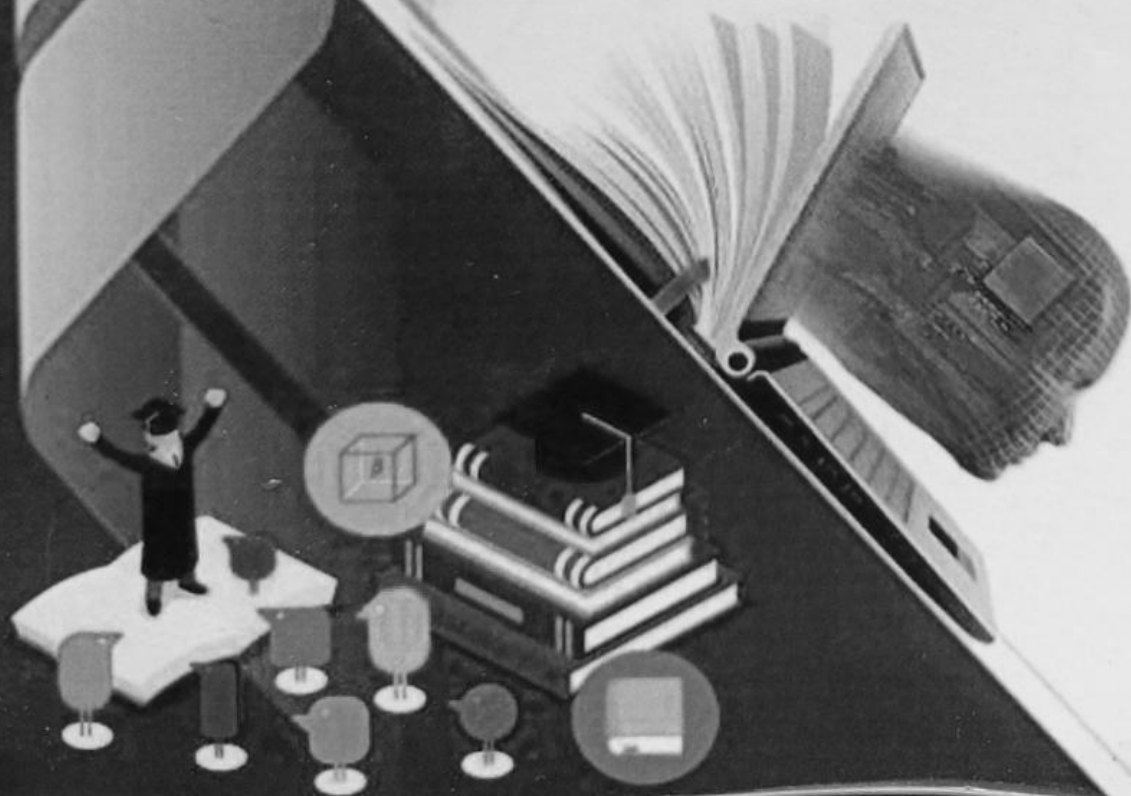


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SCULPTING COMPETENT TEACHERS IN THE VANGUARD OF REDEFINED PROFESSIONALISM

Preetha George & M. Jesa

Abstract: Education has always been 'a unique investment in the present and future'. Teacher education programme also has to be a self-contained scientific system with the core on the principles of human development in the cyber age. The entry to the teaching profession demands development of employability skills which should be the focus of the teacher education programme. In spite of the recommendations from different corners, the system is still in need of a paradigm shift. Teacher education has long struggled both to professionalize and to fully integrate itself into mainstream academia. At the core of this struggle was a perception that there was no body of specialized knowledge for teaching that justified specialized training. Teacher preparation programmes need revolutionary change, not evolutionary thinking. In this context we must think about the teacher training programmes that still focus on the microteaching of traditional teaching skills and the need for the transformation of these skills to twenty first century teaching skills.

