

# Quality Assurance and Excellence in Teacher Education: Issues and Challenges

Dr. Sheeba Sardar Ali

Assistant Professor, Majmaah University, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**Abstract** - Education is a fundamental right of each human being. In the constitution of the Republic of India it was envisaged that the State would provide, within 10 years from its commencement, free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 years. Recently, by an act of constitutional amendment, the Parliament has made universal elementary education compulsory. Many countries of the world have gone a step beyond and made ten years of general education compulsory. In our country there are 300 million children in the school age group. The challenge now is to provide educational access for universal elementary education to 200 million children and to follow it by universal secondary education. Quality and excellence in the education sector is one of the major initiatives of the Government of India in its plans. To achieve the outcome of enhanced quality at all levels of education, Govt. of India has been focusing its attention on quality and excellence in higher education and teacher education. Teacher quality has produced voluminous studies that line many a research library. Discussion on what it is, how it is developed, and its connection to student achievement have become the feature of educational slang in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These seek to look at teacher quality in a way in which it brings: 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. Within this scope, this article provides an overview of teacher education and evaluation in India and lastly we discuss about issues and challenges in teacher education.

**Keywords:** Quality, Excellence, Teacher, Education, Learning Domains, Challenges.

**Objectives of the study:**

- To study the different aspects of teachers education program.
- To know the methodology adopted for such developmental programs by the society.
- To study the educational implications of both society and parents in developing quality-based teacher training institutions.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The teacher education system in the country is extremely vast and diverse, covering over 2500 institutions at different levels of elementary, secondary and post-graduate programs with a total intake of over 1.9 Lakhs. The system is managed by several agencies like Government departments, Universities and other autonomous establishments specifically created for the purpose.

The very fact that about 4.5 million teachers are employed in the schools in the country shows the enormity of the system. The momentous developments and rapid advances in the field of education and training of teachers and the revolutionary changes in the modes of imparting and receiving instructions pose multitudes of challenges for the teacher educators and institutions. Resistance to move with time and technology from various quarters and the lack of systematic awareness of the national and global challenges have created a lot of imbalance on facilities, standards and quality of teacher education institutions, just as in any other sectors of education. It is in this background that the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) was established as a statutory body under the provision of the NCTE Act 1993 in 1995 with the main objectives of achieving planned and co-ordinated development of the teacher education system throughout the country, for the regulation and proper maintenance of norms and standards in the teacher education system and for matters connected there with the Council is concerned with adherence by the institutions to the norms and standards stipulated by it. The NCTE Act also provides for setting up suitable performance appraisal systems, norms and mechanisms for enforcing accountability on recognized institutions. The mandate given to NCTE is very broad and covers the whole gamut of teacher education programs including research and training of persons for equipping them to teach at preprimary, primary, secondary and senior secondary stages in schools and non-quality formal-education, part-time education, adult education and distance education courses. In line with the provisions in the Act and considering the international trends in achieving quality and excellence in Teacher Education, the NCTE with the help of eminent educationists and teacher

educators has recently evolved norms and procedures for accreditation of teacher education institutions.

## II. MEANING OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Teacher education refers to the policies and procedures designed 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 debate about whether teaching is a "science" that can be taught or whether one is "born" to be a teacher, it has generally been agreed, 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.

### 2.1 Some Quality Issues in Teacher Education

Teachers are the kingpins of any educational system. It is said that teachers affect eternity; nobody can tell where their influence stops. Our new National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986/1992 says that no nation can rise above the level of its teachers. Therefore, teacher education to produce teachers of high quality is of utmost importance. 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 leave much to be desired. Therefore, everything necessary has to be done to ensure that our teacher education institutions produce teachers of high quality and calibre. Conscious initiatives are necessary to influence the quality of teacher education at various levels.

## III. SUBJECT-SPECIFIC TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Quality in pedagogy largely depends on the professional competence of teachers. Competence here includes academic qualifications, pedagogical skills and commitment. In the years to come, teacher education programs may have to be

more and more subject-specific. The teacher education institutions may have to offer more specific programs separately to prepare teachers in the areas of science, social science, languages, physical education, and vocational streams. Such subject-specific courses in teacher education will provide greater scope and appropriate opportunities to delineate and discern suitable theoretical inputs and conceptualization in relation to practices in education. They will facilitate the process of bringing theory and practice together.

