



## Research and Innovation in Teacher Education: Pragmatic Approach in today's scenario

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### ABSTRACT

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*An educational institution plays really a significant function in the day to day progress of our Society. It is well known that the quality and extent of the achievement of the learners is determined primarily on the basis of the competence, sensitivity and motivation for the teachers. The key personnel in the institutions who play an important role to bring about this transformation are teachers. As stated by NCTE (1998) in Quality Concerns in Secondary Teacher Education, —The teacher is the most important element in any educational program. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for implementation of the educational process at any stage. This shows that it is imperative to invest in the preparation of teachers, so that the future of a nation could be secured. The importance of competent teachers to the nation's school system can in no way be overemphasized.*

*Teacher education is a programme that is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein. As the day to day scenario in the field of education is changing rapidly, with the emerging advancement in technology front, there is an immediate need to address these issues and to update the current curriculum for the Teacher Education program to inculcate the innovative teaching mechanism. It may also help in implementation of pragmatic approaches. The gap in learning and teaching would be widening up, if steps are not taken to address the growing concerns.*

Keeping the evolving technological advancements as the basis, I would like to share the article mainly on the issue: **Research and Innovation in Teacher Education: Pragmatic Approach in today's scenario**. Under that I would like to discuss the needs to implement new researches and innovations in the field of teacher education. The article has been categorized under the following subheadings:

1. **Introduction:** Changing Scenario in Education System with respect to Teaching
2. **Current Scenario in Teacher Education** – Lack of Research and Innovation in Teaching methodology & its Drawback
3. **Requirement of Emerging Pragmatic Approaches in Education System,** Method to implement these approaches, Advantages
4. **Course Contents in Sync with Pragmatic Approach and its Impact on Skills of Teachers and Students.**
5. **Conclusion**

### **Research and Innovation in Teacher Education: Pragmatic Approach**

To start up, with Teaching as a Profession. Let's understand what a teacher actually is. Most dictionaries define the word "teacher" simply as "one who teaches". At face value, this may be true, but most of what it means to be a teacher can't possibly be expressed in a single sentence. A teacher is a symbol of learning, a leader of learners, and a miracle to education.

Teachers often take the role of a friend, leader, coach, motivator, confidant counsellor, and more importantly a role model. They are individuals who stimulate a students' desire to learn and inspire them pursue knowledge by introducing new ways of thinking. They encourage students to exercise elements of critical thinking and to understand the value of knowledge. They are the first point of contact to the students and guide their pupil with knowledge. They help them learn different aspects from language and culture and moral values. Based on the foundations of knowledge built by the teachers, the upcoming generation is move ahead in life.

Teachers empower students. They are the main source of inspiration for the next generation. They are the ones that reach for the sky to get what our students need. The role of a teacher has seen transformation in different stages of life and history, from teaching students in Gurukuls in ancient days, to being a part of the ultramodern educational institutions. Every

sphere in history or the current scenario would clearly depict the importance of the role of a teacher. Education systems across the globe, follow different patterns, at some places more emphasis is on moral values in early stages of life and at other teaching students with live practical examples forms the basis of day to day education.

Time is changing fast with the advancement of technology and synchronously, emerging is the need to keep the Teacher Education Curriculum updated. The role of teachers in current scenario is more challenging and hence there is a constant need for a pragmatic approach in field of teaching with a perfect mix of research and innovation. In order to keep all the students interested and to keep the pace of learning be strong, a lot of research is required about the patterns of learning of each and individual pupil.

### **1. Introduction:** Changing Scenario in Education System with respect to Teaching

Teacher education is an integral component of the educational system. It is intimately connected with society and is conditioned by the ethos, culture and character of a nation. The constitutional goals, the directive principles of the state policy, the socio-economic problems and the growth of knowledge, the emerging expectations and the changes operating in education, etc. call for an appropriate response from a futuristic education system and provide the perspective within which teacher education programmes need to be viewed.

