

## EMPOWERING TEACHER-EDUCATORS FOR IMPARTING QUALITY TEACHER EDUCATION

**Prof. B. J. Mundhe, Ph. D.**

*M.A. (Eng.), M.Ed. SET (Edn.), Ph.D, (Education), Assistant Professor in Education (Selection Grade), Janata Shikshan Mandal's, Sane Guruji Vidyaprabodhini, Comprehensive College of Education, Khiroda. Dist.Jalgaon, E-mail: [drbjmundhe@gmail.com](mailto:drbjmundhe@gmail.com)*

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### Abstract

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*The Education Commission (1964-66) of India accepted this influence of teachers in powerful words, "No nation can be more vibrant and growing than the education system of her country and no education system can rise above the Status of its teachers implementing to it." Today the society is being transformed into a Knowledge society along with rise in the quality of life and living. India looks ahead to becoming a superpower. All this and many more achievements would not have been possible without the role and contribution of teachers at all levels in higher education in this country. Stating that teacher-educators cannot do justice to their jobs if they do not know the organization, management and sociology of schools. They should know the needs, motivations and commitments of the society to strengthen higher education ultimately well being of the nation. The teacher educator is the potential resource to provide guidance for the growth and development of student teacher. The teacher is now expected not only to inculcate knowledge but also encourage divergent and reasonable thinking. In the changed scenario, teachers should be able to guide students to the sources of information and knowledge available. This Conceptual Article is an attempt to visualize and probe into an important aspect concerning empowering teacher-educators for imparting quality teacher education.*

**Keywords:** *Empowering, Teacher Educators, Professional Competencies*



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### 1.1 Introduction

When our country became independent in 1947, we were importing even the pine and compass-boxes used by school students. Today India has sent spaceships and has progressed miraculously due to education expansion, advancement in technology, communication revolution, raising aspirations of the society and application of science in all aspects of life. Today, the society is being transformed into a knowledge society and along with rise in the quality of life and living India looks ahead to becoming a superpower. All this and many more achievements would not have been possible without the role and contribution of teachers at all levels in this country. **The Education Commission (1964-66) of India accepted this influence of teachers in powerful words, "No nation can be more vibrant**

**and growing than the education system of her country and no education system can rise above the Status of its teachers implementing to it.”**

We believe, for good education good teachers are needed. So good teacher education is needed for good teachers. The task of a teacher educator is very complex. He cannot do justice to it unless he closely knows four things, viz. the profile of students, the teachers, the schools and the society/community.

## **1.2 The Task of a Teacher-Educator**

The task of a teacher-educator is quite complex and demanding. He should know his pupil-teachers and their students, the school in which his teachers work as also the community.

### **1.2.1 Profile of Students,**

A teacher-educator needs to know that there are many students, who are motivated, can articulate well, and have qualities of hard work. But there are many students who have low motivation, whose language competency is poor, who simply feel happy with rote learning and cannot critically analyze. Many, coming from disadvantaged and deprived societies, have low self-concept. Talking the second category of students is a difficult task. It is more difficult to turn them into high achievers.

### **1.2.2 Profile of Teachers**

Teacher-educators also need to know that many of the secondary school teachers are committed and competent, while there are many who are devoid of motivation and lack mastery in the subjects they teach; many teachers do not devote as much time to teaching as they should. Their communicative competencies are below average. In such a situation the teacher-educator will be called upon to take remedial measures to bring them to the required level.

### **1.2.3 School**

Teacher-educators cannot do justice to their jobs if they do not know the politics and sociology of schools. They should have an objective assessment of school management, school leadership, schools' working climate, school ethics and school politics. Then alone they can assess the inputs of teachers.

### **1.2.4 Society/Community**

Teacher-educators should know the society in which primary schools, primary teachers and students, operate and work. They should know the needs, motivations as well as commitments of the society to help education. It is the teacher who builds this symbiotic

relationship between the school and the community. Therefore, it is imperative for him to know the community he works for.

### **1.3 Teachers' Core Competencies**

The word 'competency' denotes many meanings such as "Skill", "fitness", "Capability, etc. it will be meaningful to understand teaching competency as a set of knowledge, abilities and beliefs that a teacher possesses and brings to the teaching situation. In other words, teaching competencies are those abilities and skills which become a part of teachers repertoires used for teaching purposes.

