District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) plays a vital role in facilitating elementary teachers in Nagaland state. It started with an aim to equip teachers with the latest development in teaching profession. The institute has been delivering immense contribution towards the development of teachers. The institutes also face hurdles in the smooth functioning of the same. The present study tries to bring out various problems which hamper the growth of elementary teacher-education in the state. Opinions of principals, teacher-educators and teacher-trainees are considered for the study apart from secondary sources. The study highlights various problems ranging from teacher related to syllabus, infrastructure, administration, etc. Lack of sincerity among teachers; irregularity among the teachers; lack of financial assistance; and inadequate infrastructure are some of the prominent problems among the many problems derived from the study.

Key Words: *Elementary teacher-education, DIETs, teacher-educators, teacher-trainees*

Introduction

Nagaland, the land with rich cultural traditions, folklores, legends and customs is one of the Northeast States of India. Bounded by Assam in the West, Myanmar (Burma) on the East, Arunachal Pradesh and part of Assam on the North and Manipur in the South is made up of beautiful mountainous landscape. As per 2011 census, the population of the state is 19, 78,502. The state consists of sixteen major tribes residing in eleven districts. Each tribe is characterized by distinct customs, language and dress.

Western system of education in Naga Hills dates back to 1978 with the establishment of first formal school by Mrs. Mead Clark in Molungyimsen village. There was a rapid enrolment and education in the state has spread far and wide. Elementary teacher-education in Nagaland started as a training centre at Chiechama in 1955. It was known as Junior Teacher Training Institute (JTTI), funded by Hindustani Talmi Sangh. Later, the JTTI, Chiechama, was formally upgraded to that of the DIET (District Institute of Education and Training) in 1990 becoming the first DIET in the State. At present, there are altogether 10 (Ten) elementary teacher-education institution in Nagaland, out of which 8 (Eight) DIETs are under 100 percent Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) and 2 (Two) are private aided. The importance of DIETs in the country was envisaged in National Policy on Education 1986. It caters the two-year Pre-Service Teacher-Education (PSTE) for prospective teachers and a six-month In-Service Teacher-Education for in-service teachers in the state.

Menon (1993) identified several problems in elementary teacher training and suggested solutions for improving the situation of Teacher-Education in Kerala. NCTE's (2000) study pointed out many of the shortcomings in the functioning of teacher-education in Kerala like lack of physical facilities, lack of modern laboratory equipments, non-utilization of available facilities, insufficient staff etc. Unver, Gulsen Connecting (2014) stated in his study that teachers have many problems transferring theoretical knowledge into practice. The situation in the state nonetheless is no different from the other states. New and dynamic methods of instruction are needed; input in terms of physical facilities, quality student-teachers, qualified and competent faculty, relevant curriculum, functioning of the institution and research work etc needs to be implemented. The present study tries to find out the problems faced by the principals, teacher-educators and student-trainees in the state.

Method

The present study was designed on the descriptive survey method where questionnaires and interviews were prepared for the Principals, Teachers and Teacher-Trainees. Besides that, relevant official records, statistical data, reports and journals and other related literature were studied and consulted. The study was conducted on 10 (Ten) Principals, 127 (One hundred and twenty-seven) teacher educators and 242 (two hundred and forty-two) teacher-trainees from both Government and Private aided elementary teacher education institute of Nagaland.

Findings related to Problems faced by Principal, Teacher-Educators and Teachers Trainees in DIETs Institution

1. Teacher related

The present study found out that 40% of teaching faculties were found to be irregular as per the information given by the principals. It was also found that about 30% of teacher educators lack commitment and sincerity towards teaching profession. Due to constant change or transfer of Teacher-Educators especially in Government aided institutions, the Principals revealed that it create problems towards smooth functioning of the DIET. 20% of the teaching faculties were also found keeping substitution or replacement.

Most of the trainees (71.07%) viewed that some teacher lacks in mastery of the subject content. There was also lack of understanding the needs of trainees as viewed by some trainees (i.e. 23.97%). 40.90% of the teacher trainees felt that, there were contradictory feedback among teacher educators which creates confusion among the trainees. Further, 42.98% viewed that the teaching method were ineffective.

