

A Comparative Study of Pre-Service Teacher Education Programme at Secondary Stage in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

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Introduction

The comparative education is an analytical and synthetic approach. In the synthetic approach, it is seen to what extent the social structure, political philosophy and educational philosophy have influenced the educational system of a country. In such study, the totality of all situations and factors involved are kept in view. In other words, in comparative studies of education, now sociological bases are emphasised. Social process, social control, social organisation and social change of a country are carefully studied in comparative education, because it is believed that its educational system cannot be understood from teacher education point of view because it is a sub-system of education.

The purpose of the study is to understand the problems related to teacher education in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka with a view to find out their solutions. In the process of understanding Pre-Service Training Education (PSTE) programme at the secondary stage in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, the philosophical background of the country concerned are studied because the education system is always influenced by the philosophical points of view of the people. Another purpose of this study is to understand those causes which make the educational system of one place progressive and that of another backward. In fact educational administration and control is strictly according to prevailing rule in the country.

In India, secondary teachers are prepared through Pre-service Teacher Education Programmes (PSTE). One year Bachelor of Education

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(B.Ed) programme is being run largely in more than ten thousands teacher training institutions and universities in the country. These institutions are managed by Government and private bodies.

The standard of teacher education is regulated by National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE), New Delhi, a statutory body, passed by the Parliamentary Act in 1993. The main objective of the NCTE is to achieve planned and coordinated development of the teacher education system throughout the country, the regulation and proper maintenance of norms and standards in the teacher education system and for matters connected therewith. In Bangladesh, secondary teachers are also prepared through one year B.Ed programme and are being run in more than 189 public and private teacher training institutions, colleges and universities. The standard is maintained by respective national universities. In Pakistan, training of secondary school teachers is for one year B.Ed degree and is being run in 135 institutions and universities. The National Institute of Teacher Education maintains the norms and standards of teacher education. In Sri Lanka, the pre-service education is provided by National Institute of Education, four University Departments, 17 Colleges of Education and four Teacher Education Institutions. These institutions offer three-year pre-service teacher education programme leading to the National Diploma in Teaching. Out of three years, two are at the residential college and the last year is in a school as an intern.

In all the four countries, secondary teachers are prepared through pre-service teacher education programme. But there are variations in the teacher education programmes in terms of duration, curriculum weightage, curricular areas and its implementation at the secondary stage in these four countries. Keeping these in view, this study was undertaken to study the system of teacher education in all the above mentioned countries with following objectives.

Objective of the Study

The major objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify different issues of pre-service teacher education programme at the secondary level in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- To compare different components of pre-service teacher education programme in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- To derive implications for overall improvement of pre-service teacher education programme in India.

Design of the Study

The design of the study consisted of sampling procedure, tools used for data collection and techniques for analysis of the data.

Sampling

The sample of the study consisted of 24 Principals (6 males and 16 females), 88 (46 males and 42 females) teacher educators and 157 student-teachers (53 males and 104 females) from all the four countries.

Tools Used

The following three questionnaires were developed to seek the information about the various components of the B.Ed programme from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

1. The first questionnaire related to Principals of the B.Ed institutions seeks to ascertain perception of Principals about various aspects of B.Ed programme. It consists of 36 items related to general information of the institutions, faculty profile, admission procedure, curriculum development, curriculum transaction and its evaluation.
2. The second questionnaire is meant to ascertain the perceptions of teacher educators on the strengths and weaknesses of the B.Ed programme and its various components. It consists of 32 items, related to structure, duration, components of curriculum, transaction of curriculum, course evaluation, teacher educator professional development, etc.
3. The third questionnaire is related to student teachers. This questionnaire seeks to obtain the perception of student teachers/ teacher trainees of pre-service teacher education programme (B.Ed) at the secondary stage. It consists of 30 items related to the curriculum, methodology for curriculum transaction, use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and other facilities available in the institute, organisation of co-curricular activities and evaluation system.

All the three questionnaires were tried out and finalised on the basis of experts opinions.

Data Collection

The data were collected by mailing all the three questionnaires to the B.Ed institutions in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The efforts were made to get the filled-in questionnaires from all the four countries. However, less number of questionnaires were received and analysed from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka from principals (7), teacher educators (9) and student teachers (19). Besides these, data from secondary sources were also used for completing the study.

