

Teacher training and teacher education

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Abstract

This paper presents conceptual analysis of the concepts “Teacher Training” and “Teacher Education”. Although educationists have drawn a distinction between “Training” and “Education” yet these two different concepts are still used and understood interchangeably by a number of teacher educators, teachers, students and common people. Therefore, there is a great need to clarify the phenomenon. In this paper an attempt is made to answer some questions of basic nature i.e. the difference between “training” and “education” and “teacher training” and “teacher education”, scope of “training” and “education”, aims of “training” and “education”, teacher’s/instructor’s role in “training” and “education”, concept of evaluation in both, and other related aspects of “training” and “education”. In the end current practice of our teacher education programmes is discussed in the light of the concepts “teacher training” and “teacher education”.

Keywords: Training, education, teacher training, teacher education

Introduction

There has been a continuing debate to differentiate between the concepts “Training” and “Education”. Consciously or unconsciously, most of the teachers, teacher educators and students use these two words interchangeably. They use the word ‘training’ when they actually mean ‘education’ and the word ‘education’ when they actually refer to the word ‘training’. Apparently both the concepts are so closely related to each other that sometimes it is very confusing to differentiate between the two keeping in view different examples and practices in the discipline of education. With the increasing interchangeable use of both the words in our teaching community, sometimes it seems better to dissolve the problem of differentiation between the two rather than to solve it by drawing clear-cut distinctions. But that is not the best solution, I would say, because it will have a significant influence on our teacher education programmes.

Difference between ‘Training’ and ‘Education’

According to Moore (1986) ^[6] the term ‘training’ is usually used in those situations where some skill or competency is involved, often, though not always, where the skill is fairly limited in scope. Training can take place in circumstances where no one would claim that education was going on. To train a soldier in the use of a bayonet or a gas mask is hardly to educate him. ‘Highly trained but uneducated’ would not appear to be a contradiction in terms. However he says that it would be wrong to say that there is no connection between the two. Peters as stated by Schofield (1972) ^[8] says that training always implies the acquisition of a ‘skill’ and drill is an essential part of training whereas education must provide those committed to it with knowledge, understanding and cognitive perspective. Training does not necessarily involve understanding the principles involved. Khan (1994) ^[2] states that the concept of training carries with it the derogatory connotation of a process of helping others to acquire skills or knowledge by rote, without any reference to greater framework of knowledge or comprehension. Kline (1985) ^[3] is of the view

that training emphasizes the psychomotor domain of learning. Training that is done in the cognitive domain is generally at the knowledge level and lower part of the comprehension level. Education, on the other hand, teaches a minimum of psychomotor skills. It concentrates instead on the cognitive domain, especially the higher cognitive levels. Moore (1998) ^[5] argues that training is narrowly focused and closed system while education encourages general approaches to problem solving and inculcates ways of thinking that are productive, effective, and rewarding. Rao (2004) ^[7] views education as a process emphasizing the development of knowledge and moral values required in all walks of life whereas training emphasizes knowledge, skills and behaviour patterns required to perform a particular job.

One can conclude from the above-mentioned descriptions that ‘training’ is a narrow concept as compared to ‘education’. Training is focused on the development of some specific skill. It includes repetition and drilling. It is a lower level activity. Sometimes training is designed for those who don’t possess enough intelligence and cognitive ability to be educated. Often we see that children, who are dropped of schools due to their dullness or slow learning, are given training of some stereotyped tasks like tailoring, gardening or the like activities. ‘Education’ is a broader concept. It prepares a student to deal with and solve a broad range of problems, and to choose which problems are important and which are not. Training may be provided forcefully, against the will of the receivers. There is more probability of indoctrination in training. It can be imparted to those who are not committed to it. But it can’t be in ‘education’. As Peters, stated by Schofield (1972) ^[8] McClellan (1976) ^[4] and Woods (1979) puts forward three criteria for defining education. One of the criteria is that transmission of education includes voluntariness on the part of the learner and the process of transmission should be morally acceptable. It does not mean that training is a useless activity and should not be provided to highly intellectual minds. It is worth providing but it limits the cognitive abilities and problem solving thinking. It should be combined with broader

perspective, i.e. education.