Key words: Teacher skill, Flipping

Introduction

New India 2022 envisages institutions of education not just as incubation centres to promote entrepreneurs, but as smithies to mould the culture of zero tolerance of corruption and to promote ethical, moral behaviour. When 'volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity' is the order of the day, the academia should intervene with the most feasible strategies to bring in order, hope and peace to mankind. An inclusive, participatory, holistic approach 'to realize the hopes and aspirations of the people and to take India to greater heights' has been the foundation for reframing National Education Policy (2019), with the message, 'Educate, Encourage and Enlighten'. 'Wellness' of humans has become the prime word in goals of education in the global context. India dreams of a future piloted by a young generation, who could solve problems of the global village, 'like lions'. Today the new-born opens its senses not to the lullabies or grandma stories; instead to the thrashing of bullets. Nobody instils the essence of human life and its worthiness. Even the teacher does not care to touch the heart and mind of the kids. We quote on competition and unquote behaviour. It is time to make a shift from theoretically oriented education to practice based education.

The Backdrop

The philosophy of an outcome based education should set the primary goal as sustained existence of the world. Flagship programmes and schemes to foster affective intelligence should be part of the techno driven system of education. A safe and secure living environment devoid of punishment, violence and other atrocities against children has been ensured through legislation in India. But up to adolescence, positive strands of interventions are necessary to safeguard them against avarice, to help them learn lessons of good behaviour and healthy habits. Institutions of education should create a pro active environment and thus uphold the goals of futuristic education. The system should provide and lead the target group to a world of peace and tranquillity where profits help promote public good'. Every Indian has to contribute with her potential to the global 'yagna' of creating knowledge and investing with wisdom for the benefit of mankind. "Life changing programmes" like Pradhan Mantri Koushal Vikas Yojana (2015), New Education Policy (2016), iCREATE (2018) could ensure the "right educational, career and spiritual growth" (UGC, 2017) of young India through inclusion and sustainable development. The creative utilization of human and material resources in new and unique ways is the capacity demanded of any endeavour. Unfortunately, it has been reported, "even research institutions concerned with the content and pedagogy of education might oppose major changes in education (MHRD). Fortunately, the global vision of the prime minister for the 'creation of a new India' has its reverberations in the physical, social, economic, political, cultural and mental spaces of Indian Education Framework.

Problems and Issues

The National Council for Teacher Education, to "curb the growth of poor quality institution" (NCTE, 2016) revamped the system to improve the professional profile of teachers in India in 2015. The quality, competencies and commitment of teachers at higher education level including teacher education are being ensured by apex bodies like NAAC, AICTE, SHEC. The measures put forward in the TSR Subramanyam Committee Report (2016) to cater to about three hundred million Indian students, like satisfaction of minimum eligibility conditions of teachers, teacher entrance tests compulsory licensing on the basis of external testing are signposts toward validation of Indian schooling. The Bottom-Up approach of Kasthuriranga Committee on NEP could perform a collaborative post mortem of qualifications, quality, developmental programmes with reference to learning outcomes in school education, teacher education and higher education i

general. The need for paying due attention to employable skills in secondary and higher education is being felt increasingly.

Still recent steps from the Parliament point towards the needed shift in the Government's policies to 'reach the unreached' and to address the access, quality, equity concerns in the teacher education sector. The compulsory education (amendment) bill 2017 showcased the dearth of 'qualified' teachers at school level. Apart from the initiatives by minister of human resource development and the proposed task force for professionalizing untrained teachers especially from the listed eight states, collaborative effort from the think tanks is essentially required. The pivot of the issues could all be placed on the platform where the learner stands. It has already been identified that the dire lack of pre requisites poses the main hamper for the realization of learning processes and the outcomes. In spite of the efforts to bridge the gap by means of measures like diagnosis, continued remediation bridge courses teachers find it as the unsolved problem in teaching-learning.

The Research Gap

A review of literature on Teacher Education Programme, the policies, perspectives, and challenges revealed that the system is still under debate and dialogue. The Indian Education Commissions, National Committees on Teacher Education, Statutory Bodies, Educational Acts, Curricular Frameworks, Reports on the Regulatory Functions of the Apex Bodies have been proposing still more shifts to ensure quality education in the country. Research studies on these areas are numerous. But a research gap is felt in the proactive methodology with respect to the skills which forms the core of teacher professionalism. Moreover, the regulatory bodies with the power of law making alone will be authentic to bring in such shifts in the system.

