

CHAPTER IV

APTITUDE FOR TEACHING

The structural pattern of school education has been briefly discussed in chapter II. The Report¹ of the Integration Committee summarising the whole pattern writes,

Thus the course of general education in the old Bombay State extends over 11 years. The first four years of the course (Stds. I-IV) are treated as Primary and the last four years viz., (Stds. VIII-XI) as Secondary. Standards V-VII play a dual role. When they are attached to a Primary School, they are designated as "upper Primary" and are deemed as a part of Primary Education. When they are attached to a Secondary School, they are designated as "Lower Secondary" and are treated as a part of Secondary Education for purposes of control, administration and grant-in-aid.

For the purpose of the present study a Secondary School will mean a school having standards from VIII to XI and a Secondary School teacher will mean a teacher teaching in these standards.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Most generally a person who is an Arts graduate or a Science graduate with a degree in education is eligible for working as a teacher in a Secondary School. But, as stated in

1 Report of A Study by the Integration Committee For Secondary Education Appointed By The Bombay State Government, 1959, p. 19.

a previous chapter, there is a great dearth of trained graduates, and so ordinary graduates are also employed as teachers.

For the reasons discussed in an earlier chapter, the teaching profession is not very attractive. Highly talented persons hardly join this profession. They join other professions in order to secure better prospects. Some go for higher studies also. In an under-developed country like ours, there is little scope for selecting a vocation of one's own choice as there are limited choices at the disposal of a person. To many people, the teaching profession is the only choice left. They join it as a stop-gap arrangement. As such it is natural that the level of their attainment in the profession would not be very high. Accordingly the standard of education also would not reach the expected level.

There is and there may be a dearth of trained graduates as teachers but there is no dearth of graduate men and women, whatever reason there may be, who decide to take up education as their profession. There is, thus, an ample scope for selecting right personnel in the profession. To raise the standard of education, it is imperative to select proper persons for the profession.

Training College authorities should apply suitable scientific techniques to select persons with potential abilities and liking for the profession at the time of admitting them for training in the Colleges.

The school authorities, if they are required to employ untrained graduates as teachers, should also apply some scientific techniques in selecting teachers.

PREVALENT METHOD OF TEACHER SELECTION

School authorities follow the same method in selecting trained as well as untrained graduates as teachers for their schools. The selection of a teacher is done with respect to the following points.:

- (1) Basic qualifications.
 - (2) Professional qualifications.
 - (3) Scrutiny of the testimonials and certificates.
 - (4) Teaching experience if any.
- and (5) A short interview.

A procedure of interviewing the prospective candidate has come in vogue recently. But the interview is not so thorough as to enable the interviewers to get the complete idea of the candidate's knowledge of his subjects of teaching, his personality including sincerity and industry and above all his potential ability to teach. No test is used to measure his aptitude for teaching. It can rightly be said that this method of teacher selection is incomplete and no clear picture of a prospective teacher's potentialities to teach and interest in the profession is obtained. As a result of this incomplete

procedure even the wrong type of persons is recruited in the profession.

Even the training colleges, barring a very few, use incomplete method of teacher selection for professional training. They also depend simply upon basic qualifications, teaching experience and a short interview for admitting prospective teachers in the Colleges for training. No aptitude test or some sort of admission test is given to the prospective teachers. It can, thus, be said that quite a good number of the prospective teachers admitted for training, might not be possessing necessary aptitude for teaching.

Various combinations of traits and abilities may make for success in the teaching profession. One teacher, for example, may be successful because of scholarly ability, interest in his subject, and a desire to share it with others which result in a clarity of presentation, a wealth of material, and a warmth of manner which more than make up for a relative lack of interest in people as individuals and a dislike of the routines and details of classroom management. Another teacher may be equally successful because of his genuine interest in students, his warm and friendly manner, and his skill in classroom management, even though his scholarship and academic ability are mediocre. This shows that the teacher-selection made on basis only of qualifications or a short interview will not be much successful and persons with real aptitude for teaching will not be explored. A need of scientific and thorough technique

for teacher-selection cannot be overstressed. The factors that are likely to condition success in teaching should be explored and tests should be constructed to reveal whether the prospective teachers possess these required qualities for becoming successful in teaching profession.

It may just be mentioned that the teachers selected only on the basis of qualifications and interviews may be successful to some extent in fulfilling academic requirements of the pupils but they generally fail in helping them in building good moral character, developing their overall personality and making them good citizens of the country. It is discussed in a previous chapter what type of teachers we envisage. Our concept of a good teacher is made quite clear. Unfortunately one has to admit that out of a great number of teachers very few are "real" teachers of our conception. In the following few lines qualities of a good teacher are given in a summary form.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUCCESSFUL TEACHER

Eye and Lane¹ in their book, "The New Teacher Comes to School", write,

There is little satisfaction in crediting or blaming a building for the presence or absence of functions that may take place within its walls. There is more satisfaction in accusing teachers, superintendents, and board members for the absence of a good

1 Eye, G.G., & Lane, W.R., "The New Teacher Comes to School", Harper & Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1956, p.10.

educational programme.....It should seem strange to no one, then, that the expectations of the educational programmes are focussed upon the teacher.

