A STUDY ON THE PRESENT PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN TRIPURA WITH ITS REMEDIES.

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ABSTRACT

Teacher education is an essential component of the educational system. Teacher education programs are one of the means of organized education. It trains would-be teachers and in-service teachers as well. A nation is built by its people and citizens are molded by the teachers and the teachers are made by teacher instructors. The intention of the present paper is to improve the teacher education quality in Tripura by focusing on the up-and-coming issues and related concerns. Teacher education is meeting a lot of challenges due to the varying needs of learners and society. Quality of school education depends on quality of teacher education.

Therefore it is high time that every stakeholder related to teacher education to share their views to develop the quality of teacher education. We are conscious that Tripura has to address the need of supplying well qualified and professionally trained teachers in large numbers in the coming years and at the same time the huge backlog untrained teachers (about 21,000 above) in the system. Moreover, every year about 5500 students are completing their graduation from different Govt. degree college of Tripura and among them about 3000 aspirants are willing to pursue teacher education programme (B.Ed.). But considering socio-economic structure at present in Tripura two Government teacher training institute specifically IASE-Kunjaban and CTE-Kumarghat are providing Pre-service teacher education programme (B.Ed.) where intake capacity 250 only.

The present educational situation of the 21st Century has become prone to emphasizing more on quality rather than quantity. In facing up to many challenges to teacher education in Tripura, this article will provide the scope for new teacher education for the upcoming. In this article, an endeavor to bring together the main issues facing teacher education in Tripura relating to the capacity, motivation and accountability of teachers to achieve improvements in learning outcomes of learners, UEE, Right to Education and quality education.

Key Words: Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Education, Problems and Challenges.
Introduction

Tripura is the third smallest state in India with a total land area of 10,491.69 sq.kms and a inhabitants of 36, 71,032 (2011 census). Its geographical location – a land locked north eastern state, bounded on three sides by Bangladesh and poor connectivity to the mainland through a circuitous land route via Assam, adds to its sense of isolation and deprivation. Tripura was a princely state ruled by the kings of Manikya dynasty that decided to join the Indian Union in October 1949 and was part of the Union Territory for 23 years. It attained full fledged statehood in 1972 after the freedom of Bangladesh. The Govt. of Tripura is striving hard for accomplishing the target of total literacy and for excellence in education. At present on literacy rate of Tripura is the highest (about 97 percentage) among all the state in the country. During the last five decades, we have seen certain efforts have been made to improve of teacher education programme in Tripura, but it is not sufficient with the changing scenario of teacher education.

The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has defined teacher education as “A programme of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher education level.” Teacher Education encompasses teaching skills + sound pedagogical theory + professional skills. –W.H. Kilpatrick.

The teacher is required to obtain adequate knowledge, skills, interests and attitudes towards the teaching profession. In present day situation, the teacher’s work has become more complicated and technical in view of the new theories and pattern of teacher education programme prescribed by NCTE. The NCF-2005, requires a teacher to be a facilitator of children’s learning in a manner that the child is helped to construct his/her knowledge.

Teacher and his education are very significant aspects of any nation. The education gives a new shape to the individual and nation as well. As far as in-service teacher education in concerned the situation is not very encouraging in Tripura. The quality of teacher education programme has shown signs of worsening. It may be one of the major reasons for low qualities of the teacher education programme that increases of quantity of the teacher education institutes in Govt.of Tripura should think about to maintain the quality of teacher education programme.

Statement of the Problems:

In Tripura the present teacher education and training programme are considered unsuitable. The exists a continued mismatch between institutional capacity and required teacher provide resulting in shortage of teachers. The problem is acute in the state where enormous backlog of untrained teachers. In 2005 special permission was granted by NCTE to the state to clear its backlog of nearly 22,000 untrained teachers by getting them trained by IGNOU in the ODL mode. Two
parallel courses were conducted for the graduate and undergraduate teachers respectively. The undergraduate teachers underwent the CPE Training (Certificate of Primary Education) and the graduate teachers took the CETE training (Certificate Course in Elementary Education). Both these courses were of 6 months duration. Simultaneously the state started to take steps in getting the DIETs recognized by NCTE to enable them to offer regular 2 year D Ed programmes in the face to face mode. However the courses that were started in 2008 had to be discontinued from 2010 as the institutes failed to enroll students when it became apparent that these trainings did not make them eligible for jobs even when there was an acute shortage of trained teachers in the system. (JRM Report, 2013) After implementation of Right to Education Act in 2009, six (6) months certificate course for in-service teacher became insignificant. This is a big challenge in front of State Government.