As per the UNESCO Summit, 2002: *“Teacher education may assume a leadership role in the transformation of education or be left behind in a swirl of rapid technological change.”*

The Teacher- Education programme differs from other educational programmes in the sense that it trains the student teachers for a profession. A teacher reshapes the life of thousands of youth during his/her tenure. Social, Economic and technological changes of the past few decades have made education and training more crucial resource than ever. Yet teacher-education aims at providing opportunities to their students with necessary knowledge, skills and value system for evolving market places, common living environment and to prepare good citizens for lifelong learning.

With increasing use of technology and multimedia technology, education today, is shaped not only in the classroom, but outside the classrooms as well. As such the definition of teacher has changed considerably. Advancing technology and changing scenario has both have PULL and PUSH impacts on students’ learning.

The important role of teachers as major stakeholders in shaping the future of learning is also highlighted in various studies. As learning becomes more personalised, the one-size-fits-all

teaching method is becoming more and more outdated. Today teachers need to be prepared to design various sorts of learning experiences to meet the needs of the current societies. As such teachers colleges must be prepared to adapt their teaching practices to a rapidly changing global society. Teachers should also be ready to facilitate learning in multiple modalities, embracing a greater diversity of spaces, times, resources, media and methods for learning.

## **2. Current Scenario in Teacher Education – Lack of Research and Innovation in**

### Teaching methodology & its Drawback

The current educational system is evolving day by day, yet, it's still more centralized around the conventional classroom training fundamental. With the day to day advancements in training and evolving social networking tool, there is an emerging need to address these concerns and make social networking tool to be one of the fulcrum for teacher education mechanism. Updating of the current teacher education system with the changing technologies would make the teaching more effective and have a wider span.

The global upsurge of the universal education, rise in the mode of gaining knowledge, expectations and aspirations for better quality of life. That have led to the exploration of alternatives to the formal system, which suffers from inherent inadequacies of rigidity and structural deficiencies. During the last decade, new thrusts have been posed due to rapid changes in the educational, political, social and economic contexts at the national and international levels. Curriculum reconstruction has also become imperative in the light of some gaps in teacher education. Teacher education by and large, is still conventional in its nature and purpose. The integration of theory and practice and consequent curricular response to the requirements of the school system, still remains unfulfilled and inadequate.

Currently, teachers are prepared in competencies and skills which do not necessarily equip them for becoming professionally effective. Their familiarity with latest educational developments remains insufficient. Organised and stipulated learning experiences whenever available, rarely contribute to enhancing teachers' capacities for self-directed lifelong learning.

Unfortunately, the system still prepares teachers to become professionally competent and committed at the completion of initial teacher preparation programmes. A large number of teacher training institutions do not practice what they preach. Several of the skills acquired and methodologies learnt are seldom practised by the teachers. Because schools occasionally

purchase technology and educators are adequately equipped for and trained to use it effectively, technology sometimes goes unused or actually prevents student learning. Becoming aware of some of the disadvantages in utilizing technology in the classrooms can allow schools to better prepare for the widespread use of computers and devices by their student and teacher populations. While technology is fun and can add interest for students, it is not fully integrated until students are learning from technology and not just with technology. In other words, using a program to achieve a learning goal is a positive thing; however, transcending the passive use of technology and moving into active use is a skill that takes a lot of time and training.

### **3. Requirement of Emerging Pragmatic Approaches in Education System:**

#### **Method to implement these approaches, Advantages**

The need for improved levels of teacher educational participation for overall progress is well recognised. The key role of educational institutions in realising it is reflected in a variety of initiatives taken to transform the nature and function of education -- both formal as well as non-formal. Universal accessibility to quality education is considered essential for development. This has necessitated improvement in the system of teacher education so as to prepare quality teachers. Researches on teacher education have been and are being conducted in universities, national level institutions and other establishments but their utility for the teacher educator or the classroom teacher remains rather low.

