

Best Practices in Teacher Education

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BACKGROUND:

Based on the recommendations of NEP 2020 on teacher education and training, a national curriculum framework for teacher education NCFTE2021 will be drafted to guide all teacher education programs.¹ The 4 year integrated B.Ed. will be the minimal degree qualification for school teachers and is conceived as multidisciplinary and integrated dual bachelor's degree. NEP 2020 Envisages that all teacher education programs will include training in time tested as well as the most recent techniques in pedagogy, with respect to foundational literacy and numeracy, multi level teaching and evaluation, teaching children with disabilities, teaching children with special interests, use of Educational Technology, learner centered education and collaborative learning. All B.Ed. programs will include strong in-class room practical training. It will emphasize the practice of the fundamental duties along with other constitutional provisions while teaching any subject or providing any activity. In this context a revamping of teacher education curriculum with best practices including multi disciplinary and integrated practices shall be in force. This reformation starts with the stringent measures of admission procedures through aptitude tests by National Testing Agency (NTA) and net working with Govt and private schools for better collaborative activities. Innovative pedagogical practices, designing curriculum credible evaluation systems and multidisciplinary practices will be among best practices in teacher education. For this to happen, theory must be integrated with continuous graded practice. School university collaboration can assist schools to be more humanistic and can help increase the degrees to which teacher training programs are practical in nature and produce reflective practitioners. Collaboration will help to develop new courses in pedagogy for future teachers to conduct educational research. Global dimension to education through *OECD, UNESCO AND UNISEF*² will explore more critical and creative thinking and thus develop new methods and evaluation practices². More accessibility to ICT and online courses will explore new dimensions to student teachers. Best practices should aim interstate, national and global collaborations for a vibrant curriculum to explore the potential of student teachers.

¹ NEP Policy document page no 23

² UNESCO EDUCATION

Teacher education is vital in creating a team of teachers those who will shape the next generation. The teaching profession like all other professions requires very high standards for education and training. Teachers must be grounded in Indian values, ethos, knowledge and traditions while also being well versed in the latest advances in education and technology. According to AISHE data for 2015-2016 of the 17000+ colleges in India that teach just a single programme, nearly 90% are training institutes. Moreover according to Justice J S Verma Commission 2012 constituted by the Supreme Court, a majority of these standalone teaching institutes are not serious about teacher education. Observing and reflecting about actual lessons can play a critical role in the journey to become a proficient teacher. Teacher preparation requires sufficient time and space to develop educational perspectives and understanding of subject and pedagogy along with developing an identity as a teacher. For this, theory must be integrated with continuous graded practice. This is best done in a true multidisciplinary knowledge environment. Good teacher education requires expertise across all areas connected to education- Proximity to higher educational institutes will develop pedagogy of all subjects, assessment, curriculum and material development, school leadership and management along with psychology, philosophy, sociology, knowledge of India, and history of education. Institutions that can provide for faculty across disciplines and offer different programs besides teacher education are best suited to run teacher education programs. Stand alone teacher education institutions cannot build the kind of varied faculty that good holistic teacher education programs offer based on their academic and specialized subjects³. The admission to four year integrated teacher education programs should be through subject and teacher aptitude test conducted by National Testing Agency.

Each higher educational institution will have a network of government, private and school complexes to work in collaboration for the development of a vibrant system. Centres of excellence in education at universities is proposed by NEP 2020. These departments will aim to provide quality teacher education program for both pre service and in service teaching, research programs to prepare researchers and faculty in higher education. These

departments will collaborate with all other departments for teacher preparations and schools in their neighbourhood where students may intern and engage to develop practice.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

To prepare the effective teachers as per NEP2020 recommendations, teacher educational institutions require a complete structural change in curriculum and practices. Credit based programs that are fully interdisciplinary and grounded in practice and applications are the need of the hour. For this a reformation in all aspects, introducing uniformity in best practices, alignment of state machinery with national ideals, reforming the curriculum and evaluation systems and understanding the core of teaching in all dimensions by collaborating with the educators of institutions through mentorship programs are necessary.³

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the importance of revamping the teacher education programs To attain the goals envisaged by NEP2020.
2. To understand the recommendations of NEP2020 and prepare for a Paradigm shift in the existing practices.
3. To see education in the global perspective to create reflective Practitioners.
4. To understand the need of uniformity in best practices in maintaining high standards of teacher training.

Efficient and effective teacher education programs are possible if there is proper networking of teacher education colleges and schools³ Teacher education has often been segmented with subject matter preparation, theory and pedagogy taught in isolated intervals and too far removed from clinical practice. Only when preparation program become deeply engaged with schools, the schools will be able to hire new teachers who are better prepared to be effective in their schools.

There are various advantages of collaboration

³ NEP Policy document page no 20

- 1) Resource utilization—Resource material and facilities at district, regional and state levels can be mobilized for optimum utilization. This will avoid duplication and wastage.
- 2) Development of teachers- Networking will facilitate development of required teacher capabilities for qualitative improvement of the teaching –learning process. Student teachers can get expertise and guidance from the mentor teachers.
- 3) Improvement of quality- Net working will lead to rationalization of programs of pre-service and in-service courses and thereby develop a system of quality teacher education which in turn will affect school education.
- 4) Feed back for improvement- Efficient and effective monitoring and evaluation of teacher education programs can be done through networking.
- 5) Structure of networking- Horizontal linkages among institutions of teacher education is essential to enable the institutions to assist one another by sharing educational resources.

