

NEED FOR QUALITY TEACHERS FOR QUALITY EDUCATION IN INDIA.

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Abstract- The spectrum of interesting critical issues related to ‘quality’ was brought to light during the SRHE Academic Practice Network conference on 22-23 June 2021. The conference Qualifying the debate on quality attracted my attention. The key characteristics of high-quality teachers highlighted by the study are commitment, love of children, mastery of subject didactics and multiple models of teaching, the ability to collaborate with other teachers, and a capacity for reflection. The idea that teacher educators are self-made, good classroom teachers who can transmit these skills and knowledge into higher education institutions without formal training as teacher educators should be examined decisively. Systems need to be established for teacher educators to be formally trained at levels beyond that of ordinary classroom teachers. The goal is to illuminate teacher quality – what it is and how it’s captured, measured, and promoted – with an eye toward ways that it engages the whole structure of teacher recruitment, preparation, induction, evaluation, support, and career development. As the following articles illuminate, teacher quality can be the basket into which we place our idealized notions of teaching. It can also be a discursive space for healthy debate and consensus-building around continual improvement. It is a policy lever that allocates resources, power, and values. It is only semi-visible and, like a solar eclipse, perhaps best viewed indirectly. And, finally, it is rarely systematically investigated – especially in a form that crosses contexts, cultures, countries, and constituencies. Teacher training is critical to improving the quality of education in India. While there are several challenges, there are also many opportunities to improve the quality of teacher training. The government, private institutions, and civil society need to work together to address these challenges and create a system that provides quality teacher training. Teacher training is an essential investment in the future of education in India.

Keywords: United Nations (UN), Points-Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Education International (EI), Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

INTRODUCTION:

The key characteristics of high-quality teachers highlighted by the study are commitment, love of children, mastery of subject didactics and multiple models of teaching, the ability to collaborate with other teachers, and a capacity for reflection. Ascribing the label of “quality” to education has different meanings and interpretations in different conditions and settings. ‘Quality’ depends on geographical boundaries and contexts, with consideration given to quality assurance, regulations, and established standards using certain measures (Churchward and Willis, 2018). Attaining ‘quality’ can therefore be elusive, especially when we try to address all the layers within an education system. The United Nations’ sustainable development goal number 4 is aimed at offering ‘quality’ education for all in an inclusive and equitable climate. But this quality education is to be provided by teachers, with no mention (as is generally the case) of the direct input of teacher educators who sit at the apex of the ‘quality chain’. These teacher educators work in higher education institutions and are tasked with the responsibility of formally preparing quality classroom teachers. The classroom teachers in turn would ensure that our students receive this inclusive equitable quality education within schools and other learning institutions.

Although the lack of attention to teacher educators’ professional development is now receiving more attention, as reported in the literature, this once-forgotten group of professionals who make up a distinct group within the education sector needs to receive constant support and continuous professional development. This attention will enable them to offer improved quality service to their student teachers. Without giving teacher educators the support and attention they deserve, quality education cannot be realized in our classrooms. Sharma (2019) reminds us that every child deserves quality classroom teachers.

The idea that teacher educators are self-made, good classroom teachers who can transmit these skills and knowledge into higher education institutions without formal training as teacher educators should be examined decisively. Systems need to be established for teacher educators to be formally trained at levels beyond that of ordinary classroom teachers. However, their CPD should be fostered under the experienced supervision of professors who themselves have been proven to be 21st Century aware in the areas of technological pedagogical content knowledge, as well as other soft skills. No one should be left untouched in our quest to provide quality education for all. We must be serious in simultaneously addressing the delivery of quality education at every level of education systems. Our children deserve quality classroom teachers and quality teacher educators hold the key. It is multifaceted like this for several reasons. One is that teaching itself is always contested, context-dependent, and tied to values and politics. Another is that good teaching will always be both personal and professional. It’s one of those professions, like ministry or psychotherapy, that necessarily invokes the ‘personness’ of the specialist while also relying on the professional expertise employed. And a third reason for the complexity of teacher quality is that, because it can be a concrete mechanism for change, it is also a site of power. It straddles the need to standardize teaching and the desire to leave teaching partly subjective. It apportions resources, systems, and clout. As Ivan Illich once said in a lecture I attended, ‘A *problem* can be seen as an imputed lack which turns into more money and power for the problem solver. Taken together, these eight pieces are meant to introduce complementary ways of examining educational policy, teacher quality and teacher education in the global 21st century. It is our hope that this collection of

articles will not only advance teacher development and research on teaching in the countries. Education International (EI), a Belgium-based organization, defines quality education as one that focuses on the social, emotional, mental, physical, and cognitive development of each student regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or geographic location. It prepares the child for life and not just for testing. In 2012, the United Nations for the first time included 'Quality Education' in their Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Further, education in modern times is highly influenced and dependent on Information and Communication Technology which has paved the way for students to attain school or higher-level education. Quality education not only prepares a student for a job but also develops the overall personality of an individual. In the case of children, it aims at their complete upbringing where morals and ethics are taught as part of the curriculum to help them live a healthy lifestyle.

The United Nations understand the supremacy of education for a brighter and prosperous future and is therefore of the consensus that quality education and not merely education should be a reality for all. In its Sustainable Development Goals, the UN has identified quality education as a major goal to ensure the 'transformation of the world' by 2030. By quality education, the UN implies equitable and standard education for all that will promote lifelong learning and the urge to gather knowledge. Inclusivity and equitability are the foundations to be upheld in quality education and not a greater literacy rate. This is a revolutionary approach to understanding education and making it the means of changing the world.

