



Paradigm Shift in Teacher Education: Role Played By NCTE

Deb Nandita

Dept. of Education, Rabindra Bharati University, West Bengal, INDIA

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Abstract

The world has become a global village and in this age of globalization no county can live in isolation without seeking impact of global trends in national development. This age of globalization also has great impact on education. Teacher education is the brain of all educational disciplines as it delivers education to train the prospective teachers. With the advent of globalization, there is a global paradigm shift in teacher education. The main purpose of this study was to explore the role played by NCTE in bringing paradigm shift in teacher education. The quality of teacher education not only depends on professionally sound and relevant curriculum, but also on the way the curriculum is implemented in Teacher Education Institutions. This, in turn, depends on the proficiency of the faculty and its quality and the infrastructural and instructional facilities provided in the Institutions. The NCTE Act confers upon the Council to make every effort for improving the quality of teacher preparation in the country and also to ensure planned and coordinated development of teacher education. Constructivism is relatively a new paradigm which exerts major theoretical influence on the present Education system. Hence, there should be revitalization of whole Teacher Education programme, which must give real thrust on constructivism. Gradually, thereafter NCTE has adopted some strategies of constructivism in teacher education programmes to ensure quality in teacher education. The main paradigm changes in teacher education for which NCTE has really taken several initiatives are: increase in duration of teacher education programmes, standard based curriculum, balance in theory and practice, shift from teacher to student centered delivery system, quality assurance and shift in assessment procedures. This paper is an attempt to make a systematic analysis of the recent steps of NCTE in professional preparation of teachers and its effectiveness towards a paradigm shift in Teacher Education in our country.

Keywords: Paradigm shift, teacher education, constructivism, education system, NCTE.

Introduction

The Education Commission (1964-66) of free India submitted a comprehensive report suggesting for establishing a uniform national structure of education covering all stages and aspects of education. It stressed on the necessity of professional preparation of teachers for qualitative improvement of education. National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) was set up for the maintenance of standards and improvement of the quality of teacher education in the country. The NCTE Act confers upon the Council to make every effort for improving the quality of teacher preparation in the country and also to ensure planned and coordinated development of teacher education.

Constructivism is relatively a new paradigm which exerts major theoretical influence on the present education system. It is effective way of teaching and learning. Though the constructivism is a buzzword in the field of Education, our Teacher Education Programme is still very much influenced by Behaviourism. Hence, there should be revitalization of whole Teacher Education Programme and giving real thrust on constructivism¹.

The present school education program is giving real thrust on constructivism. Hence, following are the innovations that are

brought in the present school education system: i. Already framed curriculum for students prepared by teachers and experts. ii. Selection of learning objectives. iii. Choosing appropriate teaching – learning strategies. iv. Evaluation by written examination to measure student progress and for decision making. v. Examination to measure learning objectives. vi. Same examination and same answer key for all students. vii. No objective interpretation of learner's achievement. viii. Emphasis on cognitive objectives.

Therefore, we have noticed that the present scenario of teaching and learning is changed due to high access of students, information, knowledge and influence of different medias, many researches in the field of learning and teaching in Neuroscience etc. Hence, a systematic analysis of the recent steps of NCTE in professional preparation of teachers and its effectiveness towards a paradigm shift in Teacher Education in our country need to be understand, keeping in view the several perspectives of the present scenario of the society.

The quality of teacher education not only depends on professionally sound and relevant curriculum, but also on the way the curriculum is implemented in Teacher Education Institutions. This, in turn, depends on the proficiency of the faculty and its quality and the infrastructural and instructional

facilities provided in the Institutions. The NCTE has adopted a two way strategy to ensure quality in teacher education. The first approach involves development of curriculum guidelines through nation wide consultations and then persuading and supporting the State Governments and Universities to undertake reconstruction of their teacher education curricula. The second strategy involves development of norms and standards in respect of various teacher education programmes, assessment of activities of new institutions, offering Teacher Education Programmes as well as continuous monitoring and supervision of recognized institutions and, taking action if necessary, against the institutions found violating the prescribed Norms and Standards.

