



Towards Excellence in Teacher Education: Professional Development of Teacher Educators

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ABSTRACT: In order to make teacher Education effective and functional its various components needs comprehensive paradigm. Teacher Education is otherwise remaining much stagnant, compare to the changes, modifications and innovations that are taking place in school education. Introducing core compulsory paper of information and communication technology is the only need base step in the teacher Education, that too it is accepted and adopted by only few teacher education institutions. Time to time modification of the courses offered and of the pattern followed in teacher Education institution is equally important for getting better quality out-put and better performance in the area of school Education, since teacher educators teaching in teacher education institutions are preparing the prospective teachers. This paper advocates five performance area, five commitment areas and to competence, which are very essential components for effective teachers.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the last decades of the 20th Century both School Education and Society have witnessed unprecedented technological Advancements, communications Revolution, periodical reforms in school curriculum, introduction of competency based & value – oriented Education adopting MLL strategy as Envisaged by NPE (1986 and 1992), Major reforms in the text books cum work books and other teaching learning aids, promoting activity based and Joyful learning, introduction of self learning and group learning activities besides teacher directed learning. In higher education, teachers are educated after they enter in to the profession of teaching. Experts in the field of Education keep on claiming to have universities of education, to have IES ie. Indian Education service, to manage and look after the educational affairs in the country same as IAS, but no due recognition is given to all these matters. As a result of which quality in Education is being questioned today across the levels. Teaching is the only profession entrusted with the task of nurturing human skills and capacities that will enable societies to survive. So the only way left is Educating the teacher Educators through Various ways leading towards their own professional development and since they are educating the teachers they will be in a position to transmit and transform their knowledge and understanding to their clients. Thus reflecting up on one's learning and using it as a source for teaching and negotiating the complexities related to its social, Cultural, economic and political contexts is the professional responsibility of the teacher educators.

In order to make teacher Education effective and functional its various components needs comprehensive paradigm. Teacher Education is otherwise remaining much stagnant, compare to the changes, modifications and innovations that are taking place in school education. Introducing core compulsory paper of information and communication technology is the only need base step in the teacher Education, that too it is accepted and adopted by only few teacher education institutions. Time to time modification of the courses offered and of the pattern followed in teacher Education institution is equally important for getting better quality out put and better performance in the area of school Education, since teacher educators teaching in teacher education institutions are preparing the prospective teachers. At the secondary education level it was found that the skeleton staff in the CTEs and IASEs was not able to properly organize in-service training programmes outside the institution, where in they are discharging their duties as resource persons. Looking to the work profile of Teacher Educators, it can be Accepted with out suspicion that only their professional development can bring Excellence in Teacher Education, which can ensure to make the future teacher competent, committed, and an effective performer of his / her duties.

Teacher Educators are role models for the student teachers, who would like to observe & imitate them with great sense of appreciation. Education of teacher Educators should continue all throughout their professional career in a planned manner, so that it will contribute to the qualitative improvement of education in General and teacher education in particular. Many area of human endeavour is witnessed of recurrent changes occurring every now and

then which demands corresponding changes in education and therefore in teacher education. Improving the competencies of teacher Educators in terms of their knowledge, skills, interest and attitudes to enable them to solve their academic problems and meeting the academic needs of their work profile is to be considered as the task of prime importance. Teacher educator does not just teach, they foster hope, provide emotional support, nurture commitment and celebrate success and Joy. In addition to these a teacher Educator always thinks about what he does, and keeps on reflecting on the “why and how” of what he does, he also thinks about what he ought to do and about what he chooses not to do. If teaching is an extremely complex job, then learning to teach others to teach must surely be a little more complex. Therefore a Teacher Educators’ Job is most demanding and quite unenviable, he or she can’t do justice to it unless he/she turns professional and takes charge of his / her professional development.

Five performance areas identified for teachers are:

- i) Performance in the classroom
- ii) School level performance
- iii) Performance in out of school activities
- iv) Performance related to parental contact and co-operation
- v) Performance related to community contact and co-operation.

If we modify them for teacher educators they can be:

- i) Performance while imparting pedagogical skills to student - teachers.
- ii) Performance in teacher Education institution while performing different roles
- iii) Performance in the Educative processes where in he or she her participated as resource person.
- iv) Performance in Extension work activities
- v) Performance related to community contact and co-operation.