Importance of Quality Education:

We all are aware of how technology changing the face of education. Not only has the mode of receiving education changed but the methods of teaching students have also evolved. Earlier, education was more of a monologue, but nowadays, teachers encourage students to maintain a two-way flow of information in classrooms. United Nations has identified a multitude of problems at the global level that if not addressed can lead to serious problems. To tackle such issues, the need for leaders and experienced professionals who are adept in their respective fields has grown. To encourage leadership and power to influence the students, it has become imperative to employ a refined way of teaching practices. In the age of technology, information can be accessed from anywhere in the world. Even though providing quality education demands great efforts to shape the personality of a student, with the advent of new technologies, a student is just a click away from requisite resources. While sitting hundreds of miles away from an educational institute, the students can take online classes from the institution, avail benefits of counseling, and access a great volume of resources from free online libraries.

Objectives of Quality Education:

Everyone can participate in their ways to provide quality education around the world. Here are some of the targets that the UN has set for 2030 in this section:

- By 2030, ensure that there is free primary and secondary education for girls and boys for effective learning outcomes
- By 2030, ensure that both girls and boys have access to quality early development and pre-primary education
- Ensure equal access to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education
- Increase the number of people, both youth and adults who have relevant skills for employment, jobs, and entrepreneurship
- Eliminate all discrimination in education
- Ensure universal literacy and numeracy
- Ensure education for sustainable development and global citizenship
- Ensure the building and upgrading of inclusive and safe schools
- Expand higher education scholarships for developing countries
- Increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries

Problems of Quality Teachers in Education :

- Current teacher training in India is unable to cover tough spots and follows a 'one-size-fits-all' approach.
- India is dealing with a scenario of significant teacher vacancies, which are to the tune of almost 60-70 percent in some states.
- there are over one lakh single-teacher schools present across the country.

Challenges of Teacher Training in India

While teacher training is essential, several challenges must be addressed in India. One of the significant challenges is the shortage of qualified, trained teachers. There are not enough qualified trainers to train all the teachers who need it, which can result in poor quality training. Another challenge is the lack of standardized training programs. There is no standardized curriculum for teacher training in India, which can result in inconsistent training quality and content. Additionally, some training programs may not be relevant to the specific needs of teachers or may not address the challenges teachers face in their local context. Some of the limitations are as follows:

Outdated Curriculum: The teacher training curriculum in India is outdated and does not reflect the changing needs of the students. The focus is often on rote learning rather than practical and experiential learning.

Inadequate Infrastructure: There is a shortage of quality training institutions and facilities in India. The existing institutions lack the necessary infrastructure to provide quality training to teachers.

Insufficient Resources: The government's allocation of funds for teacher training is often inadequate. The resources available at present are insufficient in meeting the needs of the growing number of teachers in the country.

Lack of Qualified Trainers: The country has a shortage of qualified trainers. The trainers themselves must be trained to provide quality training to the teachers.

Teacher training Institutions at different levels in India

In India, teacher training is conducted by various organizations at different levels, including the government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private institutions. Some of the key organizations involved in teacher training at different levels are:

1. **National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE):** The NCTE is a statutory body that sets standards for teacher education programs in India. It also researches teacher education and provides guidelines for teacher training institutes.
2. **State Council of Educational Research & Training (SCERT)-** It is a state-level organization responsible for developing curricula, textbooks, and teacher training programs that also conducts in-service training programs for teachers.
3. **District Institute of Education and Training (DIET):** The DIET is a district-level organization that provides pre-service and in-service training to elementary and secondary school teachers. It also conducts research and provides support to schools in the district.
4. **State Institutes of Education (SIE):** The SIE is a state-level organization providing pre-service and in-service training to teachers. It also develops and evaluates teacher education programs.
5. **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** Many NGOs are involved in teacher training in India, particularly in rural and remote areas. These organizations provide in-service training, mentoring, and support to teachers in government schools.
6. **Private Institutions:** Private institutions like universities and colleges offer teacher education programs. These programs are typically more expensive than government-funded ones but may offer more specialized training and support.

Overall, teacher training in India is conducted by various organizations at different levels, aiming to improve the quality of education & provide teachers with the skills & knowledge they need to be effective in the classroom.

Concluding Observations:

Teacher training is critical to improving the quality of education in India. While there are several challenges, there are also many opportunities to improve the quality of teacher training. The government, private institutions, and civil society need to work together to address these challenges and create a system that provides quality teacher training. Only then can we ensure that every child in India receives a quality education to prepare students for the 21st century.

Without debate, it can indeed be said that teacher training is a critical component of school education in India. It can help to improve the quality of education, reduce teacher turnover rates, and better equip teachers to meet the needs of students. While challenges must be addressed, teacher training is an essential investment in the future of education in India.

Given the shortage of trained teachers, teacher training in Northeast India has been a priority for the government & other stakeholders in recent years. One of the challenges in Northeast India has been the shortage of qualified trainers and training institutes. In some cases, teachers have had to travel long distances to attend training programs, which can hinder participation. The lack of standardized training programs has also been a challenge, as it can result in inconsistent training quality and content.

However, efforts have been made to address these challenges. For example, the government has established training institutes such as the North Eastern Regional Institute of Education (NERIE) and the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) to train teachers in the region. These institutes offer training programs, including in-service, pre-service, refresher, and induction training. Efforts are essential in improving the quality of education in the region and ensuring that teachers are better equipped to meet the needs of their students.

Whatever progress our society has made over the centuries is because of education. Being the foundation stone of society, education brings reforms, helps in progress, and paves the way for innovation. The importance of quality education cannot be undermined in a society, which is why great personalities have extensively written on its need in a civilized society. It is because of education, that humans have been able to explore the vastness of the universe and the mystery of its existence in atoms. The concepts like gravity, cognitive dissonance, laser-guided surgical procedures, and millions more would not exist if education were not there to unleash our potential. In the 21st century, some countries are lagging in the race for quality education.

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