Issues in teacher education

INTRODUCTION : There are many problems and issues plaguing the system of teacher education. Teacher preparation has been a subject of discussion at all levels, from the government, ministries, regulatory bodies, schools, to teachers themselves. 7.A.2 ISSUES IN TEACHER EDUCATION Major issues in teacher education concern the following: Proliferation of Colleges of Education Isolation of Colleges of Education Regional imbalances Alternative modes of teacher education Duration of teacher education programmes Examination system

Further there are issues related to the quality of the teacher education Curriculum Personal and social skills Competencies Subject knowledge ICT skills Context sensitivity New pedagogy for the global world

PROBLEMS OF TEACHER EDUCATION :

Several types of teacher education institutions thereby lacking in uniformity. 2. Poor standards with respect to resources for colleges of education. 3. Unhealthy financial condition of the colleges of education 4. Incompetent teacher educators resulting in deficiency of scholars. 5. Negative attitude of managements towards development of both human as well as material resources. 6. Uniform education policy of the government treating excellent institutions alike. 7. Improper selection of the candidates (student teachers) to be admitted.

Traditional curriculum and teaching methods of teaching in the teacher education programme. 9. Inadequate duration of the teacher programme. 10. Haphazard and improper organization of teacher education. 11. Unplanned and insufficient co-curricular activities. 12. Subjective evaluation pattern. 13. Practice teaching neither adequate nor properly conducted. 14. Feedback mechanisms lacking. 15. Objectives of teacher education not understood. 16. Secondary level teacher education is not the concern of higher education. 17. Lack of dedication towards the profession. 18. Lack of occupational perception

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF TEACHER EDUCATION :

There are some suggestions here for improving the condition of teacher education: 1. Teacher education, like higher education and technical education must be the responsibility of the central government. 2. Uniformity among teacher education institutions must be ensured and maintained in terms of curriculum, duration and timings of the programme. 3. Curriculum development on a continuing basis to keep pace with current trends. 4. Government should look after the financial requirements of the institutions. 5. Teacher educators must be well qualified and experienced with language proficiency. 6. Teacher educators to be trained in the use of ICTs. 7. Privatization of teacher education should be regulated. 8. Institutes of low standards should be reformed or closed. 9. Conditions for affiliation should be made strict. 10. Regular and rigorous inspection by NCTE should be done on a regular basis. 11. Selection procedure must be improved and interviews, group discussions along with common entrance test and marks should be introduced. 12. Duration of teacher education should be increased to two years. 13. More emphasis should be given on practice teaching till mastery is reached with appropriate feedback.

14. Internship should be of sufficient time (six months) and student teachers must be exposed to the full functioning of the school. 15. Evaluation in teacher education should be objective, reliable and valid. 16. Teacher pupil ratio should be ideally 1:8. 17. Several types of co-curricular activities should be included in the curriculum. 18. Professional development of teacher educators as ongoing ritual. 19. Refresher course should be organized frequently for teacher educators. 20. Research in teacher education should be encouraged. 21. Number of teaching days to be increased to 230 per year.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION :

According to Jan D. Timmer ―quality is a state of mind…the relentless pursuit of excellence, of never being satisfied with what you do, how you do it and how quickly you do it. There is always room for improvement. Everything can always be done better. Quality should be a part of our soul‖. Quality is perceived differently by different people. Quality is not something that is bestowed by others, it is attained and maintained as a result of ceaseless efforts. Quality of a product may be good for one but not for another because it does not serve the purpose.

.1 Concept of Quality : Quality refers to basic and essential character, the distinguishing element or characteristic of a product, service, organization or entity. Consumers look at these elements in deciding whether or not to buy particular products or services.

According to Bennis (1993) ―Quality often is not measured at all, but is appreciated intuitively. One‘s response to quality is a feeling, a perception that is connected intimately with our experience of meaning, beauty and values in our lives.‖ Quality has been defined by several management experts. The dictionary meaning of quality is ―the degree of excellence‖. Juran says quality is ―fitness of purpose‖ i.e. something is of good quality if it satisfies one‘s need. Deming is of the opinion that ―quality is a positive concept. Product or service which helps someone and enjoys good sustainable markets is of good quality. According to Crosby if a product or service conforms to requirements then it is said to be of good quality. Seymour opines that ―quality is continuous improvement‖. Quality and excellence are often used synonymously. In a sense, they trigger the same response when they are experienced. Gardener (1961), who wrote a seminal book on excellence, makes the point that ―there are many kinds of excellence—academic, professional, artistic, athletic and so on. Some form of excellence is fostered through education, some is not; some kind of excellence leads to worldly success, some does not; some form of excellence involves becoming while some involves being, excellence involves comparison, either with others or with oneself; excellence indicates action (it does not just happen) and requires the exercise of human will. That explains the frequently used expressions—the pursuit of excellence and the quest for quality. There can be poor quality, but not poor excellence.

In recent times some themes have become more significant including quality culture, the importance of knowledge management, and the role of leadership in promoting and achieving high quality. Disciplines like systems thinking are bringing more holistic approaches to quality so that people, process and products are considered together rather than independent factors in quality management. The influence of quality thinking has spread to nontraditional applications i.e. manufacturing, to service sectors such as hospitality, transport, and even education.