Through intensive interactions with teachers, teacher educators, curriculum developers, evaluators and experts of different categories, NCTE (1998) has identified the following ten inter-related professional competencies as essential for making competent teachers:

- Contextual competencies;
- Conceptual competencies;
- Content competencies;
- Transactional competencies;
- Competencies related to other educational activities;
- Competencies to develop teaching-learning material;
- Evaluation competencies;
- Management competencies
- Competencies related to working with community and other agencies.

On undergoing pre-service teacher education course, the student teacher will have to acquire mastery in the above stated suggestive list/ items of Competencies as NCTE has identified.

Some researchers believe that there are three types of criteria that can be used in determining competencies. These criteria are:

- a) Knowledge criteria related to cognitive understanding.
- b) Performance criteria related to teaching behavior; and
- c) Product criteria related to teacher's ability to teach in terms of students' outcome.

A teacher-educator should continuously concentrate on how to develop in teachers competencies essential and critical for becoming good, effective and performing teachers.

A teacher-educator who is well informed, updated, dedicated and committed will always look for the following competencies in teachers.

- Context competencies;
- Content competencies;
- Communication (Curriculum)competencies;
- Evaluation competencies.
- Management competencies
- Community relationship competencies.
- Moral (ethical) competencies.
- **Context competencies**

Clusters of knowledge and skills that equip a teacher to know details of the context in which schooling is taking place are absolutely necessary. This includes knowing state policy on education, resources allocated to education and to the school, nature of leadership and organization in which teachers work. He should also possess knowledge about students, their cultural, social and economic background and also educational level and motivation of parents. Only a teacher who knows all these will be able to do justice to teaching as well as to students.

- **Content Competencies**

Clusters of knowledge and skills related to the subject matter are equally essential. If a teacher teaches science, he should be up-to-date on current information and new advances in his field; at the same time he needs to know process skills relating to observation, classification, experimentation, drawing inferences and developing hypotheses.

- **Communication Competencies**

Combination of knowledge and skills which equip a teacher to communicate his inputs effectively is imperative. Many experts distinguish between teaching (curriculum transaction) and communication competencies. I have purposely used the phrase 'communication competencies, which includes teaching (or curriculum transaction) competencies as well as general communication competencies. When one speaks of curriculum transaction competencies, one includes abilities relating to structuring, sequencing of content, presentation of content, use of blackboard, use of audiovisual material, use of mass media, art of questioning, art and technique of guidance and counseling, techniques of evaluation, abilities to involve students and to seek their participation etc.

Communication competencies certainly include all the above competencies. They also include something more with reference to language, such as:

- a) **Grammatical competence:** ability to use grammatically correct expressions:
- b) **Socio-linguistic competence:** appropriateness of status of participation and level of participants, use of appropriate verbal and nonverbal language signals, etc.
- c) **Strategic competence:** proper use of metaphors, pronunciation, intonation, stress, modulation, fluency and concentration of recipients. This also includes appropriate techniques for description explanation, persuasion, imagination, evaluation, etc.
- d) **Analytical competence:** analysis and synthesis of the expressed and unexpressed meanings of the speakers.

- **Evaluation Competencies**

A teacher-educator must orient and share his view with teachers on what constitutes evaluation competencies. Evaluation competencies include how to undertake formative and summative evaluation, how to design question paper, how to undertake continuous comprehensive evaluation, how to design diagnostic tests, how to construct objective and short answer type tests, how to develop question banks, how to construct objective and short answer type tests, how to award letter grading, etc.

- **Management Competencies**

Every teacher is the manager of his classroom and his students' learning activities, as such, teachers must be briefed about how to manage large classes, make suitable seating arrangements, arrange for library and activity classes (or periods), manage outdoor visits, manage monthly physical check-up etc. On the learning side, he should manage mobilization of learning resources, designing time and activity schedule charts, making resources available to students and ensuring their optimal use.

