

EMERGING RESEARCH TRENDS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Teacher Education is a program that is designed to equip future teachers with the required set of knowledge, attitude and skills. Teacher Education is a dynamic field of study. It changes with the changing needs of the students, society, trends and technology. However, this change must be brought through proper research to get the maximum benefit of the change. In India, the research on teacher education has gained attention after the independence to enable the teacher education programs to respond dynamically to the challenges of this field. The scope of teacher education is very broad and the scope of research in this field is therefore also wide. Research on teacher education should not be carried out in one framework. Teacher education is defined by the problems discussed, including teachers, students, teacher education foundations, teaching-learning methods, teaching-learning environment, curriculum, assessment and evaluation etc. This paper is an attempt to study the various emerging research trends in the field of teacher education.

Keywords: Research Trends, Teacher Education, Teaching-Learning Environment, Teaching-Learning Process.

INTRODUCTION

The National Council for Teacher Education has defined teacher education as, “A program of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher education level”. Teacher education programs in India are stage-specific in line with the stage-specific education such as pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education. The main objective of teacher education is to prepare reflective teacher so as to deal with the everyday challenges in the classroom situation. Though, teacher education programs are not very new in India but for a developing country like India where the scenario is changing every minute, the teacher education program must be evolving to accommodate the changes in the Indian education system. In India the research in teacher education gained attention

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after the independence to enable the teacher education programs to respond dynamically to the challenges of this field.

RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Research in teacher education is the scientific study that deals with the attributes related to the teaching-learning process, teacher, students or the institutions. It can be inspection of education, teaching-learning processes, students' behaviour or teacher attitude etc. Like any other research, educational research includes the quest for answers to the unsolved problems in the field of education. Researches are viewed as the facets that empower the individuals to bring out improvements and innovations in their responsibilities and functions.

Importance of Research in Teacher Education

Teacher plays the central role in our education system. Teacher education is a program that is designed to equip future teachers with the required set of knowledge, attitude and skills. Thus, teacher education has a direct impact not only on the teaching learning process but also on the students. Teacher education is a dynamic field of study. It changes with the changing needs of the students, society, trends and technology. However, this change must be bringing through proper research to get the maximum benefit of the change. Research in teacher education as in the other disciplines is vital for providing useful and reliable knowledge through which the teaching-learning process can be made more effective.

DIVERSITY IN RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Teacher education is a multidisciplinary field. The scope of teacher education is very broad and thus the scope of research in this field is also broad. Teacher education research cannot be encapsulated within a single paradigm.

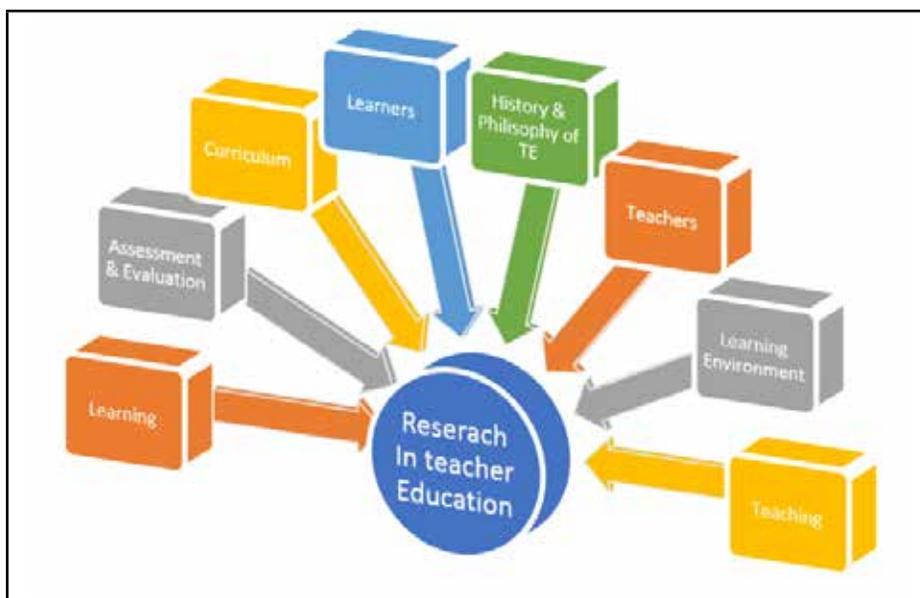


Figure 1: Diversity of Research in Teacher Education

Figure 1 deliberates the various scope of teacher educations such as teachers, students, teacher education foundations, teaching-learning methods, teaching-learning environment, curriculum, assessment and evaluation etc.

With the changing trends of education and changing roles of teachers the research trends likewise changes. Researches that are currently in trends in the field of teacher education are Philosophical Foundation, ICT in Teacher Education, Teacher ethics, Teachers Attitude towards online teaching and sustainability in education and pre-service teachers as shown in the Figure 2.