As many as 21,157 untrained teachers working in different government schools of Tripura have become a major problem for the left front government in the state for getting financial support from the Centre.

After adoption of RTE Act in 2009, like a few other states, Tripura also got relaxation of five years for completing training for all school teachers as per norms. But still 9541 of 12,130 undergraduate teachers, 6985 of a total 10,807 graduate teachers have been left untrained.

In Post Graduate Teachers, only 1756 teachers have been working without having basic training. However, there are total 2875 teachers working under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) who have not any basic training.

On the other hand, there is shortage of under-graduate, graduate and post-graduate teachers in many schools. According to the official record, there is shortage of 1,979 under-graduate teachers in many schools though those schools require 14,109 teachers.

Likewise, the schools are having shortage of 4,019 graduate and total 1500 post graduate teachers. The education minister said that they didn’t find qualified teachers in large number in the Teachers’ Eligibility Test (TET) conducted in last year”. (Source: UNI, NELive.in). The capacity of train teacher is also very limited. Research, experimentation and innovations in teacher education remain very limited. These deficiencies have brought about erosion in the professional identity of teachers and the status of teaching as a profession. Community-based teacher education also challenges teacher candidate’s assumptions about the issues of gender, race and multi-cultural diversity. Due to different flagship programme initiated by recent development of Govt. of India and U.E.E, there was a natural increase in the demand for teachers. Added to this after implementation of RTE-Act the
backlog of untrained teachers in the system and the essential requirement of pre-service teacher certification for appointment as a teacher led to mounting pressure on existing institutional capacity.

During the last decade, new thrusts have been posed due to rapid change in the educational, political, social and economic context at the implications of RTE Act 2009. The central Government shall develop and enforce standards for training of teachers. Existing teachers not possessing prescribed qualification would be required to acquire that qualification within a period of five (5) years, i.e., by 2015. But till today in Tripura above 21,000 untrained teachers in the system. The Govt. must ensure the pupil-teacher ratio. Vacancy of teacher in a school shall not exceed 10% of the sanctioned strength.

Importance and need of quality of teacher education:

It has been aptly remarked, “If you educate a boy, you educate one individual. If you educate a girl, you educate the two whole families and if you educate a teacher, you educate the whole community.” It is the need of the hour to bring and modify the teacher education programme at universities, and colleges to reflect on its objective curriculum transactions. According to Rabindranath Tagore, “A teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame.” We are aware that till today we followed an orthodox teacher education programme which is not facing the 21st century needs and aspiration of future teacher. Every individual must be in a position to keep learning throughout his life.

The idea of life-long education is the key stone of the learning society. Teacher education has become responsible activity in terms of what is needed and desired in elementary, middle and secondary school. Due to commercialization of education and marketing of services of teachers, teacher educators and teaching require a radical transformation. The school of yesterday and today are not the kind of schools we need for tomorrow. So, we need new strategies, new processes and a new mindset for the preparation of teacher for year 2030. Teacher education programmes that seek to develop with a proper planned towards extensive interactions. To teach student-teacher’s life skills, the teacher educators themselves are to be exponent in life skills; for teacher’s can teach only what they have learned and train only what they acquired. Hence, teacher education programme should ensure that intending teacher’s have a sound grounding in life skills. “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”-Mahatma Gandhi. As stated by NCTE (1998) in quality concerns in secondary teacher education, the teacher is the most important element in any educational
It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for implementation of the educational process at any stage.

**Objectives of the present study:**
1. To know the problem and challenges of teacher education.
2. To provide the some remedial measures of teacher education.

**DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY:**

The course curriculum of teacher-education programmes is very large. There are various types of teacher-Education programmes such as D.El Ed. B.Ed., M.Ed. etc. But the present study confined on teacher- Education programme of B.Ed. only.

**Research methodology:**

The researchers have adopted descriptive methodology for this study. Research has been placed on secondary data sources such as books, journals, online database.

**Definition the term, Teacher Educators:-**

All those who actively facilitate the learning of student-teachers and teachers and involved in the continuing professional development of teachers.

