

# Innovation in Teacher Education

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**Abstract:** Due to globalization, we have shown paradigm shift in teacher education program. It has been recognized that this program is restructured to deal dynamically to the problem and challenges faced in the field of education. Today there are new expectations from teachers as they are future leaders to ensure sustainable education. In this constructivist paradigm the role of teacher has shifted from an information provider or an instructor to a facilitator and a guide who can create such an environment where learners themselves create their knowledge. These learners should be able to discover their talent to develop their intellectual and potentialities to the fullest. This paper focuses on the changes that has incurred in teacher education program and innovations done in teacher education. It also discusses the need of teacher education program to be innovative and various practices that can be included.

**Keywords:** Teacher Education, Innovation, Constructivist approach.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's time, when there is continuous radical shift in the way our education work, communicate and interact, it is crucial for teachers to remain attuned to the demand, trend and development in the society and upgrade their skill accordingly. They should have the ability to adapt to "new" trend and situation. One needs to be contemporary in the known field and also a quick learner of new avenues and aspects. They also need to be proficient with the e-world and stay abreast with the happenings in the virtual world including e-education.

In last few years the definition of a teacher has changed completely, now the modern teacher must be viewed as a "change agent". He is not only information provider or instructor but he has to perform various roles like supporter, motivator and facilitator in teaching learning situation which enables learners to discover their talent, helps them to realize their physical and intellectual potentiality to the fullest and to develop character. The secondary Education Commission (1952-1953) report stated, "We are convinced that the most important factor in the contemplated educational reconstruction is the teacher, his personal qualities, his educational qualifications, his professional training and the place that he occupies in the community." National Policy on Education (1986) has rightly commented that 'no people can rise above the level of its teachers.' So the teachers are of central importance in improving the quality of education. Quality teachers can be produced only if we have quality system of teacher education. Thus revitalization of teacher education program is a powerful mean for improving the education system of a country. It should be structured and modified in a way that enables teachers to respond dynamically to the problems and challenges in the field of education. There are many issues which need to be addressed to ameliorate the quality of teacher education. One urgent need is innovative practices in teacher education as without innovation, no advancement is possible. Innovativeness means generation of new ideas and their conversion into valuable

output. These days education system is facing many challenges due to high technology, globalization, economic transformation and international competition, in such a scenario, teacher education institutions should have made many educational reforms (Cheng, 2005). It demands a multitasking teacher who is ready to play exemplary role in each challenging situation.

Now the question arises;

- To what extent and in what ways are the system of teacher education is able to equip teachers with such capabilities.
- What reforms need to be made to the system of teacher education, to better enable them to produce efficient, effective and creative teachers?

How teachers can be prepared for taking up these roles and perform effectively to meet the challenges and expectations is crucial to the reform of teacher education and professional development (Cheng, Chow & Mok, 2004). This implies that innovation both in pre-service and in-service teachers training are required. But again it is posing a question: what types of innovation should be made to ensure this? These innovations should be done in each and every aspect of teacher education like methodology, curriculum, research and evaluation. Besides that innovation process should have three critical aspects-

- 1) The prototype innovation has to be created- devised from the beginning, adapted from something existing or imported.
- 2) It has to be introduced into the system somewhere.
- 3) It has to be spread throughout the system.

Many countries are using different kinds of approaches such as "schools clusters, field based trainings, school self review and development, distance learning methods and visiting advisors". A radical transformation of learning environment is taking place globally but India is still left far behind in meeting standards of global education.

## II. INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Various innovative programs in teacher education have been initiated from time to time to bring quality improvement in the system. These attempts were successful but due to some challenges fulfillment of all objectives was not witnessed. Some of these programs are as follows-

- Master of Educational Technology (Computer Applications) by SNDT, University, Mumbai
- M.Tech. (Educational Technology) by Kurekshetra University, Kurekshetra
- Four Year Integrated Program of Teacher Education, Kurekshetra University, Kurekshetra (1955)
- Four Year Integrated Program of Teacher Education, RIE, NCERT(1963)
- HSTP Training Teachers, Eklavya , MP(1982)
- B.Sc. in Teaching Technology by Sikkim Manipal University
- Activity Based Teacher Education Program, DAVV, Indore (1991)
- Personalized Teacher Education Program, Lucknow University, Lucknow(1996)
- Comprehensive Teacher Education Program, Gandhi Shikshan Bhavan College of Education, Mumbai University, Mumbai (2000)
- Early Faculty Induction Program(EFIP) under QIP by AICTE ,New Delhi
- University of Teacher Education, Chennai, Tamilnadu (2008)
- IGNOU Institute of Professional Competency Advancement of Teachers (IIPCAT, 2009), IGNOU, India
- Indian Institute of Teacher Education, Gujarat (Bill 4, 2010)
- Two year B.Ed. program of secondary teacher education by NCTE(2014)

The central government and NCTE have planned to change the present two years B.Ed. program into four year courses in a phased manner. Further changing curriculum and introducing some more innovating things will definitely be a welcoming move to improve the quality of teachers.