- **Community Relationship Competencies**

A teacher educator should also develop competencies which relate to building competencies which relate to building relationship with the community for which he works. For that he needs to know his community quite thoroughly, organize informal meetings between the community people, students and student-teachers and be aware of the community needs. Some of these activities will surely help build good relationship between the teachers and the community.

- **Moral (ethical) Competencies**

Looking at these values identified and recorded in important educational documents, the minimum Levels of Learning recommends that planned and cautious efforts should be made

to develop positive attitudes towards regularity, punctuality, cleanliness, diligence, sense of duty, love for service and equality, cooperation, sense of responsibility, truthfulness and national identity. These values are relevant for teacher education also.

The National Policy on Education (NPE-1986) recommends that teachers should develop national identity. They should preserve common cultural heritage. It also recommends developing secularism, socialism, equality of sexes, small family norms and scientific temper.

I will now share the following two points with you:

- ***Develop the 'will' to live together and in peace***

Like a body without soul, education is a meaningless mechanical process of self-survival if it does not incorporate love and respect for humanity and mankind, if it does not teach an individual to surrender his gross self-interests to the welfare, peace and prosperity of society, nation and international community. There is a great truth in W.H. Auden's words. "We must love one another or die."

- ***We must 'not' lose our roots***

As a tree cannot survive without roots, an individual cannot withstand the challenges and vicissitudes of life unless he is thoroughly rooted in his culture. Culture and education are the two sides of a coin; and education is incomplete if the individual does not feel proud of his culture and heritage. This does not mean that we should overlook infirmities that have crept into the system over the years. We should develop respect for other cultures and see merit in their customs and different world perspectives.

#### **1.4 Teacher Education and Nation Building**

We are looking forward regarding the certain features which make teaching effective. Some of the important points those are:

- Success of teaching depends on how often and how deeply students are involved in the game of learning.
- Does the teacher fully motivate the students and does he develop their inquisitiveness and curiosity to learn on their own?
- Does the teacher stimulate students to ask questions?
- Does the teacher contextualize his teaching?
- Does the teacher make evaluation an integral part of his teaching?
- Is the teacher warm and receptive towards students?

- Does the teacher give individual attention?

The above are some of the important points on which every teacher should thoughtfully reflect. This is only an illustrative list. Many more points can be added on. But the main point is that a teacher-educator has to orient teachers in such a way as to help them develop right attitudes towards teaching.

Apparently, many persons may not see any direct link between teacher education and nation building. But there is one. The youth builds the nation, the teacher shapes the youth and the teacher-educator helps to develop the teachers. Looking at the education system, we see that most of us (as teacher educators) emphasize on transmission of knowledge. A teacher is not only a transmitter of knowledge but also a guide, philosopher, counselor, motivator and facilitator for the students.

We should also keep the second point in view that knowledge, skills, and attitudes do not exist in separate watertight compartments. All of them mutually influence each other. As teacher-educators, we should always emphasize on development of proper skills, knowledge and inculcation of right values among teachers and students. If teacher-educators adopt the right attitude they would develop as better teachers who in turn, would ensure better student learning which would ultimately result in nation building. But, if they fail, their negligence has colossal consequences.

Nation building and man-making are the ultimate objectives of education. Education plays an important role in developing national economy, social cohesion, international understanding and world peace. But, we also see terrorism, violence, tensions, social and fissiparous tendencies. The only way of hope lies in education. Although education is not the cause of all social evils nor can it remedy the multiple ills and malfunctioning of the society, yet it is a critical input which can develop right attitude and right values among students. Teachers can transform the personality of students and develop among them curiosity and inquisitiveness and thus develop a new world. Teacher-educators should constantly guide teachers on how to make teaching a joyful experience, how to present content in the socio-cultural context and how to provide right perspective to educational problems.

#### **1.4 Roles, Responsibilities and Accountability of Teacher Educator in TEI's**

The teacher education must empower one and all to be "Resourceful, Competent and Capable with skills and abilities, inculcating the values required for changing times". There is a need for providing a quality mindset through education a quality mindset through education

by making our teacher-education more effective and impact-making through 'curriculum development, faculty training, evaluation changes, linkages and having institutional identity' and Education in general and teacher education in particular has therefore to be more meaningful and rewarding.

