

**Pre-service Elementary Teacher Education
Curriculum in different States in India
A Status Study**

S.K. YADAV*

ABSTRACT

The study focused on status of implementation of pre-service teacher education curriculum at elementary stage in various states and union territories in India. The major objective was to ascertain the weightage given to different curricular and co-curricular areas and derive implications for action to improve the quality of pre-service teacher education at elementary stage. This study consists of data from 25 states and union territories. The data were collected through mailing questionnaires and personal visits. The descriptive statistical technique was used for analysis of the data. A lot of variations were found in terms of weightage given to different curricular and co-curricular areas.

Introduction

India, a union of states, is a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic, republic country governed by its Constitution. It comprises 28 states and seven union territories. In the Constitution, lot of emphasis has been laid down on education. National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, (revised 1992) called for overhauling the teacher education system. In the light of the recommendation, a centrally sponsored scheme was formulated by the Government of India to improve the quality of teacher education. District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) was one of the components of the scheme. It was recommended to establish DIETs in all the districts of the country. One of the major responsibilities of DIET was to run the Pre-service Teacher Education (PSTE) course and prepare teacher for elementary

* Professor and Head, DTE, NCERT

stage. At present there are about 560 DIETs in the country. Besides these, there are about 1200 Elementary Teacher Education Institutions (ETEIs), which are also preparing teachers and running PSTE course at the stage. However, the quality of education depends to a large extent on the quality of teachers. But the quality of the teachers depends chiefly on the curriculum of Pre-service Teacher Education Programme of the institution at the elementary stage. Therefore, Pre-service Elementary Teacher Education Curriculum needs to be in conformity with changing educational and social realities of a given society. In the past few decades, we have witnessed some sporadic attempts to modernise its curriculum at the elementary stage in order to attune it to the demands of the socio-politico realities. It would be in the fitness of things to trace the historical antecedents of the present Pre-service Teacher Elementary Education Curriculum to understand the base for the modifications that have been attempted.

The Basic Education movement led by Mahatma Gandhi, *The Father of the Nation*, during late thirties brought about an important change in school curriculum when the emphasis on bookish learning was replaced by education, geared to meet the needs and demands of life. The syllabi for teacher training also changed considerably to enable teachers to play their role in accordance with the changes in the schools. The courses emphasised craft-work and instruction relating to the methods of correlating school subjects to the main craft. Another milestone in the history of teacher training in India was the publication of Sargent Report on 'Post War Educational Reconstruction' in 1944. It recommended that the elementary teacher training course should essentially be practical in nature and specially related to the needs of the school. It also recommended provision of refresher course and research facilities for the teachers.

The Education Commission (1964-66) emphasised the development of teacher education curriculum. It observed that a sound programme of professional education for teacher was essential for the qualitative improvement in education for which it recommended (a) re-orientation of subject knowledge; (b) integrated courses of general and professional education; (c) vitalising professional studies and basing them on Indian conditions through the development of educational research; (d) improved methods of teaching and evaluation, which include self-study and discussion and continuous internal assessment and sessional work; and (e) developing special courses and programmes at all levels of teacher education to meet the requirements of the national system of education.

Yashpal Committee (1993) recommended that the process of curriculum framing and preparation of textbooks should be decentralised so as to increase teacher's involvement in these tasks. It further noted that inadequate programme of teacher preparation leads to unsatisfactory quality of learning in school. Therefore, the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme should offer the possibility of specialisation in elementary education. The duration of the programme should either be one year after graduation or four years after higher secondary. The contents of the programme should be restructured to ensure its relevance to the changing needs of education. The emphasis in these programmes should be on enabling the trainees to acquire the ability for self-learning and independent thinking. The teacher education programme being a professional course has to be rigorous, thorough and intensive.

In our country, the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) as a statutory body was established by the Government of India in 1993 to maintain the standard and quality of teacher education. However, it was already functioning as a non-statutory body since 1973. NCTE develops National Curriculum Framework for teacher education. For the first time the Teacher Education Curriculum Framework was brought out in 1978 by NCTE and recommended time allocation to different areas like pedagogical theory, working with community, content-cum-methodology and teacher practice including related practical work. Subsequently, the Teacher Education Curriculum Framework was brought out in 1988, 1998 and 2004 and the latest changes and technological developments were also incorporated from time to time. During 2006, a draft, Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education was brought out in collaboration with NCTE and NCERT.

