

ATTITUDE TOWARDS NCTE: A TEACHER- EDUCATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Sonal Chabra* & Vanita Chopra**

ABSTRACT

For some decades, teacher education system in our country has been a cause of concern. This concern was raised at several platforms, one of the prominent being National Commission on Teachers (1985). To respond to these, National council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Act started functioning in 1995. Gradually the number of teacher education institutions swelled and the parameter of scope of NCTE also widened. NCTE is just not a regulatory body, its main objective is to achieve planned and coordinated development of teacher education system throughout the country; regulation and proper maintenance of norms and standards in teacher education system; and the matters connected therewith. However, over the last decade the role of NCTE has also come under scanner. At this juncture it becomes important to ascertain the attitude of teacher educators towards the role and functioning of NCTE. The concerned study was planned with the same objective. A self made rating scale was employed on a sample of 100 teacher educators working in self-financing colleges of education of Maharshi Dayanand University. Descriptive analysis was done on the data obtained which indicated lower satisfaction with the functioning of NCTE.

INTRODUCTION

As stated by NCTE (1998) in Quality Concerns in Secondary Teacher Education, "The teacher is the most important element in any educational program. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for implementation of the educational process at any stage". This makes it imperative to invest thoughtfully and resourcefully in the preparation of teachers, so as to secure the future of a nation. The Indian sub-continent has one of the largest education system as well as teacher education system. There are several affiliated colleges and institutes that offer teacher education programs. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) is the regulatory body for teacher education in India in the current context. The National Council for Teacher Education, in its previous status since 1973, was an advisory body for the Central and State Governments on all matters pertaining to teacher education, with its Secretariat in the Department of Teacher Education of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). Despite its commendable work in the academic fields, it could not perform essential regulatory functions, to ensure maintenance of standards in teacher

education and preventing proliferation of substandard teacher education institutions. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and the Programme of Action there under, envisaged a National Council for Teacher Education with statutory status and necessary resources as a first step for overhauling the system of teacher education. The National Council for Teacher Education as a statutory body came into existence in pursuance of the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993 (No. 73 of 1993) on the 17th August, 1995. The main objective of the NCTE is to achieve planned and coordinated development of the teacher education system throughout the country; the regulation and proper maintenance of norms and standards in the teacher education system; and for matters connected therewith. The mandate given to the NCTE is very broad and covers the whole gamut of teacher education programmes including research and training of persons for equipping them to teach at pre-primary, primary, secondary and senior secondary stages in schools, and non-formal education, part-time education, adult education and distance (correspondence) education courses.

*Assistant Professor, Rawal College of Education, Faridabad (Haryana)

**Assistant Professor, Gargi College, Delhi University, Delhi

However, the pattern of functioning of NCTE has been under the lens for quite some time now. At many platforms the role of NCTE was condemned and forced the government to intervene. Shri Arjun Singh, former HRD minister while outlining the issue and concerns which need to be addressed by NCTE had said, "Teacher education curriculum needs to be constantly defined and redefined based on the changing contents and emerging areas need to be integrated. A rigorous mechanism of implementation of standards and norms of quality and qualification of teachers and teacher educators is defined by NCTE Act needs to be institutionalized and enforced on continuing basis". Infact, the government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Sudeep Banerjee in 2007 to study the issue and suggest suitable action. There have been mixed views on the same.

JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY

Like any teaching activity, teacher education is concerned with the aspects such as, who (Teacher Educator), whom (Student teacher), what (Content) and how (Teaching Strategy). Teacher education is dependent upon the quality of teacher educators. The quality of pedagogical inputs in teacher education programmes and their effective utilization for the purpose of preparing prospective teachers depend largely on the professional competence of teacher educators and the ways in which it is utilized for strengthening the teacher education programme. Further, the attitude of teacher educators towards teacher education and its various aspects also becomes an important factor which influences the teacher education programme. As discussed earlier, the NCTE has a multifarious role to play in teacher education. Amidst this understanding it becomes important to understand the attitude of teacher educators towards functioning and role of NCTE in teacher education.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study was to determine the attitude of teacher educators towards role and functioning of NCTE in teacher education.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted on a sample of 87 teacher educators from different self financing colleges of education affiliated to Maharshi Dayanand University. The teacher educators were selected by the technique of incidental sampling. A 7-point rating scale comprising of 25 items was developed by the researchers to ascertain the attitude of teacher educators. Descriptive statistics was used for the analysis of the data obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Undertaking surveys and studies and dissemination of results -

One of the functions of NCTE is to undertake surveys and studies relating to various aspects of teacher education and publish the result thereof. The results indicated that 32% teacher educators were somewhat satisfied out of a total of 48% who were on the lower side of satisfaction, with the functioning of NCTE with regard to undertaking surveys and studies related to various aspects of teacher education. Further 18% were neutral about the functioning of NCTE with regard to dissemination of the results of the undertaken surveys or studies, 26% were neutral, 25% somewhat satisfied and only 23% on the right hand side of the scale. The results of both the items indicate that teacher educators largely had low satisfaction regarding this aspect of NCTE's functioning.

