



## GAPS IN TEACHER EDUCATION - MODELS FOR BRANDING AND SUCCESS

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### Abstract

*It is rightly said, "The destiny of a country is shaped in its classrooms". Teachers are the back bone of any education system and under their care the future of the country is shaped. The present paper is an attempt to study the successful teacher training models globally, analyze & reflect on the gaps in teacher training models in India and recommend the teacher training models to train "teachers by choice". The recommendations of different committees and commissions set up for Education by Government of India and UNESCO will be reviewed and analyzed. The paper also covers the Comparison of Business and Educational Management, methodology and curriculum content which can be adapted from other professional training models like medicine, engineering, law etc. The paper discusses at length the strategies to attract the best minds into teaching, giving a professional touch to teacher training and branding.*

**Keywords:** Teacher Education, Branding, Success, Models, Models for Branding and Success

### Introduction

The teachers are the back bone of any education system and play a very important role in shaping the children. According to Sharma R N and Sharma R K (2009), "The teacher enjoyed a dignified place in the ancient Indian society. During the Vedic and post- Vedic periods his place was second to that of God only. He was more respected than the king in society. During the process of teaching and learning they have 360° influence on the children". There are four aims of education i.e., to preserve knowledge, to transmit knowledge, to create knowledge and to market knowledge. In today's world success of any country depends on its ability to create and market knowledge. Reflecting on our achievements, it is evident that we have got one Noble Prize in Science and literature before independence. Today we are one of the largest systems of education in the world and we have the best of the facilities but where is the Noble Prize? I always wonder why we have not got a single Noble prize in Science and literature after independence. Recognition like "Noble Prize" is the out come of the innovative research of very high order. We need to reflect on the way we teach our children. Our teaching learning process is mostly parrot centric. It is said, "A good teacher never covers the curriculum, he uncovers it". It implies a good teacher is one who helps children ask, what, why and how while teaching. Such teachers are very rare and it is difficult to get such teachers unless we question the way our teachers are trained.

### Why and where are the gaps in teacher education in India?

The major gaps have been successively pointed out by University education Commission (1948-49), Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) and Education Commission (1964-66). It has been observed that the existing system of teacher education is rigid and static.

Keeping in view the inadequacies of the teacher education programme, NCTE (1987) prepared a frame work for teacher education and called for drastic changes starting from its objectives, content and methodology; the Council stressed on, (a) pedagogical theory (20%); (b) working with community (20%); and (c) content cum methodology (60%). This curriculum did not find implementation in totality in Secondary teacher Education Institutes (STEIs). Bhatnagar (1982) observed great variation in foundation courses. NCERT (1983) workshop concluded that there is no uniformity in B.Ed curriculum of various universities. The National Commission on teachers (1983-85) recommended reforms in teacher education and called for revamping the current courses and curricula. 'Challenge of Education: A Policy Perspective' (1985) observed that the process of updating teacher education is extremely slow and a major portion of the teacher education curriculum was irrelevant even to contemporary needs. NPE (1986) stated that the existing system of teacher education will be overhauled. EdCIL (1987) observed much scope for the improvement in the system. It stressed on developing national norms for STEIs and to evolve a statutory mechanism for enforcing them. NCTE (1988) gave a fresh look to the existing curriculum and stressed on foundation course (20%), stage relevant specialization (30%); additional specialization (10%); and practical / field work (40%). This curriculum also did not find implementation in totality, NPERC (1990) criticized the present teacher education programme as theory oriented and isolated from school and community. POA (1992) noted the major drawback of teacher education as alienation of theory from practical component. According to Gautam V. (2001) there is a lack of relevance of many of the training components to the real needs of the teachers and the demands of the actual classroom situations they might face; the training in the teachers' institutions is itself very mechanical in nature;



and there is a lack of emphasis on and inadequate time devoted to teaching the practical aspects of classroom work. (e.g., teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, reading and language teaching skills.) Teaching is a discipline and unless we reflect on the weakness as recommended by different committees and individual researchers, it will be very difficult to reform the classrooms. We should reflect and take urgent steps to reform the teacher training models prevalent in our country.

### **How to avoid the are the gaps in teacher education in India ?**

The author has studied in depth the professional training model of medicine, law, engineering, architect, and defense etc. It has been observed that almost all the above professional training models have following features.

1. Career by choice: In all the above mentioned trainings, students are required to decide immediately after the school leaving examination, in our country it is after class XII.
2. Entry criteria: For all the professional courses the admission is very rigorous for which students start preparing at a very early stage which helps them develop proper theoretical and mental orientation towards the profession they are inclined to. Professions like Law, Engineering, medicine, have four tier selection criteria i.e., screening based on marks secured at 12<sup>th</sup> level, entrance test, group discussion and interview.
3. Training duration: All most all the professional trainees are of 4-5 years duration which is very much needed for a balanced training and for developing in dept content knowledge as well as professional skills.
4. Curriculum: The curriculum of the professional training courses are consists of content, professional and personal management skills from the day of the training.
5. Balance Integration of content and professional skills: It has been found that there is due emphasis on observation, mock sessions and internship during the training process. In the professional courses it is of at most importance that content and practical skills are integrated. It is also found that the trainers are active professionals like, for e.g. a teacher of a medical college is always associated with hospitals so that they are in touch with professional reality which helps them become a true practitioner not a preacher only.
6. Professional as well as personal development: It is found that in professional colleges like medical, engineering and architecture, due emphasis is given to the professional as well as the personal

development of the trainees. There is due emphasis on hobby classes, cultural events, excursions and visits etc.

