

The Changes and Challenges of Secondary Level Teachers Education in Pakistan: A Training Perspective

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Abstract

In the present world teachers are not only the agents of cultural transformation or managers of discipline and order but also the source of information, searcher of new areas and explorer of the unknown world. Pakistan is a country that has many challenges in different sector but most of them are linked with education in general and teacher education in particular. Training of teachers for knowledge economy reflects among students incorporating and enhancing the world over changes within the frame work of their own culture, tradition and aspiration of the people. That must be the sole purpose of teacher education to enhance current changes.

The education policy (2009) determines that the improving education quality depends on the teachers' quality, curriculum and pedagogy, text books, assessment approaches, learning environment and physical facilities. Ministry of education (2009) has worked and developed Professional Standard for Teacher Education.

The study is focused on the analysis of currents patterns of teacher education in Pakistan with reference to quality education and suggested the ways and techniques to bring changes and harmonise it with world level training. The weak areas are explored and newer ideas are explained for enhancement of change by predicting the future challenges.

Key words: Teacher education, Training, Change and challenges, Training perspective

Introduction

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) cynical comments “Those who can, do; those who cannot, teach!” about teachers has completely changed as the flood of changes and dynamics have created many challenging tasks for teachers. The last century of invention and innovation brought many directions and fields with diversity and variety for teachers’ roles. In the present world teachers are not only the agents of cultural transformation or managers of discipline and order but also the source of information, searcher of new areas and explorer of the unknown world. The question of replacement of teachers by librarians, mobile phones and information and communication technology devices requires the need and importance of teachers training on the basis of post-modern needs and roles that made them active to engage students and keep them alert all the time in place of lecturing and speaking all the time.

Nature of man suggests that the change is the only way to consistency. Therefore, everywhere in the world there is a pressure on governments to make an effective policy for teachers training. Most of the governments seriously make attempts to enforce transparent and effective strategies to give nation and public the best teachers and for this purpose, they have designed and developed different strategies and techniques. The example of developed countries, which have surpassed in this area, can become a lighthouse for developing countries that are struggling for it.

Pakistan is a country that has many challenges in different sector but most of them are linked with education in general and teacher education particular. Training of teachers for knowledge economy reflects among students incorporating and enhancing the world over changes within the frame work of their own culture, tradition and aspiration of the people. That must be the sole purpose of teacher education to enhance current changes. It is hectic task but there is no alternate for it. The education policy (2009) determines that the improving education quality depends on the teachers’ quality, curriculum and pedagogy, text books, assessment approaches, learning environment and physical facilities. It suggested a policy and action plans to improve the quality of education. An institution was also proposed to establish for accreditation and certification of teacher education in the country. The body was structured as The Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (ACTE) under the policy and planning wing, Ministry of education (2009) has worked and developed Professional Standard Teacher education.

The five years struggle achievement is not significant as compare to time and needs to boost teacher education but it is very good and well directed step and it should be appreciated. The issue of quality does not only require to have some standards but to devise and design the way to achieve it is more critical task. On the other hand higher education commission has set up Quality Assurance Division (QAD) to improve overall quality of education in the country.

The main purpose of the paper is to identify the core challenges that meet the international standards quality teachers and quality education. It is a descriptive study that focuses on current policy analysis of teacher education, the local needs and the main areas where teacher education is required. It also makes analysis of the pre and post service current teacher education programmes in the country. The major source of data is education policy (2009) Pakistan Educational Statistics (2010-11) and current teacher training programme across the country particularly at secondary level.

There is no doubt that Government of Pakistan generally and provincial government particularly focusing the issue and agreed to boost overall education level and standard but

it does not appear in their action. All the major political parties have committed themselves for education in their manifestos but when they come into power they do not act like that. The present PMLN regime intends to double the education budget which seems a good omen for the country if they do so. There are certain attempts at institutional level to bring quality of education specially higher education commission of Pakistan which has taken basic steps to set pattern for quality education in the country.

Batool and Qureshi (2008) appreciating HEC commented that it has adopted multi dimensional strategy by emphasising on improvement of teaching faculty, infrastructure of the educational institutes, market driven research, academic environment, curricula, governance, assessment system and accreditation of academic programs. It means that for improvement in education sector there need to be address the above mentioned aspects of teaching learning process.