Since education is in the concurrent list, the responsibility of developing the curriculum for elementary teacher education rests with state governments. The different states and union territories are developing their teacher education curriculum at elementary stage according to their own needs and requirements. The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and Board of School Education of respective states and union territories are mainly responsible for construction of the curriculum of Pre-service Elementary Teacher Education. Therefore, there are ample variations in terms of weightage given to different areas of Pre-service Elementary Teacher Education Curriculum and even national guidelines are not followed by many states and union territories. Several research studies also supported this point of view and have reported variations in

terms of weightage given to different curricular and co-curricular areas of elementary teacher education curriculum (Arora et al., 2000; Behari, 1998; Behera et al., 2005; Gupta, 1993; Gafoor, 1998; NIEPA, 2002; Pandey, 2000, Sandhir, 2000; Singh & Malhotra, 1991; Yadav, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2006). In the present research work, an attempt has been made to study the status of implementation of pre-service teacher education curriculum at elementary stage in different states and union territories in the country.

Objective of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To study the status in implementation of pre-service elementary teacher education curriculum in terms of structure, agency for curriculum construction, subject nomenclature, transactional approaches of various subjects, etc. in different states in the country.
- To ascertain the weightage given to different components of pre-service elementary teacher education curriculum.
- To derive implications for action to improve the quality of pre-service teacher education curriculum at elementary stage in different states/UTs in the country.

Design of the Study

It is essential to follow a scientific research design to obtain dependable, accurate, reliable and valid results from a study. The design of the present study consists of sample selected, tool used, procedure adopted for data collection and analysis of data.

Sampling

The Pre-service Teacher Education (PSTE) Programme at elementary stage is being run by the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) and Elementary Teacher Education Institutions (ETEIs) in different states and union territories. But the curriculum is constructed by the respective SCERTs and Boards of School Education. Efforts were made to collect data from DIETs and ETEIs from all the 35 states and union territories during 2005–06. However, the data could be collected from 25 states/union territories, namely, A & N Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh. Therefore, sample of the study consists of 25 SCERTs, 10 Boards of School Education, 243

DIETs, 237 ETEIs of 25 states and union territories from where the data were collected.

Tool Used

To obtain necessary information from the states, the following tools were used for data collection :

- **Questionnaire** was developed and finalised with the help of experts. It had six sections. Section 1 was related to general information about the number of DIETs and ETEIs, including name of the institution, duration of the course, admission criteria, minimum eligibility for admission, details of the academic session, weekly and daily schedule, guidelines for curriculum revision and agency involved in revision. Section 2 of the questionnaire sought information about the scheme of the studies related to the number of subjects, periods, weightage given to each curricular and co-curricular area including compulsory, optional/special, practice teaching, pre- and post-internship programme, practical activities, mode of curriculum transaction and use of teaching aids. Section 3 sought information regarding practice teaching including total duration of steps for preparing pupil teachers, details of norms of subjects, minimum number of lessons prescribed for each subject, lesson supervised by cooperative teachers and assessment procedure, etc. Section 4 consisted of practical and co-curricular activities. Section 5 sought information about assessment and evaluation of Pre-service Elementary Teacher Education Curriculum. The last section i.e., Section 6 included suggestions for improving the Pre-service Elementary Teacher Education Curriculum.
- **Focus Group Discussion (FGD)** was conducted in few institutions where data were collected personally. The issues in FGD were the same as mentioned in the above questionnaire.
- **Field notes** were taken during the visit of elementary teacher education institutions.

Data Collection

The data were collected by mailing the questionnaire to all DIETs and elementary teacher education institutes in all the states and union territories of the country responsible for preparing teachers at elementary stage. The data were also collected from State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) and Boards of School Education, which develop curriculum and syllabus for elementary

teacher education. The efforts were made to get the filled-in questionnaires from all the states. However, the filled-in questionnaires were received from 25 states/UTs. Besides this, the curriculum and syllabus of elementary teacher education from these states were collected and analysed. Some institutions were also visited for verifying the validity and reliability of the data.

Analysis of Data

The data were scrutinised, classified, compiled and analysed variable-wise. Wherever necessary, descriptive analysis of data was carried out. The syllabus and curriculum of elementary teacher education institutions of these states were analysed to validate the information provided by the institutions.

Major Findings

The major findings of the study are as follows:

- The nomenclature of Pre-service Teacher Education (PSTE) at elementary stage was different in different states and union territories in the country. It was named Diploma of Education (D.Ed.) in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, Elementary Teacher Training in Chandigarh, Meghalaya and, Odisha and M.P. Basic School Teachers Certificate (BSTC) in Rajasthan.
- The duration of PSTE course was two years in most of the states. However, it is still one year in Bihar, Meghalaya, Tripura and West Bengal. The Delhi University had a four year duration Bachelor of Elementary Education Programme.
- Admission criteria for PSTE course was based on merit basis in about 50 per cent of the states. But entrance test was conducted for admission in Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Punjab. Both interview and entrance test were conducted in Odisha and Puducherry for admission in PSTE course.
- In most of the states, 10+2/intermediate was the eligibility qualification for admission whereas it was graduation in Haryana, Chandigarh, Goa and Uttar Pradesh.
- Fresh students were eligible for admission in most of the states, while in-service untrained teachers were eligible in Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Maharashtra only.
- The medium of instruction of PSTE course was English in one-third of the states, whereas, equal number of states were providing this course in Hindi and regional languages.