**Analysis of the Statement:**

Research shows that teacher quality is significantly and positively correlated with pupil attainment and it is the most important within school aspect explaining student’ performance. Teacher education is said to be very significant investment for bringing qualitative improvement in education. If a revolution in education has to be initiated, it is the teacher-education which can be taken as a starting point.

A lot of stress is given on teacher training course in Tripura; unfortunately there are several loopholes in the system. With the fast pace of expansion of the higher education system, improving the quality of teaching and teachers has become a crucial factor. Greater attention on ensuring that the best talent joins teaching profession, their initial preparation before their induction into teaching and continuing professional development should be given, in the contact of efforts for fostering quality education.

The teacher education training is necessary for all types of teachers. It is really amazing, need for primary and secondary teachers has been emphasized by many commission and
committees but there are few who realize the need for training the college teachers also. The idea has been propagated by top educationists of the country. But prior to this UGC has also organized certain type of orientation programme and refresher courses for college Teachers. There is a total absence of pre-service teacher education in colleges and Universities - a defect which needs to be remedied. Besides mastery of subject many other things are developed through training. The new teacher will have to integrate the skills of teaching with his life style and also to help the students to develop not only intellectually but also emotionally.

Competence and professional skills are the very heart of the programme of teacher education. The teacher of tomorrow would design a teaching situation conducive to the growth of pupil’s mental health. It would develop in them a commitment to a set of values.

The ultimate values of his professional endeavour bear on the habits of living and thinking. The most effective weapon of teacher is the silent example of his own power. A part from all this, most teachers do not seem to be concerned with the method and quality of teaching done by them is good, bad or indifferent teaching.

Institutional structures imparting teacher education in Tripura:-

At the state level:

The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) and College of Teacher Education (CTEs).

At the district level:

Pre-Service and In-service training is provided by District Institute of Education and Training (DIET).

At the block level:

Block Resource Centre (BRC), Cluster Resource Centre (CRC), this are for in-service training, financial support is largely provided by the Govt. under SSA, RMSA. Under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) 20 days in-service training is provided to school teachers, 60 days refresher course for untrained teachers and 30 days orientation for freshly recruit’s teacher.

The aims and objectives of teacher education Programme:-

The aim of teacher education of the modern time is to develop the competent teachers endowed with rich knowledge and expertise in preparing the future citizen, enabling them to face the challenging of 21st century. University Education Commission opined that the objective of teacher education should be formulated, keeping in view the following task of the teacher. “The right kind of teacher is one who possesses a vivid awareness of his mission. He, not only loves his subject, but he loves also those whom he teaches. His success will be measured not in terms of percentage of passes alone, not even by the quantity of original contribution of knowledge-
important as they are, but equally through the quality of life and character of men and women whom he taught.”

Some Objectives of teacher education Programme are as follows:

1. Developing proper aptitude and attitudes towards teaching.
3. Imparting an adequate knowledge of the subject matter and methods of teaching.
4. Equipping the prospective teachers with pedagogic skills and technique.
5. Enabling the teacher to acquire understanding of child psychology.
6. Enabling teachers to make proper use of instructional facilities.
7. To prepare a curriculum policy and framework for teacher education which is consistent with the vision of National Curriculum Framework (NCF).
8. To facilitate co-operation and collaboration between institutes of teacher training and colleges.
9. To inculcate in the educands the ideals, and accepted behavior patterns of the society in which we live and whose purposes we serve.
10. To develop in the teacher trainees certain values and interests in conformity with the ideals of democracy and our developing economy.
11. To help in the conservation of environmental resources and preservation of historical Monuments and other cultural heritage.

Challenges in teacher education:-

In the context of privatization globalization, teacher education programme is facing number of challenges. At the same time, there is thrust areas pedagogical obligation curriculum design, instructional strategies, assessment techniques management etc. to be looked into and develop. The educational process is not only mediated by classroom-based curriculum transaction but also by media, both electronic and print, information and communications technologies (ICTs), books and journals etc. Learners today have access to more current knowledge through non-institutionalized means. The number of students increased so the teacher’s task is now quite difficult as concern to guide the student and in providing the sufficient time to every student. Teacher Education
Programme is being given a step-motherly treatment. Most of Teacher Education institutions are being run lack of proper facilities like proper laboratory; separate hostel facilities of boy and girls. We know that society has great expectation from educational system. To fulfill the aims and objectives of teacher education programme, some challenges regarding teacher education programmes are as follows:

