



## REPORT OF VERMA COMMITTEE FOR TEACHER EDUCATION: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT TEACHER AND TEACHER'S EDUCATION

**Phutane Padmavati Vasantrao**

Ph. D. Student  
Dept. of English  
Shivaji University, Kolhapur  
Cell No. 9423239477  
E-mail: smitesh.333@gmail.com

### Abstract

*The quality and standards of an education system largely depends on the quality, characteristics and commitment of the teachers to their profession. Teacher Education needs to be adequately strengthened and upgrade to accommodate the changing role of the teacher and so that teachers can effectively address contemporary issues regarding education. Teacher education has to be reformed in order to adequately prepare teachers for their new and more diversified functions in the school and the community. Considering this, various commissions and committees have been appointed to study the status of teacher education and to suggest recommendations. Justice Verma Commission has attempted a scrutiny of the existing provisions and the quality of teacher education to facilitate identification of the deficiencies therein, and then to enable it to make recommendations which can rectify the defects and provide the level of teacher education necessary to produce quality teachers. The present paper deals with the report of Verma Commission especially of quality of pre-service teacher education. It discusses existing scenario of Teacher Education, the quality of Curriculum Content, quality in mode of teacher preparation, recommendations made by the Commission.*

### Introduction

Various commissions and committees in their report have shown their major concern for education reforms. The Education Commission (1964-66) discussed at length various issues related to teacher education. It recommended professionalization of teacher education, development of integrated programmes, comprehensive colleges of education and internship. The National Commission on Teachers (1983-85) recommended five years integrated courses and internship. The National Policy on Education (NPE) (1986) recommended the overhaul of teacher education to impart it a professional orientation and referred to the same concerns voiced by the earlier Committees. Its recommendations led to the launch of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Teacher Education incorporating the establishment of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs), and Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs). The NPE Review Committee (1990) and the National Advisory Committee on Learning without Burden (1993) have also drawn attention to the need for qualitative reform of teacher education and suggested various measures. This Commission set up with the intervention of the Supreme Court of India has interpreted the terms of reference in its true spirit and attempted to perform its task accordingly. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 (UDHR) states: "Everyone has the right to



education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory....” The Constitution of India, recognizing this aspect enacted initially the directive principle of State Policy in article 45 to achieve the goal of free and compulsory education up to the age of fourteen within ten years, but the task remaining unfulfilled for over half a century, the fundamental right in Article 21A has been inserted by amendment to reinforce its importance along with corresponding amendments in Article 45 and 51A.

Teacher is the medium to achieve this goal. Teacher occupies a very important place in society because he brings about the transfer of the intellectual tradition from one generation to the next. Teacher plays an important role of transmitters and of inspirers of man’s eternal quest for knowledge, of himself and of his external environment. The Secondary Education Commission (1952) rightly points out “we are convinced that the most important factor in the contemplated educational reconstruction, is the teacher-his personal qualities, his educational qualifications, his professional training and the place that he occupies in the school as well in the community.” The Report of National Education Commission (1964-66) states: “The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms.” National Policy on Education (1986/92) states: “The status of teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society; it is said that no people can rise above the level of its teacher”. Thus, a true teacher is a role model who triggers the thought process of his students to realize their true potential. He teaches by practice and not merely by percept. Therefore, the teacher has to make himself / herself familiar with the technicalities of the teaching-learning processes. The teacher is required to acquire adequate knowledge, skills, interests and attitudes towards the teaching profession. The teacher’s work has become more complicated and technical in view of the new theories of psychology, philosophy, sociology, modern media and materials. The teacher can be made proficient with well-planned and imaginative pre-service and in-service training programmes. In this connection Teacher Education plays a vital role.

Teacher Education is an age-old concept, but it has been undergoing transformations over the years and assuming new meanings and dimensions due to changes in socio-cultural and political conditions of the society. Especially, after Independence the country has made new strides in the field of education and formulated new policies and programmes for realizing the emerging national goals. Several committees and commissions have reviewed and the achievements made recommendations in the field of education in general and Teacher Education in particular. It has been felt that Teacher Education is a critical area in which adequate inputs and investments are to be made for developing not only human resources but also physical resources. The purpose of teacher education is to engender the qualifications judged to be necessary for doing the work the teacher is called upon to undertake. Competence and professional skills are the very heart of the programme of teacher education. The most important task of education for the future is to improve the intellectual and technical competence in the teachers because teacher’s influence is everlasting. Therefore, it is the need of the time that one should sincerely examine the issues related to the preparations of the teachers as well as the theory and practice of teacher education, as has been undertaken in the historical past, as it is operative in the present and as it is likely to be present in future.