Analysis of Data

The data were scrutinised, classified, compiled and analysed. The descriptive analysis of data was carried out. The syllabus and curriculum of the B.Ed programme from all the four countries were analysed to validate the information provided by the respondents.

Findings and Implications of the Study

The following findings and implications have been derived on the basis of the perceptions of the principals, teacher educators and student teachers on different aspects of B.Ed institutions from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Major findings of the study are as follows.

Duration

- The duration of the B.Ed programme was one year in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. However, the duration of the B.Ed programme in Sri Lanka was three years.
- Most of the teacher educators from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan were not satisfied with the one year duration of the B.Ed programme. The student teachers were found weak in content knowledge in all the four countries in general and particularly in India.

Qualifications

- The Principals from all the countries were having Master's degree in Physical Sciences and Social Sciences along with Master's degree in Education. Some Principals were having doctoral degree in education in India.
- In India, Master's degree along with M.Ed was the minimum qualification of Lecturers, Readers and Professors of the B.Ed institutions. In Pakistan, Master's degree along with B.Ed was essential for all the posts. In Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, Master's degree was the minimum qualification required for all the posts. Five to ten years of experience was also required for the posts of Readers, Professors and Principals in all the countries.

Recruitment and Promotion

- In all the countries Lecturers, Readers, Professors and Principals of B.Ed colleges were recruited through open selection by Universities or Public Service Commission. The procedure for promotion for the post of Reader and Professor was based on seniority in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan, where as in India, it is based both on open selection as well as under Career Advancement Scheme.

Admission

- Graduation degree was the minimum qualification for seeking admission in the B.Ed programme, where as in Sri Lanka, it was GCE (Advanced Level). But the teacher educators from Bangladesh and Pakistan expressed that the entry qualification need to be post graduate. The admissions in the B.Ed programme were made on the merit basis. The entrance test was also conducted in some universities in India and Bangladesh. But the teaching aptitude was not considered as a criteria for admission in the entrance examination. The weightage to co-curricular activities should be given in admission to the B.Ed programme.

Management

- The B.Ed institutions were managed by the Government in all the countries. However, some institutions were having private management in India and Bangladesh.
- The B.Ed programme was regulated by the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) in India, National Institute of Education in Sri Lanka, National University in Bangladesh and Universities in Pakistan. These regulatory bodies have been entrusted the responsibility to maintain the norms and standards of the B.Ed programme.
- In all the countries, most of the B.Ed institutions were co-educational and some of these were having residential facilities.

Curriculum Development

- In India, National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE), University Grant Commission (UGC) and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) were responsible for preparing secondary teacher education. National Institute of Education, National University and University of Education were responsible for Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan respectively.

- The B.Ed curriculum was revised during 1998, 2002, 2005 and 2009 in India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh respectively. In all the countries, no definite role was specified for the involvement of the faculty in formulation and revision of B.Ed curriculum and syllabus. However, some of the faculty members were involved in India and Sri Lanka.
- Subjects related to science, social science and languages are taught by teacher educators in all the countries. During 2002-2009, B.Ed curriculum and syllabi of different subjects were revised by all the countries on the basis of feedback collected from student teachers, teacher educators and principals of different institutions.
- Work experience, physical education, art and craft, advanced research method and computer education were the additional papers of B.Ed programme.
- Art and craft and work experience were prescribed as non-scholastic areas in the B.Ed course. The teacher educators from India and Sri Lanka suggested that co-curricular activities related to art and craft and work experience should be organised on regular basis and more weightage should be given to these areas in the B.Ed programme.
- Physical education helped in the development of the personality of student teachers. However, the student teachers from Bangladesh revealed that physical education was suitable and useful, but not much time was given for their involvement.

Theory Papers

- The compulsory theory papers prescribed in the B.Ed programme were almost common in all the four countries. The papers namely Educational Psychology, Sociology of Education, Guidance and Counseling, Educational Measurement and Evaluation, School Organisation, Computer Education and issues related to secondary education were prescribed in the B.Ed programme. In Pakistan, the paper on Islamiat and professional ethics were also prescribed in B.Ed course. The teaching subjects namely physical sciences, life sciences, mathematics, English and social sciences were prescribed by all the countries. Health and physical education, yoga and value education, music, art and craft, computer education were prescribed as additional courses of B.Ed programme in all the countries.

