

Vol II Issue VI Dec 2012

Impact Factor : 0.1870

ISSN No :2231-5063

Monthly Multidisciplinary
Research Journal

Golden Research

Thoughts

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RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2230-7850

Indian Streams Research Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial Board readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

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Cell : 9595 359 435, Ph No: 02172372010 Email: ayisrj@yahoo.in Website: www.isrj.net**



INEFFECTIVENESS OF B.ED DEGREE IN PRESENT CLASSROOM SITUATION

RAJIV KUMAR NASKER

Assistant Teacher
Mallavpur Adarsha Vidyamandir
Urelchandpur, magrahat , South 24 Pgs , West Bengal

Abstract:

Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today

These words from Malcolm X sound relevant even today. The world we leave to our children depends in large measure on the children we leave to our world. Our hope for a better future primarily depends on the young citizen and their abilities to cope with the challenges of the 21st century. Thus education has been given a top priority in every country. India is no exception too. Article 45 of our constitution said "the state shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years." Though the commitment sounds very energetic, it has been hardly achieved even today. The responsibility for universal elementary education lies upon central government, the state Government and the local bodies and voluntary organizations. Each one has a significant role to play here upon which depends the progress of our nation. These institutions have to shoulder the new responsibility of maintaining high quality in education, which will cater the needs of the society.

But these institutions can only formulate laws. It is only and through the teachers these laws can only be put into practice. Teachers are the medium to achieve the goal set in our constitution. The present century demands crucial roles on the part of the teachers in shaping the young generation. They have to prepare the students not only to face the future with confidence but to build it with purpose and responsibility. They have upon them an enormous task of changing the world. "from narrow nationalism to universalism, from ethnic and cultural prejudice to tolerance, understanding and pluralism, from autocracy to democracy in its various manifestations, and from a technologically divided world where high technology is the privilege of a few to a technologically united world. Thus comes the importance of teacher education. Though it was believed in past that "Teachers are born and not made", the approach towards teacher education has now been completely changed. Nowadays teaching is regarded a complicated art with its own tricks, technicalities and intricacies. Besides a sound knowledge in subject, the guardian-educator must have a thorough knowledge of child- psychology, the new trends of teaching learning materials and the application of modern technology in the field of education. But does the existing provisions and system of teacher education cater the stupendous task of providing quality teachers? Is there a gap between what the trainee teachers are being taught and what they actually teach? The dismal situation of our school education (both Primary and upper Primary) will probably give us the answers of these set of questions in negative. With the experience of teaching in two remote schools of rural West Bengal, I will try to identify the deficiencies in the present education system which prevent a teacher to implement the theories taught in B.ED course. I will also try to find out the drawbacks in the present teacher education

system and thereafter with my very little knowledge I will suggest some recommendations to overcome the problems.

KEYWORDS:

Changing role of teachers in 21st century, Deficiency of present education system, Helplessness of the guardian educators, Importance of teacher education.

REASONS BEHIND THE INEFFECTIVENESS OF B.ED DEGREE

Soon after joining an institution with a B.ED Degree, a teacher is often found frustrated with the real life day to day experiences in the classroom. The dream of becoming an ideal teacher just vanishes from their heads and teaching is often equated with other professions. The reasons behind this dismal situation are not difficult to find out.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Most of the schools (especially in rural Bengal) lack infrastructure to implement the curriculum, methods and co-curricular activities practiced in the B.Ed programme. The class size and work load of the teachers are far from satisfactory. A sample survey by NCERT (J.C. Goyal and R.K. Chopra, Elementary School Teachers) showed that about 50 percent of upper Primary teachers teach four or more subjects. The teacher pupil ratio is often far from satisfactory. In some cases the ratio is 1:100. The number of class periods the teachers have to teach vary from 30 to 35 per week. Besides teaching, the teachers have to spend a fair amount of time on clerical work, census report, organizing relief work and helping in the smooth conduct of elections.

DISMAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

The dismal situation prevailing in Primary education often poses a challenge to the teachers of the upper Primary and secondary section. With the introduction of RTE Act, 2009 there is hardly any chance to judge the students' acquired knowledge before admission. So in class V the teachers are compelled to make them identify the alphabets. Moreover they have to deal with this illiterate or semi illiterate pupils for the next few years.

MIDDAY MEAL SCHEME

A well devised Midday Meal scheme can contribute to the advancement of elementary education, child nutrition and social equality. But due to utter mismanagement, it often causes serious disruption in regular school hours. Students are often found not giving full attention in studies. Students from higher sections ask teachers why they are not included in the scheme. A few teachers find themselves busy in calculating the heads and the percentage of food grains to be taken for them. In schools with no cooking sheds and dining hall, the midday meal is often cooked very close to the space where children are meant to be studying. Not surprisingly, teachers in these schools often complain that the sight and smell of hot food has distracting effects on the children.

NO DETENTION POLICY

No Detention policy implemented under the children's Right to free and compulsory Education Act is also responsible for making a teacher's life hell. Students are not mentally prepared to take examinations seriously. It has become more and more difficult for a teacher to conduct his duty smoothly. The students have stopped caring and are not serious about studies because they know they will be promoted easily. It's becoming hard for the teachers to keep them disciplined.

INEFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION

The inefficient and incompetent administrative officials are also equally responsible for the deteriorating state of education system. A government aided school is generally run by a managing committee with 6 guardian representatives. But due to some political intervention, these people are seldom found having distant connection with education. They are seemed to be busy with everything except school

education. Thus the duty and responsibility of a Headmaster increases manifold. But instead of monitoring what is happening in the classroom, the headmasters are found busy with official duties. He stands far away from the teaching learning process of the school. So there is none to tell or remind the teachers why they are actually paid for.