Dilshad (2010) identified following common problems related to teacher training in Pakistan. He says that the lack of funding and resources, poorly equipped training institutions, short training period, unnecessary emphasis on quantitative expansion, narrow scope of curriculum, imbalance between general and professional courses, over emphasis on theory than practice, little coordination between education departments and training institutions, deficient quality of instruction, lack of in service training of teacher educators, failure in implementing useful reforms, vague objectives, poor quality of text books, defective examination system, lack of supervision and accountability and lack of research and evaluation of teacher training programs. There are a few of the shortcomings that are true but most of them are the result of them. I believe that the result of (QAD) to provide integrated quality assurance it would be possible to improve teachers education particularly and other education generally.

Chande (2006) surveyed teachers' opinion in six areas including students, teachers, institutions, research, higher education outcome and syllabus then set three types of performance indicators that are quantitative, narrative and combination of both which means that if the performance is quantified and assessed correctly it would determine scope for amendments and later on improvement. The narrative means there are certain performance that may not be quantified so they should be presented in narrative form and both can be combined to assess the performance.

Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) (2007) found three major quality indicators which include learner engagement, employer satisfaction and competency completion. Learner engagement means to keep the learner on the right track and get maximum out of him, the employers satisfaction is necessary as if they are not satisfied they would go for other options and the third thing is competency which is the most important aspect as it can overcome other flaws in the system so these three have to be considered while assessing performance.

Thaung (2008) included six indicators as learners, teachers, contents, teaching learning process, learning environment and their outcomes. He further added that with focusing them quality education will improve as it has been observed at international level. The countries that have opted and prioritise these areas have brought rapid changes in their social set up and became leaders of the regions. They are educationally advanced and economically strong among the competitors.

As mentioned above Moosa (2006) grouped quality issues into six basic educational processes as teachers, curricula, assessment, research, communication and students. It confirms

that the above areas are the targets and pivotal to improve the quality education in the country. The six key areas need to be addressed if one wants to take step for building of nation.

Jahanzaib and Akhtar (2005) identified leadership, quality of faculty, quality of students, infrastructure facilities, research , learning environment, governance, strategic planning, assessment procedures and market force. In addition to earlier mentioned six points the leadership plays very important role in implementing the planning and policy actions.

Sultana (2007) reviewed teacher education and concluded characteristics of effective teacher education as futuristic nature of teacher education programmes, well defined set of professional standards, carefully designed rigorous curriculum, strong relationships and partnership with local schools, comprehensive and continuously assessment of learning outcomes, theory coupled with practice, rigorous entrance process for the students, problem based methods of learning, appropriately extended field experiences, alignment with the structure and organisation of the school system, collaboration with all the stakeholders, deliberate and thoughtful conceptual framework and continuous professional development and support for the faculty members.

The purpose of education particularly teachers education and training is to transform the society into knowledge economy and compete the world level education. This transformation is only possible when consider all the possible social effects on education.

Drucker (1994) argues that the twentieth century has experienced more social transformation than any other period in history. Although that transformation has been accomplished with relative ease to this point, it has only begun. It is now expected that the future changes will occur dramatically raising question about the role of many institutions in our society faculties of education among them. The flood of cultural invasion and the difference in wage ratio will certainly drive people toward the states who offer better facilities. Drucker 1994 called them knowledge worker which earlier Carter 1990, Joys, and Clift 1984 put the responsibility of them on teachers.

Black and Ammon (1992) believe that teacher education should be based on two different forms. One form is to teacher students how to teach in a particular constructivist manner. It can be used in teaching particular subjects. The second form of teacher's education involves working with teachers and pre-services students to help them understand their own tacit understanding. How these have developed and effects of these understanding on their action; and to introduce new conception and premises as potential alternatives those held by the students.

Hargreaves (1994) makes similar proposition about the transformation facing society. He describes it in terms of 'a major socio-historic transition from a period of modernity to one of post modernity' that indicates a rapid and fast changing social set up with immigration to more welfare states from underdeveloped countries. The issue of brain drain will also play a vital role in future knowledge economy.

Giddens (1991), Grimmett and Neufeld (1994) agree that the period we have enjoyed as a society is now ending and we are turning to a future that is much less predictable. Wideen (1995) says that the Prediction about future remain unclear, four aspects of change appears to be particularly crucial in the decades ahead- the work people do, the knowledge and education they require to do it, the pace at which changes will occur, and the people who will be involved in determining changes.

A Brief Historical Perspective of Teacher Education in Pakistan

There are 227 state run teachers training institutes and 48 privately run training institutes that provide teachers training. There are three major programs for Elementary Teachers' Training. These are; (i) the conventional programme; (ii) the fields based training programme; and (iii) the distant education programme. Each programme pursues different goals and targets; and different kind of teacher recruits.

