CHAPTER II

PROBLEMS OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND COOPERATING SCHOOLS

Nature and kinds of Teacher Edu. - Problems of Professional Education - Responsibilities of Colleges and practising schools - Problems created by practising schools - Levels of Cooperation - Reasons of non-cooperation
At the outset, it would be worthwhile to study
the nature and types of professional education of
teachers.

Nature of Professional Education

Today the term 'teacher education' has replaced
the term 'teacher training' and the institution concerned
with such an education is called as 'teacher education
institution' or 'school of education' instead of
'teachers training college'. The term 'teacher
education' is preferred to teacher training as training is
more related to animals who receive it generally through
conditioned response, whereas men are educated with the
help of reasoning and thinking. As Kilpatrick remarks,
"one trains circus performers and animals but one
educates educators". (quoted in Bhatia, et al., p. 214).

The concept of teacher education has been
changing from time to time. In the earlier periods, it
was called as training of teachers which laid emphasis
upon the practical aspect alone. Later, it was named
as teacher education which gave significance to the
teacher education' consists of refresher courses for the trained teachers. 'Continuing education' signifies courses which are designed to meet an individual's interests and needs. There is another term 'staff development' which denotes an educational programme to improve the functioning of all individuals on a staff. Its chief mission is improve both individual and group functioning.

On the basis of levels, it is called the Pre-primary teacher education, the Primary teacher education, the Secondary teacher education and the Collegiate teacher education.

Keeping in view the certificates conferred, it is designated as Certificate Course, a Diploma Course, and a Degree Course etc.

Figure 2.1 illustrates the facts clearly:

![Diagram of Teacher Education]

Figure 2.1 Types of Teacher Education
Problems of Professional Education

It is an admitted fact that our teachers' training colleges are afflicted with multi-dimensional problems and without their satisfactory solutions, the idea of a marked improvement in the system of teacher education would remain a distant dream only. Hence the researcher deemed it desirable to make an analysis of some important and current problems confronting our colleges. They are outlined below:

(1) The Problem of Formulating Concrete Objectives of Teacher Education

A peep into the programmes and courses generally followed in our training institutions would convince everybody that there are no specific and concrete objectives before them. Therefore, the problem is to work out appropriate objectives which are really useful for our school practices.

(2) The Problem of Admitting Right Type of Student Teachers

Undoubtedly, the quality of a finished product in any sphere of life depends to a great extent upon its input. In our teachers' training colleges most of the student teachers come to be admitted as a last resort
after being rejected from all walks of life. Majority of them lack adequate background of content knowledge, skill, aptitude and attitude etc. which are so vital for a teaching career. Besides, most of the Universities and colleges lay emphasis upon the merit points only determined by the marks obtained by the candidate in his various examinations and overlook other essential qualities. This situation is worsened when managements admit students after taking capitation fees and violate flagrantly the fixed limit of the number of students. These anomalies have resulted in not only the shocking decline in the standard of training colleges but stepped up the huge backlog of unemployed trained graduates and thereby threatening the very existence of our training colleges. Explaining the gloomy picture, Mathur (1964) illustrates:

In good colleges where there is a rush for admission, there is also a rush of recommendations and some undeserving candidates have to be accommodated while quite a few deserving ones are left out. It is common knowledge that the stuff we get in our training colleges and in the teaching profession is far from satisfaction and it is idle to expect efficient education from such teachers of doubtful ability (Mathur, p.174).

(3) The Problem of Preparation of Teachers in Subject Areas of Shortage

It is generally found that teachers for teaching
such subjects like Science, Mathematics, English and Music are not readily available. Persons holding degrees in these subjects prefer white collar jobs to teaching where the prospect of promotion is bleak, salary is unattractive and social status is at low ebb. Hence there is a problem of increasing the supply of teachers in these disciplines.

