State of Teacher Education in India and UK

Kiriti Bhusan Mandal  
A.T. Mollarpur D.D.S.N. High School  
West Bengal

Abstract:  
There is denying the fact that the deteriorating standards of secondary education can be attributed to the quality of teacher education in any nation as the products of teacher education are directly or indirectly responsible for these. The secondary level in education is a significant stage. Teacher education programmes have to respond to three major determinants: the stage specific developmental characteristics of the students, the courses of study they pursue and the academic qualifications the prospective teachers possess. At the secondary stage all three become distinctly different from that of the primary schools. It can be said that this stage is a preparation of higher level of education. So in this context secondary teacher education is also important in education field. The U.K. after the passing of the Education Act of 1944, and India after the achievement of independence in 1947, had undergone mementoes changes in the field of teacher education. Our educational set up influenced by the British systems of education, but our educational policy, principles, methods are separate from U.K. The present thinking and planning of teacher education at the secondary stage, in this country is based on 10 + 2 + 3 scheme of education. This scheme, essentially advocated by the Kothari Commission (1964-66). As an objective of secondary teacher education it is said that teachers shall have to take a global view of the new trends, strategies and practices, and focus on indigenous heritage and thoughts which could fit in the local and national situations. Whereas U.K. has its own special as the Kothari Commission has stressed its report with his popular lines that “Destiny of India is being shaped in classrooms”, the same holds good in case of secondary teacher education also. The present research study is not completely a historical study. It is partial historical and partial descriptive one. It is mainly a comparative study the purpose of this study is to focus those differences which make the secondary teacher educational system of India different from that of U.K. The secondary teacher education programme has been accorded a significant place in both of the countries in India and U.K. Both of the countries had a good historical background of progress in teacher education.

Keywords: Kothari Commission, historical study

Introduction:

In India, elementary schools provide education from Class 1 to Class 8. The children in these classes are generally aged between 6 to 14 years. It is the next stage after kindergarten (Pre-Nursery, Nursery, Prep or Lower Kindergarten and Upper Kindergarten). The next stage after primary education is Middle School (Class 6th to 8th). In most schools in North India, children in Classes 1st to 3rd are taught English, Hindi, Mathematics, Environmental Science, and General Knowledge. In class 4th and 5th the environmental science subject is replaced by General Science and Social Studies. However some schools may introduce this concept in Class 3 itself. Some schools may also introduce a third language in Class 5th or even in Class 4th. Sanskrit and local state language are the most common third languages.
taught in Indian schools. At some places, primary education is labeled as the education of Class 3rd to Class 5th and up to class 2nd as pre-primary education. This is because many new concepts are introduced in this class. Children are taught painting instead of drawing and colouring, exams are taken, and Word Sum Puzzle in maths are introduced along with geometry. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is the apex body for school education in India.\footnote{The NCERT provides support and technical assistance to a number of schools in India and oversees many aspects of enforcement of education policies.\cite{9}} In India, the various bodies governing school education system are:

- The state government boards, in which the majority of Indian children are enrolled.
- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) board.
- The National Institute of Open Schooling.
- International schools affiliated to the International Baccalaureate Programme and/or the Cambridge International Examinations.
- Islamic Madrasah schools, whose boards are controlled by local state governments, or autonomous, or affiliated with DarulUloomDeoband.
- Autonomous schools like Woodstock School, Auroville, PathaBhavan and AnandaMargaGurukula.

Primary/secondary education in India is segregated as Primary (1st standard to 7th standard), Lower Secondary (8th standard to 10th standard), and Higher Secondary (11th and 12th standard).

Elementary schools in England and Wales were publicly funded schools which provided a basic standard of education for children aged from six to 14 between 1870 and 1944. These were set up to enable children to receive manual training and elementary instruction and provided a restricted curriculum with the emphasis on reading, writing and arithmetic (the three Rs). The schools operated on a 'monitorial' system, whereby one teacher supervised a large class with the assistance of a team of monitors, who were quite often older pupils. Elementary school teachers were paid by results. Their pupils were expected to achieve precise standards in reading, writing and arithmetic such as reading a short paragraph in a newspaper, writing from dictation, and working out sums and fractions. Before 1944 around 80 per cent of the school population attended elementary schools through to the age of 14. The remainder transferred either to secondary school or junior technical school at age 11. The school system was changed with the introduction of the Education Act 1944. Education was restructured into three progressive stages which were known as primary education, secondary education and further education. In the UK, schools providing primary education are now known as primary schools. They generally cater for children aged from four to eleven (Reception to Year Six or in Northern Ireland and Scotland P1 to P7). Primary schools are often subdivided into infant schools for children from four to seven and junior schools for ages seven to 11. In the (diminishing) minority of areas where there is a "three-tier" system, children go to lower school or "first school" until about 9, then middle school until about 13, then upper school; in these places, the term "primary school" is not usually used. In the UK schools providing primary education in the state sector are known as primary schools. They generally cater for children aged from four to eleven (Reception to Year Six; in Scotland Primary One to Primary Seven). In areas that adopted a three-tier system, the term primary school is often used as an alternative to First School, taking in ages up to 9 or 10 years old, although for education planning purposes, the term "primary education" in these areas will still cover the age groups as in a two-tier system. In the private sector, fee-paying schools
which provide primary education are known as preparatory schools, and they often cater for children up to the age of thirteen. As their name suggests, preparatory schools are designed to prepare pupils for entrance examinations for fee-paying independent schools.