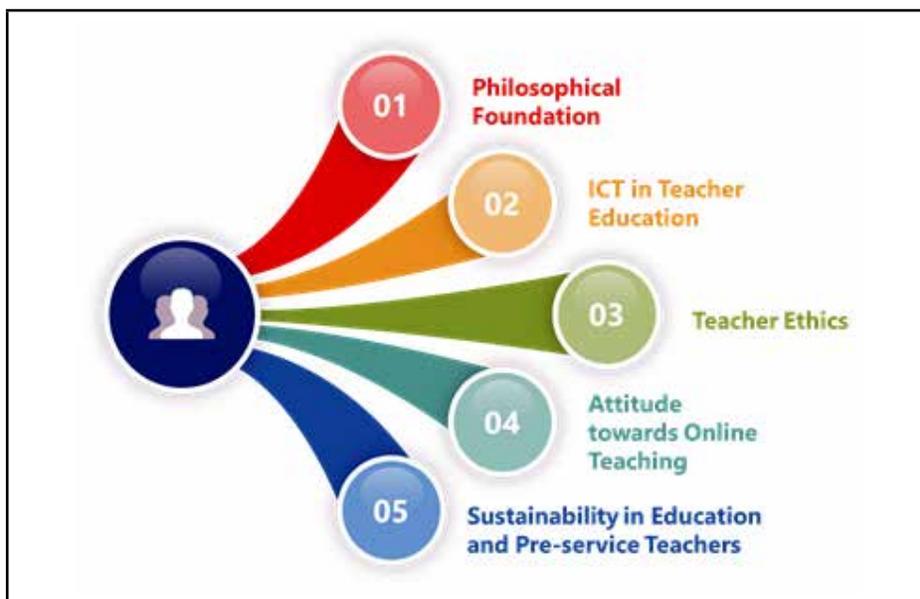


Figure 2: Emerging Trends in Teacher Education

Philosophical Foundation

Education is the medium for progress of human civilization. The educational question that arises, ultimately find answers in the philosophy of life. Philosophy provides the aim and objective of education and education help to realise the values of philosophy. Thus philosophy and education are closely inter-related with each other. J.S. Ross rightly says: “*Philosophy and education are like the two sides of the same coin; the one is implied by the other; the former is the contemplative side of life, while the latter is the active side.*”

Therefore, philosophical foundation is one of the most researched trends in teacher education.

Reflection of Indian and Western Philosophy in Modern Education

Dash (2018) compares the Gandhian philosophy and the philosophy of Vivekananda according to the relevance in the present education. This futuristic study takes into account the education scenario from the year 2018 to the year 2028. According to Gandhian philosophy, in the modern India, literacy is not enough, and it is not the end of the education. Whereas,

Swami Vivekananda advocates the Indianisation of the education. He also emphasised on the mass education and that without mass education, no country can become a developed country. As per Gandhian philosophy, a teacher must have originality and must be able to inculcate self-confidence in students, that a teacher must have freedom to adopt his own way of teaching. But Vivekananda thought “true teacher is he who can immediately come down to the level of the students and transfer his soul to the student’s soul”. A teacher must be able to understand his students and for this a teacher needs a pure heart and soul. At the same time a teacher must be a lifelong learner. Both Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda emphasis on a national system of education irrespective of any diversity. Westbrook (2018) conducted a research on how Dewey’s philosophy of experiential learning can be applied to online learning. One should make the online learning module in such a way that it is illustrative and engages more sense of the students in order to provide a concrete learning. The emphasis should be on giving meaningful assignment that make the learning experiences genuine and joyful. Alam (2019) studied Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s ideas of modern education. Sir Syed believed that education is the instrument that can change the mindset of people. He also emphasised that upliftment of masses is possible through education and there must be a link between traditional and modern education.

ICT in Teacher Education

According to UNESCO, “ICT is a scientific, technological and engineering discipline and management technique used handling information, its application and association with social, economic and cultural matters” (UNESCO,2002).

The aspect of the classrooms is changing every day. The teacher education organizations should prepare the pre-service teachers to keep up with the skills. ICT is not only a crucial instrument for teachers in their classroom work, but it also provides them prospects for their own professional progress.

Jadhav (2011) has done a research in Bhopal on ICT and teacher education. He discusses about the current scenario of integrating ICT in teacher education and it is noted that curricular activities are not so widespread as to turn the prospective teacher into a learning facilitator. The prospects of developing student teachers through current curricular strategies for ICT-based teaching learning seem to be disappointing. Yadav (2016) has done a research on the significance of ICT in teacher education. His paper discusses several approaches of ICT and how it can be beneficial for pre-service teachers. However, the paper can be more helpful if it incorporates the way of integrating ICT in teacher education. The technique to develop techno-based pedagogies can be proved useful for the teacher educators. Somashekhara, M. and Jagannath K. Dange. (2016) studied the possibilities of ICT in teacher education. Their paper discusses various aspect in which ICT can be integrated into the integral activities of teacher education. It gives an insight how ICT helps in making a quality teacher. ICT must not be treated only as a subject, but it must be treated as a skill.