School university collaboration can assist schools to be more humanistic and can help increase the degree to which teacher training programs are practical in nature and produce reflective practitioners. Co teaching can help as a specific service delivery option that is based on collaboration. Through co teaching methods, parallel teaching, alternative teaching and team teaching can be practiced.

NEP envisages a paradigm shift the way the traditional system focus on; rote memorization-exam and evaluation. Policy recommends to reduce the curriculum to give more space for creative and critical thinking⁴. A student teacher has to develop the pedagogy from fundamental level by putting creative and critical thinking dimensions. Lesson plans should be modified to nurture the inquisitiveness of the child and it will help the teacher to become a reflective practitioner.

Better practices in mastering this developmental pedagogy involves deepen our understanding of teaching learning at an international scale. Our competencies are heavily influenced by what

⁴ NEP Policy document page no 22

happens in other countries. Best practices can be developed by knowing and collaborating UNESCO class room management skills and OECD platforms. Student teacher should get access to international learning. Programme for international student assessment (PISA-OECD)⁵ are conducted to assess how the students can apply the lessons to their daily life. The low score of our country indicates that right from pre service training, student teacher should get the exposure to produce a set of pedagogical activities describing what students at different levels of mastery should do to create a platform for knowledge to nurture inquisitiveness and critical and creative thinking.

Spiritual intelligence helps the student teacher to have a better outlook on life and develop a concrete value system. NEP spoke about creating awareness of knowledge of India, cultural heritage, social justice, compassion, secularism, gender equality, concern for environment, and national unity. Indirect method of instruction is effective in building the values and the student teacher should be able to correlate and develop the lessons to impart values. The school atmosphere, personality and behaviour of teachers is a major factor in developing sense of values. It must be emphasized that consciousness of values must permeate the whole pre service training curriculum and activities. School is a miniature of the society. Spirit of service is to be developed through various community activities.

It's important for a student teacher to understand social and emotional learning, empathy, mindfulness, compassion, critical inquiry, class room management, how to facilitate conflict resolutions etc. Peer learning and observations, developing tools, Peer tutoring, project based learning, team teaching and community service activities help the student teacher to have a better adjustment and understanding of the complexities of teaching through team work. UNESCO has come up with many online modules regarding the right way of dealing social and emotional problems. Simulations, role play and E learning modules will help the trainees to understand the subject better.

A student teacher should be aware of multiple intelligence and various types of learners. Introduction to technological advancement in

⁵ Programme for international student assessment

pedagogical practice, innovations in online teaching, student engagement activities, online resources etc are essential components of teacher education today.

The future of education is blended learning. Government of India through NIEPA, NCERT, SCERT, SIEMAT and DIETS ⁶⁶started a number of online courses for the benefit of pre service and in-service teacher education. Teacher education Institutions should collaborate with national level institutes to incorporate such educative programs and it should be a part of evaluation system. The basic understanding of the existing in service programs will expand the learning horizons of trainee teacher.

NEP envisages interdisciplinary education in teacher education. Sociology, psychology, art education, physical education, philosophy, language, Maths, science, guidance and counselling, special education etc are important components of teacher education. A proper curriculum collaborating with all interdisciplinary subjects and practical training will help the trainees to have better understanding of special education and how to deal with scholastically backward children .The clinical oriented practice will help them to understand guidance and counselling. Doing projects and conducting workshops are helpful to get the core idea for innovative programs in literacy and numeracy and environmental education .The basic concepts of the school related activities in teacher training will help them for reflective thinking.

Student teacher should get a concrete understanding of educational boards, Govt councils, E learning platforms and innovations in educations. They should participate in various activities related to creative writing, interdisciplinary programs, and access to teacher journals and get updated with educational reforms in the country and abroad. They should have access to ICT, Library and resources on education. Visual and performing arts, debates, discussions and brain storming sessions on different education systems and reforms in education should be a credit based evaluation part of training.

Action research encourages enquiry and reflection, connects theory to practice, and creates link between pre service and in-service

6 NEP Policy document page no 23

teaching. Engaging in action research expands their concepts on teaching and such expansions holds potential for fostering change in schools.

A reformation in the evaluation system is very much essential to keep the entire training more and more practical oriented. The critical, creative and reflective thinking of the trainee is to be assessed rather than mere conceptual knowledge and memory power. The evaluation of teacher education should be continuous, comprehensive, credit and grade based, blended with external and internal evaluations including all interdisciplinary and collaborative parameters keeping the entire process transparent.

CONCLUSION

Teacher education colleges are to be well equipped with necessary infrastructure and attached model schools. Colleges should have collaboration with world class teacher education institutes. Action research, workshops, developmental feedback ,giving proper input to build loyalty and developing best practices fostering the need of future schooling and a network of best institutes of education for adopting best practices to adapt to the changing education system is necessary and should be central to planning while preparing the curriculum ahead of NEP 2020.

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