To Redefine Professionalism

We have to spread 'a new industrial and business ethics where teachers no more nourish undesirable competitions, lawyers no more support the unjust, engineers no more design short lived bridges and doctors no more kill patients and fill their pockets. The conduct certificate issued to the students from the parent institution should not enter the stereotyped 'Good' in the blank provided: it should attest and reflect the real personality along with his academic achievements. School should be a practice ground for inculcation of good character; an institution of higher education should be assessed based on its role in character building along with academic achievements. This should be the intended Quality Education in the global context which always points towards the professionalism of teaching at the affective, cognitive and psychomotor levels of human development.

Education has always been 'a unique investment in the present and future'. Teacher education programme also has to be a self contained scientific system with the core on the principles of human development in the cyber age. The entry to the teaching profession demands development of employability skills which should be the focus of the teacher education programme. In spite of the recommendations from different corners, the system is still in need of a paradigm shift. Pro active governance in teacher education programme a process of formulating laws and regulating the system by controlling the existing situation of the national system of teacher education at secondary and elementary levels by initiating changes rather than reacting to events is necessary. Sustained employability skills of teachers are to be aimed with basic skills, attitudes and actions necessary for getting, keeping and doing well in the profession. A programme refinement on the basis of reflections on the past, study of the system in vogue and futuristic vision for sustainability should form the blueprint of reformations. The policy is to be framed based on the critical analysis of the system of teacher education in the past, the revamped system in vogue with a futuristic vision is the demand of educational globalization. A pro-active strategy amalgamating what is golden tradition and technological innovation resulting in creative teaching is demanded of next gen teachers. To address the multipronged issues of fissiparous tendencies on the one hand and the question of quality education on the other, the job readiness of these 'edupreneurs' of futuristic India should no more be impeded. The best brains are to be invited to the smithy to be fortified into directors, managers, mentors for gen next: "to innovate to transform lives of the common" (Modi, 2017). Teaching is no more the job of a graduate. Apart from subject content knowledge developed at undergraduate and post graduate levels, the professionalizing period of a teacher should make him/her ready for job.

In the 21st century landscape, education must focus on the need to acquire new knowledge, skills and dispositions of the students to ensure their survival and success as individuals, as members of the community, and as citizens of a nation. To achieve this, we must develop teachers who are able to undertake greater responsibilities as they are at the forefront of educating our youth. It is now universally accepted that the quality of the teaching force determines the quality of education whatever the changed approaches to education be. As we raise the standards for our children, our 21st century teachers will also need the right values, skills and knowledge to be effective practitioners who will bring about the desired outcomes of education. The re identification of professionalism may have had a number of regrettable consequences for teachers, and a way for a 'redefined professionalism' is open which

underscores the requisite knowledge and skills those teachers must possess in the light of the latest global trends, and to improve student outcomes.

Teacher Skills on Demand

Twenty first century learner's call for 21st century teachers is the impetus behind National Institute of Education, Singapore's Model of Teacher Education for the 21st Century (TE²¹). NIE recommends an Extended Pedagogical Repertoire that is intended to enhance the key elements of teacher education, including the underpinning philosophy, curriculum, desired outcomes for our teachers, and academic pathways. It is a transformative endeavor that will guide the design, delivery and evaluation of teacher education programmes in order to provide the best education to the aspiring and serving teachers to become teaching professionals who are adaptive to be the fittest for survival.

Teaching is not simply an interactive engagement with others but also cognitive and affective engagement with self through regular assessment and rejuvenation of methods and approaches. To attain this goal a teacher should disseminate his ideas, thoughts and concepts through innovative ways so that the students could grasp the depth of subject and are able to apply that knowledge in their daily life. NIE's TE²¹ model listed out the following essential teacher skills for an extended pedagogical repertoire.

(i) Reflective skills and thinking dispositions

Reflective practice is a process that facilitates teaching, learning and understanding, and it plays a central role in teachers' professional development. Reflection provides teachers with a chance to think about their behaviour, analyze their actions, take up alternatives, and implement new ideas. Therefore, if teachers use reflective strategies effectively, it would be a very useful way to improve their disposition of the critical thinking.

