

QUALITY PERSPECTIVE IN TEACHER EDUCATION - AN ANALYSIS

Article

ABSTRACT

The goals of education are character building, developing people of creative, inventive and critical mind. Pre service Teacher Education is transformation of a lay person into a committed professional. The objective of this paper is to give the broader meaning and definition of the term quality in education, to list the various areas of quality concerns in an educational institution. The quality framework diagram explains the relationship between teacher effort, student effort and growth and the impact of these two in goal attainment. The present teacher education scenario is such that there is quantitative expansion without experienced, efficient teacher educators. The paper reviewed three studies conducted in the areas of teacher commitment and accountability since these are the key terms with respect to quality of the teachers. Suggestions, ways and means to enhance and sustain quality in pre - service teacher education have been listed with the conclusion that the teacher education institutions have to focus their shift from teacher oriented to student oriented approach and orienting the teacher educators, administrators, student teachers & support staff towards this total quality approach.

INTRODUCTION

The principal goal of education :

- To create men who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done men who are creative, inventive and discoverers.
- To form minds which can be critical, can verify, and not accept everything they are offered.
- To build the character and personality of the child.

"Technology of education is being developed with the aim not only of making education more widely available but also of improving the quality of education which is already available" - Apter

In India the term 'Higher Education' refers to post-secondary (post plus two) or tertiary level education. Higher education can also be defined as all graduate and post - graduate degree courses with higher level skills, knowledge and competencies. Pre-service Teacher Education is a process of transformation of a lay person into a competent and committed professional educator.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT PAPER

- To give a broader meaning for the term quality with reference to teacher education
- To evaluate the importance of teachers in the process of education

- To discuss the current scenario of teacher education
- To highlight the need for quality sustenance and enhancement in pre-service teacher education.

QUALITY IN EDUCATION

Quality

- A structured process for improving the output produced
- Implies a change i.e. a change from the existing pattern-change in the relationship between teachers, administrators, and students
- Sum total of competencies achieved at the level of mastery
- 'Kaizen' is the Japanese term used to connote quality. The word means 'improvement' i.e. continuous, gradual, orderly and never-ending improvement, the willingness to constantly and relentlessly pursue improvement with a small step at a time, concentrating on improving the process rather than the product
- An attribute reflected in the learner as a product of an educational system

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PRESENT STATUS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

In those days teaching was taken up by people who were passionate about it; now most are in it out of compulsion or by accident.

The security of a permanent teaching job still ensures a steady demand for B.Ed., courses but not with high motivation and inclination for the profession. There are no role models to inspire the applicants and absolutely no inspirational content. The attraction is merely due to the availability of a license for appointment. Mushrooming of teaching education institutions with faculty raw and inexperienced and unsuitable for teacher education institutions is the common scene nowadays.

Teacher education is not effective in churning out efficient teachers and so it must be refashioned to meet the needs of our schools and colleges in the new social and economic context in which they are functioning.

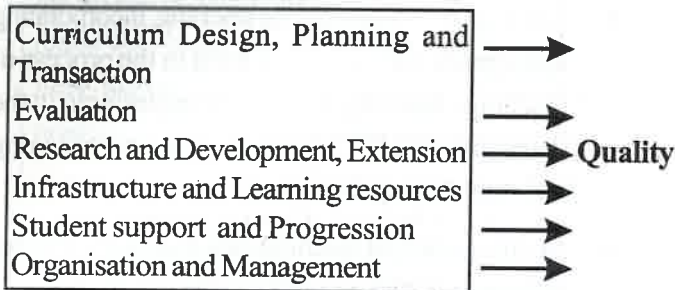
RESEARCH STUDIES CONDUCTED ON COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF TEACHERS

1. There is a correlation between organizational commitment and attitude towards work among post - graduate teachers; job satisfaction and attitude towards work are highly correlated; younger teachers (below 40 years) are more committed towards their organization than the older ones (above 40 years). (Kumar, S. and Patnaik, P.S. 2004)
2. Study on ways and means of inculcating commitment in the secondary teachers reported the following as contributing factors: healthy school environment, more salaries and other facilities, motivation by the head of the institution, qualitative improvement in the teacher training program, increased competencies, skills, reforms in the existing educational system, social climate and management, social prestige of the teacher. (Maheswari, A. 2003)

