

RECOMMENDATION No. 69
TO THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION
concerning
THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE TEACHER AND ITS
INFLUENCE ON PREPARATION FOR THE PROFESSION
AND ON IN-SERVICE TRAINING
(1975)

Preamble

The International Conference on Education, convened by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting in Geneva, at its thirty-fifth session, held from the twenty-seventh of August to the fourth of September, nineteen hundred and seventy five,

Having regard to the relevant conventions, recommendations and declarations adopted at the international level, which are applicable to educational personnel, and more particularly to the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, adopted by the special Intergovernmental Conference (1966) and the Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education, adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its eighteenth session (1974),

Considering the rapid changes brought about by economic, scientific, technological, social and cultural progress in the modern societies as well as national aspirations,

Recognizing that changes in the teacher's role resulting from changes in society and in education have an effect on initial and on in-service education of various categories of teachers, and other personnel in education, as well as on their status and conditions of work,

The International Conference on Education,

Adopts on the third of September, nineteen hundred and seventy five, and submits for consideration by the Ministers responsible for education and the competent authorities and agencies in the various States and appropriate international bodies, the following recommendation:

Underlying Principles

Coherent policy and action in the field of teacher education and in the field of their employment and conditions of work should be based on the following principles:

a) Whatever are or will be the changes in the education system, the teacher-learner relationship will remain at the centre of the educational process and therefore better preparation of educational personnel constitutes one of the essential factors of educational development and an important condition for any renovation in education.

b) To improve the contribution that education makes to international, national, social, economic and cultural development, fresh efforts in teacher education are required but these presuppose that education authorities in Member States take account of the directions of change in the role of the teacher and the factors involved.

c) All appropriate forces of the society should be involved in the definition of the aims and objectives of education and consequently of teacher education. In this definition of purposes and objectives teachers should take a responsible part, together with their professional associations or groups.

d) All aspects of teacher education, including access thereto, should be free from any form of discrimination on grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, political origin, economic condition, etc.

e) Specialists from other professions and other people from the community should be appropriately involved in the process of education.

The Role of the Teacher

2) Teachers and administrators of all categories and levels should

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be aware of the roles played by them in the present state and development of education. They should understand that their roles and functions are not fixed unchangeable categories, but are evolving under the influence of changes taking place in society and in the education system itself.

3) Despite the diversity of education systems and of arrangements for teacher education throughout the world, there is a general need for fresh national scrutiny, in a realistic manner, of the teachers' specific tasks and functions in terms of national policies and legislation. Such national analyses, with the participation of teachers themselves, should lead to the establishment of professional profiles for all categories of teachers and other educational personnel with clear definitions of the roles and functions assigned to them by the society.

4) Measures should be taken to ensure that conditions exist for serving teachers and future teachers to be aware of the teachers' roles and to be prepared for new roles and functions:

a) The teacher is engaged more and more today in the implementation of new educational procedures, taking advantage of all the resources of modern educational devices and methods. He is an educator and a counsellor who tries to develop his pupils' abilities and interests and not merely to serve as a source of information and a transmitter of knowledge- the teacher plays a principal role in providing his pupils with a scientific world outlook.

b) Since the role of the school is no longer limited to instruction, the teacher, apart from his instructional duties, has now to assume more responsibility, in collaboration with other educational agents in the community for the preparation of the young for community life, family life, productive activity, etc. The teacher should have more opportunity for involvement in extra-curricular and out-of school activities, in guiding and counselling the pupils and their parents, and in organizing his pupils' leisure time activities.

c) Teachers should be aware of the important role they are called upon to play in the local community as professionals and citizens, as agents of development and change and be given the possibility of practising that role.

d) It should be recognized that the effectiveness of school education depends largely upon the development of new

relationships between the teacher and his pupils, who become more active partners in the education process; between the teacher and his colleagues and other agents who may be called upon to co-operate with him, between the teacher and his pupils' parents and others in the community concerned with the process of education.

Other Professionals and Specialists in Education

5) With the development and the continued diversification and enlargement of the function and programmes of educational establishments at various levels, the need may arise to use other professionals and specialists in the education system on a full-time or part-time basis to participate with the teachers in the realization of the education programme. This practice should be encouraged taking into account the experience of Member States, and be recommended for wider implementation wherever it has produced positive results, provided that educational responsibility remains in the hands of qualified teachers.

6) In each case it is important to analyze the national situation in order to identify the categories of personnel desirable in the educational process apart from regular teachers and at the same time to identify and eliminate administrative or institutional obstacles which may retard or make it difficult for such personnel to participate widely in the education process.

7) The same analyses should be applied to other personnel appointed to assist teachers and school administrators in non-teaching duties, both in the administrative and in the technical sectors, in order to improve the efficiency of the school and of the teacher.

8) Other professionals and specialists engaged on a full-time or part-time basis should receive pedagogical training either prior to or during their work at the educational institution.