Farooq (1994) comments that the conventional Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC) is comprises on one year which is further broke up into two kinds of courses, a six-month theory and teaching practice course. Theory component of PTC includes courses in general education and method of teaching. The contents of the courses are presented in ten papers. Three of these are related to general education theory and six to the methods of teaching. General education courses include Principles of Education and Method of teaching; Child development and Counselling; School Organization and classroom Management, methods of teaching. The courses concentrate on upgrading teaching skills in the subjects being taught at this level and method appropriate for teaching these subjects. Practice teaching is the most important of any teacher-training program. It allows the teacher to put theory into practice and provides an opportunity for prospective teachers to form a realistic picture of teaching learning situation.

The second type of training programme in Pakistan today is the field-based short time (FBT) short-term programme that exist in northern areas, the programme of instruction is an in-school training course based on the conventional PTC syllabus. At the end of the training period of one academic year, the trainees are required to appear for a PTC examination. As a part of their training, they are assigned to the classes in pairs to teach all subjects in all the levels. They are required to teach three classes themselves and observe three classes taught by others each day. At the end of the day, they hold discussion with the master trainers who provide on the spot guidance and demonstration model lessons. Apart from on-the-job training, a very important and innovative feature of the programme is the provision of teaching manuals for all school subjects of the Primary Teaching Certificate Training Courses.

The third and final type of training is a distance programme conducted by Allama Iqbal Open University in Islamabad, Sarhad university distance education programme and some NGOs teachers training programme. The distance course includes several components which are compulsory for successful completion of the programme. In addition to the correspondence part of the course, there is a practical workshop and three weeks of practice teaching. Study material in correspondence lesson is supplemented with lesson broadcast through radio programmes, guidance by a part-time tutor and get together in study centres.

In addition to pre-service training, different in-service training programmes are being arranged to equip the teachers in the field with a latest development in education, at present most of the in-service training courses are arranged by education Extension Centres. Other in-service training courses include the Refresher Training Course (RTC) of the Agha Khan Central Education Board, the Primary Teacher Orientation Course (PTOC) programme of Allama Iqbal Open University, and the in-service Training Course of the PNE, Wing of the Ministry of Education.

Baig (1987) commented that for secondary level, the requirement for teaching is B.Ed. It has three phases, B.Ed elementary for primary teachers ,B.Ed for humanities, Bs.Ed for teaching science subjects and O.T for oriental languages teaching. All these courses are for one year and they have theory and practice but the proportion of practice is very small as six week out of 52 weeks in the full academic year.

The learners are required to produce some assignments and two term exams to qualify for the degree. There are some minor differences in each of the training institutes depending on

the location and personality of the head of the institute. Some of the Institutes produce better teacher practically but all of them have the same qualification.

In Pakistan, INSET is the function of provincial EECs (or DSD in Punjab) and the GCETs running under their administrative control. INSET is not a compulsory component, but the provincial and district governments make their efforts to provide in-service training to every teacher at least after every 3-5 years. The duration of these in-service training courses vary according to the nature of training and the trainees' level.

Teachers Training in Pakistan; Policy Framework

There were many policy and plans during last six decades but due to some or the other reasons they were not fully implemented and that is why Pakistan is still lagging behind in world education indicators. The new education policy (2009) address this issue as education subject was given to the provinces so a policy frame was introduced to enhance quality teacher education. It suggested the following steps to improve the teacher quality. The policy (2009) highlighted the following factors for poor quality of teachers which include bad governance, an obsolete pre service training structure, low quality service training, incompetence, low level social status, professional development, teachers remuneration and governance and management of teaching workforce. It suggested twenty two policy action which address the following areas of teacher training.

A Bachelor degree (B.Ed) and diploma in education (D.Ed) will be primarily requirement the other low level courses will be phased out, teachers training arrangement, accreditation and certification procedure will be standardised and institutionalised, special cadre for teachers trainers will be established, teacher recruitment, professional development and promotion will be based on merit. training for teachers will be research based , status and moral of teachers will be improved. Short term courses for professional development will be introduced and professional performance will be rewarded with accountability.

