THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

- Focus on the Contexts of Teaching
- Conceptions of Teaching
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CHAPTER II

Theoretical Overview

The initial preparation of teachers is critically important for the development of competent teachers. It should reflect both, the expectations which the community holds about the role of teacher and the skills and abilities of the individuals who enter the profession. It has been established that without effective education, the country's total development and modernisation will not be a reality. A widely held perception in the country about bureaucracy is that the standards of efficiency have deteriorated seriously since the pre-independence days. The trend in our country is to decry the standards of all professions today and to think of the old days as something of a 'golden age'.

The present study is taken up with right earnest to investigate the major hindrances of a teacher's competency. These hindrances are centred around four areas called dimensions, viz., personal, institutional, psychological and sociological. An attempt has been made here to examine the theoretical basis of the development of teacher competency and factors leading to the non-utilisation of their competency. Important theories and literature related to the study have been given under the following heads:

2.1 Focus on the contexts of teaching
2.2 Conceptions of teaching
2.3 Form and structure of teacher competency
2.4 Theories of teaching competency
2.5 Comprehensive paradigm of teacher competency

2.6 Threats to teacher competency

2.7 Redeeming secondary education for 21st century

2.8 Kerala’s specific position in the arena of education.

2.1 Focus on the Contexts of Teaching

“Any conscious activity by one person designed to enhance learning in another” is pedagogy (Watkins and Mortimore, 1999). Thus teaching is an intentional activity which assumes its distinctive character and meaning not in isolated behaviour, but in sequence of interrelated acts. Teacher is the real maker of the society and in him depends the future of the school, the village, the country and in fact the future of mankind. According to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, “the teacher’s place in society is of vital importance. He acts as the pivot for the transmission of intellectual traditions and technical skills from generation to generation and helps to keep the lamp of civilisation burning. Teachers have, therefore, to realise increasingly their special responsibility to the society” (Gupta, 1998).

Teacher is being discovered today. All over the world, the focus of attention is upon him and his competency. He is being recognised as the most vital factor in any educational system. Upon his training, his dedication and his efficiency stand the whole structure of education. The Secondary Education Commission (1953) rightly observed. “No amount of spacious buildings, costly equipments and sound syllabus will serve any useful purpose unless there are teachers who are fully alive to the nobility of the profession and its accompanying responsibilities”. Therefore, training of teachers is of paramount importance in improving the quality of education.
Teachers can act as trailblazers in the lives of learners in the process of education for development. If teachers acquire professional competencies and commitment, and if they are enabled and empowered to perform their multiple tasks in the classroom, school and community in a genuinely professional manner, then a chain reaction can begin starting with a sound teacher performance and culminating into high quality learning among increasingly more students in cognitive-, affective-, and psychomotor- areas of human development. In the last decade of the twentieth century, both school of education and society have witnessed unprecedented technological advancements, communication revolution, periodical reforms in school curriculum, introduction of competency based value-oriented education adopting MLL (Minimum Level of Learning) strategy as envisaged by NPE (1986 and 1992), major reforms in textbooks-cum-workbooks and other teaching learning aids, promoting activity based joyful learning, introduction of self-learning and group learning activities and host of other developments.

Research studies which adopted a detailed focus of life in the classroom established a more sophisticated approach to understanding the complex interactions of pupils and teachers. Doyle (1990) provides an overview of studies which have focused on classroom contexts and found that classrooms are crowded and busy places in which groups of students who vary in interests and abilities must be organised and directed. Moreover, these groups assemble regularly for long periods to accomplish a wide variety of tasks. Many events occur simultaneously to circumstances, and the course of events is frequently unpredictable. Teaching in such settings requires a highly developed ability to manage events (Doyle, 1990).
The broader view of pedagogy enables the classroom to be viewed as an 'activity system' which teachers need to establish and manage classroom activities constructed from the key elements (shown in Figure 2.1; Doyle, 1984). According to Doyle, the most important element in determining the coherence of an activity is its goals. Successful managers of activities communicate a clear programme of action for participants.

![Figure 2.1: Elements in Teaching Activities](image)

2.2 Conceptions of Teaching

It is seen that effective teaching can only be considered in relation to effective learning. This raised the question of how learning and teaching are generally conceptualised. Research has shown that academic learning is quantitative in knowledge; memorising; the acquisition for subsequent utilisation of facts and methods; the abstraction of meanings; and an interpretative process aimed at understanding reality (Salijo, 1979). Much secondary school learning can be understood in relation to the lower three levels.
Are there parallels between conceptions of teaching and learning? It has been seen on a continuum from the transmission of knowledge at one end to the facilitation of learning (Kember, 1997). However, teaching in the secondary school serves functions other than those that are purely academic. It may be for this reason that there are many ways of viewing it, for instance, as clinical problem solving (Kagan, 1988); a cognitive skill (Leinhardt and Greeno, 1986); Work (Marshall, 1988); craft knowledge (Leinhardt, 1990); management (Biggs and Telfer, 1987); improvised conversation (Yinger, 1994); apprenticeship (Pratt, 1992); transaction (Barnes, 1976); guided participation (Rogoff, 1990); or as the practice of a community of learners (Rogoff, Matusov, and White, 1996).