(4) The Problem of Having Demonstration Schools

None will deny that student teachers should be given opportunities to observe demonstration lessons. Therefore, arises the need to have Demonstration or Experimental schools. But unfortunately there are only a few colleges which have such schools. With the result that most of the training colleges donot get substantial opportunity of translating their theory into practice. It is, therefore, essential to tackle this problem to make not only the methods and techniques advocated by the colleges more relevant and realistic but to convince others of their usefulness also.

(5) The Problem of Removing Isolation of Teacher Education

The Education Commission (1966) has pointed out three types of isolation prevalent in the system of teacher education in our country.
colossal and there is a vital need for its eradication. It is really an irony that on one side, there is a backlog of untrained teachers in our schools and on the other, there are those who after completing training are either reluctant to join teaching profession or leave it after joining for some lucrative jobs. Many women don't join the profession due to marriage or geographical inconveniences.

(7) **The Problem of Improving Faulty System of Supervision**

Student teaching has been referred to as the key phase of the total teacher education programme. Experts in the field of teacher education hold the view that the success of practice teaching depends to a great extent upon the nature of supervision. Like other aspects of our teacher education, it is also afflicted with several maladies. Supervision is done without any worthwhile program; Supervisors remain satisfied with making casual visits to the classes and writing a few stereotyped remarks; and supervisory functions are not given much significance in the examination oriented scheme of student teaching. These are the fundamental defects of supervisory process. The matter of concern is how to root out them and thereby ensure a success to this process.
(8) The Problem of Organizing Continuing Education

Continuing education is referred to as Inservice or Perennial education. Its chief aim is to equip the teachers with up-to-date knowledge so that they might get job satisfaction and lead a successful life. Emphasizing the significance of this education and study habits, Arnold's reply to the following question is pertinent:

Why do you spend so much time in preparing for the class?

The reply was: 'I prefer that my students should drink from a running stream rather than a stagnant pool'. (quoted in Pillai, 87).

A teacher must act like a traveller who finds out his way through new territory. But it is unfortunate to state that teaching, learning, research and maintenance of professional standard are anathema to a majority of teacher educators. They really do not deserve to be where they are. Besides this malady, several problems related to objectives, financial assistance, responsibility and ways and means to ensure coordination come and prove to be stumbling blocks for the success of continuing education.
The Problem of Enhancing the Status of Teachers and Training Colleges

It is unfortunate to state that our society has not yet recognised the pivotal role that the training colleges and the teachers have to play in the national development and reconstruction. Funds, facilities and manpower are easily diverted to engineering, medical and science colleges even ignoring the consideration of basic facilities needed in training colleges. Many colleges are without their own buildings and even those who have their own, do not possess adequate hostel facilities, libraries, workshops, and audio-visual aids etc. Evans (1971) reports:

Pessimists might well doubt whether any improvement is possible while the per capita expenditure in colleges of education is much lower than that in the universities and in other sectors of advanced further education, thus denying to the colleges of education the necessary staff, equipment and buildings. (Evans, 1971, p. 104).

It is due to the low economic, social and professional status of teachers that young men and women of high ability are not attracted towards this profession. Though the salaries of teachers have increased, but the increase has been neutralized by the rise in the cost of living. This state of affairs undermines their confidence and militates against their effectiveness.
Hence there is a need for effecting a judicious balance between the challenging task that a teacher has to perform and his corresponding remuneration upon which depends not only his economic but social and professional status as well.

(10) The Problem of Bringing Technological Advancement Into TEIS

Our society is changing with incredible speed. In order to adjust with it and live happily, there is an urgent need to effect suitable changes in our teacher education institutions. Along with other views, there is a call for introducing mass media and technological gadgets in our educational institutions. But a section of teacher educators feels that if technological innovations replace the traditional pattern, they would lose their jobs. So they are reluctant to adopt new paths and prefer to run sluggishly on beaten tracks. The real problem is how to assure these teacher educators that these innovative practices would not replace them. Instead they would function as a support system for them which would substantially result in adding new dimensions to teaching learning process. Such teachers deserve to be reminded the advice given by Mazzini: "Slumber not in the tents of your fathers. The world is advancing."
Advance with it". (quoted in Pillai, p.35).