The American Council on Education's Commission on Teacher Education, in "Teachers for Our Times",¹ has listed the following qualities for good teachers:

- (1) Respect for personality.
- (2) Community-mindedness.
- (3) Rational behaviour.
- (4) Skill in Co-operation.
- (5) Increasing knowledge.
- (6) Skill in mediating knowledge.
- (7) Friendliness with children.
- (8) Understanding children.
- (9) Social understanding and behaviour.
- (10) Good citizenship in the school as society.
- (11) Skill in evaluation.
- (12) Faith in the worth of teaching.

The above characteristics for good teachers in America apply also to a teacher in general in any part of the world including India.

APTITUDE FOR TEACHING

After independence India is making an all round rapid

¹ Commission on Teacher Education, "Teachers for Our Times", Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1944, pp. 154-173.

progress. Industrialization of the country is taking place very fast. Day by day, and one after another, a new industry is being started in different fields. The nation's leaders hope that at least at the end of the fifth five year plan, the country's place will be among a few very highly industrialised countries. As if to keep pace with the industrial and economic development of the country, a much rapid progress in the field of education, at all stages - primary, secondary and university - is taking place.

This all round development brings with it new hopes for the teeming millions of young persons in the country. A field for working is expanding day by day and a choice of vocation for a young person is widening. Care should be taken, therefore, to see that they make a correct choice of vocation. A proper vocational guidance is needed and a proper vocational selection also should be made to avoid the possible loss of human material that may result through wrong placement of the personnel.

As pointed out earlier in this chapter, there is a great need of making a correct selection of teachers. The persons with high aptitude for teaching should be spotted out through proper testing and advised to join the teaching profession. The service conditions in the profession should be so modified as to attract persons with real aptitude for teaching to join the profession. No person with aptitude for teaching should be tempted to join another profession simply because of

better prospects.

Different persons in the society possess different types of aptitudes. For example, some possess markedly mechanical aptitude, some musical, some artistic, some clerical and some an aptitude for teaching or some other profession. Different types of tests to measure different types of aptitudes should, therefore, be constructed.

Different meanings attached to aptitude are discussed in the previous chapter and the definition accepted for the present study is also given there. When we say a person possesses an aptitude for teaching, it is assumed that he has a good proportion of the traits required for becoming successful in teaching. The magnitude of these traits may differ from individual to individual or even the number of traits possessed by each individual may also differ. Some may possess more traits, some may possess less. A number of traits required for being successful in teaching compose as a whole the aptitude for teaching. Thus the high or low aptitude for teaching is in proportion to the number of traits possessed by a person. Not only that but it also depends upon the nature of the traits possessed.

To estimate, then, the aptitude for teaching, the factors that contribute to the success in teaching, should be measured through proper tests. The aptitude for teaching is in proportion to the number of such factors and also in

proportion to their magnitude and importance in conditioning success in teaching.

The tool specially prepared to measure aptitude for teaching is termed as an aptitude test for teaching.

There is no need to plead for the importance of an aptitude testing. Its usefulness is self evident.

Mental testing is not so prevalent in this country. It is just in its infancy. A few mental tests have so far been constructed in this country. Most of the tests so far constructed are intelligence tests, achievement tests and diagnostic tests in school subjects. Perhaps no aptitude test has been constructed so far. To help vocational guidance - which is also in its infancy in this land - the need of aptitude tests in different fields is the most imperative. Similarly aptitude tests for teachers, at different stages, are also most badly required. Aptitude testing in teaching profession is a long felt need. To make appropriate teacher-selection and thereby to raise educational standard in this country it is necessary to measure the aptitude for teaching of the prospective teachers. An aptitude test for teachers is the best tool in the hands of a selector of teachers.

Encouraged by his success in constructing a "Diagnostic Test in Basic Arithmetic Skills" for his M.Ed. Dissertation, the investigator, on the advice of his guiding professor, decided to construct and standardise an aptitude test

for teachers for his Doctorate Thesis. The importance and usefulness of such a test in this country at this stage is beyond question. This is an humble effort of the test- constructor aided by much valuable guidance of his guiding professor to do a little to satisfy the long felt need of such a test.

THE PROBLEM

The problem of this investigation is: construction and standardisation of "AN APTITUDE TEST FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS".

SCOPE FOR THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

As stated earlier, the present work when completed will be the first of its kind in India. It will be the only tool to measure aptitude for teaching possessed by the prospective secondary school teachers. The test is constructed in English so that it can be given to all English knowing graduates. For the sake of convenience the population (sample) selected for standardisation of the test is from amongst the graduates - Arts, Science, Commerce, Home-Science etc. - from the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat but as the test is in English and as the similar educational and social conditions prevail throughout the country, the test can be used in any part of India.