- The teaching of different subjects in the B.Ed programme laid more emphasis on the theory courses than practical work. Besides this, there is no link between the curriculum of the B.Ed course and the school curriculum. Moreover, the curriculum is lengthy and content in many subjects are not required.
- There were many strengths of different subjects prescribed in the B.Ed course. Teaching of philosophy and psychology are helpful in the development of the personality of children. The work experience develops aesthetic sense among the student teachers. The scientific attitude is developed by the teaching of physical sciences and communication skills by teaching of languages among the student teachers.

Practical Work

- Computer application, psychological tests, art and craft, work experience, practice teaching, research projects, assignments and social work were prescribed under practical work. In Bangladesh, only teaching practice was prescribed as practical activity.
- Work experience helped the student teachers to learn by doing different activities. However, the student teachers from Bangladesh revealed that work experience was suitable and useful, but much time was not given for their involvement and participation.
- It was found that the practical activities were very useful for making an effective teacher. It developed confidence among them. The necessary knowledge and skills related to subject matter were inculcated by these activities.
- The student teachers of India expressed that performing and visual arts increased their confidence, brought hidden talent outside and made them tension free. It also helped in developing their personalities. Performing and visual arts made teaching learning interesting. The student teachers from Bangladesh and Pakistan expressed that performing arts was not necessary.

Specific Curricular Inputs

- In India, specific curricular inputs like provision of scholarships and remedial teaching were provided for the disadvantaged students. In Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan no specific curricular inputs were provided for disadvantaged students.

Computer and ICT

- The computer labs were established in the institutions. The computer literacy varied between 40 to 75 per cent in all the four countries.
- The computer facilities were utilised for the professional development of teacher educators. Different types of relevant materials related to their own specialisation were downloaded from internet but this facility was availed by only 30 per cent student teachers. However, the ICT facility was not used frequently during teaching learning process in all the four countries. ICT based classrooms were not available.

Practice Teaching

- In India, practice teaching was organised in all types of schools including government, private, aided and own demonstration schools during first and second half of the year. In Bangladesh, the practice teaching was organised only in private schools whereas it was organised in own demonstration schools in Pakistan.
- In India and Bangladesh, subjects like social sciences, physical sciences, languages and mathematics were prescribed under teaching practice of the B.Ed programme.
- The student teachers expressed that two subjects were undertaken for the practice teaching. In India, twenty-four lessons from two subjects were delivered during forty-five days by student teachers. While, forty-five lessons were delivered during ninety days in Bangladesh. In Pakistan, eleven lessons were delivered during thirty days duration.
- The minimum duration of school experience programme was 35-60 days in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, whereas maximum was 90 days in Pakistan. In Sri Lanka, minimum 5-6 lessons were required to be delivered during practice teaching, whereas, maximum 90 lessons were required in Pakistan. In all the four countries, student teachers were prepared for practice teaching before sending them to actual classroom situation. For preparing student teachers, demonstration lessons by faculty members or outside experts were arranged. Simulated and microteaching lessons were organised. About twenty schools were selected by all the four countries for practice teaching. In Sri Lanka, about 2 – 3 lessons were observed by the supervisor, whereas maximum 60 lessons were observed in Bangladesh.

- There were many weaknesses in the system of practice teaching. Teacher educators from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan revealed that the duration of the practice teaching was less. It was not supervised properly. The school authorities also did not cooperate fully in organising the teaching practices in their schools. It was difficult to observe the natural behaviours of student teachers during this programme.

Co-curricular Activities

- (i) The co-curricular activities like debate, study tour, social activities, drama, health awareness programme, excursion, science fair, etc. were organised as a part of the B.Ed programme. But in Pakistan, very limited activities like indoor games were organised. The participation of the student teachers in co-curricular activities were lowest in Pakistan and highest in India.