Expert teachers focus primarily on the pupils and usually adopt a combination of activities either sequentially or concurrently to deal with one or more goals simultaneously taking account of the current conditions at the time (Brown and McIntyre, 1993). Teaching, like most expert skills, relies on knowing 'how do the right thing at the right time' (Dorner and Scholkopf, 1991).

There is considerable evidence that teachers' beliefs and expectations have a crucial effect on the learning outcomes of their pupils. Argyris (1976) proposes that teachers hold what he calls 'espoused' theories. These underlying professional practice and theories in use that guide professional practice. What teachers 'think' influences 'what they do' (Clark and Peterson, 1986; and Calgren, Handal, and Vaage, 1994). Teachers' expectations of their pupils are also important in relation to raising achievement (Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis, and Ecob, 1995; Gottfredson, Marcinia and Birdseye, 1995; Jussim, Madon, and Palumbo
1998), although the effect does not seem to operate in all classrooms all of the time (Rogers, 1990).

Positive interactions between teacher and pupils are important in facilitating learning. Teachers’ self-efficacy as teachers is also an important predictor of pupil learning outcomes (Tschannen, A.W. Hoy, and W.K. Hoy, 1998).

In the world shrinking fast into a global village characterised by knowledge, technology and industries taking off at top speed and information highways opening up new vistas of prospects, the profile of the teacher would be quite different. Education is increasingly being perceived as a stake of crucial significance, capable of modifying the economic scenario and transforming the dream of millions of human beings for a better and higher quality of life into a reality.

Till recently, it was presumed that teachers prepared in teacher education institutions through a programme of one year’s duration get sufficient education that could last throughout the rest of their working life as teachers. Now, a very different kind of a teacher in specific contexts would have to be thought of and prepared to shoulder new responsibilities extending far beyond the confines of the classroom.

Being the first terminal stage of education, the role of secondary education is of vital importance all over the world. Secondary education is preparatory to higher education and its quality has natural bearing on the quality of higher education. The role of secondary education is envisaged to impart the necessary skills of self-learning to the generation, as learning is expected to be a life long process. The general education in Kerala is relatively widespread, compared to
other parts of India and even to the many third world countries. Despite this highly creditable achievement, it is facing a serious crisis; in content, organisation and in management. At present the quality of education imparted in the common schools leaves much to be desired, which has led to the proliferation of English medium ‘schools of excellence’. This situation can be remedied only by improving the common school system.

2.3 **Teacher Competencies: Form and Structure**

A competency can be described in terms of its form, which places it in a particular category of behaviour, and its structure, which places it in a sequence with other competencies.

The developmental process of formulating teacher competencies is presented in Figure 2.2.

![Diagram of Developmental Process of Teacher Competencies](image)

**Figure 2.2: Developmental Process of Teacher Competencies**

Source: Mandler and Kessen (1959, p.133)
Here, the first step might be a literature search to identify teacher behaviours relevant to local or institutional goals and objectives; another might involve conversion of previously identified behaviours into variables by constructing various forms of instrumentation; and third effort might entail research on previously defined variables in order to select and validate levels of proficiency, i.e., to determine whether or not attainment of a certain proficiency level does, indeed, lead to improved pupil performance. Since research has produced very few of these, efforts at this point must focus on the identification and validation of teacher competencies, rather than their immediate application to the appraisal process. The most critical and tedious task in developing an appraisal system is that of identifying and validating proficiency levels for the teacher behaviours selected for assessment.

There are three forms of teacher competencies: (a) knowledge competencies, specifying cognitive understanding the teacher is expected to demonstrate, (b) performance competencies, specifying teaching processes the teacher is expected to demonstrate, and (c) consequence competence, specifying pupil behaviours that are viewed as evidence of teaching effectiveness.

While the objectives of most pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes involve the attainment of teacher competencies, few of these programmes provide related training experience that acknowledge the interdependence of knowledge, performance, and consequence competencies. If any one form of competency is considered independent of its preceding, enabling competencies, it probably will not be attained by the teacher, since knowledge competencies are needed in order to attain performance competencies, and
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Performance competencies are in turn, needed to attain consequence competencies. Knowledge, performance and consequence competencies are best viewed as a sequence of interrelated behaviours that work in partnership to build a comprehensive array of both teacher and pupil outcomes in the classroom. This view implies that an appraisal effort must not only formulate teacher competencies, but must also identify the learning sequence required for the attainment of competencies. That is, each form of competency must be considered a building block within a broader sequence of learning.

2.4 Theories of Teaching Competency

The term ‘competence’ is frequently used when we talk about any profession or work that expresses one’s quality of being competent, possessing adequate professional skill, knowledge, qualification or capacity. In bygone days, a person stuffed with knowledge with no practical training in teaching was a teacher. Now teaching competency is the ability of a teacher to facilitate behavioural change in students. To be precise, teaching competencies are functional abilities which teachers show in their teaching activities. The teaching competencies will include teacher’s role as a mentor, friend, guide and a social worker. It is an overall assessment of the performance of the teacher in a classroom situation on the criteria of knowledge of the subject matter, methods and techniques of teaching, questioning, use of teaching aids, pupil participation, teacher personality, rapport with the class, classroom management and clarity of objectives. If a teacher lays emphasis on all these above mentioned factors, it will definitely make the teaching effective. There are, however, many approaches to develop teacher competency.
(a) **Trait Approach**