Influence of the Changing Role on Preparation for the Profession and on in-service Education

General considerations

9) If education is to meet the demands of our time and of the coming decades, the organization, content and methods of teacher

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education must be constantly improved. In particular situations, a search for new educational strategies and concepts should be undertaken, taking account of the special social and cultural conditions under which the school and the teachers must perform their basic functions.

10) In view of the continuous renovation and development of general and pedagogical knowledge, and of pedagogical activities, it does not seem possible to equip the student teacher with knowledge and skills which would be sufficient for his whole professional life. Therefore, the initial preparation for the profession, pre-service education and training, should be considered as a first fundamental stage in the process of the continuous- education of teachers.

11) Hence a comprehensive policy is needed to ensure that teacher education is reorganized as a continuous co-ordinated process which begins with pre-service preparation and continues throughout the teacher's professional career. In such a system, pre-service and in-service education should be integrated, fostering the concept of life-long learning and the need for recurrent education.

12) In-service education should not only permit professional updating but should also ensure the necessary professional mobility by preparing educational personnel to assume new functions and responsibilities.

13) Such a comprehensive policy of teacher education should include provision for pre-service and service training of educational personnel of various categories and of various levels, including inspectors, supervisors and other administrators as well as other professionals and specialists engaged in education.

14) At the level of educational policy with regard to in-service education the four principles which it seems most important to apply are:

a) continuity designed to keep the teacher continually aware of new developments in the education system and in the field of educational research and to expand his knowledge and skills in his particular subjects:

b) comprehensiveness that will involve all those who participate in the education process—various categories of teachers, school administrators and inspectors, teacher educators and others;

c) establishment of an organizational framework with appropriate funding and staff provisions, making possible the participation of all educators in various forms of in-service education and the mobilization, in collaboration with all institutions concerned, of all the resources likely to contribute to such training;

d) involvement of various categories of educational personnel in the definition of in-service teacher education policy, objectives and programmes and their implementation as well as in educational research.

Preparation for the profession

15) Taking into account the fact that there are, and always will be, changes in all aspects of social, cultural and educational life which will influence the roles and functions of teachers, it is essential to make future teachers aware of these changes and to prepare them for the profession with this in mind. This underlines particularly the importance of the development of the personality of the teacher in the course of his training and the development of his readiness and capacity for further training and self-education.

16) Within the context of existing educational legislation there should be flexibility for adapting rules, regulations, professional statutes, so as to facilitate progressive changes in the initial and continuing education of teachers, the formation of teacher teams which would include persons performing appropriate educational roles, the provision of incentives in career situations and prospects, etc. Accreditation and certification procedures should be geared to the new roles of teachers.

17) From the point of view of content, initial teacher education should enable the future teacher to acquire the necessary professional preparation for new roles and functions, and should provide a basis for continuing professional development in the framework of life-long education for teachers. The development of the curriculum for teacher education courses should be linked closely with curriculum developments in the schools

18) Considered from the point of view of general principles and aims, the programmes of initial teacher education should:

a) Relate closely to roles and functions expected of the teacher today and prepare the future teacher not only for his instructional

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role but also for the variety of roles and functions demanded of him by the society and the development of education. Teachers are now more and more involved in various extra-curricular and out-of-school activities and should be prepared so that they will be able to combine teaching and up-bringing into the single process of developing personality.

b) Prepare future teachers to use effectively and for the benefit of learners all the facilities and resources offered by the social and cultural environment.

c) Give an opportunity for student teachers to experience these new roles and functions during the training period, by giving them responsibilities in the administration of teacher education institutions, by establishing closer links with various educational institutions and providing practical training so as to develop the students' initiative, responsiveness, resourcefulness and adaptability to change, and so enable them in the future to assume such new roles and functions as may appear.

d) Provide for and ensure the student teachers' personal and professional self-development, so that they will be prepared to continue their education and development in the future either by self-education or by seeking to attend courses of in-service training and also prepare them to develop the same aptitudes in their pupils.

e) Include adequate provision for general and professional, theoretical and practical preparation. The studies of specialization should be up to date and interdisciplinary in character and cover not only the facts but also the fundamental concepts, principles structures of subjects so that students acquire an interdisciplinary framework within which they can continue to gain new knowledge independently during their professional life, taking account of the latest developments in the field of their specialization.

f) Include ample provision for professional development, both theoretical and practical, including introduction to problems of educational research and its application, to elements of experimental technique in education in order to facilitate teacher participation in educational research and strengthen the links between training and research.

g) Prepare the teacher for the effective use of educational technology, including the media of mass communication.

In-service education

19) Continuing education should be an integral part of the teacher education process and should therefore be arranged on a regular basis for all categories of educational personnel. Procedures should be as flexible as possible and adaptable to teacher's individual needs and to the special features of each region, taking into account developments in the different specialities and the extension of knowledge.

20) The functions of teacher education institutions should be extended not only to provide for the pre-service education of teachers but also to contribute substantially towards their further education- it is thus desirable that these institutions provide pre-service education and continuing education.