2. Teaching related

Most of teacher-educators opined (63.78%) about non-availability of required, sufficient and up dated text books, reference materials etc in the library. 62.20% of the teacher-educators felt that they lack opportunity to update and equip with the latest developments in the subject matter. 61.41% revealed there weren't latest audio visual aids / TLM in most of the institutes. 44% viewed that there was not enough orientation programs on evaluation. 42.52% complained that there were not sufficient funds to conduct field work, practicum, study tour. 37.80% opined that teaching methods, techniques and skills need to be updated with the help of experts.

Cent Percent of the teacher trainees viewed that teaching program like, micro, macro and block teaching were very expensive, time consuming and tiring. They also opined that after practicing in simulated situation (micro and block teaching), it becomes difficult to manage in real class room situation. There was a problem for time management, class management, content mastery, and preparation of teaching aids. Most of the trainees (72.31%) face transportation problem in rural areas during practice teaching. 71.48% viewed that no. of days allotted for practice teaching was lengthy. Trainees felt overburdened. 40.08% opined that there weren't adequate facilities in the practicing schools. About

23.55% said that critical observation by the supervisors and giving negative feedbacks during teaching sessions discourages trainees in preparing for the next lesson.

3. Teacher-Trainees related

60% of the principal opined that teacher trainees have poor attendance during their training program. 60% of them also feels teacher trainees performed poorly in their academics, practice teaching programs etc.; and 50% of them due to non-maintenance of study habit, insincerity, poor discipline etc.

52.75% of the teacher educators opined that teacher trainee's lacks sincerity and commitment, 44.09% were less active in co-curricular activities; and 1.57% viewed that there was less participation in co-curricular activities, lack of capacity building programs and exposures for the trainees.

4. Infrastructure

Majority of Principals (70%) viewed that immediate need for proper toilet for trainees was required and 50% opined that there were no proper fencing/ wall/ gate in the college campus and also 30% revealed that basic requirements like furniture, proper black/ white boards etc. were not available. 20% of them view that there is shortage of class rooms for practical's.

Majority (80.31%) of the teacher educators viewed lack of infrastructure facility- Library, Science Lab, ICT lab. About 77.16% gave their view about lack of transport facility. 1.57% prefers to give priority to the work program plan. 67.72% opined the need for Hostel facility for both boys and girls and staff quarter for teachers.

5. Syllabus

Majority (60%) of the principals were of the view that syllabus has to be reviewed/ revised after certain period and also 50% opines that syllabus was too vast with limited number of days for theory papers.

Majority (62.20%) of the teacher educators viewed that, there was no required study materials and references in the library. 6.30% opined there was overlapping of topics and also revealed that syllabus need to be more practical oriented towards the profession. 3.15% viewed that overloading of syllabus curb the joy of learning.

6. Evaluation related

The teacher educators revealed that about 59.84% lack orientation or training program on evaluation. 41.73% opined the need to give more importance on TLM. Majority (77.16%) viewed that systematic evaluation procedure needs to be followed so that there is no biasness in all the papers. 37.80% opined the shortage of time allotment for observation to assess in a fair ways or means. 48.81% put forward that there was lack of acknowledgement towards evaluation duty of the Teacher-Educators in the form of remunerations and honorarium.

7. Management and Administration

Most of the Principals (60%) revealed there were no academic advisory board, 40% viewed there was lack of inspection from higher authority and 20% revealed student welfare fund were not provided. It was found out that 60% of them complained about lack of financial support/ grant in aids from other sources, and 40% opined that they face problem in maintaining office due to lack/ shortages of fund.

65.70% of teacher educators opined about weak administration (i.e. Attendance were not checked). Majority (81.81%) viewed the lack of financial assistance. About 71.07% said no inspections were conducted. 23.14% viewed on the failure of the Management in providing the basic need of the institute.