Transactional Strategies

- Lecture method was frequently used by the teacher educators in all the four countries for curriculum transaction in the B.Ed programme. Demonstration methods and group discussions were held on some occasions. Discovery and problem solving methods were used rarely.
- ICT is not used for curriculum transaction. Power-point presentations were made on some occasions in India. It was not at all used in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Professional Development

- There was no policy for the professional development of the teacher educators. They were only deputed in orientation and refresher courses organised by national institutions like UGC and NCERT in adhoc manner.
- For the professional development of faculty members, national seminars, refresher courses, orientation programmes and other academic programmes on different themes were organised by all the four countries. Lowest 15 faculty members from Pakistan and maximum 100 teacher educators from Sri Lanka attended the professional development programmes during 2004-07. The programmes were organised in the area of educational technology, research design, curriculum development, peace education, human rights, physical sciences, languages, women empowerment and teacher education during 2004-07. Teacher

educators from Sri Lanka attended awareness course on teacher education, whereas in Bangladesh, teacher educators attended the course on teaching quality improvement in secondary education. The teacher educators from Pakistan attended the refresher courses on human rights education, curriculum review and revision and teaching of social studies for elementary B.Ed programme. But, no such programme was attended outside the country during this time period.

- Teacher educators from India had expressed that they were the members of professional organisations like AET, AIATE, AIERA, ATER, IAP, MAF and NATE. In Sri Lanka, teacher educators were the members of SLTEU. In Bangladesh, they were the members of NAEM, where as in Pakistan, they were the members of PITE and AIOU.
- The teacher educators from India had published articles/ papers in the field of school and teacher education. The articles were contributed in MERI Journal of Education, Indian Education, University News, Journal of Indian Education, Indian Educational Review, Journal of All India Association for Educational Research, Journal of Education and Psychology, Nav Shiksha and Education in Asia. In Sri Lanka, teacher educators had published articles on educational awareness and role of education in women empowerment in journal of Thinakaran. Teacher educators from Bangladesh published articles on Biological science teaching for the B.Ed syllabus, Right person for the right job, curriculum in the journals named-The Observer, The Star, and The Sangbad. No article was published by the faculty of Pakistan during 2004-07.
- Teacher educators from India had published books in the area of educational technology, computer education, teaching of mathematics, child psychology and total quality management in education during 2004-07. The book on Islamic philosophy was published by the teacher educators of Sri Lanka. In Bangladesh and Pakistan, teacher educators had published books related to teaching subjects on Science, Psychology, English, Languages and Social Science.

Research and Innovation

- Many research projects in the area of school and teacher education were completed during 2004-07 in India and Pakistan. In India, innovations on practice teaching, educational technology, and instructional strategies were carried out, whereas innovations

on ICT and staff development were undertaken by Pakistan. No innovations were reported by Sri Lanka and Bangladesh countries.

Library

- The library facilities were available in the B.Ed institutions and the professional librarians were working in these institutions in all the four countries. There was open access for books and journals in India and Sri Lanka, but open access was not available in Bangladesh and Pakistan. The libraries were kept open on holidays only in India.
- In all the four countries, it was found that books and journals related to the B.Ed course were not available in adequate numbers. Moreover, the libraries were having variety of books related to different fields. The student teachers from all the countries were satisfied with the library services and cooperation extended by the library staff. Seating arrangement in the library was not found proper and adequate in most of the libraries.

Physical facilities

Most of the physical facilities including Principal's room, Staff room, Classrooms, Student's common room, Office space, Laboratories, and Toilets in the B.Ed institutions were available and adequate in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. But the physical facilities like playground, computer room and gymnasium were not adequate.

Weaknesses and Suggestions

- Many weaknesses were reported in the B.Ed programme from all the four countries. It was reported that more emphasis was given on the teaching of theory courses. Infrastructure facilities were not adequate. Students were not attending the classes on regular basis. New and innovative methodologies were not used for transacting the curriculum. The problems related to admission procedure, lack of faculty, library books, inter-college migration of students, curriculum and textbooks were also reported by the respondents.
- Many suggestions like use of ICT during teaching learning process, adequate infrastructural facilities, adequate library facilities, appointment of qualified staff, well equipped science laboratories, enhancement of duration of the B.Ed programme from one year to two years, more emphasis on practice teaching than theory, availability of textual material and revision of the

B.Ed curriculum on regular interval of five years, were reported by the principals, teacher educators and student teachers of B.Ed institutions from all the countries for improvement of this course.