21) Special regional centres should also be developed for this purpose and also to provide initial in-service education for those teachers, particularly in developing countries, who did not receive adequate preparation before starting teaching.

22) Teachers' organizations should be encouraged to contribute to the continuing education of teachers by initiating opportunities for teachers to meet and work together on common problems. Conferences, seminars and courses organized by teachers' organizations may represent a significant measure in encouraging teacher development by the profession itself.

23) Self-education of teachers should be considered as an important element in their continuing education. The educational authorities and educational research and documentation centres should help the teachers to organize their individual in-service education by providing guidance, the necessary documentation and literature, library facilities, etc., and by making the necessary time available.

24) In order to make continuing education more effective and to reach educators in remote regions, extensive use should be made of radio, TV and correspondence courses. The combination of short full-time courses with long periods of multi-media programmes, including radio, TV and correspondence courses may provide one immediate solution of in-service education of the broad mass of teachers.

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25) The strengthening of the continuing education of teachers as required at all levels of the system, from early childhood education to the tertiary level and adult education, will require considerable efforts on the part of education authorities. Such efforts include the quantitative analysis of teacher supply and demand in the country and the working out of national or regional plans for the continuing education of teachers.

26) Present rules, regulations and statutes should be so modified as to recognize the importance, necessity and effect of in-service education, to take into account the developments in its organization which have already occurred and to provide a legal right for all educational personnel to take part in continuing education.

27) Measures should be taken to give all full-time or part-time specialists working in education the opportunity for in-service education and at the same time to ensure that their professional experience benefits other teachers.

Status of Educational Personnel

28) *a)* It should be recognized that the social and economic status of teachers and the level of appreciation of their role are important for the quantitative and qualitative development of education;

b) Special attention should be paid to the status of women teachers and their educational opportunities, especially their reintegration into the educational service after absence due to family responsibilities .

29) It is desirable, however, that the improvement and adaptation of the existing administrative and socio-economic status of teachers to new requirements should also permit an enlargement of scope so as to make the education function accessible to a much greater number of competent people available in the community, at least for part-time participation in the educational activities.

30) For this purpose, it is desirable that an administrative, social and economic status should be granted to these specialists consistent with their roles and functions.

31) The Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (1966) should also be revised in this sense, and its proper application should be promoted.

Participants in the Education of Teachers

32) Whatever may be the intentions to improve or to reform the education of teachers, the practical realization of such intentions will greatly depend on the quality and initiative of those called upon to participate in this activity. In order to prepare future teachers to assume new roles, such persons should in their own turn be competent psychologically, scientifically, academically and practically to educate teachers in this way.

33) Consequently, those responsible for educational policy should give more attention, in general, to the problem of the preparation of those called upon to contribute to the educational of teachers. The continuing education of such persons is an essential aspect of educational strategy, which involves, notably, the contribution of universities and specialized institutions. Resources devoted to these purposes are likely to have a maximum multiplier effect.

34) Those responsible for the education of teachers should have at their disposal all the necessary means of keeping abreast of progress achieved in the field of education and of new methodologies and approaches concerning their specific functions.

35) Such persons should be competent to prepare teachers and other educational personnel for various specializations and functions in education and also for professional mobility, and should be in a position to promote among them the right attitudes towards innovation and towards life-long education.

Regional and International Co-operation

36) Co-operation in the field of initial and in-service teacher education should be carried out at bilateral, regional and international levels. The effect of such co-operation will be:

a) to promote the formulation and to support the application of policies and plans for the pre-service and recurrent education of teachers and other specialists at all levels and for all types of education in order that education systems may better contribute to economic, scientific, technological, social and cultural progress;

b) to facilitate programmes and activities for the education of teachers, teacher educators and various full-time and part-time

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specialists required for improving formal and non-formal education at all levels;

c) to encourage structures, programmes and methods facilitating the introduction of appropriate innovations in initial and continuing education for all those who may be called upon to assume educational responsibilities;

d) to encourage the Member States to collect and to disseminate all possible information about their policies and plans concerning teacher education and also to undertake case studies and comparative studies of such policies and plans;

e) to recognize the diversity of situations in the development of education, to work out appropriate strategies in the field of teacher education and to intensify policies of assistance in this respect.

37) Regional organizations and international organizations, like Unesco, interested in the training of educational personnel, should help to establish a world network of documentation and information centres likely to stimulate and to support renovative action undertaken in various States, fostering the exchange of information on innovations between the institutions and services responsible for initial and continuing training of educational personnel.

38) Unesco is invited to give priority in its programme to such important aspects of training of educational personnel as are mentioned in this Recommendation: to search for new strategies, roles and functions of various educational personnel, continuing education, wider participation of people other than regular teachers in education, etc. In particular, Unesco should seek to increase concerted international action to support developing countries in their efforts to provide systems of continuous education for their teachers.

39) It is desirable that Unesco, in collaboration with the Member States' competent authorities, should study the possibility of extending the scope of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (1966) so as to cover various categories of full-time and part-time educational personnel.