Background of the study

National Policy on Education (NPE) was formed to give direction to Indian Education in 1986 which has been revised in 1992. The policy further emphasizes that "the Government of India will also review, every five years; the progress made and recommend guidelines for further development". Accordingly, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) was set up as a statutory body in 1992 though it was come out in 1974 as a non-statutory body for the maintenance of standards and improvement of the quality of teacher education in the country. It brought out its first curriculum framework in 1978. A Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education was placed by the statutory body NCTE before the nation in 1998, which was a gradual execution of revised and reviewed version of Curriculum Framework presented by the NCERT in 1988. An independent endeavour in evolving a teacher education curriculum framework by the NCERT was brought out in 2005 and a joint Curriculum Framework came out by NCTE in coordination with NCERT in 2006. In order to concretize the imperatives of NCF - 2005 and also to fulfil the concerns of RTE Act 2009, the NCTE brought out the latest National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) in early 2010².

A huge constructive changes and developments have taken place in the national and international arena in social, economic, cultural, scientific and technological spheres as well as in information and communication technology sectors during these years. These developments have affected education, as well as teacher education necessitating review and reform of Indian teacher education programmes.

Aims of teacher education

Facing the pressure of diverse expectations of multiple school constituencies and the challenges from the changing educational environment, teachers are often required to accomplish different tasks with diverse goals and objectives within a tight time frame. Resources (e.g. available time, high quality teaching materials, equipment, facilities, expert and technical support, new teaching methods, etc) often become a critical factor in

accomplishing the assigned tasks and meeting diverse goals and expectations. Therefore, teachers are deemed effective if they can maximize the use of allocated resources in their work processes and procure the needed support to overcome difficulties and accomplish different tasks even with diverse and competing goals. Therefore, teacher education aims at helping teachers: i. to understand the nature and importance of resource-input to working and teaching processes and achieving planned tasks and education outcomes, ii. to have the professional competence to procure and manage scarce resources and maximize their use for teaching and school work; and iii. to have social power and skills to win the support and resources from colleagues, parents or the community for their work.

Teacher Internal Effectiveness - A Real Demand of the Present Society

Assuming goals and objectives of education are clear and consensus to all, the first wave of school reforms and initiatives since the 1970s focuses mainly on *internal effectiveness*, with efforts made to improve internal performance particularly the methods and processes of teaching and learning in educational institutions. Many changes are government-directed and top-down, with the aim to improve school arrangements and education practices, thus enhancing their effectiveness in achieving the goals and objectives planned at either the site level or the system level. Improvement of teacher and student performance up to identified standards obviously had been a popular and important target for educational reform. Following the emphasis on internal school effectiveness, the discussion of teacher education in the first wave focuses heavily on preparing teachers to ensure their effectiveness for internal school processes particularly teaching and learning. In this line of thinking, ensuring teacher effectiveness mainly refers to the teacher's achievement of planned education goals particularly in terms of students' education outcomes. The higher achievement in planned education goals implies the higher teacher effectiveness^{3,4}.

Therefore, efforts of teacher education often focuses on developing or improving teachers' competence and performance to achieve the planned school goals often in terms of students' learning performances and other school outcomes.

Recent steps of ncte towards new paradigm of teacher education

National curriculum framework (2005) emphasizes constructivism and recommends that curriculum should help learners to become constructor of knowledge and emphasizes active role of teachers in relation to the process of knowledge construction according to which textbooks at primary education level are developed but what about Teacher Education programmes? They are the subset of school education and social interactions. Total constructivism approach is still far away, so instead of bringing constructivism in content, we can stress on

process. However, NCTE has taken several initiatives to bring in constructivism in Teacher Education Program because of the following reasons: i. Learning means interpretation of new experiences by the individual through own experiences. ii. Learning is internal process. iii. Learners are totally active in learning process. iv. Change in behaviour is due to personally interpretation of facts, concepts and generalization. v. Stresses on meaningful learning. vi. Teaching-learning methods are learner-centered. vii. Learning process is much important than learning outcome.

In elementary education two to three courses are designed around key concepts and research from Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology, Child Psychology, Social Anthropology, Child rearing Practices, Process of Physical, Mental, Emotional, Aesthetic, Language, Social and Moral Development, Habit formation, Self-expression, Neuromuscular coordination, Health and Hygiene, Art of observation and Nature study are persuaded in the curriculum frameworks. The gradual transaction of the teaching and learning processes from concrete operational stage of development to abstract reasoning process and change over of teaching-learning strategies from one stage to another are stressed on. Depending on this, NCTE has also taken several initiatives in bringing change in the curriculum frameworks⁵.

Teacher education programme at the secondary stage, like all other stages, are equipped with theory, practice teaching in school and practical work in the light of contexts, concerns, profile of teachers and general and specific objectives. The major consideration which demands the attention of teacher educators is to maintain the continuity of integrated approach in curriculum development and its transactional strategies and prepare students for subject centered approach in future.

