



A STUDY ON THE POLICIES OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

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Abstract

India has a long tradition of learning and education right from the antiquity. History of teacher education is classified in two periods from pre independence period to post independence. Teacher Education in India starts from the ancient times starting from the Gurukul system. Teacher education in pre-independence period was divided in Upanishadic period, Buddhist period, medieval period, Modern period. This paper is an attempt by the researcher to study policies of teacher education in pre independence period. India has the largest system of teacher education in the world. Development of society depends upon the dynamic nature of its educational system.

Key Words: Teacher, Education.

Introduction

Teachers' are the kingpin of any educational system. It is said that teachers affects eternity; nobody can tell where there influences stop. From the ancient times teaching has been considered as a noble profession in India. Teacher education in India has a long historical perspective. As we all know teachers are the largest professional group involved in human development activities. "If a nation's teachers are C3, the nation itself cannot but be c3. And let there be no doubt about this--if we wish to be an A1 nation, our teachers have to be A1" writes Dr E.A. Pires. John Adams describes the teacher as a "maker of a man". Teacher education system plays a crucial role in shaping the education system of a country. It is expected that teacher education programmes should enable teachers to develop the knowledge and disposition required to meet the complex demands of the classroom. According to the ancient theory of education, the training of mind and the process of thinking are essential for the acquisition of knowledge. Teacher education has its root in the ancient system of India. In India the teacher has always enjoyed a prominent position in the system of education and his behaviour has been watched with utmost care and caution from the earliest days.

The Upanishadic Period

In the Vedic period, the teacher enjoyed a very special status and position in the society. He was held in high esteem by the society and this was due not only to learning and scholarship, but also to qualities of head, heart and hand. The teacher was an embodiment of good qualities, a fountain of knowledge and an abode of spirituality¹. The selection and preparation of a teacher was done with much rigour. According to the Rigveda, a teacher was selected and then he was educated or trained effectively. The teacher in this period must have been passed through the recognized curriculum and have fulfilled all the duties of a Brahmachari before he was allowed to become a teacher. Later on teachers came from this caste of Brahmins and it became a hereditary profession. According to Manu, the son of the teacher sometimes helped his father, by teaching in his father's place. The teacher was also sometimes helped in his work by some of the older and abler student who acted as monitors. This monitorial system, which was a method of inducting pupils to the position of teachers, was the contribution of the ancient education system. Teaching in the Upanishadic period was known for the personal attention paid to the student. As the word Upanishad (sit close) connotes there was an intimate relationship between the teacher and the disciple. The freedom to accept a disciple rested with the teacher, but once he accepted a disciple it became his moral duty to see that the disciple grew. Similarly, a disciple or student had the freedom to choose his teacher. Knowledge was transmitted orally (since writing developed later) and explanation was one of the important method of teaching. The methods used by teachers were emulated and adopted by the disciples and handed over from one generation of teachers to another. The transmission of methods through initiation and repetition continued. Good teachers devised their own methods and made the matter interesting and meaningful to students by day-to-day examples². Methods and techniques of teaching were very simple. There was no formal system of teachers training in ancient period.

The Buddhist Period

During the Buddhist period an important feature was monastic system. In this period the any enlightened person from any class of the community may get the status of a teacher after a vigorous training. Formal teacher's training started in this period comprising seven centuries. Teachers who were monks were trained for spreading the spirit of Buddhist religion to

¹ Dr. R.S.S.Nehru and Dr.N.V.S.Suryanarayana, *Teacher Education*, 2013, p.22.

² Dr. R.S.S.Nehru and Dr.N.V.S.Suryanarayana, *Teacher Education*, 2013 , p.23.



people. To get status of a teacher, one was kept under the supervision of the teachers from whom he learned the elements of morality, proper conduct and training in Dharma. When the supervisors were satisfied, they gave a certificate that one is fit for the profession of teaching³. The method of training teachers in Buddhist period was known as monitorial system. Teaching was a noblest profession in Buddhist period. The teacher employed several methods besides oral recitation such as exposition, debate, discussion, question-answer, use of stories and parables.

Muslim Period

In medieval India the reputed scholars and theologians earned name and fame by their scholarly works and were appointed as teachers in Makhtabs, the schools for Muslims. During this period the Allama's or the scholars came to deliver a lecture through which the teachers were greatly benefitted. Sultans also provided opportunities to these scholars to develop their education. Libraries also serve as a rich source of knowledge of teacher education. In Mughal period the great emperor Akbar, helped scholars and teachers to earn renown. Education was mainly teaching of Quran. In this period educated people available in the country or Arabia were appointed as Molvies in the educational institutions. Only Mohammadans were allowed to teach in Madarsahs⁴. One system which continued from ancient period to medieval times was the monitorial system. Students helped their teachers as monitors for the assistance of teachers in conducting the class, maintaining discipline and giving lessons. Thus they received good practical training in the art of teaching.