Based on the above discussion we can reform teacher education and implement the methodology and curriculum integration process and other aspects of training like internship, admission criteria, etc.

### **Proposed Model & Methodology**

According to Education Commission (1964-66), "Of all different factors which influence the quality of education and its contribution to national development, the quality, competence and character of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant. Nothing is more important than securing a sufficient supply of high quality of recruits to the training profession, providing them with the best possible professional preparation and creating satisfactory conditions of work in which they can be fully effective".

Along with many other activities suggested by NCTE (2008) a due emphasis should be given to community based field work, community based social work. Activities related to practical work may include: surveys about the drop out, interview with people in slums, visits to some high and low achieving secondary schools and preparing brief reports, studying contribution of religious institutes in education and problems faced by girl students / SC – ST students. If possible such practical activities should be identified in each unit. The teacher educator should demonstrate use of learner centered methods like discussion, symposia, group work, projects etc. In transaction of this component student teachers should be given challenging assignments for which they have to consult books, journals, community recourses etc. In short, participatory and interactive learning approaches should be given importance in transaction of this component. The NCTE (2004) also supports the same by stating that. "The programme of Teacher Education is institution based. The students are not exposed to the realities of school and community, internship, practice of teaching; practical activities are not paid proper attention. Despite the commendable improvement in service conditions and perks, the profession is yet to attract best brain".

NCTE (1995) suggested that student teacher may be placed in a school for a block period of four weeks to work as intern teachers so that in addition to practice teaching, they can take part in other activities of the school. In my opinion this period of four weeks needs to be of 8 to 12 weeks of duration for such an important programme. NCTE (2008) suggested fourth semester out of two year duration to be exclusively devoted to provide comprehensive on the job training. There is a need to allot this period to provide student teachers to integrate



their experience gained in first three semesters and apply the same in this phase.

The author studied the methodology followed in successful professional training institutions by personal visits, observation of classes and interaction of faculty. The comprehensive lists of methodology of different institutions are observation; practice teaching; internship; book reviews; seminars; social outreach or visit; video recording and feedback; film shows; teaching portfolio; teaching learning material museum; science park / labs; special workshops and seminars; personality development session; national & international student exchange; mentor; peer teaching; interaction with eminent teachers and successful personalities; language lab; psychological assessment of students, and jury and peer presentation.

All the above strategies are very easy to implement and can be easily adapted in teacher training institutes.

#### **Self Employment Opportunities in Teaching**

There are many untapped self employment avenues in teaching, some of them are Pre School & Day Care Centres, Mobile Creches and Activities Centres. In our teacher training courses, we can help trainees develop entrepreneurship skills and explore self employment opportunities.

**Pre-School & Day Care Centres:** According to the demographic survey of India by 2015 more than 50% of our population will be less than 20 years of age i.e. a young India. The social structure is changing from the joint family to nuclear family. In the nuclear family too we have more than 60% of the cases where both the spouses are working. During the joint family era the young children were taken care by grannies or some elder members of the family. Nowadays couples are finding it difficult to get a safe place for their children where they can keep them while on work. There is a need for centres which will be safe for children and managed by people who are well trained to take care and facilitate the developmental needs of children. In fact every colony needs such centres.

**Mobile Creches:** We can think of mobile creches to take care of infants...just imagine mobile creches in the office premises where mothers can come periodically to feed their infants. They will be able to concentrate on their job as well.

**Activity Centres:** We are undergoing several changes; today we are more bothered about the parking space than the space for play area. Activity centres if managed scientifically can play very important role in the all round development of children.

**Parenting centres:** In our country we believe, "bacha to pal jata hai,"...gone are the days of this proverb. Today it is a proven fact that there is science behind nurturing children. The education of children starts from the time

they are conceived. There is a need to create the awareness among the couples about the science of parenting.

#### **Strategies to Attract the Best Minds in Teaching**

There are two types of teachers i.e., "teacher by chance" and "teacher by choice". We have very less number of teachers who are teachers by choice. We should reflect and work out strategies to attract the best minds. Some of the strategies are discussed below:-

1. **Indian Educational Services:** Since the independence many committees have recommended to establish Indian Education Service (IES) According to the National Policy of Education (1986), "a proper management structure in education will entail the establishment of the Indian Education Service as an All-India Service. It will bring a national perspective to this vital sector. The basic principles, functions and procedures of recruitment to this service will be decided in consultation with the state governments". We should conduct an all India and State level exam to recruit educational leaders and teachers.

2. **Departmental Promotions:** Teaching is perceived as stagnant and routine job. There should be opportunities of career growth i.e., teachers should be encouraged to grow vertically through performance appraisal and department promotions.

#### **Conclusion**

Today's economy is knowledge centered and the power of a nation depends on its knowledge power. The success of an individual, organization and society depends on its ability to create knowledge. It is the need of the hour to change our classrooms to idea generation centres, i.e., a place where ideas will be generated through thinking and questioning. For this to happen we need dedicated teachers who are teachers by choice and one who can enthuse thinking and questioning among children. We need to seriously reflect on the systems and mechanism involved in teacher training in our country and take drastic steps to change the scenario so that we can lead in this knowledge economy.

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