1. Traditional curriculum and teaching methods in the teacher education programme.
2. Inadequate duration of the teacher education programme.
3. There is no uniformity in teacher education programme.
4. Lack of teacher commitment to the profession.
5. Inculcating among teachers, love for the country and appreciation of various national concerns.
6. Incompetent teacher educators and improper organization of teacher education.
7. Unhealthy financial condition of the college of teacher education.
8. Present curriculum of teacher education programme not flexible and not based on the current educational research.
9. Lacking of feedback mechanisms.
10. Developing among teachers an understanding of the impact of forces like Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization (LPG) and ICTs.
11. Fostering among students interest for life-long learning and developing their capacity to reconstruct the knowledge into wisdom and apply the same in life.
12. To build up the co-operative and friendly attitude among the teachers in teacher education programme is one of the challenging tasks. Without co-operation and collaborative approach, it is quite impossible to achieve the objectives of teacher education programme.
13. Enhancing among teachers the proper understanding of modern technique of evaluation.
15. From 2015-16, NCTE has revised teacher education programme for two (2) years. So it is challenges to work with changing teacher-student ratio. The number of students increased so that teachers’ task is now quite difficult as concern to guide the student and in providing the sufficient time to every student.
Remedial measures towards teacher education Programme:-

With changing scenario, teacher education programme should also reconstruct the principles of teaching learning process. Now-a-days the field of education is not confined with books only but has broadened in various new horizons. Govt. should come out with a concrete, specific and detailed Programme of Action for implementing of teacher education. Teacher education must meet much higher standards. The focus must be on what teachers need to know and able to do. Development and changes in education have affected teacher education necessary review and reforms.

1. Government run teacher education institutes should set up immediately, at least two new CTEs should be established, one is in Shantirbazar, South district, and another at Teliamura in Khowai district.

2. Encourage public-private partnership (PPP) model is teacher education institutes with nominal fee structure considering the Socio-economic structure of Tripura where about 60 percent population are BPL category.

3. Strengthening and re-structuring of SCERT and IASE. IASE may be upgraded to Deemed University Status.

4. Training for educational administrators, teacher educators including HM/AHM of School Education Department. Orientation course, Refresher course, induction training, conferences, seminars, symposium should be encouraged for the teacher educators for Professional development.

5. A Teacher education department should conduct special innovative programmes such as seminar, conference, talk-fest, team-teaching, panel discussion and projects sponsored by the faculty members for improvement of learning in various spheres.

6. Re structuring of DIETs and establishment of Block institutes of teacher education (BIETs) for augmenting teacher education capacity in SC/ST and minority concentration areas and especially in TTADC areas.

7. Rigorous inspection should be done on a regular basis by NCTE and DHE to all Govt. and private teacher education institutes in terms of IQAC.

8. To face the challenges of huge number of aspirants for pursuing B.Ed. programme, four years integrated B.A. B.Ed. and B.Sc. B.Ed. course should be start immediately.
9. To face the challenges in 21st Century teacher education should have to change the old traditional curriculum. Teacher education programme should concentrate on physical education, value and peace education and its implication, use of ICT etc.

10. Training institutes should also interlink with academic life of the university as well as from the daily problems of the school. It is said that the training institutes are remained isolated from the main stream and often called Island of Isolation.

11. Teacher education institutes should start the publication of teacher education bulletin, start the guidance and counseling centre, start the courses under the scheme of learn and earn.

12. All educational agencies like NCTE, Tripura University Education Dept, DHE, SCERT, IASE, CTE, TRBT, DIET, BRC, CRC, should work together with transparency and with quality attitude to improve the quality of teacher education institutions.

13. Devotion, honesty and commitment of the teacher’s for imparting excellent education is very important.

14. Tripura Education Service (TES) should be formed with immediate effect considering vast teaching research and other administrative experience of in-service tracer’s of state and central cadres. A separate cadre will be created for appointment of staff in SCERT, secondary teacher education institutions and DIETs. Persons selected to this cadre will receive incentives such as housing and placement in a higher scale of pay special arrangements will be made to ensure their continuing education.

15. Education department should set up in newly established M.B.B. University to develop programme in teacher education, studies and research in education.

16. Establish Academic Staff College for teacher educators in Tripura to make them aware with new techniques and methods.