In some contexts these two words produce totally different meanings. For example if your teenage son or daughter is involved in illicit sexual relations, would you give him/her 'sex training' or 'sex education'? Here sex training may mean to involve the teenage in practicing and repeating the sex affairs. If we use the word 'sex education', it most probably means to educate the son or daughter on how to control sexual emotions and how to cope up the problem. It is a broader perspective and desired as well. Similarly there may be difference in the meanings of the words 'drugs training' and 'drugs education', 'disease training' and 'disease education', 'aids training' and 'aids education', 'computer training' and 'computer education', 'physical training' and 'physical education' and so on. The word 'training' is associated with drill, skill, repetition and practice whereas the word 'education' is associated with understanding, thinking, problem solving and intellectual perspectives. 'Training' lies within 'education'. So it can be concluded that it does not seem appropriate to use the two interchangeably.

'Teacher Training' and 'Teacher Education'

Although our teacher training colleges have been named as 'Colleges of Education' but mere name does not imply that the phrase 'teacher education' is used in its true meanings. Khan (1994) [2] commenting on the activities in our 'Colleges of Education' says that in these colleges our prospective teachers are taught to use fixed and formalized teaching methods and produce so called 'trained teachers' with 'windowless' minds who refuse to react to ever-changing situations of the students they are supposed to guide and groom. Schofield (1972) [8] is of the view that to train someone how to teach is not sufficient. It results in mechanical teaching and narrowing of horizons. Dove (1986) [1] states that teacher education refers to the knowledge aspect and teacher training to the acquisition of pedagogical skills. Rao (2004) [7] claims that in this age we need to bring a 'sophisticated' and 'cultured' generation so the very phrase "the trainee teacher" is out of date.

Training is commonly associated with teaching tricks for animal or with narrow vocationalism. Khan (1994) [2] criticizes our teacher education programmes for being dominated by only two concepts: methodology and practical skill in teaching. Hence very little consideration is given to the general theory of education, comprising the philosophical, sociological and psychological aspects. Whether to 'train' our teachers or 'educate'? To answer this question we will have to think on the meanings these two words carry. If we want to train our teachers, it means that we have put aside the higher order thinking and cognitive perspective. Mechanically trained teachers will apply the same outdated methods and drills without any creativity and innovation and without understanding the underlying theories of classroom practices. To 'educate' teachers conceptually means that we are also developing intellectual and cognitive abilities of teachers. We are giving them broader view of the teaching world. We are grooming all aspects of their personality. We are preparing them to face uncertain and unexpected situations in and outside the classroom. We are opening new horizons of knowledge for them. They will not be limited only to the knowledge of methodologies of teaching. Linkage of educational theory and practice is essential. 'Teacher training' is concerned with practice and skill of methodologies, not with the knowledge of

background theories whereas 'teacher education' is associated with both theory and practice. Theoretically we are providing 'education' to our prospective teachers in our Colleges of Education and Departments of Education in various public and private sector universities. The inclusion of courses like Philosophy of Education, Foundations of Education, Educational Psychology, Educational Sociology and other courses related to understanding of educational theories is a testimony to that. It is not appropriate to use the phrase 'teacher training' when we actually mean 'teacher education'. Schofield (1972) [8] rightly puts that as 'training' lies within 'education', so 'teacher training' lies within 'teacher education'. Hence it does not seem logical to use these two phrases interchangeably because there are conceptual and contextual differences between the two.

Scope of 'Training' and 'Education'

Training is limited and specific in scope. It focuses on development of some specific skill and by practicing the skill; the trainee tries to become expert in that skill. It limits independent thinking and the trainee is bound to repeat the same exercises again and again. He has to do what he has been 'asked to do' to be expert in the task. Education, on the other hand, has a wider and broader perspective. It encompasses all kinds of activities essential for human development. It does not limit the learner to only imitation and practice. (Schofield: 1972, Moore: 1986, Dove: 1986, Khan: 1994, Rao: 2004) [8, 6, 1, 2, 7] Along with developing professionalism, education also develops good human beings who are capable of independent thinking. In training one has to follow the prescribed activities and methods; in education one prescribes activities and methods on the base of some sound rationale. 'Training' is a part of 'education' to achieve its broader aims.