(11) **The Problem of Improving Evaluation System**

In any programme of educational improvement, evaluation plays its significant role. The adage: "our examination is a bundle of evils" is highly applicable to our teacher education. Lack of objectivity, validity and reliability are the common defects prevalent in it. One major anomaly stifling the whole programme is concerned with over emphasis on examination to the extent of neglecting competencies. It is true that the students are given training in the context of examination expectations rather than of job expectations. Besides, what weightage should be assigned to theory and practical work? Who should be appointed examiners? Whether evaluation should be external or internal or both? and How to assess the student teaching scientifically? are some of the baffling problems confronting our teacher education institutions.

(12) **The Problem of Vitalizing Student Teaching**

Student teaching is rightly regarded as the sheet anchor of the teacher training. Inspite of its significance, it does not get its due attention and place
in the scheme of our teacher training. It is organized in an artificial atmosphere and has been reduced to a formality to be gone through. It comprises merely some demonstration lessons followed by a few days of practice teaching and the final examination in practical skill in teaching. This is why people regard it as a prerequisite for evaluation and not for efficient teaching. In this context, Mathur (1964) admits:

> The practical side is not being given its due share. If we look at conditions prevailing in many Universities we will find that only 1/5th of the total marks are assigned to the practical work, with the result that naturally this side of training gets only 1/5th of attention of the staff and students. The result is proverbial gap between theory and practice. (Mathur, 1964, p. 175).

Keeping in view these facts, the problem is how to revamp and revitalize student teaching so that the teacher education programmes may become really useful and really effective.

(13) The Problem of Professional Organization of Teachers

There are hundreds of organizations of teachers in various parts of India. At present there are two national organizations which deserve due consideration: The All India Federation of Educational Association (AIFEA) and the Indian Association of Teacher Educators.
Even these two are riven by dissensions and corruption charges. They do not make any worthwhile effort for the improvement of professional competence of teachers. As a result, a vast majority of members of the teaching profession remain indifferent and are not associated with them. The chief mission of the newly formed association 'ICET' is to rectify these lapses and place the defunct association (IATE) in proper perspective.

The Problem of Having Good Research in Education

The colleges of education have mainly three functions to discharge: training, service to schools and research. To realize these aims, good academic staff, library and laboratory facilities are required. But generally our colleges do not possess these requirements adequately. It is, therefore, natural that the research work is adversely affected.

Another factor which is worth mentioning is that only a few researches conducted have bearing on the actual classroom teaching. Generally problems are selected without keeping in view the functional aspect and national priority. In most of the cases, samples are chosen according to the convenience of the researcher, foreign tools are employed and results are interpreted
in a routine manner. All these shortcomings give rise to mediocre quality of research in our country.

Besides the above mentioned problems, there is an important problem of enlisting better and full cooperation of practising schools. It would be in fitness of things, if various important aspects concerning with this vital subject are discussed here:

Teacher Education Colleges and Practising Schools

The success of student teaching programme depends upon interaction and sound relationship between the colleges of education and the practising schools. This is why it has become a cooperative enterprise in which the colleges and schools share responsibilities. Figure 2.1 shows the shared responsibilities to be undertaken by the colleges of education and schools.

As a result of his study of the roles of practising schools, Jackson (1967) found the following points in order of importance:

(1) Experimentation
(2) Research
(3) Participation
(4) Observation
(5) Demonstration teaching
(6) Inservice leadership to the profession
(7) Student teaching
A Comprehensive Chart of Facts Concerning Practising Schools

Functional

- Experimentation
- Research

Participation

- Administration
- Professionalization
- Student Teaching

Communication

- To enhance the creative ability of student teachers
- To involve the principal
- From the principal
- From the administration
- To examine the role of specialists

Levels of Cooperation

- Problems created by traditional type of teaching
- Problems created by pupils
- Shortage of college staff
- Unnecessary shortage of teaching aids
- Lack of appreciation for new schemes

Strains for lack of cooperation

- Poor student teaching
- Failure to recognize due responsibilities
- Unnecessary shortage of teaching aids and college
- Problems of accommodation, furniture, and aids
- Unnecessary shortage of students and colleges
- Problems within the framework of cooperation
- Problems within the framework for teaching

Objectives of communication

To enhance the presence of the teaching of and education
1. Participate in arrangements for student teacher assessment by:
   (a) examining student records and surveying student requests
   (b) conveying placement requests to administrators
   (c) Participating in selection of cooperating schools and cooperating teachers
   (d) Completing final arrangements.

