

The Need for Skill Development in Teachers at Secondary Level

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Abstract

The drop out at secondary level is the result of several factors one of which is the inefficiency of the teachers. The teachers at the secondary level are unable to respond to the needs of the children resulting in significantly high dropout even in the urban areas. Government of India has been taking initiatives to reduce the drop outs vide its various schemes and policies yet such initiative would not be successful until the teacher education system supports it by skilling the teachers appropriately through both its pre service and in service teacher education programmes.

Keywords: skill development, secondary education

1. Introduction

Teacher education in India has passed through tremendous pressure of various International and National Laws and policies and has been striving hard to cope up both in terms of quality and quantity of the teachers being produced in the country. The stupendous pressure on the teacher education system has paved the way for several modifications in the teacher education system in India.

As the researchers suggest, the teacher education system in India has been producing teachers who have been qualitatively less efficient in various aspects. Indian education system has been the victim of lack of teachers apart from the other issues as well. Most teacher education is informal and unplanned, as teachers learn through experience with and from colleagues, students and others, in settings that may be both literally and metaphorically far removed from lecture rooms or classrooms (Booth, 2003) ^[1]. The country witnessed the highest investment in the education sector vide its eleventh five year plan (2007-2012) and enforcement of the RTE Act ^[1] in 2010 to assure free and compulsory education to all children under the age group 6-14 years

Apart from these, India has been a signatory to several international treaties and declarations that affirm quality education to all its children. All its policies and schemes such as SSA ^[2], DPEP etc have been targeting success for all the children who are the future of the country. Thus, with the increased emphasis of education, it becomes more important to remove the lacunae's that lie in the teacher education system to respond to the need of the hour in a much effective manner.

¹ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act' or 'Right to Education Act also known as RTE', is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009, which describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21A of the Constitution.

² Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right.

2. Secondary Education in India

India has been focussing primarily in the hundred percent enrolment and retention at the elementary level in the past; it was almost recently that with the schemes such as RMSA ^[3], secondary education has come to the centre stage. With the success of more and more targeted initiatives for elementary education such as SSA, RTE, India is on the verge of achieving full enrolment at the specified level. At this stage, it becomes more important to assure that the full enrolment is retained and excelled at the secondary level also. Thus, the system at the secondary level needs to be more and more dynamic, inclusive and flexible to accommodate the diverse student population completing the elementary stage and reaching the secondary level.

The teachers at the secondary level need to be more responsive towards the needs of the children and respond to their needs accordingly. As the research data suggests, the drop out at the secondary level is still significantly high that may be attributed partially to the dearth of quality teachers. Chugh (2011) ^[2] points out that a very few children complete elementary education and even fewer transits to secondary education. Despite a small proportion of children actually reach secondary education the dropout rates at secondary level are found to be very high. Table 1 below highlights the drop out at secondary level.

Table-25 : Average Annual Drop-Out Rate in School Education

A : All Categories of Students

Classes/ Year	Primary			Upper Primary			Secondary			Senior Secondary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2011-12*	5.89	5.34	5.62	2.13	3.20	2.65	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2012-13*	4.68	4.66	4.67	2.30	4.01	3.13	14.54	14.54	14.54	NA	NA	NA
2013-14*	4.53	4.14	4.34	3.09	4.49	3.77	17.93	17.79	17.86	1.48	1.61	1.54

Data Source:

For School Education : National University of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi
 (website: <http://dise.in/>)

* Figures related to School Education are provisional.

³ This scheme was launched in March, 2009 with the objective to enhance access to secondary education and to improve its quality.

Commenting on how the inadequacy of programmes of teacher preparation lead to unsatisfactory quality of learning in schools, the Yashpal Committee Report (1993) [7] recommended that "...the content of the (teacher preparation) programme should be restructured to ensure its relevance to the changing needs of school education.

Thus, the teachers at the secondary level need to be skilled enough to respond to the current requirements of the education system.

3. Skill Development of Teachers at Secondary Level

As discussed above, the skill development of the teachers at secondary level is the need of the hour to respond to the needs of the education system. Skill development plays a major role in all the sectors including teacher education. With the implementation of RTE 2009 as an initiative towards achieving UEE [4], the teachers now need to be a facilitator, who is capable of responding to the needs of all the students from diverse social and economic backgrounds. The teacher now needs to be sufficiently skilled to handle the inclusive classrooms with an environment of mutual trust and respect among teachers and the students.

The teachers at the secondary level handle the age group that is more vulnerable to several emotional problems owing to the physical and hormonal changes. Being able to understand and respond in an appropriate manner would help the teachers to retain the student population and enable them to complete the levels successfully.

Thus, for the skill development of the teachers, the teacher education system needs to lay down its foundation on the well researched platform to overcome the short coming in the skill development of the teachers. Both pre service teacher education and in service teacher education need to be redesigned to match the requirements. A mapping of the demand and supply needs to be effectively carried out to assure the availability of sufficient number of teachers in the schools. All the teachers need to undergo refresher courses from time to time with the existing requirements and changes at the systemic levels.

4. Conclusion

Drop out in secondary education is a serious area of concern. The teacher, being one of the most important factors in reducing the drop out levels needs to be skilled in order to successfully retain the diverse student population in the classrooms. The teacher education system needs to be active enough to fulfil the needs of the quality teachers that is existing at the secondary level to ensure an egalitarian society.

5. References

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⁴ Universalisation of Elementary Education in India. Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) has been accepted as a national goal in India. Central and State governments are making strenuous efforts to achieve this goal.