NO PLANNING ON THE PART OF THE TEACHERS

It must be admitted that to some extent the confused teachers are also responsible for the unhealthy classroom environment. As soon as a teacher finds his future secure in a govt-aided school, he/she tends to forget all the finer techniques and crafts of teaching that he/she had to practice rigorously in one year B.Ed Course. During practice teaching a trainee teacher has to complete a lesson plan for every single class he will take. But when it comes to regular school teaching, We will seldom find a teacher following it. How many of us use teaching aids to make our students understand the subject well? The answer will be very disheartening. The duty of a teacher ends with his fixed classes. Very few of us think about our students outside the classroom. On the whole there is a complete taken for granted attitude reigns among the teachers of today.

DEARTH OF TALENT AND QUALITY IN TEACHING PROFESSION

It must be admitted that profession of teaching does not lure the best talent of our society. Only the mediocre took up teaching when they find other doors are shut for them. It's a irony that future citizens are nurtured not by best persons available. Furthermore, lower academic qualifications are still acceptable for teaching in states like West Bengal. Even a person without a B.Ed degree can take his entry easily in school. Thus the lower academic standards of teachers are also responsible for the present grim scenario.

LACK OF REGULAR INSPECTION

In West Bengal we have nearly 60,000 Primary, Secondary and Higher secondary schools. It is very unfortunate that most of the schools are running without regular inspection. So, how can we expect them to impart quality education when there is practically no monitoring system? The condition of schools located in rural areas is even worse. Even after a gap of 4-5 years when an inspector comes to school, he seems to be very busy in collecting official facts and findings. So, Practical teaching learning process is utterly neglected by him. Thus nothing changes when it comes to the condition of classrooms. There is also a general apathy on the part of the government to fill up the post of school inspectors who are supposed to monitor the education system. With nearly half its sanctioned posts are lying vacant, they are aiming at a monumental task of starting school wise inspection.

POOR QUALITY OF IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

A mere pre-service education is not at all enough for such a demanding job like teaching. So, the teachers must have seminars, symposiums, and subject wise orientation programmes to make them aware and up to date with the recent trends in world education at a regular basis. Government funds are allotted for this purpose. But seldom this programmes yield fruitful results. They lack purpose and motivation. The organizers took this opportunity to spend the allotted money to have something in their pockets, whereas the teachers bunking the classes and thus depriving the students, spend the time in a picnic mood.

MUSHROOMING OF PRIVATE B.ED COLLEGES

Most of the Pre-service teacher training institutions are in the private sector. These below standard colleges are often found lacking in basic NCTE requirements. Still, they got NCTE affiliation and thus they seldom produce quality teachers. Without any regular classes, the trainee teachers just sit in the examinations and pass using unfair means. A huge demand for a large number of teachers (due to RTE ACT) in school sector over the past few years has led to the proliferation of substandard teacher education institutions. These B.Ed colleges are serious impediments to fulfill the objectives of RTE Act, 2009.

B.ED SYLLABUS, CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

The syllabus and curriculum of such an important degree lacks vitality and realism. The trainee teachers are taught in a totally unscientific way. After completing higher studies, the teacher educators are

compelled to teach pedagogical analysis of substandard texts. They often lack motivation. The programmes are traditional, rigid and stereotyped which don't have any distant relevance with day to day activities in schools.

PRACTISE TEACHING

Practise teaching facilities available in B.Ed are often found inadequate. It is generally conducted in a mechanical way just to please the examiners. The trainee teachers make suitable arrangements and rapport with the students so that everything passes off smoothly.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE CLASSROOM SITUATION

1. Both the state and central govt. must ensure quality teaching in schools. The teacher pupil ratio should (that is 1:40) be strictly maintained.
2. Mid-day meal should be implemented in a proper and systematic way. Class teachers must ensure that the scheme does not hamper the regular classes.
3. Due attention should be given to primary education. The primary teachers must ensure that the students' regular participation in studies.
4. No detention policy up to class VIII has been implemented before the requisite development of school infrastructure. The concerned authority should consider postponing the policy for some time.
5. People in school administration should have a requisite academic qualification.
6. Instead of confining himself in his chamber, the Headmaster should come out and see what is happening in the classrooms.
7. The duty of a teacher should not be restricted only in teaching hours. They must engage themselves outside the classrooms.
8. The teachers should be regularly evaluated by the students.
9. Instead of regular increment, the teachers should have a performance based promotion system.
10. Pay and allowance of a teacher should be at par with other lucrative profession so that talented persons can be attracted here.
11. There should be a regular and effective inspection system throughout the year. The authority must not inform the school the date and time of their visit.
12. People with due experience and caliber should be given the charge of In-service training so that it can have its desired result.
13. NCTE should be more careful before giving the affiliation of a private B.Ed college. They must have an inspection team to see what is going on the colleges throughout the year.
14. Syllabus and curriculums of school education should be modified in every 2 year.
15. The Govt. has to introduce the general transfer policy for the teachers. instead of remaining in a school throughout his curer, a teacher should be transferred in every 5 year.
16. A minimum 2 years should be allotted for the B.Ed course which will be broken up in semesters.
17. Practice teaching should cover at least 33% of the total classes. Trainee teachers will be placed in different schools.
18. The syllabus and curriculum of B.Ed course should be entirely overhanded. It have a more valid, scientific and objective approach.

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258/34 Raviwar Peth Solapur-413005,Maharashtra
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