In ancient India, there was no systematic provision for the education of teachers but it was assumed that he alone had a right to teach who had acquired complete mastery over knowledge and could also translate it into practical life. There was no formal curriculum for teacher training as well as award of diploma or degree as we have today. The teacher's image was reflected in his outstanding intellectual ability and vast erudition. There was a general belief in that period that "teachers are born not made". Professional training was not considered necessary. But with increasing knowledge about child psychology and advancement in the science of pedagogy it is being recognised that the teacher should not only know the content but also know the 'child' whom he has to teach. In order to do the job of teaching well the teacher should be well conversant with the art, science and skill of teaching. All these necessitate education of the teacher to make him familiar with the intricacies of the teaching-learning process and planning of the lessons. Hence, it is being increasingly felt that teachers should be educated and re-educated to be able to do the job well. That is why it is very apt to say that teachers are not only born but made also and can be made through good programme of pre-service and in-service teacher training programme (Das, 2000).

(b) **Classroom Behaviour Approach (Flanders' Technique)**

The quality of teaching behaviour, in turn, depends upon the level of equipment of teachers with necessary skills in designing and handling teaching behaviour. This can be successfully accomplished through understanding teaching
behaviours, their effectiveness in terms of corresponding pupil outcomes and their adoption by the master designer and architect – the teacher.

Flanders’ technique, widely known as Flanders’ Interaction Analysis System, is a training device which describes the way a teacher interacts with his class. When used as a training device to give feedback to teachers about their patterns of action, the system has a very explicit set of objectives. Flanders, from his several studies revealed that teacher influence was found to have positive relationship with pupil’s achievement and their attitude. If teacher trainees know the teaching concepts operationalized in terms of teaching behaviour, if they know how to analyse their own teaching behaviours for the educational outcomes they want to engender in their pupils, and if they are provided with objectives and specified feedback regarding their observed teaching behaviours, there is a likelihood that they will modify their teaching behaviours accordingly. From five different studies related to interaction analysis, it is clear that researchers have endeavoured to evolve a new teaching strategy and have determined its effectiveness against traditional lecture method and similar other variables. Flanders conveys a message to the teacher that Flanders’ Interaction Analysis System is more effective than the traditional method of teaching in developing teaching competency on the part of the student teachers. Teachers are, therefore, urged to use the Flanders’ Interaction Analysis System in developing teaching competency although the system is somewhat outdated (Das, 2000).

(i) **Verbal Interaction Category System (VICS)**

This system developed by Amidon and Hunter is an extension of Flanders’ system of interaction. As in the Flanders’ interaction analysis, VICS matrix
too has certain significant area, where the relatively heavy tally concentration occurring would refer to unusual aspects in the verbal communication.

(ii) **Reciprocal Category System (RCS)**

Richard Ober of the University of Florida has put forward a modified adaptation of the FIACS known as the Reciprocal Category System (RCS). In this, there are nine categories which are applicable to either teacher or the student in a reciprocal manner and a tenth category of silence or confusion. The RCS, not only enables us to determine the nature and type of teacher-pupil interaction but also to estimate the socio-emotional climate in the classroom by noting the warming and cooling behaviour of teachers.

(iii) **Microteaching – Skill based Approach**

The Education Commission (1964-66) has stated, “Involvement in education can yield very rich dividends against the resulting improvement in the education of millions. First rate teacher training institutions can thus play crucial role in the development of education. Microteaching is a teacher training technique. It is now considered not only as a constructive teacher training technique but also as “a versatile research tool which dramatically simplifies the logistics of investigating certain teaching skills and learning variables” (Allen and Ryan, 1961).

Complexity in teaching is reduced by practising teaching skill one at a time. This concept of microteaching although originated in early sixties, had developed to such an extent that a large number of teacher training institutions in many countries have adopted this as an approach to teacher training. Skinnerian theory of ‘shaping’ or ‘successive approximation’ in acquiring the new patterns of
behaviour seems to have been applied to teacher feedback-reteach pattern in microteaching technique.

(d) **Model Approach**

To prepare teacher for effective teaching learning process, Joyce and Weil (1972) have developed different models of teaching based on different theories of teaching. A teaching model is necessarily characterised by the ‘frame of reference’ and focus that it provides to the teacher to act purposefully and rationally. A model is considered as a ‘blueprint for teaching’. The models are grouped into four families as the basis of their chief emphasis in the ways they approach educational goals and means.

(a) Social interaction models  (b) Personal models
(c) Behaviour modification models  (d) Information processing models.

2.5 **A Comprehensive Paradigm of Teacher Competency**

Pre-service education is a process of transformation of lay persons into competent committed professional educators. In order to equip teachers well in performance areas and to enable them to become thoroughly competent to carry out professional tasks with efficiency and insight, ten competency areas have been identified. These competency areas are designed to provide adequate theoretical and conceptual understanding and to empower teachers to perform their responsibilities with professional insight and confidence. To achieve these multiple goals, teacher competencies include relevant conceptual elements, content elements, contextual aspects, transactional and evaluation aspects etc. All the ten competency areas thus
identified converge on one or more of performance areas and interrelate theory and practice in a focussed manner.