There is no doubt that the policy frame work and action plane is a good document but actually the situation based planning is needed as there are different type of education sectors which need to be gridded with state own education and it is imperative to suggest and consider a plan for the training of the following three steams of educational institutions' teachers

Teachers of Mosque Schools

These are based on religious places and only teaching of Islam and reading of the Holy Quran is the main objective of these school but the government first introduced Urdu and later on some other subjects to bring them in the main streamline. The teachers generally do not get training but only those who are under control of state organisation 'auqaaf' get only six months training in their whole teaching career. Their exact number and strength of students and staff is still unknown but it was accepted by govt in the last policy that they are contributing in education effectively and positively. The teachers need to have a training based on their needs and environment with the mission of bringing them in main streams education.

Teachers of Private Schools

There is a large variety of private schools, every well establised governmental institution has its own school as we see Army schools, Bahria schools, PAF schools, Fouji foundation schools cadet schools and colleges with other departmental schools. The other private schools are in great numbers and equally in student's strength with government school in city areas but they are not found in remote areas. Now some NGOs are trying to establish some private schools in

villages and remote areas. The teachers of these schools, although they have their own system of teacher training, need to be in the main stream line of the state policy framework.

Government Schools

They are well established in most of the areas but still have many shortcomings in villages and remote areas. The government always arrange in-service training as well as pre-service training with an aim to improve literacy in the country. In schools, there are four classification primary schools (4-9) Middle schools (9-13) high schools (13-15) and higher secondary schools (15-17) The calculation of the number of teacher gender wise is the following

Teachers of Higher education Institutes

The universities and higher educational institution have large number of teachers, they sometimes arrange teachers workshops, seminars and training sessions but there is not a particular department for teachers training there. Every institution has its own demand based training programme. They need to be brought in within the state policy framework by introducing a state owned teachers training policy. Although Higher Education Commission is this job from time to time but it need to be more focused and all the institution must be bound to send teachers for the courses.

Teachers of Professional and Vocational Institutes

The institution of professional and technical education do not have a system for teachers at national level so there is need to develop a teachers training programme for these institution to bring them in the main stream education with introducing of moral and social education in technical education. The technical institutions have teachers which qualified from the same and they do not have knowledge of psychology of the learner, teaching techniques and approaches, taxonomies and learning aptitudes. Their performance will increase if they have the basic knowledge of these aspects and they will disseminate knowledge in more effective and efficient way.

Changing requirements for Teacher Training

The teacher trainers of the modern times have to think and consider the changing requirement of the modern time including technology and globalisation. New concepts and newer ideas are emerging and taking place in the world. The social media and social networks can play a very interesting role in professional development of teachers apart from their institutional trainings and professional development programmes.

The first is the concept of individualisation which brought many significant points. It gave unlimited freedom to the learner that consequently brought the lack of interest among students in class and promoted personal tuition culture in the world. In other sense, it handed over the opportunity from poor and source less people to the rich and resourceful. Individualisation has brought some positive effects as it was seen that the learner got freedom to ask what he wants to know, pursue as he likes and get specialisation of the field of his interest. On the other hand, it stopped the learner to have a broader view of the things other than his own interests. It also hindered him from social life and made him purely commercialised entity. It secluded him from his peers, parents, relatives and other social community. The machines and mechanical things have replaced his supports and other home activities. This idea got quick popularity and fame because it apparently looks so close to practicability that policy makers and planners adopt it at once but later on its implication were realised by the teacher who were practically involved in teaching the young children.

The second idea was social transformation that has taken place because of multi cultural societies, immigration of people from one region to another and information and communication technology. Transformation does not take place rapidly but it is a very much

slow and it seems like flowing water that its way can be turned by artificial means and later it makes its own way. The globalisation and fast communication have a great impact on civilisations and cultures. Sometimes it gets some resistance but generally, it goes on smoothly and slowly in some cases.

The third concept that created some other dynamics for teacher, is modern inventions and electronic gadgets that have attracted most of the student's time and attention that has made difficult for teachers to attract the learner for what he should be learning. It is needed to derive and design ways and means to handle and tackle the situation. The problem lies in the heart of commercialisation of education, invention of print and electronic media and dependence of education on the pillars of economy. The learners and their needs were determined by themselves and they were left to select what they want to learn. It made teachers like a human being who have all the system to live but do not have strength to sustain because he is deprived of his rights for the sake of others' right.

Another view is politicisation of the education. The regional, national and international politics has paramount importance in the current education system because since the fall of Soviet Union, the single power has all the strength economically and legally to do away what it likes and dislikes. The polarisations of the societies, feminism and immigration toward developed countries have created many other field and direction for teachers to handle the situation. The merging of the cultural and personal identities, interaction among different civilisations, the half cast babies, without parent's babies and immigrated pupils certainly need different type of behaviour in the school and from the teachers psychologically. Therefore, a teacher has to be very vigilant, active and alert to socialise these pupils across the section to make them socially adjustable and without feeling of any seclusion and separation.