- Teacher educators from Bangladesh mentioned that PSTE should be made compulsory.
- The student teachers from Bangladesh expressed that more assignments should be given on the basis of the theory papers. Guidance and counseling paper was suggested to be included in the theory paper of the B.Ed course of Pakistan.

Examination and Evaluation System

- Both annual and semester system for examination were followed in India and Sri Lanka. Whereas, only annual system was followed in India and Bangladesh and semester system in Pakistan were followed. Marking system was prevalent for theory and practice teaching and grading system followed for practical work examination in all the four countries.
- The performance of the student teachers in theory courses was evaluated by conducting external and internal examination. Written tests, viva-voce and assignments were largely used as tools for examination. Practice teaching was evaluated by observing and supervising the delivery of the lesson plans in real classrooms. The evaluation of the practical activities was based on construction of psychological tests, assignments and projects.
- There were many weaknesses in the current evaluation system. Outdated and traditional techniques were used for the evaluation of performance of student teachers. These tools and techniques were largely related to cognitive aspect of the personality. Teacher educators suggested that methods of evaluation should be revised. Continuous and comprehensive evaluation should be introduced for evaluating the performance of the student teachers and grading system should be introduced in place of marking system.

Implications

The following implications for action have been drawn on the basis of the findings mentioned above.

1. The Principals, Teacher educators and Student teachers from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan stated that one year duration of the B.Ed programme is very less and it should be increased from one year to two years, so that the necessary knowledge and skills

can be inculcated among the student teachers during this programme. Besides this, integrated programme of longer duration like in Sri Lanka should also be introduced in India for preparing better teachers.

2. There should be entrance examination for admission in the B.Ed programme and it should be based on aptitude of the students. Written tests, group discussions and interviews should be the part of admission procedure.
3. Physical facilities including principals' room, staff room, common room, computer room, office space, laboratories and toilets should be provided adequately, so that the quality of teaching can be enhanced.
4. The library services should be provided in all the B.Ed institutions, with latest books and journals in adequate number. Well qualified librarian should be employed. Adequate space for library and reading room should be provided in the institutions. The computer and internet facility should also be available in the library. The library should have networking with other libraries.
5. Well qualified faculty members including principals, teacher educators and technical staff should be appointed according to sanctioned strength prescribed for the institution. In the same way, administrative staff should also be appointed. Promotional policies should be followed on regular basis.
6. The schools and the teacher education institutions are working in isolation. Even, there is no relationship between the PSTE curriculum and the school curriculum. Both the curriculum should have close linkages and coordinations. The frequency for revising PSTE curriculum should be at least five years.
7. During the B.Ed programme, more emphasis was laid on theory part than the practical aspects. All the theory papers prescribed in the B.Ed programme should give space to the practical work including assignments and projects.
8. The duration of the school experience was not found adequate in the B.Ed programme. Ninety days duration were allocated for this programme only in Pakistan. The other countries should also allocate at least ninety days duration of the school experience programme. Student teachers should be prepared well before sending them to actual school situations. Simulation and microteaching lessons should be organised. All the lessons should be supervised and monitored, either by the faculty of the

institution or by the school teachers, where the school experience programme is undergoing.

9. Lecture method was used frequently for transacting the curriculum of the B.Ed programme in all the four countries. Besides this, project method, problem solving method, quiz, discovery method and case studies should be used in transacting the curriculum of the B.Ed programme. ICT should be integrated during teaching learning process.
10. The activities related to work experience, projects and assignments were undertaken as a part of B.Ed programme. These activities were not undertaken seriously. More activities like debates, social activities, drama, health awareness programmes and science fairs should be organised in more serious and systematic manner, so that student teachers can gain more exposure and experience during this programme.
11. The performances of student teachers in the B.Ed programme were evaluated through annual and semester systems of examination. It is suggested that comprehensive and continuous evaluation should be introduced for evaluating the performance of student teachers. Equal weightage should be given to school based experience and practical work. Grading system should be introduced in place of marking system.
12. There was no regular policy for the professional development of faculty of the B.Ed programme. Only some faculty members are deputed to the seminars and conferences in adhoc manner. Only very few are contributing articles/papers in the journals. There should be a regular policy for the professional development of the faculty members for their growth and development.

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