These competencies are first to be developed during pre-service teacher education and then further updated and strengthened during recurrent in-service teacher orientation programmes. Teacher effectiveness is not automatically ensured by professional competencies and practical skills only. One of the reasons of the phenomenon is that the actual performance of trained teachers in the classroom or school in consistent manner is equally dependent, if not more, on their commitment to perform well. It is this commitment component that plays a decisive role in effective teaching. Thus well-trained and effective teachers are those who are both competent and committed professional practitioners. Hence, the task of fostering professional commitment among teachers must become an integral part of pre-service and in-service teacher education. Towards this five commitment areas have been identified. Many studies on successful teachers, teacher effectiveness and teacher performance have pointed to one or more of the commitment characteristics. Thus a competency based and commitment oriented curricular framework includes three interrelated and interactive dimensions as follows:

Figure 2.3: Interrelated and Interactive Dimensions of Curriculum

Source: Dave (1998)
Teacher preparation ought to begin with a sound pre service teacher education programme that may transform an individual into a competent and committed professional functionary, fully equipped with an equally comprehensive professional readiness to perform these tasks with perfection and satisfaction. It is being increasingly appreciated that before a teacher is assigned the responsibility of teaching in schools, familiarity with basic understanding of sociological, philosophical and psychological principles is a basic prerequisite. No teacher can be successful in school without a thorough and practical understanding of the specific community, the learner's needs, societal expectations and basic objectives of the particular stage of education.

NCTE has identified the following ten interrelated competencies for making competent teachers (Dave, 1998).

(i) **Contextual Competencies**

The job of the teacher is not only an integral part of the total educational system but also of the social and cultural systems in which they perform their functions. In a world shrinking into a global village, they need to understand the local and cultural ramifications of the policies and programmes.

On undergoing pre-service teacher education course, the student teacher will acquire mastery in the following contextual competencies:

- Understand that the teacher’s role is an integral and crucial aspect of the total education system
- Develop familiarity with national policy on education and state level initiative for quality education.
Understand new roles and responsibilities in implementing measures of improvement at the local level and strive to translate the understanding with desired behavioural changes.

(ii) Conceptual Competencies

The concept of education in the emerging context requires an entirely different vision and perception since competency based approach to education is new and involves a mixture of old and new concepts and theories the teachers will need help in facilitating learning of children and helping them to achieve mastery of competence.

(iii) Content Competencies

Teachers everywhere have given more importance to facts and details of the concerned subjects they teach. The teacher education programmes prepare quality teachers, competent and capable enough to correlate facts, reduce cramming, establish relationships, classify areas and structures in pursuit of quality education. Such an analysis could help teachers identify avenues for joyful activities, bring in dynamism in learning and transacting the curriculum in the class as well as in schools, utilise media and innovative strategies to make the entire learning-teaching process acceptable to the learners. A teacher, having acquired thorough understanding of the content competencies, would be able to determine the ways and means to dispel such apprehension.

(iv) Transactional Competencies

Transactional competencies constitute the backbone of teacher education. If developed comprehensively, these could prepare student trainees or
teachers to internalise fully their functions as transmitters and facilitators of learning. To achieve this, the teacher needs to learn and practise how to ascertain the learning needs of the children as well as the remedial inputs necessary to augment their learning.

One of the often repeated criticisms of teacher education pertains to the competencies sidetracked in pre-service teacher education programmes so much so that teachers even after having undergone teacher training do not practise the methods and strategies, if any, learnt in the training leaving them then and there as legacy to the training institution itself. After attending pre-service teacher education course, the student teacher will achieve mastery in the following transactional competencies:

1. Prepare a variety of lesson plans to make classroom communication effective according to the level of the learners.
2. Identify tools of individual and group learning to help children achieve mastery level learning.
3. Understand the new information technology to weave it into transactional strategies.
4. Acquaint oneself with the teaching-learning process.
5. Analyse patterns of teachers’ and pupils’ interaction, etc.

(v) Competencies Related to Other Educational Activities

Lack of focus on development of non-cognitive areas in education contributes to several problems. Emotional maturity and psychomotor skills that the learner can pick up through different activities inside or outside the school, apart from the curricular ones, help to build some kind of a balance among various
developmental aspect of the child's personality. The teachers need to be adequately goaded through sufficient practice and participation, to acquire these skills and competencies from planning appropriately to execute such educational activities efficiently and effectively such that significant learning takes place as a result thereof. After attending pre-service teacher education course, the student teacher will achieve mastery in competencies related to other educational activities like participate and guide in effectively organising different functions in the school such as annual school day, republic day etc. Participate and help in conducting various activities like school assembly, relief camps, health camps, polio camps etc. and develop insight into self-concept and strengthen it through continued participation in such activities.

(vi) **Competencies to Develop Learning and Teaching Materials**

Availability of teaching learning material ensures, no doubt, help to the teacher in organising the learning situations quite effectively, yet many a time the material already available is not quite useful. Sometimes it is not even available. Therefore, to make the teaching effective, the teacher is supposed to search for relevant materials from different sources or else prepare them individually or collectively. Self-made learning material is indeed the best tool for the teachers to make the teaching learning task really meaningful, relevant and lasting for classroom teaching. Through pre-service training, teachers can identify various types of educational media / teaching learning material and sources useful for educational purposes, identify factors, such as age group, size of the class, number of students in a class, etc., to be considered while developing teaching learning materials, etc.
(vii) **Evaluation Competencies**

The area of examination or evaluation generally generates a sense of fear among children and is often considered to be the weakest link in the system of education. The teacher is expected to know the methods, techniques and ways of utilising evaluation for diagnostic and prognostic purposes. Obviously, for this, a knowledge of various types of tests available, their selection and administration would be learnt in the teacher training institutions.