- Imbalances in Teacher Education
- Education is Human Values
- Enriching pedagogical inputs
- Co-ordination of in-service and pre-service teacher education program
- Pre-school teacher education

### 3.1 NCTE Initiatives

*New Methods and Materials of Teaching/ Learning:* Education has become more complex today due to the vast societal changes and the new insights in the field of technology. There is an explosion of knowledge in every field. There have been tremendous advances in science and technology, and more in information and communication technology (ICT). All these developments have brought about substantial changes in the methods and materials of teaching and learning. Unfortunately, our teacher education institutions have not been able to keep pace with these developments. Researchers on classroom processes and present practices of teaching indicate that teaching in our school remains didactic and that emphasis is still on memorization of facts and assessment through achievement test.

### 3.2 ICT literacy

Today our classroom procedures are mostly based on 'chalk and talk'. This has to change. All teachers have to be made ICT literate. All pre-service and in-service teacher education programs should include intensive training in the use of modern tools of ICT including off-line and on-line electronic sources such as CD-ROMs, multi-media, internet and world wide web.

## IV. IMBALANCES IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Teacher education in India is plagued with imbalances and mismatch. There are large variations in the States/UTs in respect of teachers. Qualifications at different stages of education, recruitment procedures and conditions of service. There are also variations in the parity and cadres of teachers and teacher educators, and transfer and secondment policies.

Such differences are bound to exist in a large system of education in a country like India, which is a huge subcontinent. However attempts should be made to bring them to comparable levels at least in respect of the major dimensions of the teaching profession. Data on the existing variations should be collected State-wise and then suitably collated with a view to bring them to comparable levels.

#### **4.1 Role of Teacher's in promoting quality**

Good education is the result of interaction of multiple factors, the most important of which is increasingly recognized to be quality teachers and training. Teacher quality, teacher learning and teacher improvement are becoming the center of researchers, policy makers, program designers, implementers, and evaluators. In both developing and industrialized countries, teachers in the past were treated as semiskilled workers unable to make responsible decisions about their practice.

They were required to follow instructional prescriptions and highly scripted and rigid teaching procedure. Many educational systems are starting to advocate active learning approaches for teacher's as well significant changes are taking place. If teachers are to become reflective practitioners who use active learning approaches in their classroom, where students learn through problem solving, critical dialogue, inquiry and the use of high order thinking skills. The emphasis on teacher empowerment has grown from a variety roots. The idea of reflective practice assumes that teachers are professionals capable of making a large number of instructional and classroom management decisions. Although discussion at national, district, educational institutions, and community levels school determine the qualities that a specific education system seeks in good teachers, a list of generally held perspectives on good teachers would include many of the following:

- Sufficient knowledge of subject- matter to teach with confidence knowledge and skills in range of appropriate and varied teaching methodologies.
- Fluency in the language of instruction.
- Ability to create and sustain an effective learning environment.
- Understanding of the curriculum its purpose, new paradigms of teaching and learning are introduced.
- Good character, sense of ethics, and personal disciplines.
- Ability to work with others and to build good relationship within the educational institution and community.

The teacher is always functioning as part of social network, either with his or her students within the school community. Excellence at the academics level means more than an individual excellent teacher or even a collection of excellent teachers.

### **V. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

The rapid changes in society led to teachers facing new and complex issues, resulting in change in the area of teacher education. One of the most significant developments was the creation of special education for children with special needs. Special education teachers must be taught how information, especially more advanced and more subject material can be effectively taught to students in non-traditional ways. Advances in technology have also posed an issue for future educators. Many educators have focused on ways to increase technology into the classroom. Television, computers, radio and other forms of mass media are being utilized in an educational context, often in an attempt to involve the student activity in their own education. With technologies, distant learning and internet, it has become crucial for new teachers to keep up to date with the knowledge and interests of their students in these developing systems.