(ii) Techno-Pedagogical Skills

One strategy that has gained wider acceptance and mobility in the twenty first century teaching is techno-pedagogy. It is more student-oriented practical approach compared to the traditional methods of teaching. Teachers teach with today's tools and technology and adapt their teaching styles based on the needs of the students. They are best represented as techno-pedagogue. Techno-pedagogical skills are hybrid set of skills which helps a teacher to use technology into the pedagogy of teaching.

(iii) People management skills

The ability of teachers to manage the behaviour of students is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes. Inadequate preparation and inadequate professional development are the major contributing factors to the classroom management problems faced by new teachers. Such skills are not taught thoroughly or with adequate supervision in a real classroom context. Whether the teacher is adopting whole class, individual or group teaching strategies, part of his/her job is to maximize the time that all the individuals in the class are on task, paying attention. Involving all the children in the learning activities of a classroom involves developing the sensitivity to be able to read how individual children are responding and to be able to anticipate the most effective way of maintaining interest or re engaging attention. This will differ from individual to individual and in different contexts.

(iv) Self-management skills

Self-management is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviour effectively in different situations. This includes motivating oneself, and setting and working towards personal and academic goals. Teachers with strong self-management skills are able to do different activities effectively, including managing their timelines, focusing on their tasks, cooperating with others in school and better performance. Self management skills include self-awareness, self-control, self-confidence, problem solving, self-motivation, positive thinking, personal hygiene and grooming, team work, time management and goal setting

(v) Communication skills

Communication skills can be defined as the transmission of a message that involves the shared understanding between the contexts in which the communication takes place (Saunders and Mills, 1999). Teacher communication skills are important for a teacher in delivery of education. Communication skills involve listening and speaking as well as reading and writing. For effective teaching a teacher need to be highly skilled in all these areas. Effective communication skills are really important for a teacher in transmitting of education, classroom management and interaction with students in the class. Teacher has to teach the students having different thinking approaches. To teach in accordance with the ability and capability of the students a teacher need to adapt such skills of communication which motivate the students toward their learning process. Good communication skills of teacher are the basic need of academic success of students, and professional success of life. Students need to understand what is right, and

what is wrong while it totally depends upon the communication skills of teachers. Good communications minimize the potential of unkind feeling during the process of teaching. Communication process is successful when we deliver the message in clear and understandable way. Effective communication need to convey and accept his/her message in all kind of situation and circumstances.

(vi) Facilitative skills

A facilitator is the person who assists a group in grasping their common targets and in achieving them without any intervention on his/her behalf. Therefore, when we say the teacher has to play the role of a facilitator in the classroom, this means that the teacher should not be the king who controls the activities of the learners. He /she should grant the learners some space to let the spirits of creativity and innovation unchained. In other words, the learners must get involved into an active participation that would be represented in argumentative discussions and teamwork activities, so that the process of learning becomes comprehensive. One of the most important sets of skills for teachers is facilitation skills. These are the "process" skills we apply to guide the students.

(vii) Innovation and Entrepreneurship skills

Entrepreneurship is an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. It is seen as vital to promoting innovation in teaching-learning process.

(viii) Social skills and emotional intelligence

In the context of emotional intelligence the term 'social skills' refers to the skills needed to handle and influence learner emotions effectively. The component skills include persuasion, influencing, conflict management, building bonds, change management, team working skills etc.

(ix) Administrative and management skills

Administrators are responsible for providing administrative support for an office or department within a school. They play a crucial role in the day-to-day life of a school by providing a wide range of administrative support to keep everything running as smoothly as possible. Teachers with effective administrative and management skills are able to anticipate and to see where help is needed. They are able to nip trouble in the bud and skillful at scanning the class whilst helping individuals and they position themselves accordingly. They are alert; they can pre-empt disturbance; and they can act fast. They can

sense the way a class is responding and can act to maintain a positive atmosphere. These skills have to be learned and developed. The components that constitute administration and management skills are excellent spoken and written communication skills, methodical and well-organized presentation, accuracy and attention to details, good ICT skills, interpersonal skills, prioritizing work, sensitivity and understanding, flexibility and open to change.