The teacher education programme is constantly making efforts to bring the teaching programme in a respectable level, bring all people engaged in this profession on an equal level. The various aspects of teacher education are different of these two countries.

The curriculum pattern, evaluation system, practice teaching programme, qualification of admission from all these perspective it can be separate the secondary teacher educational programme of these two countries. Such as the methods of practice teaching does not differ too much but the curriculum pattern or vocational teacher training is totally several from one another. From this comparison it can be said that the secondary teacher education programme of U.K., is more progressive, vocational and flexible. It helps to inculcate the intrinsic and extrinsic values of professional competency, professional commitment and professional ethics. Our present secondary teacher education is faced some difficulties which affect the quality of teacher education. To analyze the programmes of secondary teacher education of U.K., some features will be revealed which enable to set and monitor the standard of our teacher education programme.

Result and Discussion

Problem:

Teacher education by its very nature is inter-disciplinary. The major areas of inter-disciplinarity implicit in teacher education programmes include philosophy, sociology, anthropology, economics, history and culture. Teachers shall have to take a global view of the new trends, strategies and practices, and focus on indigenous heritage and thoughts, which could fit in the local and national situations. The profile of a teacher, which emanates from the context and concerns, necessarily implies additional roles, besides the conventional ones. An understanding of the emerging Indian society and factors and forces operating behind it are essential for developing educational insight among teachers. The knowledge of various components of secondary education in the academic stream will enable them to understand its nature, purpose, philosophy and problems. They will be aware of the curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation techniques relevant to this stage and acquire the knowledge of psychology of teaching, learning and transacting the curriculum and action research to solve day-to-day problems. Teachers will acquire knowledge of the methods of teaching in depth and develop related competencies by means of the specialized programmes. To produce teachers with academic and professional excellence, teacher education programmes contains three components viz. academic study, educational theory, practicum / practical work. The teacher must himself be a learned person, because organization of learning is his main concern. There is hardly any wonder if they command greater respect in society and earn more than teachers whose training programmes are as varied as trees in a forest and who follow no system to upgrade their information base and even if followed, majority of such systems are either poorly administered, To ensure this the knowledge, attitude and aptitude of the entrants has to be properly assessed and then the required skills and pedagogical inputs be provided through training. This demands of the teacher training institutions : modification in the existing admission rules, practice teaching programme, curriculum, teaching methods followed by the teacher educators, and evaluation procedure.
The secondary teacher education is the backbone of the educational system. The crucial and most different task involved in teacher education is to generate a supply of teachers with match in quality, quantity and type the needs.

In the present age of technology there are very difficulties to spread the field of teacher programme. During these times of rapid social change and world uncertainties, this survey views systems of teacher education in the various countries as moving and changing entries where efforts to resolve problems are changing constantly.

A few concluding words seem in order to attempt to synthesize some of the key points which have emerged during the preceding discussions and to draw some conclusions.

The underlying assumption throughout this work has been a belief that teachers and teaching are an important factor in the success or failure of the students in secondary schools all over the world. In India there is a difference in what teachers are able to achieve is they are trained, and yet more of a difference if training has been of a certain quality. Though some changes take place in our secondary teacher education programme. Interaction between the institution and the community is gaining importance in the modern context. The component of assessment, evaluation and remediation has been added. But the teacher training reflect the tensions and contradictions that invariably lie at the heart of educational policy. This is partly truth in the field of teacher education in U.K. Recent developments in Britain have been marked by a profound, and some would argue revolutionary and irreversible.

In sum, secondary teacher education needs to be very carefully examined and, whilst giving due attention to the contextual factors, attempts should be made to improve the actual processes of training.

While looking at the overall current status of teacher education in India, one finds a mixed picture. On the one hand, there exist teacher education institutions, which have made a mark in the field of teacher education by promoting excellence, and on the other hand, there are teacher-training colleges which do not have even the minimum physical facilities and may be rated as substandard. This, however, is not the whole story. Some of them have been engaged in experimentation and innovation to keep pace with the new developments in pedagogy and allied sciences. But, still there is much to be done. A large number of teacher education institutions need overhauling. The entire system is faced with certain grave problems and issues, which need to be resolved. There is much scope for improvement, especially, in the qualitative aspects of teacher education.

State of Isolation:

About three decades ago, Education Commission (1964-66) had talked about the isolation of teacher education system from other educational institutions. A teacher training college is not only isolated from schools in the surrounding area but also from other teacher education institutions. Similarly, the department of education in a university remains isolated from other academic departments in the university. There is very little interaction between an academic department and education department in the university.
Similarly, colleges of education receive inadequate and insufficient support from university departments of education and SCERTs, and the linkages between them are very weak and ineffective. Therefore, there has to be a planned and sustained effort to establish linkages between teacher education institutions and apex bodies on the one hand, and between teacher education and school education on the other.