17. The state Government should make adequate provision for funds for teacher education departments. Govt. should provide special incentives for student-teachers during their four months long internship programme and set an example to rest of the country.

18. Select excellent teacher educator considering their experience, research and on excellent competencies.

19. Publication of “Teacher Education Journals” from Tripura with the help of school education department of Tripura focus on emerging issues and problems of Educational sector.
FINDINGS:

In Tripura only one IASE, 5 CTEs and 4 DIETs are conducting teacher education programme among them 4 CTEs are private aided institution. These institution providing teacher educations with huge amount of course fee. The principal and the teachers are on contract basis. There is no substantial research going on in improving teacher education in Tripura. It has been observed that every year about 5500 students are completing their graduation from different Govt. degree college of Tripura and among them about 3000 aspirants are willing to pursue teacher education programme (B.Ed.). But at present in Tripura two Government teacher training institute namely IASE-Kunjaban and CTE-Kumarghat are providing Pre-service teacher education programme (B.Ed.) where intake capacity 250 only. So there is a huge competition of taking admission in the B.Ed course. Moreover, there are another four (4 ) Private teacher-training institutes were established in Tripura rightly say in Agartala centric location along with huge amount of course fee more than Rs.1 lakh to 1.5 lakhs range compare to only Rs.60/ in govt. run institutions like IASE and CTE. Considering socio-economic structure of Tripura, it is really a problem and challenge for rest of the aspirants who are willing to pursue teacher education programme (B.Ed.).

Discussion of problems and challenges about teacher education with different educationists and a deep study was conducted on it. During the study it is found that major issues are working teacher education institutions, erosion of value, structure of teacher education programme, realization of constitutional goals, developing creativity and life skills, social issues and development of ICT. Most of the teacher education programmes are being conducted in a routine and visionless manner. At present SSA training programme have excluded the teacher educators and have been confined to in-service teacher training alone.

The pre-service teacher education sector has been kept away from the SSA training. As a result of all these, teacher education has become close to a farce in the state. In view of insufficient of Govt. run teacher education Institute SSA training programmes should incorporates pre-service training and tie up with IASE and CTE. Value education has been neglected in present teacher education curriculum. At present teacher education emphasizes methods of teaching and ignores knowledge of the subject matter. It is not integrated in terms of theory and practice. Poor link between school and college education. The faculty of the most teacher education institutes is not very competent. The Yashpal committee report (1993) “Learning without Burden” recommended that the emphasis in teacher preparation programme should be on enabling the trainees to acquire the ability for self-learning and independent thinking.
Conclusion:

An integrated effort should be required for improvement of Teacher Education programme in Tripura for future perspective. Teacher Education prepares the teachers to help learners meet the challenges of life, so that teacher education programme should be structured and modified in a way that enables them to respond dynamically to the new problems and challenges in the field of education, then only teacher can help in national development. National values and goals need to be meaningfully reflected through Teacher education programme. Teacher education has not come up to the requisite standards. Since Tripura has a composite culture, so more thrust should be on multicultural education and culture-specific pedagogy.

Teacher education may not remain conventional and static but should transform itself to progressive dynamic and responsive system. In the era of fast growing and expending knowledge, it is very important to adopt the changing situation as early as possible. The faculty also needs exposure to debates and researches in education. For this the library needs to be urgently updated and the faculty needs to organize academic orientation programmes by inviting resource persons from institutions outside the state also. Develop a systematic plan of individual and collective professional development of faculty members with their participation with adequate provisions for promotion, study leave, attend conferences and seminars within and outside Tripura and undergo refresher and orientation courses at academic staff colleges including those conducted at JNU, University of Delhi etc. No doubt a lot of stress is given on teacher education programme in Tripura during last decades. Unfortunately still there are several loopholes in the system. Challenges in teacher education must be made easier by strong will power of stakeholder, teacher determination, and educational planning.

After the deep study and healthy discussion with educationist, I came to this conclusion that State Governments, and different educational bodies like, IASE, CTE, SCERT, TRBT, DHE should join the hands to bring the quality and improvement in the teacher education, then bright future regarding the teacher education in Tripura is possible.

From this seminar we have an appeal to all for making a society in Tripura whose name will be Tripura Teacher Educator Association (TTEA) for quality increase and facing the different problems and challenge in teacher education.
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