Demonstrative Model of Teacher Education in the Twenty first Century

Teacher education has long struggled both to professionalize and to fully integrate itself into mainstream academia. At the core of this struggle was a perception that there was no body of specialized knowledge for teaching that justified specialized training. Teacher preparation programmes need revolutionary change, not evolutionary thinking. In this context we must think about the teacher training programmes that still focus on the microteaching of traditional teaching skills and the need for the transformation of these skills to twenty first century teaching skills.

The demonstrative model utilizes the component skills of the major twenty first century skills of creating a flipped classroom environment and the lesson procedure for training teachers. The blending of an *acharya* with a *smart facilitator* gets approved in the strategy of Flipping.

What is flipped?

"Flipping the classroom means students gain first exposure to new material outside of class, usually via reading or lecture videos, and then use class time to do the harder work of assimilating that knowledge, perhaps through problem-solving, discussion, or debates." (Brame, 2013). Flipping first attracted the attention of educators in 2007 with chemistry teachers Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams from Woodland Park High School recording of live lessons and broadcasting them on-line for the students that missed those lessons (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). The main aim of this new learning system is to provide preparation of student for the subject before the course and during course applying activities that increase the quality of face to face education. Flipping is an assignment based model in which lectures or texts are presented as homework outside of class in online videos and the class-time is reserved for engaging with real time activities. The major shift that is brought about by flipping is the events that have traditionally taken place inside the classroom now take place outside the classroom and vice versa.

The philosophy of flipping

The philosophy of Flipped Classrooms rests in the pretext of the present century easy access to technology, an active, student-centred approach that was formed to increase the quality of time within class. The teacher's role shifts to a mentor who engages students in interactions through learning by doing and the learner becomes the creator of knowledge. The classroom is transformed into a smithy to work through problems, advance concepts and construction of knowledge. Home is the preparatory ground to equip the learner with all the pre requisites for the classroom processes. Thus the philosophy of flipping is derived from a meta- cognitive approach to learning. In order to achieve a higher order thinking and competence every student must have a deep foundation of factual knowledge, understand facts and ideas with a conceptual frame of mind and the organization of knowledge which facilitate retrieval and application.

The assumptions in flipping

The basic assumptions of flipping are:

- Learner comes to class with a problem
- Home assignments ensure differentiated learning at learner pace and learning style
- Classroom promotes collaborative constructivist learning
- Homework initiates application level
- Classroom process promotes learner autonomy for the enhancement of lower order and higher order thinking skills through an inverted classroom approach

Skills for creating a flipped classroom

The process of flipping demands the Skill of source searching ,skill of content preparation, skill of making videos/presentations, skill of content sharing, skill of processing, skill of uploading the content video/presentation, skill of using online learning platforms, skill of making the students to receive the digital content at home and the skill of interacting with students inside and outside of the classroom.

Phases in flipping

(i) Opening with home assignment

In this model before the course the students watch theoretical part of lesson via multiple equipments such as online videos, presentations, learning management systems and take notes, prepare questions about

the parts that they do not understand (Kim, Kim, Khera, & Getman, 2014).

(ii) *Classroom sessions with productive feedback*

The classroom sessions commence with productive feedback on the home assignment and separate time is kept aside for question-answer session. Peers and teachers actively contribute in this session. Thus all the learners undergo the processes of remembering and understanding with respect to the pre requisites and the basics of new content. The gap in the knowledge, skill and experience are remedied.

(iii) *Progress through guided independent practice*

During course they achieve supporting activities such as finding answers together to the questions they prepared before lesson, group working, problem solving, discussion and making an inference (Formica., Easley & Spraker, 2010). Flipped classroom transfers learning responsibility from teacher to the student. Learners thus undergo the 'doing' process through applying, analysing, evaluating and creating.

Lesson procedure in flipping

Step 1: Content, Learning Outcomes, Learning Resources and Strategies

Step 2: Teacher creates video/presentation about the content he/she is going to teach and shares it through Podcasting platforms like Edmodo, Schoology, Google drive or YouTube.

