



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2017; 3(10): 652-654
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 16-08-2017
Accepted: 29-09-2017

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Innovative practices in teacher education

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Abstract

Teacher should translate the national goals into educational actions. He has to communicate to his pupils the importance of and the feeling for national integrity and utility; the need for a scientific attitude, a commitment to excellence in standards of work and action and concern for society. Nothing is more important in educating teachers than to make them imbibe the right attitudes and values, besides being proficient in the skills related to teaching. The minimum recruitment of any training programme is that it should enable the trainee to acquire the basic skills and competencies of a good teacher, such as, the capacity to manage a class with pupils of varying abilities: to communicate ideas logically and with clarity; to use the technology available to make teaching effective; to organize educative experience outside of class and to learn to work with the community and help the student do so. Some of the Important Innovations in Teacher Education are: Inter-disciplinary approach, Internship in teaching, Orientation courses (In-service programmes), Integrated courses, Correspondence and Distance Education, Teacher Behaviour Approach and modification of teacher behaviour, Simulated and Social Skill Teaching, Micro Teaching, Programmed Instruction, Group Training, Team Teaching, Educational Technology, Supervised Study, Action Research, Part-time Teaching, Bloom's Evaluation Approach and Objective-based Lesson Plans etc.

Keywords: Innovative practices, teacher education

Introduction

“The status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society. It is said that no nation can rise above the level of its teachers. The Government and the community should Endeavour to create conditions which will help to motivate uninspired teachers on constructive and creative lines. Teachers should have the freedom to innovative devise appropriate methods of communication and activities relevant to the needs and capabilities and concerns of community.”

- National Policy of Education, 1986

NPE (1986) has recognized that qualitative improvement of education depends on quality of teacher education. The teacher has a crucial role in the development of the country. New practices, policies and procedures in the area of teacher education affect the quality of teacher education and accordingly the education and the nation. Teacher education helps in:

- Improving initial teacher education to ensure high quality pedagogical and professional training to new teachers.
- Retaining and recruiting a sufficient supply of qualified teachers to maintain and improve the quality of the teaching profession.
- Ensuring that professional development is an integrated part of the teaching profession.

Some of the current Innovations in teacher education are discussed

1. Inter-disciplinary Approach
2. Internship in Teaching
3. Community Living
4. Orientation courses
5. Correspondence courses
6. Mechanism of Feedback devices for the modification of teacher behavior
 - Simulated Skill
 - Micro Teaching

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- Programmed instruction
- Interaction Analysis
- T-Group Training

7. Team Teaching

8. Action Research

Inter-disciplinary approach

Inter-disciplinary approach is an integral part of the programme of teacher education. In this approach content and methods are integrated through inter-disciplinary approach. The four year courses of the teacher education offer ample scope to integrate all the essential ingredients of good teacher education, namely liberal education, professional education, specialization in one or two school subjects and direct experience including practice teaching in schools. B.Sc.Ed, B.A.Ed., M.Sc.Ed offered at RIE Mysore is an example for this approach.

Internship

Internship in teaching includes practice teaching and wide variety of field experiences under the guidance of competent supervisor. The intern shares all the experiences of the total school environment and develops meaningful skills and attitudes towards his profession. Internship in teaching is a joint effort of the colleges, co-operating schools, cooperating teachers, students and the college supervisor. A student teacher involves in many activities such as, planning and performing teaching, observation of classes, correction of homework, supervising library reading classes, organizing co-curricular activities, conducting tests and so on as a regular teacher during the period of internship.

Community living

Community living is a training programme which has a training potential for community living. Teacher education programme would be incomplete unless they provide some kind of independent individual and corporate group life. Community living programme includes group living, taking group projects such as cleaning of a premise, rooms, gardening etc. management of playing indoor and outdoor games, organizing entertainment, variety of programmes, arranging study groups for evaluating the achievements etc.

Orientation courses

This course is organized for a period of 4 to 6 days depending upon the needs of the students. This is to orient the incoming students to the nature, scope and significance, of the training programme. It helps to develop closeness and familiarity with classmates and advisors. It orients according to the specific course needs. The syllabus for the entire programme is circulated among the student teachers during this course. The entire course is conducted through group discussions under the leadership of student teacher themselves.