2. Provide adequate supervision of the student teacher through observation and analysis of teaching and by means of conference.

3. Participate in planning for students' professional experiences and helping them to clarify their analysis.

4. Keep communication open
   (a) interpreting the student teaching programme to students and community

5. Build and maintain good relationships with public school personnel.

1. Participate in arrangements for student teacher assessment by:
   (a) Supervising possibilities of school centres
   (b) Considering requests for placement of students
   (c) Participating in selection of cooperating schools and cooperating teachers.
   (d) Completing final arrangements for assignments.

2. Cooperate with college coordinators in facilitating supervision and offering guidance in daily activities.

3. Provide opportunities for students' varied professional experiences and offering guidance.

4. Keep communication open
   (a) interpreting the student teaching programme to students and community

5. Build and maintain good relationships with staff of teacher education institution.

Figure 2.2 Shared Responsibilities (From Haines, p.20).
If the cooperating schools play their roles and give cooperation conscientiously, the following advantages would be available:

(i) It would provide an opportunity to the student teachers to have first-hand experiences of working with children of the schools.

(ii) It will enable the student teachers to relate theory to actual practice teaching experiences.

(iii) Close contact with classroom instructional practices would pave the way for making necessary changes in the theory course.

(iv) It will provide a solid base to measure the student's fitness or aptitude for teaching.

(v) It will acquaint teachers with modern trends in educational theory and practice.

(vi) It will enable the staff members of the colleges to be familiar with the practical problems faced by teachers in schools.

(vii) It will facilitate the process of establishing good human relationships among the people of the teaching profession.

Levels of Cooperation

Cooperation from schools is expected at different levels.

A. From the Administrator or Management. An administrator is referred to as the officer of the education department controlling the Government schools and the president or the secretary or the manager in the case of private schools. The administrator should
exercise his influence and instruct the principal of the school for total involvement in student teaching programme.

B. From the Principal. The headmaster being the captain of the team of teachers plays key role in the student teaching programme. He is expected to perform the following duties:

(i) Helping to orient the subject teachers for enabling the student teachers to get their full cooperation.

(ii) Framing the time-table of the school in consultation with the representative of the college.

(iii) Arranging accommodation for the student teachers and supervisors for performing various activities.

(iv) Allowing the student teachers to use various teaching aids and devices which are available in the school.

(v) Supervising and guiding the student teachers.

(vi) Helping the research workers to get every facility concerning their research work in the school.

From the Teachers. The cooperating teachers who give up their teaching have crucial responsibility in student teaching. Their cooperation is expected in the following respects:

(i) Creating suitable background so that the student teachers may carry on their works effectively.
(ii) Providing help in maintaining and promoting class discipline.

(iii) Acquainting the student teachers with the courses or topics to be taught.

(iv) Issuing teaching aids from the school stock to increase the effectiveness of their teaching.

(v) Supervising the teaching daily and giving suitable suggestions.

From Students. Students of practising schools treat the student teachers as outsiders and do not give the same recognition and respect as they do with their teachers. Students should be advised by the practising school authorities to remain disciplined and extend their wholehearted help to the student teachers.

In actual practice studies conducted in this context show that the attitude of practising school staff is generally not positive and encouraging. Cooperation between the colleges and schools is somewhat superficial. Willy and Maddison (1971) admit that "the evidence to the select committee demonstrates that there is a dangerous gap between the colleges of education and the schools". (Willy and Maddison, 1971, p.53). Generally, the practising schools instead of providing cooperation create more difficulties during student teaching. It would be proper to study the extent of non-cooperation and problems created by the practising schools. Describing the adverse effect of indifference
on the part of practising schools, D'Souza and Chatterjee (1956) opine:

"The old antagonism is often replaced by an indifference which is even more chilling and enervating than open hostility." (D'Souza and Chatterjee, 1956, p.135).