Through teacher training, the student teachers have thus learn, understand and practise the concept of evaluation which is not only diagnostic, prognostic or remedial in nature but also very objective, consistently comprehensive and continuous in its assignment.

(viii) **Management Competencies**

The concept of management by a teacher has revealed itself to be a complex one, embracing a variety of activities occurring before, during and after instruction and even apart from it. Management is considered to be very crucial in terms of effectiveness of instruction and professional success of the teacher. Neglecting harnessing of educational management competencies as part of teacher training and school education, by and large, tells quite heavily on the quality of schooling and school innovations. A teacher who manages the class quite effectively also contributes meaningfully to school management and management of other activities and programmes in as well as outside the institution. Through pre-service training, the teacher trainees ought, therefore, to be necessarily made to undergo the practical experience of managing the totality of activities in the totality of school plant
so as to help them perform the totality of their duties as prospective regular school teachers. The area of management competencies as such, is very comprehensive, and of great importance for total educational development and wholesome growth of the teacher trainees not simply as competent school teachers but also as human beings, dedicated to the task of educational reconstruction in local, national and global context. After attending pre-service teacher education course, the student teacher will acquire mastery in management skills like time management, personnel management, resource management, management inside the classroom or institution, etc.

(ix) Competencies Related to Working with Parents

Parents and teachers can put their heads together and co-operate to devise mutually interactive strategies to overcome unwelcome situations in their common interest of providing for a wholesome institutional climate for the child to grow fearlessly and comfortably in a naturally spontaneous way. Through training, the teachers have to experience, learn and develop competencies of meaningful interaction with parents to help the child’s proper growth in educational as well as other developmental areas. Through pre-service training, the student teachers will attain mastery in understanding the role of parents in the child’s learning and development, organising parent teacher meetings for mutual consultation to effect overall improvement in the school and in children’s achievements, etc.

(x) Competencies Related to Working with the Community and Other Agencies

Community can provide human and physical resources required for school education. To achieve this, not only orientation but also co-operation of the community and other developmental agencies is extremely useful. The community
resources can be advantageously shared with the schools and can be utilised for mutual benefits of the school and the community. After undergoing pre-service teacher training, the student teacher will gain mastery in the following competencies related to working with the community and other agencies:

Understand the importance of community and other agencies’ contribution for improvement of school education.

Develop wholesome relationship between the school and the community for mutual benefit and

Act as nodal individuals for bringing different educational agencies and the community together for overall school and community improvement.

**Teacher Commitment**

Professionalism in any sector is a consequence of the extent of commitment on the part of individuals constituting the same. Teaching, being a profession, assumes that every teacher needs to stand committed to it. Teacher’s commitment cannot be taken for granted in the present day context. Hence, important areas of commitment and expected teacher behaviour need to be explicitly covered in pre-service teacher education curriculum. It is the teacher’s commitment to the learner which leads to total development of the child. The most crucial teacher commitment areas have been identified to five-fold as follows (Dave, 1998):

(i) **Commitment to the Learners**

By taking up the profession of teaching, the teacher is pledged to the progress and development of the learners. This can happen only when the teacher
evinces sincere concern and affection for the learners and is tolerant towards mistakes and mischief committed by them.

(ii) **Commitment to the Society**

Essentially, the school and the community have a symbolic relationship between them. Being knowledgeable persons, teachers can orient the community towards the importance of education as a life long process and also motivate them to take it in that perspective. The teachers have a very special role to play in motivating the deprived sections of the community to learn. This can only be done if teachers understand the community thoroughly and use various ways to mobilise it. Therefore, as a prerequisite, the teachers need to have deep concern and commitment towards the community which demands teachers’ specific orientation.

(iii) **Commitment to the Profession**

Teachers are entrusted by the community to shoulder the crucial responsibility of shaping the present generation for the future through the process of teaching and learning. Taking cognisance of this, only committed professionals will adopt various innovative methods of teaching, taking into consideration how best to learn and bring about effective teaching. This can happen only when teachers themselves evince commitment to the profession to improve both guided as well as self-directed learning. Educational training institutions and District Institute of Educational training have a great responsibility to provide opportunities and motivate teachers for self-directed learning for professional enrichment so that more and more teachers feel committed to the profession of teaching.
(iv) **Commitment to Attaining Excellence for Professional Actions**

A teacher who is committed to profession should simultaneously be committed to excellence. Only knowledge of innovations and developments in one’s subject is not enough; one must integrate it in the structure of the curriculum and communicate it to the students through suitable methods of teaching. To excel in one’s own profession, it is very essential to be open to accept an innovation, after studying the pros and cons. Developing commitment to attaining professional excellence could make one of the essential components of teacher education programme so as to help this discipline regain the status and honour of being the noblest profession and to help the teachers regain their confidence and respect of the community.