Last but not least is the economic outcomes of the education as earlier the topic is touched but its direction was different so here it classifies education as major economic boost force individually and nationally. Mostly today, education is the simplest and open area for social uplift and up gradation. The school requires bringing some skills and knowledge to earn and improve individual finance. The ultimate end of education, post modernity suggests, is financial establishment, economic stability and future security. A teacher has to do all these things at the same time. From counselling and guidance to personal assistance, it is teacher who has to be responsible for all these things. In modern era, a teacher has to focus on the following things and he has to be trained in the following areas.

Social Change and Teacher Training

Teaching is generally understood as an obtained skill rather than gifted an individual characteristic. It can be moulded or diverted but it cannot be created in humankind so the process of selecting teachers needs some changes because it is that crucial time when a teacher is handed over the responsibility to manage learners' needs.

1. The present systems of teacher recruitment are carried out either through an interview or by administering some written test. Sometimes he/she is placed on probation period for sometimes and if he/she meets requirement then he/she is confirmed as a regular teacher. I believe that it should be more systematic, procedural, the training should be more flexible and area based. It is not a bad idea to add some full period demonstration in real classroom where he suppose to teach systematic means that there should be some

psychological tests to determine how he can accept changes quickly and how he can put his influence on students. The recruitment should have four parts that is interview, written test, psychological test and on site demonstration of the subjects, he/she would be teaching.

2. There should be some personality assessment pattern before going to teaching profession. In personality assessment the following areas must be assessed,

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|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. Attitude of tolerance, | b. Attitude for socialisation, |
| c. Attitude to accept change, | d. Clarity of speech, |
| e. Over all composure. | f. Mental stability |

It is a lengthy process but it will pave way to induct such teachers who are capable of doing it.

3. Procedural training means that they should be given training whenever curriculum changes takes place. There should not only be strict criteria for induction but after induction, the training phase must be able to enhance the formal teaching skills. The teacher should be responsible for picking the material to teach in the class. Manage the activities in the classroom. Teaching forums and teacher seminars should be made compulsory for teachers to attend at district or tehsil levels. There long holidays can be utilised by training workshops and courses. At least a week training workshop after every year must be attended by the teachers and it should be associated with their promotion and up gradation.

4. Some awareness about the child psychology and the behaviour problem of different ages of young learners should be highlighted on print and electronic media. The teachers work and their views about teaching should be publicised and involvement of teachers to set direction for teachers will be a good idea to enhance and share acquired skills. As in UK, TES and other teaching forums, organisations and clubs to share and discuss teaching related problems.

5. The different roles assigned to teachers to bring some cultural change or some national spirit should be introduced to teachers first. Teaching values can be delivered like advertisers campaign that could bring good results for what the state wants to transform and transfer to the students in the post-modern world. It can be general type as well as subject based topics and situation that require immediate action from the society.

6. It is important to analyse the impact of science and technology on teaching and learning process, just like internet how, when and why to use it. It is teacher duty to manipulate the use of internet for learning purposes. A teacher must be able to understand the basic knowledge of mobile communication system and how it has affected our social life. That is why with pace of technology teacher has to modify himself to adjust himself in new environment and take his students toward those new situations.

7. There are different needs and requirement of the learner of different age group so for teaching them there should be a clear demarcation of the age group and the role of teacher dealing with certain age group. He/she must have up-to-date knowledge of the current researches and their results. He/she must be able to adopt and transfer what new elements and equipments introduced to carry out as international community assign them to do. In UK and other developed nations have already included most of these points in their system but the developing countries are still lagging behind and they need assistance and support to absorb these changes that would definitely bring social change in their respective countries.

Conclusion

The study concludes that there is a dire need of quality education and training for teachers in Pakistan. The Professional Standard for Teacher Education (PSTE) is a very good attempt on part of government to enhance the quality but the problem is that there is no proper training of private schools teachers, Madrassa education teachers. There was no uniformed pattern and quality framework of teacher education. It is needed to have a standardised format like other professions for teacher education and state should keep an eye on implementation of the professional standards set out by them. It is also recommended information and communication technology course should be included in teachers training syllabus which could play a very effective role in teacher professional development. More resources are also needed to enhance these changes and meet the future challenges.

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