Majority of the researches are undertaken to obtain a degree and hence the focus on its possible utility and relevance gets misplaced. There is a definite requirement of bringing in research methods and methodologies in appropriate form in teacher education programmes. The structure and design of future courses and programmes need to take this aspect into account. Preparation of teacher educators can no longer be completed without adequate grounding in various aspects of research. Researches must respond to policy issues, curriculum issues, evaluative procedures as well as practices, training strategies and classroom practices etc.

The areas of teacher preparation for children with special needs, gifted children and children from groups with specific cultural, social and economic needs can no longer be ignored. Surveys and studies also need to be encouraged. These may be exploratory or diagnostic in nature. The new initiatives and innovations need to be encouraged and studied and could be brought into the system of teacher education for wider and gainful use wherever needed.

Opportunities brought about by social networking tools are enabling teachers to network and collaborate with other teachers from anywhere, at any time, which offers new aspects to teachers' in-service training as a lifelong learning opportunity.

#### **4. Course Contents in Sync with Pragmatic Approach and its Impact on Teachers' and Students' Skills:**

Keeping in mind the current educational scenario, the following curriculum framework is suggested for formulating a Plan of Action for developing programmes and activities, devising strategies of negotiating the curricular inputs and methods of obtaining feed-back. These are pre-requisites for improving the interaction processes directed towards the realisation of optimum enrichment of experiences at the early childhood stage.

##### ***Theory***

- Emerging Indian Society
- Early Childhood Education: Scope, Nature, Status, Problems and Issues.
- Psychology of the Child and Learning during early years (implementing developmentally appropriate curriculum).
- Methods and Materials for facilitating the growth and development of pre-school child through activities for:
  - Physical development- Mental development- Emotional development- Adult Education- Language development- Social development- Moral development- Education of Children with Special Needs, imitation of adult behavior and roles and a tendency of defiance- moral reasoning and challenging attitude towards the established ideas, practices and authority- Habit formation- Observation

##### ***Practical Work***

- Drawing and Painting- Music- Creative activities- Story telling- Dance and Dram- Games and Physical Activity- Plays- Field trips- Block making and related games- Activities for children with special needs

***Practicum:*** Teaching, placement and internship

***Practical experiences:*** Observation, planning and implementing programmes related to activities for children

In every society or school one can find children who are much above the average and possess certain special abilities. They are referred to as the gifted or talented children. It has been observed that generally teachers are not properly trained to nurture the talent of such children. Every society needs the gifted and the talented children for its progress. It is, therefore, necessary that proper provisions are made for their education.

In India certain schools have been started for the education of the gifted and the talented children. In these schools as well as in the general schools the teachers are appointed from the general pool of trained teachers whose training, by and large, is not oriented towards meeting the educational requirements of such children. Since giftedness and talent, like disability, have different shades and colors, the preparation of teachers should also be multi-dimensional.

Various studies demonstrate that a major driver influencing the future of education is the increasing development of new technologies and their appropriation in everyday life in most Western societies. Many different types of technology can be used to support and enhance learning. Some examples of technologies used in the current teacher education system are video content and digital movie making, laptops, computers, and handheld technologies. New uses of technology, for example, podcasting and tablets are constantly being created. Many students are growing up in a digital age where they have constant exposure to a variety of media that is impacting on the way they interact and use information.

### **Conclusion**

Thus to conclude, I would like to say that though due to technological advancements and the changing scenarios with respect to educations, have made Teacher education one of the toughest profession. But still if there is a proper mix of research and innovation with reference to the day to day teaching, along with it, inculcating the technology as a part to day to day curriculum, it would lead to a more balanced and successful journey in the teacher education curriculum. Therefore, it can be rightly said that the basis to the growth of the nation would be: ***“Research and Innovation in teacher education: Pragmatic approach in today’s scenario”***.

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