(v) **Commitment to Basic Values**

Value inculcation, development of values and value education are the issues that invite consistent debate in the educational system everywhere. The communities everywhere expect the teachers to follow a value-based approach in their personal life to become role model for a pure, chaste and transparent way of life as teachers. While transmitting every unit of curriculum inside and outside the classroom, every teacher needs to analyse the possibility of emphasising universal values like honesty, co-operation, love, truth, objectivity, regularity, transparency etc. At the end of the teacher training course, through continuous practice and active participation in various activities, discourses and programmes, the student teacher will develop positive commitment to understand basic values of the teaching profession for total human development. Develop positive attitude towards the values
underlying the national policies of education and the role of the teachers to realise them, promote human rights through various awareness programmes etc.

**Performance Areas**

Preparation of theoretical background through ten competency categories along with five commitments described in the preceding paragraphs will facilitate the process of performance by teachers inside as well as outside the classroom. Teacher education curriculum which aims at inducing effective performance from a competent and committed teacher needs to focus on certain well known ingredients in the light of emerging changes in socio-economic and cultural contexts. Teachers would regain their status and respect in the society through their consistent performance at an optimum level within the classroom, in the school, outside the school and in their interactions with the parents and the community. The major performance areas identified are given below:

(i) **Classroom Performance**

Performance in the classroom comprise major areas like (i) instructional / transactional activities (ii) evaluation of classroom activities and (iii) classroom management. The classroom performance, and the preparation involved therefore, assumes the heartbeat position in the process of schooling and, therefore, deserve special attention as part of practice teaching performance.

(ii) **School Level Performance**

Teachers are expected to organise various types of activities and events in the schools which give opportunities to generate interest in national events, school community activities, areas of aesthetic work, debates and many other fields of school
level performance. These activities not only help to develop desirable attitudes and approaches in the teachers but also generate opportunities for the teachers to work together, share responsibilities, perform individual and co-operative activities and develop a sense of pride for effecting better performance in the school. Such performance not only invigorates the young learners but also rejuvenates the environment of the school for providing better schooling.

(iii) **Performance in the Out-of-School Activities**

As institution has to interact with those who are outside the institution as a large number of curricular and co-curricular activities require external interactions. Teachers are not only required to organise these but also provide ideas and evolve strategies for effective utilisation of these activities of a major component of the learning process in the school. To ensure that the activities to the teachers do not get routinised and have always a proportion of freshness, the teachers’ regular and re-orientation and enrichment has to be ensured simultaneously.

(iv) **Parents Related Performance**

While every professional treatise on education emphasises explicitly on the significance of parent teacher associations, they are operative in a limited number of schools. It is essential to ensure that school-parent interaction takes place at regular intervals and for sufficient time. Personal relationship of the parents with the teacher would help the school overcome its deficiencies in several ways. Pre-service teacher education programmes need to highlight this aspect continuously, and on a regular basis, for which the teacher trainees should be motivated to willingly devote their time and energy with full practice and perseverance. Only those teachers
who understand the context and are capable of maintaining dynamic relationship and rapport with the parents can perform their roles comprehensively. Such teachers would also receive due respect and regard from the parents and the community.

(v) **Community Related Performance**

Involvement of the community apart from parents, is equally essential for effective functioning of the school. Community can provide various resources, personal as well as material, to school as and when required and once these are mobilised, they can contribute continuously and significantly to the cause of quality schooling. Once the process begins in right earnest, the two way co-operation between the teachers and the community may go a long way in developing a strong link between performance and competency in tune with the overall commitment of the teacher.

2.6 **Threats to Teacher Competency**

An individuals' satisfaction on the job is related to his total self and therefore, it cannot be explained on the basis of any single factor. The extent to which a worker is satisfied with his work role and the extent to which he is motivated to perform effectively in it can be defined independently to one another, conceptually and operationally. The job satisfaction is closely related to the performance.

There are several sources of dissatisfaction in teaching which the principals and other personal administrators should be aware of. Some dissatisfaction is inherent in the work, but some is amenable to change.

One source of teacher dissatisfaction is simple boredom. Teaching becomes highly repetitive after a school time, and for some people repetition leads to
boredom. During the first year in the classroom, teachers have the benefit of novelty. Beginning with the second year, the teacher begins to repeat activities and content and after a few more years, the teacher has done everything at least once. This repetitiveness is a source of boredom. This boredom is an occupational hazard for many. Administrators can help relieve boredom by providing stimulating staff development programmes, providing for conference travel and sabbatical leave, and arranging transfers to new situations for teachers who request them.

Another source of dissatisfaction prevalent in teaching is interruptions and distractions. Teachers complain frequently about the visitors and paper work. Principals in many schools have taken steps to reduce the number of interruptions. Another cause of frustration for teachers is lack of teaching resources. In most of the schools, the teaching materials were 'poor' or barely adequate. Unfortunately, administrators often have little control over budgets, other than to request the money to purchase needed materials and supplies.

**Non-teaching Burden on Teachers**

These days there is an unending list of non-teaching work being assigned to teachers. Teachers are ordered to do various tasks at the cost of teaching. As a result, some schools have to be closed or kept operational by a single teacher or two to three teachers. If one takes into account the number of working days lost due to non-teaching duties along with the number of gazetted holidays, summer and winter vacations, end of session vacations, local holidays, rainy days etc., the number of days of effective teaching per year comes to only about 150. Besides, teachers are kept busy with duties of a peon or a clerk, for example, receiving, compiling, and...
delivering the required information for the education department. All these non-teaching activities involve a lot of time and energy and teachers are left with little time for teaching activities.

