

STRENGTHENING TEACHER EDUCATION IN BIHAR

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Abstract

India is the youngest country today due to its youth population and if the nation has to be the power centre of the world it has to channelize the potential of young Bharat. Population Dividend cannot be obtained without developing a system to direct the energy of the Young India and no need to say that education is the answer to all these questions. Teacher and her education have their bearing on the quality of education that is the prerequisite for quality manpower. Teacher education does not bear the responsibility of the preparation of quality teacher up to desirable level. India in general and Bihar in particular need to strengthen its teacher education preparation system. Perhaps Bihar is the poorest potential state in terms of teacher education preparation mechanism, especially in the area of secondary teacher education. Only Patna University has Faculty of Education and Department of Education. There are few government colleges providing B.Ed. and M.Ed. study facility. Vacancy in these institutions has not been full-filled since long. As per the two years B.Ed. programme the Bihar Cabinet has to sanction new and more posts and that is also pending. Development of Faculty and Department of Education in every university of the state, sanction and creation of posts for two years B.Ed. & M.Ed. programmes, preparation in advance for the implementation of four years integrated B.Ed. programme, timely appointment of required faculty members, proper funding, implementation of Criterion Referenced Evaluation in teacher preparation & selection, etc. are some of the measures that can enrich the secondary level teacher preparation programme of the state.

Keywords: Teacher education, Bihar, strengthening, potential state, population dividend

Teacher Education and Human Development

Out of all the available resources human resource is the most important resource as without trained skilled, educated and dedicated human resource no resource can be utilised properly. In

fact, without the capable & enriched human resource every available resource whether natural, time or material are of no use or futile. India, the youngest country of the world, is that most capable country of the globe today due its young human resource. The challenge before the nation is to utilise its population dividend by converting the available human resources into skilled & trained mass through scientifically managed manpower planning. Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (1996) concluded in this matter as, "The absence of manpower planning in teacher education and lack of proper co-ordination between planning and human resource development have been a matter of serious concern." The framework further stated that there are certain parts where there are surplus teachers and there is lack of trained teachers in some other parts. India has one fifth of the world total youth population. Around 65 percent of India's population falls under the age group below 35 years. As per the estimate of the Annual report by the year 2020 the median age of Indian population will become 28 as compared to the 38 years of China and other South Asian Countries. Median age in USA, China and Japan are respectively 38, 42 and 48. India has a favourable demographic profile due to its 27.5 percent population falling in the 15-29 age group bracket. Most of the countries of the world are facing the challenge of aging population, but India is in a comfortable and advantageous position. It is a well known fact that without proper quality education human resources cannot be developed. Quality education is possible only when we have a large pool of qualified, trained and dedicated teachers to nurture the potential of our young population. Praveen (2018) has narrated the situation in a nice way, "The global need for teacher education is greater now in the early 21st century than ever before. According to UNESCO half of the world's 195 countries will have to expand their stock of teachers significantly." School is the place where future of the country is being shaped and school can fulfill this duty only when this goal of shaping future population is being properly done by the teacher working in the school. Teacher preparation to play this role depends upon the education and the training she has received. Bahera (2018) has rightly concluded, "It is the quality of Teacher Education that decides the quality of human resources in a country." New Education policy draft finds teacher education in India in a very poor shape, "The integrity and

credibility of the teacher education system has unfortunately taken a great hit and witnessed a severe decline due to the thousands of "Teacher Education Institutions" that are solely commercial operations where little of any teacher education is taking place." The draft has also shown its concern for the improvement of the level of teacher education programme and has found its quality essential for the development of school education and ultimately the education system of the country.

Over the years teacher's status has been undermined by the government, the society and also by the teaching community herself. They are also facing challenges of increasing materialism in the social and educational system. In fact, teachers are expected to behave in the idealistic way though the system (social & educational both) has taken pragmatic shape gradually over the years. To deal with individual & family growing needs due to improvement in the overall life quality of the society and growing expectations from the part of the society & government have left the teachers in a state of conflict, contradiction and constrain. Teacher and teacher education have to learn to handle the crisis as they have to contribute some way or other to take care of the development and nourishment of the young population of the country. Teacher is the torch bearer of the society and character builder of the nation through its population development and there is no scope of exception in this matter. Education of teacher is even more important to prepare the teacher to handle crisis and to contribute judiciously to the development of society and nation and at large the humanity. To improve the overall quality of education better and brighter candidates have to be attracted in this profession. Kolluri (2019) reacts in the same manner, "The efficiency of any educational system mainly rests on the quality of the teachers. So the teaching profession must be made attractive. Right persons must be selected for the teaching profession."