- In majority of the states, the instructional days varied from 180 to 220. But the instructional days were more than 220 in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Odisha and Bihar.
- Most of the states observed 201 to 240 days as working days in a year while Chandigarh worked for 269 days.
- The periods allotted were from 41–50 per week for teaching different subjects in most of the states. The minimum 25 periods in Kerala and maximum 54 periods in Himachal Pradesh were allotted per week for teaching different subjects.
- The PSTE curriculum was not revised in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Goa during the last more than fifteen years. During last five years, the curriculum was revised in Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Haryana, Assam, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh states.
- The State Board of Education and SCERTs/SIEs were following the NCERT and NCTE guidelines for revision of PSTE curriculum.
- Teachers, Teacher Educators and Experts from DIETs, Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs), Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs), University Departments of Education and Non-government Organisations (NGOs) were involved in curriculum renewal process of PSTE curriculum.
- Minimum of 20 students were admitted in Arunachal Pradesh during the first year of PSTE course, whereas, maximum of 150 students were admitted in Delhi, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh. Fifty students were admitted in Karnataka, Meghalaya and Madhya Pradesh.
- Different names are given for the compulsory papers of PSTE curriculum of different states/UTs. But these are mostly covered under the discipline of philosophy, psychology and sociology. The remaining subjects were related to teacher's functions and elementary education, ICT, art and creative education.
- The optional papers like pre-primary education, multigrade teaching, education for all, girl's education, population education, etc. were prescribed in PSTE curriculum by different states/UTs.
- All the subjects of elementary stage like english, science, mathematics, regional languages, work education, art education, health and physical education were prescribed for content-cum-methodology subjects.
- The strategies like lecture method, demonstration, discussion, seminar, group work, quiz, project work, assignment and field trip were used for transacting the curriculum in almost all the states/UTs.

Pre-service Elementary Teacher Education...

- Teaching aids like blackboard, charts, models, OHP, computer, slides, maps, math-kit, science-kit, LCD projector were used in most of the states and union territories.
- In most of the states, steps like model lessons by expert, simulated teaching role-play, micro-teaching and activity-based approach were undertaken for preparing pupil teachers for practice teaching.
- Maximum 120 days were allotted for practice teaching in Andhra Pradesh state, whereas, minimum 40 days were allotted in Meghalaya. About 100 days were provided by most of the states for practice teaching.
- The maximum number of 200 lessons of different subjects was supervised in Andaman and Nicobar Islands during both the years, whereas, minimum 18 lessons are supervised in Assam. However, in other states the lessons supervised were 180 in Chandigarh and Tamil Nadu, 168 in Uttar Pradesh, 160 in Mizoram and Puducherry and 150 in Delhi.
- There were lot of variations in different states in terms of supervision of lessons of pupil teachers by cooperative teachers, supervisors and internal faculty. In case of Kerala, maximum possible lessons were supervised by three faculties, whereas, 50 per cent of lessons delivered by pupil teachers were supervised by supervisors, cooperative teachers and internal faculty. But in Assam, minimum two lessons by supervisor and 6 lessons by internal faculty were supervised.
- The pupil teachers were assessed internally in practice teaching in Delhi, Goa and Odisha, whereas, both external and internal examinations were conducted in most of the states. One or two lessons were observed and assessed by the external examiners in practice teaching.
- The work experience, health and physical education, educational technology, community work, music and clay modelling were given in practical work in most of the states. The practical work was assessed internally in most of the states.
- Co-curricular activities like drama, dance, educational tours, exhibition, blood donation, sports and games, debate, health check-up were organised in most of the states.
- The semester system was followed in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chandigarh and Uttar Pradesh for evaluation of student teachers. But annual examination pattern was followed in most of the states. Grades were given in Goa and Kerala but most of the states were allotted both marks and grades.

- The theory papers, practice teaching and practical work were assessed separately in about 50 per cent of the states but these papers were evaluated/assessed jointly in equal number of states.
- The SCERTs/SIEs and State Board of Education were the main agencies for awarding certificate to the student teachers of elementary teacher education programme.
- The Inclusive Education, Environmental Education, Education for Disadvantaged groups, Human Rights, Information Technology, Value Education, Adolescent Education, Peace Education, HIV/AIDS Education were found to be the major and emerging concerns to be included in the elementary teacher education curriculum in most of the states.

Implications of the Study

In this section, the results are discussed and the following implications for action have been derived from the findings of the study.