## III. INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND REFORMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

The purpose of this paper is to present information regarding current innovation and initiatives in teacher education. As we know some teacher education institutions are “Ivory Towers” detached from the realities of the school setting. To improve this NCTE has recommended 2-years B.Ed. course all over the country and transaction of the course shall be done using a variety of approaches such as day’s studies, discussions of reflected journals, observation of children and interactions with the community in multiple socio-cultural environment.

NCFTE (2009) also mentioned some important dimensions to improve the system which are as follows:

- Reflective practice as a central aim of teacher education.
- Opportunities should be provided to pupil teachers for self-learning, reflection, assimilation and articulation of new ideas
- Development of capacities of critical thinking, working in groups.
- Providing opportunities for observation, engagement and communication with children

Thus in order to improve teacher training various reforms-Innovations have been done in pre service education like introduction of ICT/ technology in teacher education, professional development of teacher educators, Public Private Partnership(PPP) in teacher education and improving monitoring mechanism. There is an urgent need for creating and innovative learning environment for teachers in making to explore technology and device creative and meaningful approaches to integrate technology into their future classrooms (Beaudin and Madden, 2002). The following aspects were emphasized by NCTE in teacher education-

- 1) **School Based Teacher Education-** Observation and practice teaching are no longer undertaken in the laboratory schools of the colleges of education and teacher training colleges. They occur in the government or private school for longer duration at least for 6-months and in 2- phases.
- 2) **Practicum Based Teacher Education-** Practical aspect is more emphasized in B.Ed. course. The curriculum involves a structured program in which the pupil teachers work with students and the community. There is integration of theory and practice through additional field based experiences.
- 3) Teacher educators are highly qualified and well trained in latest technology to fulfil the need of course.
- 4) Evaluation includes continuous assessment, tests and exams.
- 5) More emphasis is given on strategy, instructional technology, human development and linking school knowledge with community life.
- 6) There is a provision of comprehensive curriculum which includes various subjects like lifelong education, ICT, yoga and gender education and community education.
- 7) Modern technologies like e-mail, blog, web based learning, video conferencing, virtual and online learning play an important role in enhancing learner capacity to investigate and draw conclusion.

Teachers should know about how to use best technology for preparing lesson in order to achieve pedagogical goals. They can use ICT to explore and learn new courses and skills, participate in community and group activities and discussions to understand newer prospective. Though many reforms or innovative practices are implemented in teacher education but

some resisting factors prevent it to be successful. These barriers are as follows:

-Many institutions are suffering from paucity of funds and physical facilities like infrastructure, laboratories, equipment and man power. They are not able to put things into actions.

-Teacher educators are not able to imply innovations in their institutions as there is no support from the management and administration. No facilities are provided to them.

- Many teacher educators are not aware of modern trends in their field as they are not allowed to attend any refresher/ orientation courses, workshop and conferences to avoid any disturbance in their rigid routine work.

- Sometimes teacher educators are not willing to practice new ideas as there is no motivation for this. They have not yet developed any research aptitude as well as attitude.

-There is no flexibility in curriculum and examination system of teacher training institutions. They work in a rigid framework which is the biggest stumbling block in practicing innovative ideas.

-Professional rivalries, lack of cooperation among teacher educators and lack of expertise are some important factors in preventing innovations in institutions.

-What type of innovation, where and how to implement; all decisions are generally taken by higher authorities and heads only. In such a scenario, teacher educators do not take initiative and lose their interest in applying innovation even in their own field of pedagogy and providing guidance to students.

- pupil teachers are not having required aptitude as well as attitude to give desirable output. They entered the system just to have degrees.

The above discussed issues indicate that there is a dire need of reviewing the teacher education program critically with respect to innovativeness of program, its implementation, administrative machinery, teacher educators and pupil teachers. Arun Jaitely, Finance minister had made an announcement in his education budget 2018 on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018 for introducing revamped course model for the new integrated B.Ed. program. This four year integrated teacher training B.Ed. program has been introduced to ensure that only willing and serious candidates apply for it. NCTE is also reworking on the syllabus of this new course to achieve its core objective of producing quality teachers.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Innovation in the field of education is necessary to sustain and energize the knowledge economy. It is well known that newer technologies are coming in by the time we get efficiency that skill become outdated. So we need to constantly update ourselves to avoid being obsolete in the system. There should be an insatiable desire to learn and explore skills. The key to stay relevant is "reinventing". Reinventing means constantly exploring opportunities that help in mental and professional growth within an existing environment. In India, teacher education is at new stake as far as new policies are concerned. Teacher education needs to orient itself to face new

challenges. However Colleges of Teacher Education and IASEs have been given the responsibility of initiating innovations in teacher education at secondary level. NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) has also taken various steps to bring quality in teacher education. To meet the challenges of new millennium various attempts have been done through ICT mediated constructivist approach, focus on cooperative/ collaborative/ blended learning, development of soft skills and intensive research. But there is need to move further strategically to overcome all challenges. Teacher education system must be committed to follow holistic approach, essentially innovative in nature to bring quality in the whole system.

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