Status of Teacher Education in Bihar

Bihar is a potential state, land of knowledge and place of many extraordinary institutions of higher learning. Land of Vishwamitra and Chankya, the famous teacher of the time, has not done justice with

its past glory specially in terms of the institutions meant for the preparation of teachers. Of course we have one of the oldest teacher education institution of undivided India in the name of Patna Training College, which was established in the year 1908, to cater the educational needs of the state and its surrounding states. This institution has also contributed the preparation of teacher education through its M.Ed. Programme very early in the country. To serve the development and research need in the area of teacher education the Patna University has developed its department of education. To cater the educational need of the female students a separate B.Ed. College has been established by the university. The faculty of education, Patna University, has three distinct units as Patna Training College (1908), Women's Training College (1951) and Department of Education (1954). In fact, the glory of the teacher education programme in Bihar has received a set back as no other university except the Patna University has neither developed its department of education, nor the faculty of education. The educational needs of teacher education & teacher preparation of the state is largely dependent upon the University of neighbouring states or on the Central Universities & national institutions. We have some good quality teacher education colleges managed and controlled by the state government, but our present day teacher education preparation is largely through private teacher education colleges which have grown very fastly to commercialise the status of teacher education of the state. Kumar (2009) has lamented on the dependency of teacher education needs of the state on private institutions, "Mushroom growth of private teacher training colleges after seventies and negative attitude of Janata Dal government towards teachers training harmed the teacher training programme in the state widely and intensively."

We are a potential state, state of large pool of young & energetic population, state of a large number of first generation learners, a backward state which is educationally backward as well, the state which is the heart of the nation through its resources and so its educational need cannot be given step motherly treatment by centre & state governments. This is the state which has a large number of youth populations whose capability cannot be used in national interest without providing them good quality education. The gross

enrolment ratio of the state in higher education is lowest in India, teacher-taught ratio to follow RTE act is also lowest in the country. We have already discussed that any resource is of no use if the human resource of the state is not being given opportunity to foster with the help of good quality education and healthy & enriched teacher preparation programme or system.

Along with the country the state is also doing much experiment in the field of teacher education and that too without considering the ground reality of the institutions and programmes and without estimating the financial requirement to support its structural and physical expansion. B.Ed. programme has become of two years duration from one year and now the country through its New Education Policy Draft Document (2019) is trying to make it of four years duration. Irony of the situation is that this is happening without any proper planning & advance preparation. We can not change the duration of the programme too frequently without required & needed subsequent changes. State government is still to sanction faculty and other required post as per the NCTE norm of two years B.Ed. programme, though in the state five batches have run. Three have completed the programme and two are running. No government institution is ready for four years B.Ed. programme, but some private institutions, have entered into the arena. Will the teacher education programme of the state be captained by these private managements? If yes, what will happen to welfare nature and social fabrics of the state? We have no way except to strengthen and develop government teacher education colleges in the state. We are needed to develop department of education and faculty of education in our all the universities and that too not under self financing scheme. We cannot plan for privatisation and we cannot keep welfare nature of education intact without strengthening & financing properly to the government educational institutions.

Steps for Improvement and Development

Teacher education in India in general and Bihar in particular is in a poor state. Its improvement is not essential rather inevitable as it is mandatory for the development of our young human resources. Following are few suggestions that may prove instrumental for the

expansion and development of teacher education in Bihar :

- to develop faculty of education in every university of the state,
- to establish department of education in every university of the state,
- to start M.A. education programme in every university besides M.Ed.,
- to add education as a subject in the list of Public Service Commission of the state,
- to sanction post for the government education institutions to cater needs for teacher preparation,
- to establish advance study centres in some of the universities of Bihar,
- to establish new institutions with advance planning and preparation,
- to start B.Ed. programme of changed duration only after preparing to fulfill the norm well in advance,
- to finance the teacher education judiciously,
- to minimise privatisation, shut down poor quality institutions and to restrict unplanned growth of teacher education in the state,
- to take a policy decision to decide the ratio of private and public funded teacher education colleges, in any case the ratio must be in favour of public funded institution as they are Welfare State with commitment of Inclusive Structure and Nature of Education,
- to employ Criterion-Referenced Evaluation besides Norm-Referenced Evaluation. BCF (2006) finds assessment and

evaluation as an important dimension of teaching,

- to prepare Academic, Cultural, Sports and Evaluation Calendar well in advance,
- to manage a balance between Scholastic & Non-Scholastic activities, and
- to sharpen the subject knowledge, knowledge of pedagogy, communication skill and Mechanism of Evaluation among the pupil-teachers to prepare a pool of balanced teachers.

Quality teacher education is the life line of any education system and NCF (2005) reacts in the same manner, "No system of education can rise above the quality of its teachers, and quality of teachers greatly depends on the means deployed for selection, procedures used for training, and the strategies adopted for ensuring accountability." In fact, conflict of ideology and social requirements must be taken care of when planning for revitalizing or restructuring the teacher education programme of the state. What the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (2000) has observed for the country is also true for a potential state of Bihar "The education system of a country has to be built on the firm ground of its philosophical, cultural and sociological tradition and must respond to its needs and aspirations."

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