The higher secondary stage is important as it offers a choice of subjects to students. For some students, this stage may be the end of their formal education, leading to the world of work and employment; for others, the foundation for higher education. They may choose either specialized academic courses or job-oriented vocational courses. According to NCF the subjects should not be grouped into separate 'streams', and students should have the freedom to opt for subjects or courses according to their need, interest and aptitude.

Theoretical study with complementary workshops needs to focus on issues of identity development, recognizing teacher's own strength and limitations and developing social sensitivity and skills of empathy. Concept and issues like classroom as a social context is to be followed. The pluralistic culture, identity, gender, equity, poverty and diversity of India and the ideas of educational thinkers like Gandhi, Tagore, Dewey and others are considered in their socio- historical contexts in which they are brought up.

Classroom teaching is essentially a matter of organizing learning activities aimed at the achievement of the several objectives. A variety of activities like listening, reading, writing, reciting, singing, play acting, playing with numbers, drawing maps, pictures, observing, collecting specimens, demonstrating, discussing, asking questions, doing experiments, project work and field visits are included in the NCF for proper implementation.

The curriculum of the teacher education at the vocational stream may comprise Indian culture, contemporary Indian society, economic problems and development, occupational and educational psychology, marketing and salesmanship, survey of market demand and advertisement, exhibition of products, managing financial resources and machinery, fixation of price, accountancy, history, states, problems and issues in vocational education, management and organizational problems of vocations.

The theoretical component in the curriculum of Physical Education may include Indian heritage and emerging Indian society, foundations of physical education, its status, problems and issues, yogic exercises, regional games and sports, psychology of physical education, anatomy, physiology and sports medicine, rules of games and sports, science of training and coaching, education of athletes and developing training competencies and evaluation techniques for physical education.

The most critical aspect of the proposed teacher education curriculum is its transaction. Teaching is a profession and teacher education a process of professional preparation of teachers with organized body of knowledge, a reasonable duration of formal and rigorous professional training blended with practical experience in the field and a code of professional ethics that binds its members into a fraternity. Instead of a general curriculum, stage specific and subject oriented curriculum of teacher education need to be developed. The quality and standard of the curriculum of teacher education must be enriched in the light of global experiences incorporating the findings of researches in different disciplines having implications for teacher education.

NCTE stresses on shifting from teacher centric stable design to learner centric flexible process of teaching. This shift not only discards teacher-centricism in education but accepts learner-centricism which were psychological for the all round development of the learners. The learner's centricism also accepts differences and variations among the learners in respect of the interest, intelligence, aptitude etc.

Shifting from teacher's direction and decision to learner's autonomy was given importance by NCTE. 'Learner's autonomy and initiative should be given a priority regarding taking decision. This may help them to develop self-effort in solving problems as well as improve their ability to think

properly. So in lieu of teacher's direction and decision let the learner allow to face problems and to find out solutions. The role of the teacher would be a helper and a guide. Learner's autonomy involves learners being aware of their own ways of learning, so as to utilize their powers and to take initiative for making up their weaknesses. The concept of learner autonomy fits with the overall paradigm shift because it emphasizes the role of the learner rather than the role of the teacher. It encourages students to develop their own purposes for learning and to see learning as a lifelong process⁶.

Initiatives were taken by NCTE to bring in Shift from teacher guidance and monitoring to the open area of facilitation support and encouragement of the learner. In this paradigm the role of the teacher is as a facilitator, supporter who encourages the learner in learning also. The teacher remains generally the storehouse knowledge and experienced person in the classroom, but the goal is for students to move toward and perhaps even beyond for exceeding themselves. Placing value on learners' knowledge helps them feel more capable of playing a larger role in their own learning.

Conclusion

Where the concern is to make teacher education liberal, humanistic and responsive to the demands of inclusive education, Teacher education programmes at all stages should provide opportunities to the would be teachers for understanding the self and others, developing the ability of self analysis and self evaluation and understanding and developing oneself as a professional. The teacher education is teacher training mingled with the theoretical framework and

philosophical foundation in a field of education. A sustained contact through internship would help teachers to choose, design, organize and conduct meaningful classroom activities. Teacher education curricula have to integrate and blend them into a composite whole. The restoration of teacher education curricula has, thus, become a pressing need of the hour. The NCFTE has looked into the matter with a practical and professional approach. A shift from information-based to experience-based and from the traditional instruction domination to newer constructiveness orientation is seen. Now the success depends on operationalization of the curriculum by the all, concerned.

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