So, components of professional development of teacher educators can be:

- 1) Development of pedagogical skills
- 2) Development of teacher educator as a member of teaching profession.
- 3) Development of Research Aptitude in teacher Educators.
- 4) Development of management and administrative skills of teacher Educator.
- 5) Development of various skills in teacher Educators in the context of their work profile. ie. The various roles that they have to perform

As a facilitator

As a resource mobilizer

As an innovator

As a curriculum developer

As a researcher

As a counsellor

II. SOME EFFORTS IN THIS DIRECTION

Government has created a few centers of Excellence in different subject specialties under the scheme of centres of advanced studies (CAS), department of special Assistance (DSA) and inter-university research centers. Objective is to provide quality input in higher education and in research areas. However these selected centers of Excellence are not able to cater to the vast need of the country and many a times institution are not prepared to spare the faculty to specific training programmes even if the programme is important. Thus it is important that every institution /university takes up in house faculty development and also offers opportunity to faculty for upgradation of their qualification.

The NCTE took initiative for professional growth of teacher Educators and Evolved strategies for improving quality in teacher Education through various in service programmes. Publication and training courses were provided for bringing about awareness, improving their skills and efficiencies and acquainting them with new technologies and concerns.

The faculty improvement programme and award of teacher fellowships have been in existence to provide opportunities for teachers in universities and colleges to acquire degrees like M.Phil, M.E, M.Tech and Ph.D in various disciplines.

Leave and financial support have been provided to teachers by the Indian council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) Financial support has also been provided in the form of grants for carrying out research-projects and for scholarly publication of books, e.g. UGC provides grants for various minor and major research projects. All these schemes aim to promote professional development of teachers.

Self regulated learning, planning and participation in various in-service and professional development programmes for internal faculty and teacher educators from other teacher a Education institutions, planning, Organizing and participation in practice teaching programme for student-teachers exchange of experiences with peers, maintaining a learning journal for directing one’s professional development, taking up school projects and action research for

resolving felt Educational problems, sustained reading of Journals, using online professional development resources etc. are some of the strategies for promoting teacher educators' professional development.

Writing and publishing one's work, year end reviews, faculty appraisal planning, implementing and monitoring the term and session plans are other activities that support teacher educators' professional development.

For effectively discharging the responsibilities ten competencies are identified they are:

- Contextual
- Conceptual
- Curriculum
- Transactional
- Other Educational activities
- Related to teaching learning material
- Evaluation
- Management
- Related to parental contact and co-operation
- Related to community contact and co-operation

Broadly the competencies are classified in to three types:

- 1) Competency in academic field
- 2) Competency in teaching methodology
- 3) Competency in Classroom, interaction analysis and application

Five identified areas of Commitment are:

- Commitment to the lender
- Commitment to the society
- Commitment to the profession
- Commitment to achieve excellence
- Commitment to achieve basic human values.

The new professionalism of the teachers calls for committing to the path of life long learning by themselves. Emergence of Various streams in the field of Education, in-depth specialization in each area and getting recognition as separate discipline have compelled the system of teacher education to review its own pattern of dealing to ensure teachers with professional out look and professional work ethics. Level of professionalization of the teacher Educators would determine the professional quality of teacher Education.

Pertinent questions to be asked in relation to teachers' education are:

Who should teach?

How should teacher be taught?

Where and when should teacher education take place?

What should teachers be prepared to do?

Answer to these questions determines the work profile and area of performance for teacher educators.

III. VARIOUS FORMS AND MODES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATORS

There can be standard pattern of programmes of varying forms and duration for professional development of teacher educators focussing on the components mentioned earlier. Concentration can be on introducing innovative methods of simulated techniques, computer aided instruction, using advanced level of technology in the field of education, skill in organizing and conducting tutorials, use of group methods and self learning resources etc. along with earlier mentioned components.

The following modes can ensure professional development among teacher educators.

- Conferences
- Seminar and symposium
- Pannel Discussion
- Work Shop
- Attending brain storming sessions
- Refresher Courses
- Orientation Courses
- Study groups
 - Study of professionals writings
 - Exchange of experts
 - Extension activities

- Short term courses
- Sandwich courses
- Intensive courses
- Evening courses
- Correspondence courses

NCERT, UGC, University departments of education, regional colleges of education, NCTE, professional organization of teachers, viz, IATE, AIAER, colleges of teacher education, CASE and IASEs are generally organizing and funding these kind of various programmes for professional development of teacher educators, whereas IGNOU provides the opportunity through offering various courses as mentioned here.

Several levels of interactivity can be:

- Face to face interaction
- Satellite based interactive learning
- Inter – center information exchange
- Computer assisted interactive learning.

Self appraisal, organizing and participation in seminars, workshops and conferences, writing research papers and reflective articles, membership of professional and academic bodies and in-service training are definitely the major techniques for professional development, but, the contribution of “ reflection – on – action” in the context of daily class room teaching, discussion and review based development of academic calendar for the teacher education institution and planned sequencing of theory and related practicum sessions and mentoring related experiences are equally important to promote professional development of teacher educators which is **the only step** towards excellence in teacher education.

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