## II. Justice Verma Commission

During its 104<sup>th</sup> – 109<sup>th</sup> meetings held in 2008, the Western Regional Committee (WRC) gave recognition to 291 colleges of Maharashtra for starting the Diploma in Education (D. Ed.) programme in spite of the explicit recommendations of the Government of Maharashtra that the State did not require more D. Ed. institutions due to limited employment opportunities for the graduates of this programme. When the matter came before the Hon'ble Bombay High Court (Nagpur Bench) in a Public interests Litigation (PIL), after looking into the facts and circumstances of the cases, it quashed the order of the WRC granting recognition to the 291 colleges. These institutions challenged the decision of the Hon'ble High Court and filed Special Leave Petitions (SLPs) (c) Nos.4247 and 4248/2011 before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The Hon'ble Supreme Court allowed the institutions recognized by the WRC to admit students to the D. Ed. course taking the view that the issues raised in the SLPs were of considerable public importance. During the Hearing of the SLPs, the Hon'ble Supreme Court appointed a High-Powered Commission to examine the entire issue which have bearing on improving the quality of teacher education as well as improving the regulatory functions of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE). The Chairman of this Commission was Hon'ble Justice J. S. Verma, former Chief Justice of India.

Justice Verma Commission has attempted a close scrutiny of the existing provisions and the quality of teacher education to facilitate identification of the deficiencies therein, and then to enable it to make recommendations which can rectify the defects and provide the level of teacher education necessary to produce quality teachers. Then only the Constitutional mandate in Article 45 read with that in Article 21A can be met. The Report of the Commission is in three volumes: Vol. I contains the main report divided into seven chapters along with the final conclusions and recommendations. Vol. II contains all the discussion and material related to the aforesaid 291 institutions. Vol. III contains all the Annexure.

## III. Terms of Reference

1. “Whether in the context of the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 the Regulations on Recognition Norms and Procedure that lay down the norms and procedure for various teacher education courses which are adopted by NCTE are adequate or need review.”
2. “Whether further reforms are necessary to improve quality of teacher training and in-service training”
3. “To review the Recognitions on Recognition Norms and Procedure currently in force as laid down by the NCTE are being properly enforced. If not how to evolve a fair and transparent manner in which these norms and standards may be enforced.”
4. “To review the existing practice of appointment of members to the NCTE are undertaken, so that the NCTE discharges its crucial role in providing vision and direction in the functioning of NCTE.
4. “To evolve standard and norms for evaluating teacher performance and audit teachers”



5. “To review whether the present provisions empowering withdrawal of recognition of institutions are adequate.”
6. “To determine what the methodology should be to examine / enforce quality in teacher education institutions.”
7. “To review whether the 291 institutions in the Western Region qualify to be recognized as Teacher Training Institutions.”

#### **IV. Existing Scenario of Teacher Education**

The Commission has pointed out the following findings,

1. Classroom practice is closely tied to the manner in which teachers learn to engage with teaching as a practical and social activity. The institutions of teacher education operates as a system of well-established conventions that structure social interaction, reproducing shared habits of thought through the conventions and rituals of teacher preparation.
2. The bulk of secondary teacher education institutes offering programmes leading to the B. Ed. degree are outside university campus. Elementary teacher education institutes leading to the D. Ed. degree are not linked to the Universities. Teacher education institutes function as closed spaces with the sole mandate of training teachers.
4. Most teacher education programmes (B. Ed. and D. Ed.) do not adequately engage with subject knowledge.

#### **V. Quality of Curriculum Content**

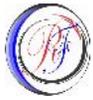
The Commission has examined the curriculum and finds the following things.

1. Initial teacher preparation, both at the elementary and secondary levels, is facing a number of problems. Some of them are common while others are specific to a stage of education.
2. The teacher education curriculum either in the D. Ed. or the B. Ed. programmes does not effectively engages student-teachers with subject knowledge. It focuses only on generic methods of school subjects. Any new developments in specific disciplines that make up school subjects do not receive the due attention.
3. Current programmes fail to integrate the knowledge about learners and the knowledge of the subject with knowledge about the socio-cultural context and philosophical basis of education and learning. Teaching is practiced as a mechanical delivery of a given number of lessons, rather than reflective practice.

#### **VI. Quality in Mode of Teacher Preparation**

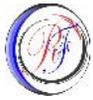
The commission has studied the mode of teacher preparation. It is of view that:

1. There is poor quality of training through distance mode.
2. Current teacher education institutes are isolated from universities and the system of higher education.
3. Initial training of teacher education suffer from isolation, low profile and poor visibility in view of it being a non-degree programme.
4. There is an urgent need to up-grade pre-service elementary teacher education by enhancing the duration of training; making it equivalent to an integrated degree programme and locating the management and control of elementary teacher education with universities.