Customers recognize that quality is an important attribute in products and services. Suppliers recognize that quality can be an important differentiator between their own offerings and those of competitors. Applying this to the field of education, the customers of education, the students, parents and future employers recognize the importance of quality students i.e. the products of the system. In this sense the different educational institutions must provide the best of courses, and training in order to meet the demands of the students and future employers and try to give better opportunities than other competing institutions. From this discussion it is possible to identify certain characteristic of quality.

Characteristics of Quality :

• Quality is a matter of perception, not logic. It is the perception that resides outside the product, service or organization. Peter Drucker (1990) says ―the results of an organization are always outside the organisation. Inside, there are only costs. The result of a business is a satisfied customer, the result of a hospital is a healed patients and the result of an educational institution is a student who has something of value which he/she can use ten years later.‖ Thus, quality is perceived by the consumer.

• Quality is relative and not absolute: It is a matter of degree. Theoretically, there are no maximum or minimum limits. Quality improvement, like pursuit of excellence, is a journey without a destination. There is nothing that cannot be little better in some way or the other.

• Quality is subjective: The criteria for judging quality can be substantially different from people to people, based on experience, values and culture.

• Quality is a contextual idea: Indicators of quality are institution specific. A high rate of job placement of graduates is a legitimate indicator of quality for vocational-technical-professional

education programmes, but would not hold for humanities and liberal arts education. Each institution has a mission, a clear understanding of what it is, why it exists and what its primary obligation is. All functions and activities are informed by this mission. Assessment of performance and quality are valid only in terms of mission and goals.

• Quality can be measured inferentially: Like intelligence, motivation, attitude and other educational outcomes indicators of quality are established that serve as a basis of measurement.

• Quality is attainable: quality is not something that is bestowed by others it is attained and maintained as a result of ceaseless striving (Sapre 1999)

• Quality is applicable to the system and its parts: Quality is applied to each component of a system i.e. input-process-output.

Principles of Quality :

Quality management adopts a number of management principles that can be used by upper management to guide their organizations towards improved performance. The principles are: Customer focus Leadership Involvement of people Process approach System approach to management Continual improvement Factual approach to decision making Mutually beneficial supplier relationships

Quality in Education :

Quality has become a defining element of education in the 21st century in the context of new social realities. The information communication revolution, the knowledge economy and globalization are greatly influencing the ‗next society‖.

How to provide quality education to large numbers at affordable costs is the primary concern of developing countries.

Quality makes education as much socially relevant as it is personally indispensible to the individuals. In this sense quality becomes the defining element of education. In this context, quality and excellence should be the vision of every higher education institution including teacher education. Acquisition of quality and excellence is the great challenge faced by all higher education institutions.

Quality Management in Teacher Education :

Applied to the field of Teacher Education, quality refers to the totality of features and characteristics of the student teacher acquired as a result of the teachers education programme. If the expectations of the schools, students, parents and the society are met that indicates that the right type of teachers have been prepared by the teacher education institutions. And if the teachers continue to improve themselves then there is value addition in education (Feigenbaum, 1951). Such teachers will continue to meet the needs of the society. There is fitness of educational outcome and experience for use (Juran and Gryna 1988). There will be defect avoidance in education process (Crosby 1979) of teachers in a quality teacher education institution.

In any educational institution there are three aspects to be managed-academic, administrative and financial. Besides these there

are the human and physical resources to be managed to their optimum level. In other words management of input-processproduct is of utmost concern of the system of teacher education. If every component is of good quality then the final product i.e. the teacher will be perceived as fulfilling the needs of the consumers.

Quality in teacher education can be indicated by the ‗educatedness‘ of the products of the institution i.e. the student teachers. Quality teachers are indicated by their ‗educatedness‘ that they have achieved through their education and training. The teachers are well informed and possess knowledge about facts figures, concepts in their subjects. They are cultured and possess integrated personality which is warm, empathetic and ethical. One level ahead of being cultured is emancipation wherein teachers are individuals who rise above the known artificial boundaries of religion, caste, creed, gender, linguistic and geographic belongingness, social mores, cultural traditions and forms and treat their students fairly. Finally, teachers should achieve the best of potential already in them. However, if the following questions are answered by the educational institutions in general they will be able to achieve quality.

1. What key outcomes have we achieved? 2. How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders? 3. How good is our delivery of education processes? 4. How good is our management? 5. How good is our leadership? 6. What is our capacity for improvement?

Quality Indicators for Teacher Education (NAAC)

Curriculum Design and Planning Curriculum Transaction and Evaluation Research, Development and Extension Infrastructure and Learning Resources Student Support and Progression Organisation and Management

Quality refers to basic and essential character, the distinguishing element or characteristic of a product, service, organization or entity. Quality is a matter of perception, it is relative,

subjective, attainable, measured inferentially, and is applicable to the system and its parts. Providing quality education to large numbers at affordable costs is the primary concern of developing countries. If the expectations of the schools, students, parents and the society are met that indicates that the right type of teachers have been prepared by the teacher education institutions to impart quality education. The three aspects to be managed are academic, administrative and financial as well as the human and physical resources. In other words management of input-process-product is of utmost concern of the system of teacher education.