Regional Imbalances:

Due to unplanned and ill-planned expansion of teacher education, there has been a wide gap between demand and supply of teachers in certain areas. In some regions of the country, there are surplus trained-teachers resulting in the serious problem of their employment, while in some other parts there is acute shortage, like in the North-East, of teachers and untrained teachers have to be employed. Therefore, planned efforts have to be made not only to establish new institutions in some areas, but also to check the mushrooming growth of substandard institutions in certain other areas. There has been an enormous growth in the number of substandard institutions in teacher education and corresponding downfall in the quality of training imparted in them. At the same time, there are reports of grave mal-practices in the admission of students, appointment of teachers and utilization of funds.

Inadequate Physical Facilities:

A sound professional training requires sufficient physical facilities in terms of both men and material. It is the group of the qualified and competent teacher educators and good classrooms, library and laboratories that make a good teacher education institution. A large number of teacher education institutions suffer from inadequacy of physical facilities, laboratories and related equipment are not available, libraries, if available, do not have good books and journals, classrooms are also not adequately furnished, and the overall learning environment is not conducive. In certain cases, teacher educators are neither sufficient in number nor satisfactory in quality.

A large number of teacher training colleges do not have experimental schools attached to them. These institutions find it difficult to carry out the practice teaching programmes of trainees effectively. Whatever practice teaching is being done is on the traditional lines. This situation has to be carefully studied and improved.

Commercialization:

During the last five decades, there has been an enormous growth in the number of substandard teacher training institutions many of them being indulged in grave malpractices. Several of them are now offering B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses through correspondence / distance education mode the suitability of which is being questioned and doubted in the professional circles as well as in the general public. These institutions are charging very high fees from the poor students, most of which come of lower-middle stratum of the society. This practice is highly undemocratic and unjust. These practices, not only lead to the downfall in the quality of training, but also encourage commercialization of teacher education. Although, universities have laid down norms for such institutions / colleges including those for staff requirement, admission process, examination process, practice teaching and physical
facilities, yet these norms are not strictly followed. Moreover, these norms, as prescribed by the universities, are not very rigorous.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to stop commercialization of teacher education programmes resulting in dilution of standards, by developing strict and national level norms.

Duration of Courses:

In general, the teacher education programmes for elementary school teachers are of two years' duration, and those for secondary school teachers these are of one-year duration. There is a general feeling these days that one-year B.Ed. programme is inadequate to meet the demands of the profession in view of the multi-dimensional development in various related aspects such as school curricula, information technology, knowledge of the subject matter. They have to become effective and result oriented to these programme. These are not possible to be achieved within the short span of one year. Hence the need to increase the duration of the present B.Ed. programme from 1 year to 2 years.

Limited Scope:

The teacher education institutions cannot function in isolation from the other components of the education system. Their programmes must be influenced by changes in school education, because the main target of training institution is a ‘school’. Any change in the nature, purpose, quality or character of school education throws new demands on teacher education and reinforces the process of programme evaluation and re-adjustment, especially in the area of curriculum reconstruction.

Prospect:

Keeping in view the previous discussion, may give some recommendations as follows:

An overview of the preceding details would bring into focus the duration required to transact the curriculum to ensure achievement and objectives of teacher preparation at this stage.

Professionalism involves its own compulsion and pressure. It needs a change in attitudes and values systems of the teachers.

Increasing the duration of the B.Ed. programme.

Recently there has been some change in the curriculum pattern in field of secondary teacher education in India. Educational Technology, technical skills, are used in the training programme. The application of educational technology, informatics, telematics, cybernetics etc. have yet to make a discernible headway. But the learning resources, wherever, available in the training institutions and the community as also in the schools, have not been optimally utilized.

In U.K. system of secondary teacher education the curriculum pattern depends on the practical work whereas in India the stress is given upon theory. Therefore we can follow the
curriculum pattern of teacher education in U.K. through such a training approach takes longer and hence costs more money. Our educational system, social system is different from U.K. But a change should be provided in our curriculum.

Besides criteria for admission to colleges of education, every college may have an “Admission and Selection Committee for looking after this work and for finalizing admissions which the Principal as its Chairman.”

Before practice teaching and internship in teaching, the demonstration lessons in various subjects be arranged.

The criteria for renewal of the license and tools to assess the teachers may be developed through, seminars, workshops, in which the evaluation experts and experts of teacher education be involved.

The isolation of secondary teacher education should be removed.

In sum, teacher education needs to be very carefully examined and, whilst giving due attention to contextual factors, attempts should be made to improve the actual processes of training. A different, more inquiry-oriented and interactive approach to training is proposed.

Bibliography:

- Don Adams. “Introduction to Education— A Comparative Analysis”. Y.K. Sharma; Comparative Education; Nicholas Hans; Comparative Education.