**Excessive Role Demands**

Teachers mentioned that they felt overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of their workload and consequently were unable to perform effectively. The amount of work teacher had to do was discouraging. Class size was a major contributor to teachers' perceptions that they were not as effective as they wanted to be and thought they were capable of being. Teachers are of the opinion that in a large group of students, they couldn't have much effect on individual students. They contended that classes of '25 students and no more' would help teachers 'survive'. Confrontations with students who were difficult to control diminished teacher's sense of efficacy.

**Inadequate Salaries and Low Status**

Teachers might be able to bear the burden of large classes, excessive expectations and difficult students if they felt that they received fair remuneration and respect for their efforts, but they receive neither, and many spoke with bitterness about it.

Teachers come to their work with aspirations of vertical mobility, but today they find little opportunity for advancement in their chosen profession. They come with the hope that they will earn an adequate income, but they find that their salaries are not keeping pace with inflation and that the pay of many blue collar workers equals or exceeds their own. It would appear that teachers are suffering from
status panic which is the result of prestige damage of teachers by the decline of public confidence in education.

**Lack of Recognition and Professional Isolation**

Teachers are further demoralised by lack of recognition and support from their administrators and colleagues. Teachers need some support and understanding, and it is very seldom that you have someone who is genuinely interested and willing to lend you an ear and listen to your problems.

**Uncertainty**

Isolation from peers deprives teachers of the opportunity to see others at work and develop a shared technical culture. An apparent absence of professionally sanctioned goals and the paucity of scientifically verified instructional techniques force teachers to make their own classroom decisions and ultimately to calculate their own professional competence.

**A Sense of Powerlessness**

Teachers were frustrated because they were unable to influence important decisions that affected their work sharing views and opportunity to participate are the two elements in decision-making.

**Repetition of Work**

Teachers with 25 years of experience are likely to be doing much the same kind of work that is performed by those with one or two years of experience. The experienced or expert teachers are not generally given any special recognition or honourific titles. Not surprisingly, then, substantial numbers of teachers eventually
leave the profession and those who remain are often subject to boredom, stress and 'burnout' (Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1977).

**Teacher Burnout and Teacher Stress**

The expression 'teacher burnout' is one of the most widely used in bibliography now-a-days, describing as it does the permanent, negative effects upon the utilisation of teachers' competencies arising from the social and psychological conditions under which teachers exercise their profession.

Teachers in our society find themselves faced by circumstances which force them to do their job badly. The phrase 'teacher burnout' has become a catch phrase in educational literature and includes all the reactions, apathy, aggression, anxiety, neurosis, defeatism or sheer bloody-mindedness, which can be observed in today's teachers, now totally disoriented as a professional body. It is understood that the institution will deaden those who work in it if they do not have new infusions of energy from some outside source preferably from younger teachers who inevitably will face the same pressure. This burnout is a means of explaining widespread feelings among teachers of inadequacy, listlessness and decreased dedication to teaching.

One of the main factors of non-utilisation is the 'teacher burnout' which has a direct effect on the teacher in the classroom and which results in tension connected with the feelings and negative emotions. Another factor is environmental, i.e., they affect the situation in which teaching takes place. The action of this second group of factors is indirect and affects teaching efficiency by diminishing the teachers' motivation, involvement and the amount of effort he/she is willing to put
into the job. In the present day, teaching is undoubtedly a stressful occupation and it will never be possible to get rid of stress from work completely. So the aim should be to attempt to reduce it, and prepare people at the receiving end to cope with it more successfully. Proper selection and training procedures for teachers according to ‘school fitness’, early recognition of stress symptoms and a timely intervention may save a substantial drain on human and national resources.

**Lack of Code of Conduct**

Society has certain expectations from teachers especially with respect to their conduct. Many a time a teacher who enters the profession is neither supplied with the code of conduct nor briefed about his role. Job descriptions are also not available and the teacher is left to use his own discretion to decide on what he has to do. The teacher feels elated that he has been performing his role to the best of his ability only to discover that his perceived role and that expected by his superiors are in conflict. Inadequate role perception demotivates an individual to work.

**Mismatch between Individual Needs and Institutional Needs**

An enthusiastic teacher sets ambitious goals for himself and more often than not his goals may not match the institutional goals. This mismatch leads to his inability to achieve the goals he has prescribed for himself, demotivate him resulting in not doing his work sincerely.

**Feeling of Insecurity**

Constant unfulfilment of safety needs makes the individual insecure and turn him into a neurotic. People working in institutions want security, tenure and protection of their jobs, old age benefits and fringe benefits of various kinds.
Disproportionate distribution of work without a dialogue can also demotivate the most sincere staff members.

**Lack of Aspiration**

A teacher who does not set goals for himself and strive for superiority lacks aspiration. This demotivates him to accept any challenging task, a change, and, even an innovation.

**Mismatch between Student and Teachers**

Our educational institutions have not taken care of inculcating, the right values in students which lead to their misbehaviour and teacher frustration.

**Lack of Physical Resources**

This is one of the factors of demotivation. The inability to use the resources available to the maximum extent contributes to demotivation to work. Our experience indicates that in many schools where science equipment was supplied to schools for enriching school labs have been kept safely under lock and key with the head or senior teachers.

