

How to Gear up Challenges of Teacher Education of 21st Century

* Reeta Sharma



ABSTRACT

Since the dawn of Independence, the Indian education system has undergone drastic changes. This article highlights some major problems of teacher education in India. The author suggests some effective measures to save Teacher Education from deterioration.

"Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Maheswara, and Guru is truly Parbrahma, My salutation to thee."

Time has changed the position of teacher. But we cannot deny the importance of teacher in our life. From the philosopher to layman everyone eulogizes the teacher as a mason who builds fabric of society, the students being the bricks and mortar of the future. In the coming decades of 21st century teacher has to play bigger and crucial roles. He has to plan, organize, lead and control the resources and variable involved in the process of teaching-learning. Touching more lives, affecting the outcome of so many futures, a teacher is the epitome of all virtues.

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam in his book "India 2020: A vision of the New Millennium" has rightly said, "If you are a teacher in whatever capacity, you have a very special role to play because more than anybody else it is you who are shaping the future generation." Teacher education in our country has to face the challenge of producing teachers for a new society.

Kothari Commission said:

"A sound programme of Professional Education of teachers is essential for the qualitative improvement of education". There are many challenges in teacher education. We will discuss a few major challenges in teacher education in this article:

Quality Culture - Need of the Hour

Quality means "degree of excellence"

"Quality is not a chance but a choice,

Quality is not an accident but design

Quality is not a destination but a continuous journey".

In teacher education competent and honest teachers need need-based curriculum; adequate infrastructure and ideal student teachers ratio to strive towards quality education. Now - a days there is a mushrooming of educational institutions. No doubt they are in compliance with present need but they lack something i.e. true spirit of education i.e. Development of individual growth, It is need of the hour to sit down

and chalk out quality agenda for fostering complete quality culture in our system.

Suggestions to Gear up the Challenge:

"The road to improvement is always under construction" - Fullan (1992)

The following suggestions will help in gearing up this challenge:

1. Focus on vision, mission, goals and objectives (VMGAO) of Institutions.
 2. World class curriculum, instruction and evaluation
 3. Use of ICT
 4. Practice of transparency and accountability.
 5. Research and development on quality in education
 6. UGC has proposed faculty recharge scheme in XI Plan to promote excellence in the field of research
 7. Adopting TQM (Total Quality Management)
 8. Adopting "Kaizan methodology which says: Right People, Right focus, Right Perspective (for Quality)"
- These lines highlight the real spirit of maintaining quality standards:**

"Define the potential & deliver the promise,

Demystify the experience & distill the essence."

Value Erosion

What is education? Macaulay's mandate or Gandhi ji's heritage? The first wanted to make clerks; the second planned to make Indians holistic humans. True education involves the development of head, heart and hand. But it is an irony that value erosion is dilemma of Teacher education. Now-days, students are bombarded with Negative messages, which adversely affect their mental, emotional and spiritual development. Also they are conditioned to believe that they can obtain happiness from a material world.

"Modern Education has blinded man with lust;

Life has become a burden;

Minds have gone astray;

Delay no more for delay is disastrous;

Fuse morality with education in sweet harmony;

And see what happens".

Thus Value Education is the need of the hour. Kothari Commission stated: "Indian education needs a drastic

reconstruction, almost a revolution."

Suggestions to Gear up the Challenge:

It is the duty of Teacher educator to set an example before students. Teacher educators should practice values of our Leaders. Imbibing values is a journey together .When teachers fail to embody the values in their behavior it raises confusion about the ideal and the practical. Education should be a means for getting in touch with our innate values like love, happiness and truth so that we become strong, balanced and constructive citizens.

Teacher educators' Search for identity in self - financing College A number of Self-financing Colleges are mushrooming. However leaving a few reputed colleges, majority of Private Colleges are education shops catering to the majority of students. Students are like customers and teacher educators are like salesman .Customer-satisfaction is the priority for college management at the cost of job-satisfaction of teacher - educators .Students are powerful and faculty is weak in these self-financing educational institutions. Indeed the faculty lacks the position, power and autonomy, which they traditionally enjoy at universities.

While employing full-time faculty management pay meager salary and also deprive the teachers of other allowances, facilities, leave etc. Teachers in these self-financing colleges do not have adequate time, resources and support to conduct productive research .The UGC does not provide financial assistance to self-financing colleges for projects, organizing seminars and conferences, opening up study centers etc. Consequently teacher educators of these colleges are unable to nurture their vision despite being innovative and competitive enough to run such centers or projects.

Suggestions to Gear up the Challenge:

The Present system does not accord teachers of self-financing colleges proper economic and social status, opportunities for professional and career development, initiative for innovation and creative work, and proper orientation in concepts, techniques and value system to fulfill their roles and responsibilities

.Teacher-Education Programme can be successful if certain points are followed:

1. Specially designed orientation programmes, refresher courses in teaching methodologies, pedagogy

** Assistant Professor, Swranjali College of Education, Rewari, Haryana*

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must be organized. 2. Research aptitude of Teacher-educators must be encouraged by providing necessary facilities and incentives. 3. Attention should be paid to safeguard the interest of teacher educators of self-financing colleges by ensuring them salary, leave, promotion and other facilities and benefits at par with teachers of other government institutions. 4. U G C should revise its policies to ensure financial assistance to these colleges for running minor and major projects, study centers etc. Teacher educator should get what they deserve to produce quality education.

Lack of Professional Development of Teachers Now - a days teacher education lacks professional development of teachers. Teaching as profession will never suffice if we do not focus on professional development of teacher as it is a major thrust of teaching as a profession.

Suggestions to Gear up the Challenge:

Following measure should be taken to develop the professional skill of teachers: 1. Teacher should be made the first and foremost active agent in every aspect of educational system. 2. Give recognition to teaching as a reflective practice and Teacher as a reflective practitioner. 3. Teachers can be acquainted with the action research work in its theoretical and practical perspective through the programs of Professional development. 4. Teachers should shift from teacher - centered method to learners centered methods.5.Inclusion of human values and peace education for better professionals.

Conclusion:

This Model ideally represents what should be included in Teacher education to gear up the challenges of 21st century. This is new generation of learners who are highly productive, effective communicator, inventive thinkers, masters of technology, responsible producers who bring an enlightened approach to learning. As a teacher educator let us help them transform the world The blend of our sanskar - heritage, culture, and value system - with the modern and advanced technologies from the West can create human resource that would be unparalleled. So we can sum up by saying that concrete steps will help in direction of developing confident, competent, committed, enthusiastic teachers having genuine love and respect for Teaching profession.