Aims of 'Training' and 'Education'

Aim of training is to bring excellence in the specific job for which the individual is being trained. Purpose of education is to provide conditions essential for people to develop an understanding of traditions and ideas influencing the society in which they live. It aims to acquire linguistic and other skills which are basic to learning personal development and creativity. (Rao: 2004) [7] Explaining the purposes of education and training, Whitmore (2006) [14] states that education is intended to provide equal opportunity to the masses to learn socially valued knowledge. It is a political goal that is pursued over many years. Training is intended to develop a particular group of people into competent job performers in as short a time as possible. Defining the concept 'Education', Peters as stated by Schofield (1972) [8] says that 'education' implies the transmission of what is worthwhile. 'Transmission of worthwhile' may be the aim of training as well. But if one thinks deeply, it may be found that most of the times 'training' is worthwhile for specific individuals who are receiving that particular training but it is not true of education as it is worthwhile for whole society rather than selected individuals.

Aims of education are long term and encompass all aspects of individual and social development. Aims of training are short term and concentrate on any single aspect of individual development specifically in terms of some type of performance or production of skills. Psychomotor aims of education can be achieved through training as training involves the use and

practice of motor abilities. When applied in the context of teacher education it can be said that the aim of teacher training is to get expertise and proficiency in methodology of teaching and its applicability in the classroom. Teacher education aims at not only achieving command on methodologies but also on theoretical perspectives of all educational practices. Preparation of an ideal teacher involves both theoretical and practical aspects of teaching. Hence, linkage of theory with practice is essential to fulfil the broader aims of 'teacher education'.

Instructors/Teacher's Role on 'Training' and 'Education'

Talking about instructor's role in 'training', Whitmore (2006)^[14] says that in training, the instructor provides the students with a progressive series of exercises leading to competence and coaches students when necessary. It limits the number of students that one instructor can manage, typically to less than ten or twelve in one class. In education, the instructor presents information and students learn as much of the information as possible. The emphasis is on clear explanations and presentations that motivate students to study. Presentations are often broadcast to large numbers of students simultaneously. Some classes may consist of a hundred or more students with just one instructor. One can find out that in 'training', the instructor is concerned with exercises and drilling of activities. The purpose is to get expertise in performing some specific task. The smaller the number of students the more focus on practice and drilling. In 'education', the instructor is concerned with providing students theoretical knowledge of different concepts with suitable explanations and presentations. Focus is on development of cognitive abilities so that the learner may be able to comprehend the foundations of theories and practices.

The interesting point to consider is that in 'training', the instructor asks the students to do and repeat the tasks. So the learners do as they have been 'asked to do'. There is no 'free will' and 'independent thinking'. The instructor is not interested in such phrases. In 'education', the instructor gives learners freedom to think and speak because here his purpose is different from that of 'training'. The learners present their own views regarding various concepts instead of doing what they have been 'asked to do'. The instructor in 'training' has limited perspective and is more focused. The instructor in 'education' has broader perspective and more general rather than being specific.

Concept of Evaluation in 'Training' and 'Education'

As there are other differences in 'training' and 'education', concept of evaluation has also different meaning in the two concepts. According to Whitmore (2006)^[14], in 'training', the purpose of the evaluation is to determine if the student is ready to stop practicing a given skill and move on to another skill. The intent is to have every student achieve all skills. Trainers are evaluated largely on their job competence and on their coaching skills.

In 'education', the purpose of evaluation may be to determine how far the student has absorbed knowledge and how far he is able to develop his cognitive and intellectual abilities. Paper and pencil tests are administered to assess learner's abilities. In Whitmore's view Educational instructors are evaluated largely on their content expertise and on their presentation skills. We can say that 'training' evaluates psychomotor skills and

'education' evaluates cognitive abilities.