Following are the some problems created by the practising schools:

(i) Some schools do not give permission for arranging practice teaching at all.

(ii) They insist that the practice teaching should be finished within a short duration of time.

(iii) They are not willing to change the timetable and split the classes when required.

(iv) The principals and teachers of the practising schools possess grumbling and grudging attitude towards student teachers.

(v) The teachers do not evince keen interest in guiding student teachers.

(vi) Some schools lack adequate accommodation, furniture and equipments. The subject teachers do not allow the student teachers to utilize various teaching aids and devices which are available in the school.

(vii) The school authorities want to extract undue concession from the college for their contribution during student teaching. It may range from appointment of teacher educators to admission and extorting good marks in internal assessment to their candidates.
(viii) In the wake of poor school results, the principals and teachers protect themselves by throwing the entire responsibility upon the student teachers. This results in tarnishing the image of the colleges in the eyes of the public and the management of the school.

(ix) The schools encourage only traditional type of teaching. Thus creativity and originality are suppressed.

(x) There is a tendency on the part of pupils to create unnecessary troubles which make it difficult for the student teachers to proceed and teach in an effective way.

Reasons for Lack of Cooperation From Schools

It would be proper to study the possible reasons that induce the cooperating schools to adopt such unhelpful stance.

(i) The practising schools do not get due recognition and appreciation for their role in teacher preparation.

(ii) There is a lack of proper harmonious relationship with the teachers, administrators and pupils.

(iii) Some student teachers do not go well prepared and present inferior quality of teaching. Their behaviour and adjustment to the new environment leaves much to be desired. "The sad part of the study is that the student just does not realise the chaos he creates". (Cohen and Garner, 1965, p.90).

(iv) The teachers of practising schools feel exasperated due to being excluded from effective participation in student teaching programme. But some teachers are also to blame themselves for this sorry state of affairs as they are conformists, weak in professional stature and usually appearing to be doing a job for the principal or for monetary reasons.
(v) The present relationship between the colleges and schools is marked by one in which the college play a superior role and the school staff feels that they have to work in subordination. The situation is worsened by highbrow attitude adopted by the teacher educators.

(vi) The unprecedented increase in the number of trainees and training institutions have made schools and college relationship more unsavoury.

(vii) According to Cope (1969) "Much unfortunate snipping between schools and colleges is due to misunderstanding of the college course and a failure to recognise joint responsibility". (Cope, 1969, p.25).

(viii) Schools are skeptical about the teaching ability of student teachers. They view student teaching as a waste of time and a farce. They believe that to allow student teaching is to allow school children become 'guinea pigs' in the experiments conducted by the colleges. This would impair their school results. Price (1964) affirms:

So long as schools are preparing pupils for such examinations, parents and teachers alike are bound to look with suspicion upon experiments which might get their children well back in the race of preferment. (Price, 1964, p.39).

(ix) They are no-well defined and democratic responsibilities to be shared between the colleges and schools.

Pointing out the actual position of existing relationship between the colleges and schools, Owens (1970) declares:
From the schools point of view, students are frequently little more than a hindrance, they come in at the college's inconvenience; there is often considerable feeling in schools about the irrelevance of college work and the college is put in a curiously predatory and casual relationship with the schools, so that it is difficult for lasting relationship to form. From the college point of view, students under present system gain little confidence in themselves. (Owens, 1970, p.63).

All these accounts indicate that there are some obstacles to a close and working articulation between colleges and schools. As the importance of forging a good relationship is paramount, there is a major concern to search out ways for achieving this objective. If this is realized and the practising schools are committed to play their part honestly in upgrading the student teaching programme, the success of not only the student teaching programme but the teacher education as a whole would be inexorably ensured.
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