#### **1.4.1 Role of Teacher Educator in Teacher Education**

In our society, a physician is responsible for the health of his patients; a civil engineer is responsible for the durability of buildings, roads and bridges. Similarly the Teacher Educator is held responsible for the nation building. In another words, he is called as "Social Engineer."

Following are some of the core areas where Teacher Educator must concentrate and apply it in his day to day academic teaching schedule.

- **Ensuring knowledge**
- **Up-gradation of knowledge**
- **Access to equipments**
- **Use of new technology**
- **Edu-sat project to meet the challenges**
- **Quality assurance**

##### **a) Ensuring knowledge:**

Management is a challenge. Once teachers understand that they are not only to teach but also to learn about "how students learn" and how s/he can facilitate learning; it will positively help in their professional development. Now the teacher's role is changing from information giver to advisor, guide, coach, co-learner, mentor resource, technology manager and mediator to the students.

Some strategies can be specified for Teacher Education Institutions regarding knowledge management.

- ❖ There is a need to develop "Thinking, Interaction & Expression".
- ❖ Innovation is therefore necessary to convert the new knowledge into new products and services. Creative insight, sensitivity, vision, versatility, focus and preserver are the qualities to be developed among learners.
- ❖ The preparation and up-gradation of human resources in any field require long term and sustained effort.

**b) Up-gradation of knowledge**

For the relatively recent change from the term Information Communication Technology & Communication Technology (ICT) due to the convergence of information technology and communication, technology has opened up new challenges for education. ICT can immensely help the teaching-learning process. For this purpose, it is necessary to create in the teachers an awareness of the possibilities of the information and communication technology.

**c) Need for access**

The selection of technological tools will depend on costs, technology infrastructure and learner access to the technology, facilities available to create digitized knowledge resource and individuals commitment to sustaining the venture. Long-term competence programs can work along where educators/teachers and students use ICT in their daily work and daily learning experiences.

**d) Use of new technology**

There is a growing demand for an interactive satellite-based education system in the country. The challenge is to produce such teachers who can handle the ICT effectively and are capable of using it in developing teaching-learning material, access information from the Internet, use of digital library, customize lessons by consulting world library available on web, and create a forum for chat for likeminded people to interact with each other in real time.

**e) Edu-sat Project to meet the challenges**

The success of Edu-sat project will substantially hinge on educational software development, accuracy of the content and its authenticity and credibility. A new educational program based on intensive use of ICT has begun to take shape and is radically transforming the teaching-learning process, school practices and educational institutions themselves. The innovations in the field of ICT are taking place very rapidly but changes in pedagogical practices and mindset of teachers are at a much slower pace.

**f) Quality Assurance**

Since teacher preparation follows a top-down approach, maintaining the quality in the teacher's performance depends on the professional preparation of teacher educators. Teacher educators, in turn, need quality training from Master trainers, providing periodic refresher courses, professional enrichment sandwich courses, orientation in emerging areas like special education, value education, environmental education, human rights education. Teacher

educators must be encouraged to have minor and major research projects in these areas; similarly membership in professional enrichment bodies needs to be made obligatory.

The role of teachers can be visualized under different parameters. These parameters are:

1. Teacher's role in relation to students.
2. Teacher's role in relation to society and the nation.
3. Teacher's role in relation to profession.
4. Teacher's role in relation to ethical values.
5. Teacher's role in relation to pursuit of excellence.

#### **1.4 Conclusion**

The European commission Report ' Commission on Teacher Education' (2007) in the very beginning observes, research shows that teacher quality is significantly and positively correlated with Pupil attainment and it is the most important within school aspects explaining students. The road to an educated, enlightened and an empowered India can be laid only by competent and dedicated teachers and teacher-educators on whom the entire edifice of education is constructed. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century is going to be an entrepreneurial society and teachers have to move towards this desideratum. India is on the verge of entering a Golden which will positively enable our country to reach the destination-to become a "Super Knowledge Power" by 2020. Given the commitment and team performance at all levels with science and technology at our command and having made education effective at all levels through information pathway. author clearly foresee India achieving the desideration through the confluence of tradition, spirituality and modernity.

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