## VII. Recommendations made by the Commission

1. The Commission recommends the Government should increase its investment for establishing teacher education institutions and increase the institutional capacity of teacher preparation, especially in deficit states.
2. Government may explore the possibility of instituting a transparent procedure of pre-entry testing of candidates to the pre-service teacher education programmes, keeping in view the variation in local conditions.
3. Teacher education should be a part of the higher education system. The duration of programme of teacher education needs to be enhanced, in keeping with the recommendations of the Education Commission (1966), the implementation of which is long overdue.
4. It is desirable that new teacher education institutions are located in multi- and inter-disciplinary academic environment. This will have significant implications for the redesigning of norms and standards of various teacher education courses specified by the NCTE. This will have also implications for employment and career progression of prospective teachers. Existing teacher education institutions may be encouraged to take necessary steps towards attaining academic parity with the new institutions.
5. Current teacher education programme may be redesigned keeping in view the recommendations in the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCTE, 2009) and other relevant material.
6. In keeping with the recommendations of the Education Commission (1966), every pre-service teacher education institution may have dedicated school attached to it as a laboratory where student teachers get opportunities to experiment with new ideas and hone their capacities and skills to become reflective practitioners.
7. There is a need to establish a national level academic body for continual reflections and analysis of teacher education programmes, their norms and standards, development of reading material and faculty development of teacher educators.
8. As a matter of policy, the first professional degree/ diploma in teacher education should be offered only in face-to-face mode. Distance learning programmes and the use of blended learning material may be developed and used for continuing professional development of school teachers and teacher educators.
9. The institutional capacity should be increased for preparation of teacher educators. There is need to make Masters in Education programme of two years duration with the provision to branch out for specialization in curriculum and pedagogic studies, foundation studies, management, policy and finance, and other areas of emerging concerns in education.
10. The NCTE would need to develop broad-based norms for qualification of teacher educators to enable induction of persons with post-graduation degrees in education science, social science, languages and mathematics, along with a professional degree in teacher education or a research degree in education, as teacher educators.
11. The idea of creating opportunities for teaching practitioners to teach in teacher education institutions, as visiting faculty, may be explored. Similarly, teacher educators could be considered as visiting faculty in schools.
12. Faculty development programmes for teacher educators should be institutionalized.



13. There is need for enhanced investment in promotion of research in education in general, and in teacher education in particular in the universities; creation of an Inter University Centre in Teacher Education could play a significant role, in this regard.

### **VIII. Conclusion**

The findings of Justice Verma commission make us to rethink what we have learned from the earlier commissions and committees on Teacher Education. The Commission has highlighted how the role of the teacher and the very concept of teaching has changed and assumed new meaning and significance due to various reasons. Today, students are quite advanced in their mental age in their intellect ideas and outlook. They are curious to know and have many doubts. Teachers have to meet the queries and satisfy this hunger with confidence. There must be adequate freedom, flexibility and frankness in them. Teaching instruction needs to be problem oriented and not discipline or theory oriented. Approaches such as case studies, simulations, role play and action research would be more appropriate for the professional development of teacher. Open ended activities and questions could help bring out the vast experiences of the prospective teachers. The professional development of teachers need to be located in the larger socio –cultural, economic and political context of contemporary Indian society. A teacher's task is to facilitate learning by enabling the child to construct or generate knowledge on the basis of his/her own observations, experiences, experimentation, analysis and reflections. Teachers need to be prepared to care for children and to view learners as active participants in their own learning. To conclude, professional up gradation is an important issue in teacher education. Teacher Education has to be made an integral part of social as well as educational system. There should be dynamism in our approach to meet the challenges of the diverse problems with confidence and competencies. The code of professional ethics and values has to be pursued vigorously. Teacher Education has to assume responsibility to prepare teachers with proper attitude and ability to translate the philosophy of education into practical learning experience. Unless and until the present system of Teacher Education is revamped and re-organized, it would be difficult to provide suitable pre-service education and upgrade the quality of education in the country.

### **Reference**

1. Aggarwal, J. C. *Educational Reforms in India for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Shpra Publication: Delhi. 2008.
2. Mohanty, Jagannath. *Teacher Education*. Deep & Deep Publication: New Delhi. 2007.
3. Saxena, N.R., Mishra, B. K. and Mohanty, R. K. *Teacher Education*. R. Lall Book Depot: Meerut. 2008.
4. Sharma, P. S. *Teacher Education: Principles, Theories and Practices*. Kanishka Publishers: New Delhi. 2003.
5. Report of Justice Verma Commission Report. Vol.1, Vol.2 and Vol.3 Aug. 2012.