

Introduction:

Teacher education occupies a central place in the total programme of education. It is a key to qualitative improvement of education in a country. The teacher is the backbone of the society who guides the students to proceed to the path of the light of knowledge from the darkness of ignorance. By putting a tremendous faith and responsibility on them, the National Policy on Education (1986) expects a lot from the teachers. It boldly opined "No people can rise above the level of its teacher." It states that the "Status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society."

Education is a continuous process of human enlightenment to achieve a better and higher quality of life. An effective system of education results in the unfolding of learners' potentialities, enlargement of their competencies, and transformation of their interest attitudes and values. In this context, effective teacher education programme plays a vital role. In fact, teacher education becomes a core condition to ensure high quality of education in a country. In other words, effective school education anticipates effective teacher education programme.

Meaning and Concept of Teacher Education?

"Destiny of nation is being shaped in her classrooms"
Kothari Commission.

This statement of Kothari Commission best reflects the importance of teacher for forming the nation's destiny. The teacher is central to formal and non-formal system of education because he determines the students' opportunity for learning and growing. As a person he inherits, interprets and disseminates the relevant items of culture and traditions of past, creates new knowledge, practices/innovations, critically appraises the past & its traditions and cultures, strengthens social and economic fabric of the country. Therefore, Henry Brooke Adams said "A teacher affects eternity, he can never tell where his influence stops." Thus, ^{the} teacher is the most influential factor in the education system and the bearer of the noble traditions and ideals that constitute the ethos of a society.

The success of education is based on the effectiveness of teacher, as he is the central in the education field. But, this effectiveness is again provided to them by Education. As education is used for teacher training. The programme which is associated with the preparation of the teachers is an important part of total process of education. This part or discipline is known as Teacher education.

Teacher education can be defined as a specialized type of activity designed to equip the prospective teachers with deep insight, appropriate knowledge, right attitude and required skills for teaching. It enable the teachers to grasp the underlying principles and critical methods of teaching, develop a mental culture to appreciate fundamental concepts and develop their own free judgement and sense of intellectual independence. (Adaval 1984)

Teacher education is a branch of education discipline which deals with the process of preparing classroom teachers. Preparation of teachers and their quantitative improvement is the responsibility of the system of teacher education.

AIC to Education Commission, to increase the efficiency of a teacher, "A sound programme of professional education of teacher" is necessary. It further said that investment in teacher education will yield very high dividends, because in comparison of investment the return from teacher education is very high. When a person is appointed as teacher he tries to teach in the way he himself was taught by his favourite teachers, which may be not be suitable at the present situation. This situation can only be made effective by effective teacher education.

Teacher education means an education system that can help a teacher or would-be teacher to discharge his duty effectively. Before doing a job a person must have sufficient knowledge about the job.

In teaching it is teacher education that can provide, through pre-service and in-service training, necessary training or knowledge about teaching profession. Pre-service training provides knowledge in

advance about the art of teaching and also how to face a group of students in the class. In service training helps teachers in the continuous enrichment of knowledge and teaching.

Teacher education refers to the provide that kind of knowledge, skills and ability to the teacher that would be relevant to the life of a teacher as a teacher. It is a process or programme of education that tries to reshape the attitudes, remodel the habits and reconstitute the personality of a teacher.

It is a programme of education related with the development of teacher's proficiency and competence that would make them capable to face new challenges in their professional life.

For successful teaching, a teacher is required to acquire adequate pedagogical knowledge, teaching skills and positive attitudes towards the teaching profession. It can be achieved through well-planned and effective pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes. These training programmes may be designated as 'teacher education'.

Teacher education covers all those activities which essential to accomplish the aim of teaching profession. It denotes a real and holistic perception of teacher for that task they are required to perform and continuously upgrading their professional skills.

Teacher education = Teaching Skills + Pedagogical Theory + Professional Skills

① Teaching Skills :

Teaching skill includes the set of behaviours of teacher which facilitates pupil's learning. The term 'skill' implies efficiency, expertise or proficiency in a particular task. Teaching skill therefore, means the efficiency or expertise of a teacher to impart a lesson well.

② Pedagogical theory :

Pedagogical theory includes the philosophical, sociological and psychological considerations that would enable the teachers to have a sound base for practicing the teaching skills in a classroom.

- The philosophical basis of teacher education provides insight to the student teacher regarding the implication of different school of philosophy, educational philosophy of great philosophers etc.

- The sociological basis helps the teacher to understand the role of society and its dynamics in the educational system of the country.

- The psychological basis help the student teachers develop insight into students' psychological makeup.

③ Professional skills :

It includes all those techniques, strategies and approaches that would help in the professional growth of the teacher. It includes soft skills, information retrieval, interpersonal skills, counselling skills, computer skills, and management skills and above all lifelong learning skills etc.

Thus in simple term, teacher education is education of the teacher or teaching the teachers how to teach. Teacher education encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory and

professional skills.

Defining Teacher Education:

- ① A/c to Durbin, "Teacher education is not teaching how to teach, but it is that knowledge, skill and ability which is relevant to the life of the teacher."
- ② A/c to Prof. B.K. Passi (1997), "Teacher education means programs of education, research or training of persons for equipping them to teach at primary, secondary, and senior secondary stage in schools and includes non-formal education, part-time education, adult education and correspondence education."
- ③ The NCTE - (National Council for Teacher Education) defines teacher education as a programme of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher secondary level. T.E is therefore a programme that is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that could enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirement of the profession and face the challenges therein.

On account of this concept and definition it can be rightly said that teacher education is an integral part of total education system, which is key to the qualitative improvement of education. T.E. is that branch of education which helps the teacher to perform his professional duties effectively.