2. Co-ordinating teacher education- The Council co-ordinates and monitors teacher education and its development in the country. 30% teacher educators were somewhat satisfied with NCTE's functioning with regard to coordinating teacher education in the country and only 29% expressed higher satisfaction with regard to same. With 51% teacher educators on the left side of the scale somewhere indicates a not so positive attitude towards the coordinating functioning of NCTE. On another related item, 'role of NCTE in maintaining a balance between teacher education institutions across country', 23% teacher educators were very unsatisfied with NCTE's functioning. There were only 20% who were fairly satisfied and another 11% who were satisfied, again indicating that they were

more who were on the lower side of satisfaction. This finding becomes important because this is one of the major functions of NCTE.

3. Ensuring implementation of the norms, guidelines and standards by the recognised institutions-

The Council is bound to examine and review periodically the implementation of the norms, guidelines and standards laid down, and to suitably advise the recognised institutions. For the same, the Council has to conduct inspections to ascertain the functioning of institutions. 21% teacher educators were 'fairly satisfied' and 13% were 'satisfied' with NCTE's functioning of conducting inspections of recognised institutions. There was another 30% who were neutral about the functioning of the Council and 34% who were on left side of the scale indicating a lower level of satisfaction. On another item pertaining to periodic review of recognized institutions by NCTE, 25% teacher educators were 'fairly satisfied' and 23% 'somewhat satisfied' and another 17% 'very unsatisfied' with the Council's functioning. The responses on this item indicate that 37% were on right side and 46% on left which shows that more were on lower levels of satisfaction.

4. Recognition and functioning of teacher education institutions-

With self-financing institutions also allowed to provide teacher education in the country, the Council has the function of granting recognition to only those institutions which have adhered completely to norms laid down by the council. 21% teacher educators were 'very unsatisfied', 18% 'not at all satisfied' and only 13% 'fairly satisfied' with NCTE's functioning with regard to recognition of teacher education institutions. Another related function is to effectively regulate tuition fees and other fees charged by recognised institutions. 21% teacher educators were neutral, 20% were 'somewhat satisfied' and 13% were 'very unsatisfied' about the Council's functioning in this regard. The NCTE is supposed to formulate suitable mechanisms for enforcing accountability on recognised institutions. 29% teacher educators were 'fairly satisfied', 22% 'neutral' and 23% 'very unsatisfied' with NCTE's functioning in this regard.

5. Promotion and conduction of innovation and research-

One of the functions entrusted for NCTE was to promote and conduct innovation and research in various areas of teacher education and disseminate the results thereof. 23% teacher educators were 'fairly satisfied', whereas 22% were 'somewhat satisfied' with the Council's role in promoting and conducting innovation and research. With 21% holding a 'neutral' attitude, there was an equal number on left and right hand side of satisfaction. NCTE is also entitled to formulate schemes for various levels of teacher education. When teacher educators were asked about the Council's role in formulating schemes for in-service teacher education, 16% were neutral, 23% 'somewhat satisfied' and 18% 'very unsatisfied'. Further, there were 22% who were 'fairly satisfied' and 15% 'satisfied'. When it comes to implementation of these schemes, 21% were 'very unsatisfied', and 11% 'not at all satisfied', while there were only 39% who were on the right side of the scale.

6. Maintaining standards-

Maintaining standards in teacher education is the prime function of NCTE. 47% teacher educators were on right side of satisfaction with 38% of them being 'fairly satisfied' with the Council's maintenance of standards in teacher education through the distance mode. A quarter of teacher educators are uncertain about the role of NCTE in maintaining standards of teacher education in general and 24% were 'fairly satisfied' with its role, however, a considerable number of 36% were on the left hand side indicating a lower satisfaction. Further 32% were positively satisfied and 48% were 'negatively satisfied' with NCTE's role in opening new horizons in teacher education. 31% teacher educators were 'very unsatisfied' and 16% 'not at all satisfied' with the steps taken by the Council to prevent commercialisation of teacher education.

7. Regulating teacher educators' selection and performance-

26% teacher educators were 'fairly satisfied', 9% 'satisfied' and 6% 'very satisfied' in establishing a proper co-ordination with the university norms for the selection of teacher educators in teacher training institutes.

Almost half (49%) the teacher educators are on the left side of the satisfaction with regard to Council's role in evolving performance appraisal system for teacher educators. Similarly 20% were 'somewhat satisfied', 16% 'very unsatisfied' and 9% 'not at all satisfied' with NCTE's functioning in enhancing professional development of teacher educators.

like regulation and functioning of teacher education institutions, preventing commercialization of teacher education and others. This calls for an overhaul in the management of teacher education in the country by perhaps roping in people with sincere commitment or involving the practicing teacher educators to a larger extent in different capacities.

OVERVIEW

The provision and organisation of teacher education in the country is an important aspect and need apt consideration from all those concerned. The government has entrusted the prime responsibility of the same to NCTE. Teacher educators being a significant part of teacher education system play an active role in its transaction to the beneficiary. Thus their attitude towards NCTE, the regulatory body, becomes vital. The responses on the scale clearly indicate that most of the teacher educators held lower satisfaction with the functioning of NCTE in different aspects of its role

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- NCTE (1998) Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education. New Delhi: NCTE
- NCTE (2009) National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education: Towards Preparing Professional and Humane Teacher. New Delhi: NCTE
- Sharma, M. (1993). Teacher education: The quest for quality. In E. Thomas et al., Professional development of teachers: Policy and practice in initial teacher training. London: Commonwealth Secretariat