Step 3: Students get familiarized with new content material before class-time

Step 4: Activities that motivate students to prepare for the class

Step 5: In-class activities that consolidate the content of video lesson

Step 6: In-class activities that provide students with opportunities to deepen understanding

Step 7: Post-class activities that extent student learning

Step 8: Directions for preparation for the next classroom session

The strategy of flipping defines and rationalizes the role of a teacher in the traditional modern concept of the profession. A flipper could always be by the side of the student as a source of a rich learning environment with mental, spiritual and content support.

Transforming Teacher Education for the Twenty First Century

In recent years, state and national policies have focused more attention on the issue of "teacher quality", the ability of individual teachers or a teaching faculty to improve student learning and meet expected standards for performance. The No Child Left Behind Act, for example, provides a formal definition of what constitutes high-quality professional development and requires schools to report the percentage of their teaching faculty that meet the law's definition of a "highly qualified teacher." The law maintains that professional development should take the form of a "comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement." Similar policies that describe professional-development expectations or require teachers to meet certain expectations for professional development may be in place at the state, district, and school levels across the country, although the design and purpose of these policies may vary widely from place to place.

(i) In-service professional development

Generally speaking, professional development is considered to be the primary mechanism that schools can use to help teachers continuously learn and improve their skills over time. In recent decades, the topic has been extensively researched and many strategies and initiatives have been developed to improve the quality and effectiveness of professional development for educators. While theories about professional development abound, a degree of consensus has emerged on some of the major features of effective professional development. For example, one-day workshops or conferences that are not directly connected to a school's academic programme, or to what teachers are teaching, are generally considered to be less effective than training and learning opportunities that are sustained over longer periods of time and directly connected to what schools and teachers are actually doing on a daily basis. Terms and phases such as sustained, intensive, ongoing, comprehensive, aligned, collaborative, continuous, systemic, or capacity-building, as well as relevant to teacher work and connected to student learning, are often used in reference to professional development that is considered to be of higher quality.

(ii) Pre-service professional development

Exemplary teacher education programmes possess a close integration of courses that create a coherent experience throughout the programme, well-defined standards of practices and performance, a core curriculum with emphasis on student learning, assessment and content pedagogy, use of problem-based teaching methods, active assessment using case studies and

portfolios with the aim to prepare the student teachers to become 21st century teaching professionals ready to meet the challenges awaiting them in the 21st century classroom.

Student teachers have been well prepared, and sufficiently exposed to elements that they needed to be aware of and which they would need to strengthen further in the 'beginning' phase of their professional career. A beginning teacher's expertise in handling routine teaching and other domain-specific professional matters develops over the initial years of induction and professional development, as they move towards the development of adaptive expertise.

The theory-practice gap has been acknowledged as an almost universal phenomenon not just in education, but in every profession. In teacher education, four oft-cited approaches used by NIE in bridging the theory-practice link are reflection, school-based inquiry or research, pedagogical tools that bring the school classroom into the university tutorial and experiential learning. A reframing of the pre-service teacher training not in theoretical perspective but in the practical aspect is very essential in the vanguard of redefined professionalism.

Conclusion and Future Work

In order to compensate the educational demands of 21st century students, it is important to equip teachers with latest teaching strategies. Since there are very less researches regarding the training given in twenty first century skills it is really an important matter of concern. The skills of teachers in designing materials by using multiple equipments and to transform these materials with learning management systems, have to be developed. The positive development in desire, interest and motivation of educators using technological equipments will be effective in the professional development.

Teachers should be permeated with a sense of "self" as a teacher. This includes pondering over what it means in terms of a professional identity. It also should be characterised by a zest for learning as well as passion for their subject discipline, always understood in relation to their role as a teacher. Hence, as education systems around the world evolve to cope with the impact of the new economy, the teaching profession must evolve in tandem. This calls for a re-conceptualization of teacher education along with a redefined professionalism comprising enhanced use of specialized knowledge and skills appropriately in a variety of institutional contexts, adoption of an inquiry orientation to investigate pedagogical issues, realistic goals and structuring learning environments for learners and engaging in continuous learning related to their own expertise and experiences so as to strengthen

professional identity. The system of Education future demands that the teacher beats with the heart, head and hands in symphony with those of the learner.

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