8. Non-Teaching Staff

60% of the principals complained that non-teaching staffs were absent from the duty for many days. 80% felt that they lack sincerity and discipline towards their duty. 40% found out that some were appointed without required qualifications/ training course; thus, their performance are found to be poor.

Discussion

The present study aims towards finding out the problem faced by the principals, teacher educators and teacher trainees on the effectiveness of school organizational climate and teaching competency of teacher. The study found out that irregularity and lack of mastery in the subject-matter among the teacher educators was a serious concern for the teacher learners. The problem could be due to rampage political appointment and proxy teacher practice. Most of the teachers felt that the infrastructure is inadequate. This hampers the growth of the teacher education in the state. The study undertaken by NCTE (2001) on Teacher-Education in Andhra Pradesh highlighted the present status, its historical growth, the organizational set up, roles and functions of the institutions. It also studied the strength and weaknesses, problems and issues pertaining to academic, financial and professional aspects. The findings of the study correlates with the present study in respect to inadequate physical facilities, insufficient teachers, insufficient budget allocation, lack of academic advisory board, low status of mode of inspection, less participation of teachers in decision making and need for financial support for trainees were some of the poor status of DIETs.

Many teachers felt that they are not aware of the evaluation process for lack of opportunity to learn the same. (Sharma, 1982) on "Progress and Problems of Teacher-Education in India", examine the growth pattern of Teacher-Education in India, and identify the problems of teacher-education in the country found out that methods of teaching and evaluation being used in the training institute were traditional. There was evidence of irregular syllabus updating and defective evaluation process from the present study as pointed out by teacher-educators. Teacher-educators plead for proper training on evaluation methods and systematic planning.

Most of the principals observe poor sanitation system in the DIETs institution. Lack of hostel facilities for far-flung teacher-trainees and transport system creates inconveniences while practice teaching. Teachers also felt that weak administration leads to irregularity and punctuality of both teacher educators and teacher trainees. Teachers felt that many students have poor attendance record and lack sincerity in their training. The study also highlights the issue of incompetent non-teaching staffs and prolonged absenteeism.

Recommendations

Teacher-educators recommend that proper infrastructural facilities should be provided in the institute. Teaching learning materials should be made available to trainees so as to facilitate proper learning. Seminars, workshop, capacity building program, orientation program etc. should be organized for both teacher and students by the concern authority. Separate teacher has to be appointed for life skill education. Encourage English speaking so as to curtail the problems relating to language skills. Curriculum should be revised after every three years to ensure that it benefits the needs of the society. Teacher educators who have specializations in specific pedagogy should be allowed to teach concern subject at the primary level in order to improve the quality of education. Untrained teachers should be given proper information and motivation before undergoing teacher training programme.

Most of the College environments were not conducive for conducting training. Government should take some measure towards further improvement and development. Apart from teaching and conducting activities, teacher-educators should be encouraged to conduct research works which will benefit the institution, society and education system especially teacher education. Measures should be taken to meet the professional demands such as appraisal, incentive and reward to encourage and motivate the teachers. The concern authority should conduct regular checking or inspection on proxy appointment, substitution and replacement. Guidance and counseling services should be made available in the institute. More importance should to be given on Life skill education and preparation of TLM. All the Elementary Teacher-Education institutes should have special provision for learner with special needs. There is a need for establishing more DIETs in every districts of Nagaland.

Conclusions

District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) plays a vital role in empowering the elementary teachers in the state. It has evolved into a powerhouse in facilitating teachers with different skills of teaching. The study has put forth various problems hampering the progress of teacher education. This very understanding could be used to eliminate the malpractices and in return inculcate systematic procedures for smooth functioning of the DIETs institution. Innovations and creativity in educational field should not be left alone to few teaching community. There should be cordial coordination from every section of the society. To counter issues in the society, education can only open doors for solution. In the search for solution, creating a space for teacher to be more resourceful and knowledgeable will enriched the students immensely. Teaching then, will be more meaningful and fruitful. This could be attained only when everyone contributes and support to refine the education system. Teacher-education should not be reduced to a mere process of acquiring a degree but professionals who are specialists.

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