British Period

The educational system of India was changed according to their need, own system and philosophy. Their major goal was to educate Indian children according to British system. Formal system of teacher education started in the hands of Britishers. At Serampore (West Bengal) Danish Mission first established a formal training centre for teachers in India Thereafter, Calcutta School Society was established in 1819 which trained teachers of native school on the basis of monitorial system. In this period, the educational boards of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta established few training centers where the teachers of primary schools imparted training. In 1826 first normal school was established with the finances of the British Government in Madras. It prepared teachers for the district schools. Later this normal school developed into the Presidency College. IN 1847 Bombay started a normal school in the Elphinstone Institution and in 1849 Calcutta too had a normal school. The number of primary schools was increased and three more training schools were set up at Agra, Meerut and Varanasi. A number of Government training schools were also set up in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Wood's Despatch

Wood's Despatch was known as the Magna Carta of English education in India. This despatch advocated for the first time the need for establishing teachers' training institutions and for giving stipends to pupil teachers. Wood's Despatch recommended that allowances should be given to persons who possess aptness for teaching and who are willing to devote themselves to the profession of school master. Wood's Dispatch urged the establishment of training schools in each presidency in India.

Stanley's Despatch

In the year 1859, Stanley's Despatch laid greater stress on teacher training. In 1859, the new grant in aid rules provided that salary grants to schools are given for those teachers who had obtained a certificate of teacher training, the training of teachers received a remarkable attention as a result of this measure. There was an increased expansion of teacher education on normal school training for primary teachers. In the year 1882, there were 106 normal schools, though the total enrolment at these schools was low. These schools provide pedagogic training for teachers of primary schools. Stipends were given to teachers receiving training from Presidencies. Separate schools for female teachers were also established each class.

The Indian Education Commission

The Indian Education Commission was considered as the second milestone of Indian Education. This commission provided some definite directions for improving the teacher education system in India. The commission made some valuable suggestions for developing the teacher education system in India. It aim was to strengthen and reorganise the existing the system. The commission highlighted on the establishment of a number of normal schools for secondary teacher training throughout the country. It also recommended for a examination to be conducted on principles and practice of teaching and only successful candidates should be appointed as a teacher in secondary schools. The commission also recommended separate training programmes for graduates and under graduates. As a suggestion of the commission training colleges were

³ Shashi Prabha Sharma, *Teacher Education, Principles, theories and Practices*, 2012, p.13.

⁴ Shashi Prabha Sharma, *Teacher Education, Principles, theories and Practices*, 2012, p.14



established for the first time and soon six training colleges came into existence⁵. Till 1917 Madras College was recognised as the only exclusive training college for secondary school teachers. In 1889, Lord Curzon was appointed as the Governor General of India.

The Government of India's Resolution on Educational Policy

The most important educational documents which laid down the policies for the future educational system were Government of India's Resolution on Educational Policy, in the year 1904. This is one of the most important educational documents which laid down the policies for the future educational system. It made some very vital suggestions for the improvement of the teacher-training Programme. These were:

(a) Training Colleges

The Resolution enunciated that if Secondary Education was to be improved then the teachers should be trained in the art of teaching. There were five teacher training colleges in all at places like Madras, Kurseong, Allahabad, Lahore and Jabalpur. Intermediates or Graduates could seek admission to these Colleges. The general principles upon which the training institutions were to be developed, were,

1. To enlist more men of ability and experience in the work of higher training,
2. To equip the training colleges well,
3. To make the duration of the training programmes two years and for graduates, one year. The course would comprise knowledge of the principles which underlie the art of teaching and some degree of technical skill in the practice of the art,
4. The course would culminate in a university degree or diploma,
5. There should be a close link between theory and practice and practicing schools should be attached to each college. These schools should be fully equipped with well trained teachers whose examples the students should emulate. They should have good Library and Museum. There should be a close link between the training colleges and the school, so that the students do not neglect the methods learnt in the college. The students should be occasionally brought together again and the inspecting staff and the training college authorities should try that the influence of the college is felt in the schools.

(b) Training Schools

The Resolution recommended opening of more training schools, particularly in Bengal. The normal schools were mostly boarding schools where students with vernacular education came for training and were given stipends. They received general education combined with the instruction in the methods of teaching and practice in teaching. The Resolution recommended a minimum course of two years. It mentioned courses of training specially suited for teachers of rural schools. Thus, it can be observed that the recommendations and suggestions of the Resolution were of far reaching importance. Some of the suggestions of the Resolution were not implemented and several recommendations were implemented, some changes took place in the field of teacher training. Universities instituted B.T. degree for-graduate teachers. Rethinking on the syllabus improvements in facilities etc. were the outcomes of the Resolution. The second resolution on educational policy pinpointed the weakness of the system and suggested many useful measures with regard to improvement of Primary education. The Resolution suggested that teachers should be drawn from the class of the boys whom they will teach and they should have passed the middle vernacular examination and undergone a year's training. It suggested periodical repetition and improvement courses for teachers. The resolution emphasized that no teacher should be allowed to teach without a certificate and that there should be a constant exchange of ideas amongst the training college staff members and that they should visit different colleges.