EARLY ATTEMPTS TO MEASURE APTITUDE FOR TEACHING IN INDIA

The investigator tried to collect all available information on the subject in India but no aptitude test of any type, including one on teaching, was available as none is published in this country.

S.B.Adavel conducted an experimental investigation on "Aptitude for Teaching". In a review in the Indian Education Abstracts the following¹ lines are written about the experimental investigation. (The investigation):

Examines the nature of aptitude and interest and the various aptitude tests of teaching ability (prepared by Knight and others; Cox-Orleans; and Moss, Hunt and others). Reports a study in which an aptitude test based on the test by Moss, Hunt and Wallace, and adapted to Indian conditions was administered to 429 - student-teachers in 10 institutions in U.P. and Delhi. The poor response to the test is attributed by the author to either the carelessness of the student-teachers or to the lack of aptitude for teaching profession in them.

In Foreign Countries:

Super² writes,

Tests of aptitude for teaching have been experimented with by a number of individuals and schools of education, in attempts to improve the selection of students of education.

1 "Indian Education Abstracts", Vol. 2. March, 1956, No.1. Educational Abstracting Service, Central Educational Library, Ministry of Education, New Delhi.

2 Super, D. E., "Appraising Vocational Fitness", Harper & Brothers, New York, p. 355.

Anne Anastasi¹ comments,

The development of special aptitude tests for the teaching field has not met with much success. A number of such tests have been prepared along the same general pattern as the tests for medical students, law students and other professional groups. One of the best known of these tests is the Coxe-Orleans Prognosis Test of Teaching Ability.

A good deal of work has been done on "Forecasting Teaching Ability" by Peter Sandiford and others at the University of Toronto, Toronto.

Henry Bowers at Normal School, Stratford, Ontario, has constructed and standardised the Aptitude Test for Elementary School Teachers - In - Training.

Some of the other important tests for measuring aptitude for teaching are listed below:

(1) The Coxe-Orleans Prognosis Test of Teaching Ability: According to Super², this is a good example of custom-built tests of aptitude for teaching. It consists of five sub-tests: (i) general information, (ii) knowledge of teaching methods and practices, (iii) ability to learn the type of material included in professional texts, (iv) comprehension of educational reading matter, and (v) judgment in handling

1 Anne, Anastasi, "Psychological Testing", The MacMillan Company, New York, p. 517.

2 Super, D. E., Op.Cit., p. 355.

educational problems. Commenting upon the test, Anne Anastasi¹ writes,

Several of the items are outdated, the test not having been revised since 1930. In its present form, this test does not appear to be suitable for current administration.

(2) The National Teacher Examinations: These are designed to measure the professional background, general intellectual ability, and cultural knowledge of candidates for teaching positions. According to Super²,

These are, obviously, only intellectual aspects of ability to teach, and do not include interest in children, emotional stability, and other factors which are generally believed to be important to teaching success.

(3) Teaching Aptitude Test: George Washington University series.

May V. Seagoe³ comments,

The date of publication (1927) means inevitably that some of the terminology is now obsolete, the pictures are noticeably crude, and the typography a little difficult
The test is useful chiefly as a research instrument.

(4) "Qualities related to success in teaching" -

1 Anne, Anastasi, Op.Cit., p. 517.

2 Super, D. E. Op.Cit., p. 356.

3 Buros, Oscar Krisen (Ed.), "The Fourth Mental Measurements Yearbook", 1953, p. 806.

Knight, F. B. *

The tests used are:

- (i) personal data,
- (ii) two intelligence tests,
- and (iii) a professional test of techniques of teaching.

(5) "The Prediction of Teaching Success" - Whitney,

F. L. *

The tests used are:

- (i) intelligence,
- (ii) high school record,
- (iii) academic record,
- (iv) marks in professional courses,
- (v) student-teaching success, by rating,
- and (vi) physique.

(6) "Teacher-aptitude tests and teacher selection"

- Bossing, N. L. *

The tests used are:

- (i) Cadet teaching grades,
- (ii) professional education grades,
- and (iii) all academic grades exclusive of those in professional subjects.

(7) "An aptitude test for high school teachers"

- Castleman, N., Grover, M., & Moore, H. *

An aptitude test for teachers based on traits judged necessary for success was used.

Tests of "Forecasting Teaching Ability" of Sandiford and others and Henry Bowers' ATEST are discussed in details in chapter VI.

The study of these tests helped the investigator in selecting tentatively the traits which are supposed to condition success in teaching.

All the tests in the present test-battery had to be constructed anew as no foreign test could be used in toto or even in part, the educational, social and other conditions in foreign countries being quite different from those prevailing in India. At the initial stage, no doubt, the items in these tests served an important purpose of a good model.

In the next chapter the whole plan of the present study is given in a nut-shell.

* Adapted in part from:
Dorcus, R.M., & Jones, M.H.
"Handbook of Employee Selection"
McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.
New York, 1950.