When this concept of evaluation is applied in the context of 'teacher training' and 'teacher education', we can conclude that purpose of evaluation in teacher training is to determine how far the prospective teacher is able to adopt the teaching techniques and methodologies in actual classroom practice. The purpose of evaluation in teacher education is to determine whether the prospective teacher has comprehension of underlying theories of education on which practices are based. Which methodology is to be used and why? Here evaluation has broader range. It is not confined to assess the practice of methodologies only but it goes further.

Current Practice of Teacher Education Programmes in Pakistan

If we analyze our teacher education programmes keeping in view the difference between the concepts i.e. teacher training and teacher education, we will have to go back to the meanings these two concepts carry with them. Although it is not reasonable to divide Teacher Education

Programmes in 'Teacher Training' and 'Teacher Education' yet it seems to be a right way for discussion and understanding. It is already discussed that teacher training is concerned with practice and expertise in teaching methodologies and techniques. One of the characteristics of

'Training' is that the trainees don't move to the next skill until they get expertise in the previous skill. If we call P.T.C., C.T., B. Ed. and M. Ed. programmes as 'Teacher Training' programmes as majority of us do, the questions arise are: Are our prospective teachers expert in various methodologies of teaching? Have they command on different methods of language teaching, teaching of science and social studies? Do they really use these methods in actual classroom practice? A keen observer can see that majority of our teachers use the same old and outdated methods in classroom which were used by their school teachers ten or twenty years back and training seems to make no difference. This phenomenon raises certain other questions: What is the use of training if teachers have no expertise in practice of skills and methodologies? Do our teacher educators have the expertise in the methods they are teaching our prospective teachers? This scenario also takes into account the curriculum developed for these training programs.

If we think on a higher level and say that these programmes (P.T.C., C.T., B. Ed. M. Ed. etc) are actually 'Teacher Education' programmes and not 'Teacher Training'. We have already discussed that teacher education is associated not only with expertise in skills and methods but also with knowledge of theoretical perspectives of education. As it is concluded earlier that 'training' is a part of teacher education, so we will not repeat the questions we raised above to understand the status of or 'teacher training' programmes. Teacher education requires the learners to develop their intellectual abilities, think on their own and produce new ideas. If our 'educated' teachers bring creativity and innovation in teaching methodologies, if they are able to theorize and philosophize various concepts of education, then we need not worry. But if they are not, then we should be concerned. The existing teaching-learning environment in our schools indicates that majority of our teachers are resistant to change and is accustomed to easy ways and short cuts instead of developing higher level thinking in them and in their students. This phenomenon raises doubts in our minds regarding the outcomes of our teacher education

programmes.

We need to re-orient our teacher education programmes. We should not limit their scope by calling them 'teacher training' programmes. We have to produce 'reflective' teachers instead of 'mechanical' teachers. The concepts 'teacher training' and 'teacher education' look very attractive to us and we use these concepts in our daily discussions without applying them in true meanings.

That's why we lack 'original' and 'creative' teachers who are able to face unpredictable situations within and outside the classroom. Without implementing the concept 'teacher education' in its true sense, our dream of producing capable teachers will not come true but it requires hard work and potential on the part of teacher educators.

Conclusion

Because of textual and contextual differences between various aspects of 'teacher training' and 'teacher education', it does not seem reasonable to use these concepts interchangeably. Although it is very difficult to identify which activities are to be called 'teacher training' and which to be called 'teacher education', the intellectual and the teaching community should know the difference between the two. The phrase 'trained teacher' is becoming outdated now because of its limited scope and meaning. It does not mean that we should not 'train' our teachers. Training is an essential part of teacher education programmes and it enables the prospective teacher to acquire expertise in applying new methods in the classroom. But it is not synonym to education. It is desirable that we use the phrase 'teacher education' for our teacher education programmes. It is more dignified phrase and contains deeper meanings than 'teacher training'. To conclude I would add that words or concepts are nothing in themselves. They are important because of the meanings we attach with them and all meanings are useless until they are given outcome based and pragmatic orientation.

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