Situation Analysis of Institutional Policies for Teacher Educators and Prospective Teachers

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Abstract

Research study used a variety of methods for analyzing the institutional policies for teacher educators and prospective teachers.It browsed through the induction strategies and capacity building system being practiced by teacher training institutions. It addressed the prospective teachers, their satisfaction level with training, expectations and future roles.The percentage of trained teachers who join education department and the major reasons and factors which stopped trained teachers from joining education department have been traced out. The study was motivated by ongoing discussion on teacher training, performance and competency of teachers, status of teachers and their satisfaction level. Study provided evidence based information about teacher training situation which was equally beneficial for educational managers, educational practitioner, researchers, planners, policy developers and implementers and teachers. The outcomes will provide guideline to pre-service institutions for future planning.

Background and purpose of the study

Government of Pakistan shows commitment in policy documents for strengthening education sector. HEC and different donor agencies are putting efforts for uplifting educational standards and for quality enhancement. Teacher education sector is receiving priority by Government and partners.

Teacher and learner are mutually associated and both influence each other. Teacher educators and prospective teachers move together in educational stream. Their knowledge and skill level has strong impact on teaching-learning process.

Literature shows need of assessing the capacity of teacher educators.(Klitgaard, Siddiqui, Arshad, Niaz, & Khan, 2005) appreciated the capacity building efforts for teacher education sector with special emphasis on addressing the concerns of teachers and teacher educators.

The purposeof research study was toidentify the capacity building efforts being done by teacher training institution for teacher educators and prospective teachers. It discussed the induction strategy for teacher educators and also highlighted the existing knowledge and skill gaps. The thought process of prospective teachers have been traced out which will help planners and decision makers for making effective and efficient future decision and policies for educational leaders, key role players and rudimentary practitioner. Some of trained teachers are performing in departments other than education.The research team approached such trained teachers and traced out reasons which dragged them away from the profession for which they invested their time and energies. These findings may be useful while developing induction and placement policy. The results of study may strengthen the teacher training system at national/ international level.

Teacher training institutions build the capacity of educational system by addressing the knowledge and skill gaps of system audience. Teacher trainers and prospective teachers serve as focus group for these institutions. (Gujjar & Naoreen, 2010) conferred the need of policy framework for teacher training intuitions regarding capacity building of teacher educators. (Holden & Hicks, 2007) recommended the need of induction policy for teacher trainers. (Klitgaard, Siddiqui, Arshad, Niaz, & Khan, 1985) portrayed the teacher educators roles in the initial education and training of new members of their occupational groups. (Holden & Hicks, 2007)raised questions about the knowledge and understanding of teacher trainers working in teacher education institutions. (Halai, 2006) pointed out the need of capacity building system for in-service and pre-service teacher education program. (Khamis & Sammons, 2004) indicated that prospective teachers showed concern about their preferred future roles in school and outside school as change agent. (Khattak, Abbasi, & Ahmad, 2011) felt the need for devising a fool-proof mechanism for the follow-up of the trainees. (Klitgaard, et al., 1985; Sales, 1999) suggested the need of addressing the concerns of trainee teachers. (Sales, 1999) argued for proper placed of trainee teachers. (Westbrook et al., 2009)   proposed policy reforms for future teacher.   (Akiba, Chiu, Shimizu, & Liang) explained the need of professional satisfaction. The proposed research study is an effort for fulfilling the recommendations and suggestions of researchers and experts. It will encourage future research and will contribute for quality enhancement of teaching-learning process in teacher training institutions and universities.

Research Question(s)

1. What are the institutional policies and systems for induction of teacher educators who will prepare prospective teachers?
2. What is training and capacity building system for these teacher educators?
3. What are the general demographics of prospective teachers?
4. What is training & capacity building system for these prospective teachers?
5. What is perception of prospective teachers about their training and future roles?
6. Are prospective teachers satisfied with their training?
7. What is percentage of trained teachers who join education department as teacher?
8. What are major reasons and factors which stopped trained teachers from joining education department?

Methodology

The methodology of study included selection of sample, strategy for approaching sample, development of interview guide, development and validation of questionnaire, development of set of instructions for group discussion, policy for documents analysis, travel strategy, data collection strategy, policy for hiring expert for data analysis, mechanism for report writing and review, procedure for results dissemination by participation in conferences, seminars, print media, soft media and social media.

Sample

Sample size was 780 which were selected from 24 institutions operating in 6 zones of country. Two districts were selected from every zone including one from urban and one from rural area. One male and one female institution were selected from each district. Educational manager, working teachers and presently studying student served as respondents.

List of students who have completed studies was collected and the trained students who have not joined education department were approached. Experts living in selected district were consulted for having expert opinion from them. Annex 1 explains the sample.

Data collection instruments

Data were collected by four methods.
1. Interviews
2. Questionnaires
3. Group Discussions
4. Document analysis

Each question was addressed by one or more than one method as given below;

- Document analysis was carried out for the research question # 1,2,3,4 and 7.
- Interviews were conducted for the research question # 1, 2, 4 and 8.
- Questionnaire was used for research question # 3, 5 and 6.
- Group discussion was used for research question # 2, 4 and 5.

Interview guide was developed with the help of experts. Multi-item questionnaire was developed and its reliability has been tested by item analysis. Questionnaire was validated on a separate group.
Question # 1 and 2 dealt with Principal/Educational Managers and experts and was answered by using document analysis and interviews.
Question # 3, 5 and 6dealt with prospective teachers and was answered by using document analysis, questionnaire and group discussions.
Question # 4dealt with Principal/Educational Managers, experts and teacher educatorsand answered by using document analysis, interviews and group discussions.
Question # 7dealt with trained students (during past three years) who joined education department and answered by using document analysis.
Question # 8 dealt with trained students (during past three years) who didn't joined education department and answered by using interviews.

Data collection procedures

Data collection was sequenced in the following order;
1. Interview guide was developed.
2. Questionnaire was developed and piloted at small group from Lahore district teacher education institutions.
3. Group discussion instructions were developed.
4. Appropriate clearance was obtained from relevant authorities.
5. Research assistants was recruited for data collection purpose and was trained for interviews and group discussion.
6. Communication was made with sample institutions and also with experts and trained teacher who didn't joined education department. The research schedule was shared with sample.
7. Two research teams visited all six zones. Each team visited three zones. Visit activity was completed in six months.
8. Expert in STATA was hired for data analysis.

Data analysis

Data was collected by document analysis, interviews, group discussion and questionnaires. Each category was analyzed separately. Data was analyzed by using software Stata. A competent professional having expertise in statawas hired. He was given orientation about study.

Findings

Induction policies for teachereducators are being prepared by different administrative department. In past teachers were not consulted as stakeholders but now-a-days teacher community is being consulted while developing induction policy. Perspective teachers are being trained in teacher education institutions and these institutions are developing day by day. Perspective teachers are fresh graduates and normally midlevel students. The students who score at average often join education department. The perspective teachers are not fully committed people. Majority respond that they will change the profession if they got higher offer from anywhere else. Perspective teachers are also not satisfied with their and capacity building system. They expect very high level of content and delivery but their expectations are not fulfilled completely. The data reflect that majority of trained teachers is applicant for joining education department.

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