- Creating an environment where educators, parents, government officials, community representatives and business leaders work together to provide students with the resources they need to meet current and future academic, business and societal challenges

- Quality cannot be equated with money

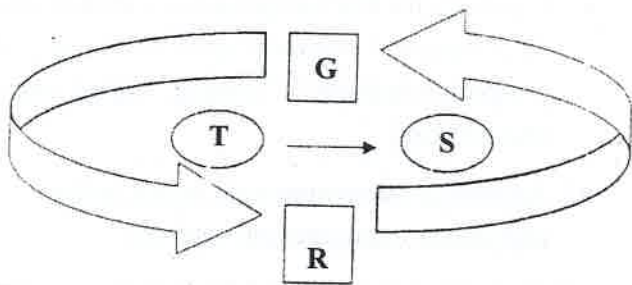
The innovation taken up in the following six criteria contribute to quality enhancement.



Commitment, Conviction and Accountability of teachers are some of the key terms associated with quality in education.

QUALITY FRAME WORK

The following diagram on quality frame work, implies the term quality includes the efforts and gains made by teachers and students over time, the innovations practiced, characteristics of the social structure, the historical legacies of the system and the conditions shaping the school's everyday reality.



G: Goals, assumptions
and values

□ Matters of perspective

R: Reform through innovation

T: Teacher effort and growth ○ Matters of performance

S: Student effort and growth ○ impact, reinforcement

3. Teachers of all levels (schools, colleges, and universities) have shown a low degree of accountability; the existing training programs make teachers competent rather than accountable, training has no impact on teachers' accountability, experience decreases the sense of accountability among male teachers. (Das, B.C. 2005)

It can be inferred from all these studies that pre-service teacher training program should definitely include some components to inculcate commitment, and increase the accountability of prospective teachers.

IMPORTANCE OF TEACHERS IN SCHOOL EDUCATION

Teachers play the most important role in all the functions that contribute to the growth of the child.

A great teacher not only gives knowledge and information to the students but also emotional and moral moorings. Teachers should have a deep sense of understanding the student psyche. Keeping in view some of the above mentioned points the following quality enhancement measures are suggested for pre-service teacher education programs.

STEPS TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF TEACHER EDUCATION

- Emphasis on methods of teaching and the art of teaching: The initiative and innovativeness of the teacher and the teaching methods make the process of teaching more interesting and effective, make a lasting impression on a pupil's mind and motivate them to learn more.
- Interactive activities like discussions, debates, site visits, teaching through games and videos, the play way method etc. could be used appropriately.
- Globalisation demands teachers with competencies to teach in a multicultural environment. Hence the prospective teachers have to be prepared for the same. Prepare a teacher to teach subjects along with a whole set of skills and an intrinsic culture.
- Internship programme duration is to be increased to one full semester with a sort of sandwich model – student trainees alternate between teacher education colleges and practicing schools.
- Flexibility, openness and creativity are the hallmarks for quality apart from facing the challenges and adapting to changing demands.
- Utilizing web resources for teaching, incorporating appropriate technological tools in the process of teaching - learning, besides giving training in the development of ICT tools, evaluation, managing and maintaining data bases.
- Improvisation of teaching aids makes the teacher more resourceful according to the locally available resources. Practical aspect of this should find a prominent place in the B.Ed., curriculum
- E-tutoring is the new field with growing need for Indian teachers of subjects like Mathematics, Physics. Hence some add-on courses can be planned for the students of Mathematics and Physics.
- Networking teacher education institutions.
- Assessment of teachers by their peers and evaluation by their students.
- Improving the four components of communication skill assumes topmost priority among the prospective teachers i.e. listening, reading, writing, and speaking.
- Sensitizing the environmental issues, human rights and values among student teachers.
- Dissemination of research findings in major areas of research related to problems of classroom teaching and management and solving student related issues among prospective teachers goes a long way in their career.

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