Teacher’s Ethics

Teacher is an integral part of the educational system and the place that a teacher holds in the education system and the society together with his moral principle requires use of certain

ethics from which his professional privileges and commitments are generated. A teacher's professional relationship not only depends upon his/her professionalism but also on his/her personal moral values.

Ayeni & Adeleye (2014) studied on teacher education and social ethics. Both found that teachers need proper training in order to fulfil the social need especially in terms of morals. This is a descriptive paper using case study. If we integrate the moral social ethics as a part of the teacher education programs, it will help the student-teacher to deal with various dilemma related to ethics. Naaz (2015) conducted a research on student-teacher perception of professional ethics. It shows that the professional ethics must be compatible with the persons' morality and that the moral and value education plays a significant role in strengthening the professional ethics for student-teachers. Sawhney (2015) studied the professional ethics and commitment in the teacher education. Teacher's education institutes must be held accountable to the society. And the teacher must follow the ethics industriously. However, the commitment is more related to the aptitude of the teacher so the admission into the teacher education program must follow a process so that only those candidates will take admission who have a genuine interest in the teaching profession. The study shows that a teacher must encourage equality in the classroom. The most important thing is that a teacher must be aware that his/her own personal, political views should not affect the students of his/her class. Teaching is not just a profession like other profession. It impacts many lives on daily basis. So, the code of ethics must be followed rigorously, and it should be a part of the teacher's education so as to inculcate these ethics among the student-teachers.

Attitude towards Online Teaching

As the world gets tormented by the COVID-19, all the sectors including education has got affected abruptly. However, the education sector has not shut down completely. In this pandemic, technology came to the rescue and now online learning is the proper instrument. For the past few years, distance learning evolved as a new way of learning. Distance learning has developed in the last few years as a modern form of learning. There is no way that it would replace the conventional way of learning, but when it comes to reaching the masses, it is easier. To make online learning successful fully depends upon the teacher's attitude towards the tool. Various researches have been done in this area in the last few months around the globe.

Rama (2020) conducted research in Bali to study the attitude of science teachers towards the online learning. Science is a practical subject and it is quite difficult for a teacher to give hands-on experience to students in the online classes. Tyagi (2020) conducted a research in Chandigarh to study the attitude of university teachers towards online learning. This study was about the different strata of teachers e.g. government/private, male / female to gauge whether teachers are in favour of online teaching or not. Another research was conducted by Mardiana (2020) in Indonesia on the lecturer's attitude towards the online teaching. The most common findings in all three researches was that though teachers have a positive attitude towards the online learning, but they strongly feel the lack of training to take online classes effectively. Teachers feel that the institutes must provide workshops so that the teaching can be more effective, and the learning outcome

can be improved.

Sustainability in Education and Pre-Service Teachers

Sustainability is a process of utilizing the natural resources in a way that it will not affect the future requirements. The agenda is to be saving the resources for the next generation. Sustainability can be achieved only with a change in the mindset. To achieve this mindset, change-education is probably the only tool. ESD i.e. Education for Sustainable Development is the way to empower the people to achieve sustainability.

ESD inspires people to actively participate in the creation of ‘a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from quality education and learn the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive social transformation’ (UNESCO, 2005, p. 6).

Lahiri (2017) studied education for sustainability according to the NCFTE 2009. The study found that NCFTE is consciously crafted to aware the pre-service teachers about the global environment. In India, ESD is still a distant dream. Firstly, the teacher education must include the practical activities so that teachers can inculcate the value of sustainability. Secondly, to get the optimum result, in-service teachers must be trained for the same. Brandt & Barth (2020) conducted a study on the 4 Cs of learning in pre-service teacher education for sustainability. The four forms of connection (the 4 Cs) i.e. personal, professional, social, and structural are impactful in order to the student-teacher learning of sustainability. This is a research-based paper based on experiment done on 100 pre-service teachers and four instructors. Azcárate (2020) studied the perception of pre-service teachers on ESD. The study shows that the pre-service teachers have positive attitude towards the sustainable development goals, but the training is lacking. From all these research papers, one thing is clear that the pre-service teachers are going to educate the future generation and thus they need training on ESD so that they can pass the same knowledge to the next generation. This type of program must be a part of teacher education.

CONCLUSION

Schreurs & Dumbraveanu (2014) found that the recent trends in education shows the paradigm shifts from traditional teacher-centric education to learner-centric education. Gone are those days when teaching-learning process were determined by “what is taught”. Now it’s, “how it is taught”. To improve the quality of education, it is very important to connect the teacher education to classroom learning. The last few decades have seen a greater shift from teacher training to teacher education, not only in the content and structure, but also the whole aspect of teacher education programs. Study shows that teacher education is considered as a field of insufficient research. Teacher educators and teachers need to involve in research, in order to keep themselves up-to-date with the newest developments in their field and to gain knowledge about effective pedagogical and instructional techniques. Research on teacher education have greater benefit for the education system as a whole and teachers specifically. It will also help in improving the learning outcomes of learners, for the fact that every research conducted in teacher education will lead to improve the quality of teachers.

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