#### **5.1 Other emerging issues and challenges**

- Lack of up-to date books, and materials on teacher education.
- Development of national professional standards.
- Establish learning communities and network among teachers.
- Transparency in the funding of teacher education.
- Staff appraisal system and use of peer observation in schools are still the matter of development.
- Teacher centered strategies and pedagogy still dominated in the classroom.
- Need to explore the development of performance based evaluation.

#### **5.2 Suggestions**

- Stake holders, students, parents, teachers and owners of colleges have to come forward and give information.
- The management of the teacher training colleges should include the well known members of the society.
- Honoring best teacher educator and rank should also be given to the students.
- Establishment of placement services and guidance cell for the students.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Educator/Teacher has prime importance in the area of education. The most important aspect of teacher's persona is his attitude. It is believed that the educator must have the same attitude for the learners as for her own child. Teacher education is a difficult task especially at the present age where teacher education programmes are being delivered by a large number of unaided private teacher education institutions. These institutions are also not sure of their tenure, as in near future; possibility of huge unemployment of trained persons may result in swinging fall. The surviving institutions can only be helped by appropriate authorities in improving quality of their academic management. This article suggests an increase in responsibility for teachers, but not an increase in authority in the classroom. Expand the teacher candidate pool by targeting potential teaching candidates in schools and colleges. Promote and support to teacher candidates who are otherwise qualified but not passing the tests. Development of state, local and national policies that provide meaningful financial support for teaching preparation programs and their students, including greater access to financial aid resources. Quality and excellence in teaching in the Indian context is only possible if these points to be remembered.

- Students should listen intently, and participate actively.
- Teacher should try to interact with all the students.
- More emphasis given to educational activities, careful planning, times questioning session should be organized. Students learn stage setting routines that allow teachers to change activities without interruption.

To conclude, numerous are issues relating to the quality aspects of teacher education. The current debate in teacher education is on quality. We have to bear in mind that quality is never an accident; it is always the result of intelligent effort adequate investment and a continuous journey.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Education In Encyclopedia Britannica (2011) Retrieved from

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/179408/education>

- [2] Pratibha Kohli , Attitude of Educator And Student Achievement (Pg No.42), Vivek International journal of education & research Vol. 1 No.7 April 2014 ISSN 0975-7481.
- [3] Guidelines and Recommendations for Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainability. Prepared by UNITWIN/ UNESCO, October 2005.
- [4] James Albright and Masturah Ismail-Issues facing Teacher Curricular and Pedagogical Capacity in Mature and Emerging Education Systems ,A Draft paper prepared for the AARE conference, Adelaide, Australia-27-30 November, 2006.
- [5] Kothari, D. S. (1966) Chairman) Report of the Education Commission 1964-66. Govt. of India, New Delhi.
- [6] Loughran, John. Developing A Pedagogy of Teacher Education: Understanding Teaching and Learning About Teaching. Routledge, 2005. ISBN 0415367271.
- [7] Prof. B. Wanjala Kerre, Science and Technology Teacher Education in Africa: Issues in the promotion of Scientific and Technological Literacy.
- [8] Rakes, G. C., Fields, V. S., & Cox, K. E. (2006). The Influence of Teachers' Technology Use on Instructional Practices. Journal of Research on Technology in Education, 38(4), 409-424.
- [9] Tisher, R. P., and Marvin Wideen, Research in Teacher Education: International Perspectives. Taylor & Francis, 1990. ISBN 1850007829.
- [10] Vappu Sunnari & Rauni Rasanen, Ethical Challenges for Teacher Education and Teaching: Special focus on gender and multicultural issues, OULU 2000.

## AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

**Dr. Sheeba Sardar Ali** presently working as an Assistant Professor in Majmaah University, Majmaah, KSA. She has good experience of teaching Communication Skills in the Department of English, Engineering College and in Women's polytechnic, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. Her areas of interest are ELT, ESP, Phonetics and Spoken English, Study skills etc. She has been contributed many articles in different international peer reviewed journals with good impact factor and has been written some book chapters also on the problems of teaching and learning.

### Citation of this Article:

Dr. Sheeba Sardar Ali, "Quality Assurance and Excellence in Teacher Education: Issues and Challenges" Published in *International Research Journal of Innovations in Engineering and Technology (IRJIET)*, Volume 3, Issue 9, pp 39-42, September 2019.

\*\*\*\*\*