**Disrespect Among Teachers**

Disrespect shown by seniors and Head teachers in an institution has very often resulted in demotivation of teachers. Provision for upward mobility is the least in the teaching profession especially at the school level. Internal conflicts, character assassination and political interference can be highly frustrating leading to inefficiency on the part of the teacher.

The creative powers of teachers disappear because the teacher tends to lose the learner’s attitude. One’s own opinion based upon personal experience and
strengthened by daily repetition is apt to develop a didactic attitude that makes learning impossible.

**2.7 Redeeming Secondary Education for 21st Century**

School education is perceived as to be essential and compulsory education for the all-round development of budding citizens of the society. It forms the basis of all type of educational activity and manpower planning in the country. The first requirement for developing an appropriate pedagogy is the recognition of the importance of establishing clear educational aims and a set of values that underpin pedagogical processes. No discussions of effective learning or teaching can take place without reference to its content. The National Curriculum determines the content of what is to be taught and defines specific learning objectives but does not set out overall aims of education. The aim of education in the 21st century should aim at making individuals – to be, to learn and to become the three fold objective for total growth.

In defining the aims of education it may also be advisable to take account of pupil’s motivation as, without this, learning cannot take place. The main functions of education as helping them to do well in examinations, acquire qualification and life skills and ultimately be employed. They wish to be supported by schools in achieving these aims (Keys and Fernandes, 1993). The possible increase in dissatisfaction from school in recent years suggests that not all pupils feel they are receiving this support. For a small proportion of pupils, school is seen as a waste of time. The disproportionate amount of time which many teachers seem to spend in relation to classroom control would also suggest that there may be a much
greater proportion of pupils who are not committed to current curriculum and pedagogical methods.

2.8 **Kerala’s Specific Position in the Arena of Education**

In the post independent India, Kerala got a supreme position through the achievements in education. Not only in literacy but also in the development of skilled manpower suitable for any trade is the outcome of Kerala’s educational progress. The foundation for progressive education in Kerala, as we know, was laid by the great missionaries of the past and was developed by various educational agencies through the years. As a source of human power, Kerala now has a good market throughout the world to tap this opportunity on a large scale in the years to come. Teachers of Kerala should dedicate themselves for shifting their role with a futuristic vision.

There is veritable explosion of knowledge in all fields all over the world. In today’s world of high competition and high technology, high quality education is necessary not only for the survival but also for the socio-economic development of a nation. But during the past four decades, not much has been done to improve, modernise and reorient our education system to suit the varied socio-economic and cultural developments that have been taking place in our society. The overall academic standards seem to be deteriorating and the prospects are discouraging. The failure of the system can be ascribed to a number of factors including perennial shortage of funds, inadequate infrastructure facilities, defective examination system, politicisation of the academic institutions, distancing of the educational institutions from the society and a general lack of concern.
A careful analysis of educational development in the last two centuries in different parts of the world has revealed that the twentieth century was the century of developing primary education whereas the twenty-first century is going to be the century of developing secondary education. Hence, the emphasis on the quality of secondary education and the need to prepare ourselves well for facing the challenges of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century assume a special significance. The Secondary Education Report (1953) further specified that the special function of the secondary school is to train a person who will be able to assume the responsibility of leadership in the social, political, industrial and cultural fields in their own small groups of community or locality.

It has been argued that secondary education in India still remains 'the weakest link' in the education system. The all India dropout rates are alarming. Around 70 per cent children at the secondary stage dropout before completing classes X and the share of girls is even higher; nearly 74 per cent. Secondary education in India is mainly a responsibility of the State governments. The State education department plays a leading role in the adoption of curriculum and various policy makers.

Enrolment figures at the secondary level show some interesting trends. Students seem to make a smooth transition from the primary level to the secondary level with hardly any dropouts. Dropouts appear at the secondary level, and after standard IX, there is a clear slump, with the schools applying the promotion rules. Only 70\% of the initially enrolled students finally move to standard X.
The S.S.L.C. Examination conducted at the end of standard X is the final stage of school education in Kerala (Now the plus two stage is attached to school). S.S.L.C. results over the recent years, show an unvarying pattern, only about 50 to 60 per cent of students who appear for the examination get through. A closer study of the results reveals that the pass percentages are normally inflated with liberal valuation and allocation of 'grace marks'. An incidental observation is that girls generally perform better than boys in the final examination.

Quality of school programmes is an issue that has received periodic attention from citizens and legislators, often in connection with national crises. The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) aroused the nation's concern when it declared that the United States was threatened by a rising tide of mediocrity as a result of the deteriorating quality of education.

When schools undertake an effort to improve the quality of instruction, they tend to follow a predictable course of action aimed at rationalising teacher's work. For the organisation of effective schools, establishing district-wise instructional goals and efficient use of resources are necessary. Campbell (1977) found that the variables of effectiveness are productivity, efficiency, profit, accidents, growth, employee absenteeism, turnover, job satisfaction, motivation, morale, conflict or cohesion, flexibility or adaptability, goal setting, internalisation of organisational goals, role and norm congruence, interpersonal skills of managers, evaluation by entities, participation and shared influences, training and development, and emphasis on achievement. Three criteria used to judge the effectiveness of schools are efficiency, equality and quality (Seyfath, 1991).

This overview of the literature presents a perspicacious idea of the development and structure of teacher competency and the hindrances of teaching.
REFERENCES