Correspondence courses

This is a new technique for in-service teachers. Correspondence Courses are being successfully conducted by different professional groups. It is adopted to meet two special requirements, first to adequate the facilities for the development of teaching skills through practice teaching and secondly continuous contact between the student teacher and the institution.

Mechanism of Feedback Devices for the modification of Teacher Behavior

- **Simulated Teaching:** Simulated teaching is a training technique used to change the behavior of the pupils. It is used before the practice of class teaching. Here pupil teachers play the role of both pupil and the teacher. Since effective teaching behavior is identified, behavior can be modified by the psychological use of role perception and role playing. Hence effective teacher behavior can be practiced. Feed back mechanism is used for modification of the social communication skills of pupil teachers.
- **Micro Teaching:** It is a scaled down teaching technique. In other words it is a short session teaching in which a teacher is to teach a small unit group of 5 to 10 students for a small period of 5 to 6 minutes. Such a situation offers a helpful setting for an inexperienced teacher to acquire new teaching skills and to refine his teaching. It is a highly individualized training device and provides immediate feedback and thus prepares effective teachers. Some of the skills that are practiced are; skill of writing instructional objectives, introduction, fluency in questioning, explaining, probing questioning, stimulus variation, reinforcement, effective use of blackboard etc.
- **Programmed Instruction:** Programmed instruction is a highly individualized instructional strategy for the modification of teacher behavior. It is defined as a method of individualized instruction in which the student is active and proceeds at his own pace and is provided with immediate knowledge of results. The physical presence of the teacher is not essential in this strategy. Though used for instructional purpose it can also be employed as a mechanism of feedback device for improving teaching efficiency. Its theoretical knowledge is essential to use it as a feedback for the modification of teacher behavior. Thus various kinds of intellectual, emotional and motor experiences are provided to the learner in a controlled situation through a variety of devices like book, teaching machine, computer, etc.
- **Interaction Analysis:** Interaction analysis is a technique for analyzing and observing the classroom behaviors. It provides the structure component and flow of behavior to classroom activities. Interaction analysis can also be used as a mechanism of feedback device for the modification of teacher behavior. The pupil teachers are trained in both theory and practice of interaction analysis for using it as a feedback device. They should be well acquainted with categorization of teacher behaviour, the encoding and decoding process and interpretation of the constructed matrix involved in interaction analysis.
- **T-Group Training:** T-Group is also used as a feed back device for the modification of teacher behavior. It has been developed by Bathel and Mine. It is a leaderless group which meets without any agenda or schedule. T-group consists of 8 to 12 trainees and meets for 2 to 3 hours. The trainees discuss their own problems of teaching and suggest some solutions on the basis of their experience. T-group provides the opportunities and situations to express their feelings regarding the training programme freely. Pupil teachers

become honest, straightforward and insightful by meeting their T-group regularly. The teacher educator may also provide most thoughtful guidance for the problems of teaching.

Team teaching

In team teaching a group of teachers, working together, plan, conduct, and evaluate the learning activities for the same group of students. Teams generally comprise staff members who may represent different areas of subject expertise but who share the same group of student teachers and a common planning period to prepare for the teaching. Exposure to views and skills of more than one teacher can develop a more mature understanding of knowledge. Team teaching aids the professional and interpersonal dynamics of departments leading to closer integration of staff. The concept of team-teaching has been developed to enable teams to plan, practice, evaluate and to instruct new teams for sustainable development.

Action research

Action Research is a method for improving and modifying the working system of the classroom or school. It is a scientific search which is concerned with practical aspects of education where a solution is found for various problems which are faced in the day to day activities of pupil teachers and school. Action research helps in developing scientific attitude in the pupil teachers. It helps the student teachers to overcome the immediate problems faced by them in the field and in improving their present practices in order to make their teaching effective.

Conclusion

Professional success of every professional depends on update professional knowledge, fullest devotion, commitment and dedication along with his efficiency and effectiveness. In the present day world with the advancement of technology these qualities can be inducted through education. As teaching occupies a honorable position in the society each and every teacher educator must make himself familiarized with the above said Innovations in teacher education. The existing situation needs to be modified by effective professional education which will initiate the teacher to revolutionize his teaching and lay a strong foundation of professional growth of the student teachers.

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