Sadler Commission (1917)

The Calcutta University Commission was set up under the chairmanship of Dr. Sadler. The commission recommended that a Department of Education should be created in the university of Dacca and Calcutta. It also suggested the need for attaching a small experimental school in addition to a large practicing school, to a training college. As a result of the recommendations of the commission the number of training colleges increased. It was noticed that due to the recommendations of the commission Departments of Education Teacher –training curricula were improved. The recommendation of the Sadler commission had salutary effect on the teacher training programme in India. Mysore University started a faculty of Education in 1925.

⁵ Dr.Gaurav Singh. *Teacher Education*, 2013, p.7.



Hartog Committee (1929)

The work started by the Sadler commission was carried on by the Hartog Committee. According to the commission, the success of education depended on the quality of the training, the status and pay of teachers. The commission suggested that the standard of general education for primary teachers should be raised. It also suggested for lengthening the duration of training period, making provision of adequate staff for training institutions and improvement of service conditions of primary school teachers to attract and retain better quality of teachers⁶. As a result of these recommendations, the system of teacher training that was prevalent in the country was reoriented more on progressive lines. In 1932 a new degree of B.Ed was started for the first time by Andhra University. Bombay University started the post graduate degree in education the M.Ed in 1936. Some important changes took place in the educational scenario of the country. The Central Advisory Board of Education was revived. Basic Education was started by Mahatma Gandhi in the year 1937. Training was given to teachers to teach in Basic schools. Later on a Basic Training College was set-up at Allahabad and the Vidyamandir Training school was started at Wardha in 1938.

The Abbot- Wood Report: The report submitted in 1937 is again a landmark in the field of education. It made valuable suggestions about teacher education. The report suggested that the duration of training should be three years to enable the pupil to continue with general education along with professional training. It also suggested a refresher course for the teacher so that he could get a wider experience. There was development in the percentage of trained teachers from 56.8% in 1937 to 61.3% in 1942. In the year 1941, there were 612 normal schools out of which 376 were for men and 236 for women. These schools also provided one or two years training.

The Sargeant Report: Sargeant Report, 1944

In 1944, the Central Advisory Board of Education drew up a Scheme. As Sir John Sargeant was the educational advisor of the Government of India at that time, it is known as the Sargeant plan. The objective which the Board set itself was to create in India, in a period of not less than forty years; the same standard of educational attainment on had already been admitted in England. With this end in view, the Report provides for:

- a. Pre primary education for children between 3 and 6 years of age.
- b. Universal, compulsory and free primary or basic education for all children between ages of 6 and 14.
- c. High school education for 6 years beginning after the higher secondary examination, for selected students.
- d. A university course of 3 years beginning after the higher secondary examination for selected students.
- e. Liquidation of adult illiteracy and the development of a public libraries system in about 20 years.
- f. Full provision for the proper training of teachers required for the implementation and continuation of the scheme.
- g. Creation of employment bureaus.
- h. Education of the physically and mentally handicapped children.

The Sargeant plan was bold in concept and went much further than any other official scheme published until then. It was comprehensive in scope and tried to meet almost every problem of Indian education. It promised higher remuneration to teachers with a view to attracting a better type of person and raising the social status of the profession. According to the suggestion of the report suitable boys and girls should be inducted into the teaching profession after High School; practical training should be provided, refresher courses be planned and research facilities be provided. The non-graduate in high schools was to undertake two years training where as the graduates for one year training. To attract better teachers it also made proposal to revise pay scales for all category of teachers. Refresher courses are also suggested as they were of utmost importance and should be provided for all types of teachers and mainly those in remote areas. Facilities were also provided for research and selected teachers were encouraged to study educational methods in foreign countries.

Conclusion

Before independence teacher education was established as one distinct component of the educational system. There were different institutions providing teacher training. On the whole we can conclude that during this period, the increase in training facilities was not adequate. During the first quarter of the twentieth century an attempt was made to infuse education with a national spirit. Major highlights were, education under Indian control, banishing the feeling of inferiority, education in Western knowledge and science, English language to be regarded as general subject and meeting inadequacy of vocational education. Teacher education in India has a strong historical perspective and a result of different outside invaders, social reformers and dominant educationist. In 1937 out of about one lakh secondary men teachers 43,000 were untrained. So, by

⁶ Dr. Gaurav Singh. *Teacher Education*, 2013, p.9.



1947, teacher training programme was quite comprehensive in India. At the secondary level, out of total 88,000 teachers, hardly 51% were trained. There were about 649 training colleges. Number of secondary level training colleges was 42 only with an intake capacity of 3000 teacher. The expansion of teacher education was slow and inadequate in pre- independence period due to the efforts of Government machinery. Finally, we can observe the expansion of teacher education in pre-independence period in quantitative as well as qualitative aspects. Development of a country depends upon the development of its education system. Teacher education occupies an important place in the education system of Indian Universities. Qualitative improvement of school education is the foundation of the entire education system that depends upon the qualified and skilled teachers produced by the teacher training institutions.

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