1. The nomenclature of elementary teacher education programme is not common in the country. Most of the states have named it as Diploma in Education (D.Ed.) in the light of DIET guidelines evolved by MHRD. The remaining states should also change the nomenclature so that uniformity as per DIET guidelines can be established and confusion can be removed. The meeting of policy planners can be organised to resolve this issue.
2. The admission of students in D.Ed. course varies from state to state. The quality of training declines for admitting more number of students in the PSTE course. Fifty students to be admitted as recommended by DIET guidelines. Besides this, students are to be admitted on the basis of entrance test and interview.
3. In most of the states, English was followed as medium of instructions in D.Ed. course. It create problems for the students. Therefore, the regional language of different states/UTs is to be followed in D.Ed. course.
4. The study revealed that the duration of D.Ed. course varied from one year to four years in different states and union territories. The duration of D.Ed. course should be at least two years according to DIET guidelines so that adequate time to theory and practice can be provided. If the state has adequate resources, the B.El.Ed. course can be introduced.
5. The study has revealed lot of variations in implementing elementary teacher education curriculum in terms of agency for curriculum development, number of working days, periods in a week, duration of periods, teaching approaches in different

subjects, evaluation system, etc. These variations shown in the study need further in-depth qualitative analysis and research support to see the effectiveness in teaching-learning process in elementary teacher education institutions and schools.

6. Different names are given for compulsory and optional papers of PSTE course. It would be better if these are put under foundation course, stage specific course and additional papers. These papers should have linkages with practical work and practice teaching so that theory and practice can be integrated.
7. All the teaching subjects related to both cognitive and non-cognitive should have practice session in schools. It will help in integrating both content and methodology in PSTE programme.
8. The practice teaching during D.Ed. programme is not taken seriously in many states/UTs. It should be of longer duration. Proper steps should be taken for preparing student teachers for practice teaching. They should be made to perform all activities of the school independently. The proper feedback to be provided during teaching practice by the supervisors. The school experiences need to be shared after the teaching practice. It will minimise the gap between theory and practice.
9. The work experience, health and physical education, community work, ICT, music, educational technology and action research were prescribed under practical work in D.Ed. course by different states. The practical exercises should have linkages and should be based on foundation course and teaching practices. It will help in integrating theory and practice, and content and methods. For further verification, research study to be conducted for the practical work related to co-scholastic areas.
10. The D.Ed. curriculum is transacted by using lecture method, demonstration, group discussion, project, assignments, field trip, etc. Beside these, constructive approach should be followed in D.Ed. course for preparing reflective and creative teachers.
11. Two agencies namely SIEs/SCERTs and Boards of School Education are responsible for construction of curriculum in most of the states. But from the findings of the study it appears that there is no coordination between the two important agencies. Both the agencies should work together for preparing the PSTE curriculum and follow the NCTE norms. It will also improve the quality of ETT curriculum.
12. In most of the states, marking is followed for evaluation of student teachers achievement of Elementary Teacher Education course. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) is also not

followed in most of the states and union territories. A study maybe undertaken for knowing the strengths and weaknesses of marking system, CCE and grading system in evaluation.

In the end, it can be concluded that there are lot of variations in terms of weightage given by different states to foundation courses, pedagogical aspects, practicals and internship programmes of Elementary Teaching Education curriculum. Academic subjects are still given considerable more weightage in comparison to the co-scholastic area in PSTE course. The integration of theory and practice, content and methods and use of ICT in teaching learning process are not reflected clearly in the PSTE course. Therefore, there is need to follow DIET guidelines for developing curriculum at this stage. It will help to tackle the issues raised above to certain extent. Besides this, in-depth research study should be conducted to find out the gaps and causes so that suitable strategy can be evolved to improve this course.

REFERENCES

- ARORA, G.L. ET AL. 2000. District Institute of Education & Training : Status of their Operationalisation. DTEE, NCERT, New Delhi.
- BEHARI, ALKA. 1998. Analysing Teacher Education Curriculum in the Context of Requisite Abilities for Effective Teaching. *IER*, Vol. 33, (1), January 1998, *Sixth Survey of Educational Research and Training*, 1993–2000, Vol. I, p.36.
- BEHERA, L AND BASANTIA, T.K. 2005. Evaluation of the Elementary Level Pre-service Teacher Education Syllabus in Odisha, *Indian Educational Review (IER)*, Volume 41, Number 2, July 2005, pp.96–117.
- GUPTA, K.M. 1993. Qualitative Improvement of Elementary Teacher Education: A Study. *Trends in Education*, Vol. XXV, No.V, pp 63–71.
- GAFOOR, P.K. AND AYISHABI, T.C. 1998. The Present Status of DIETs in Teacher Empowerment: A Critical Study, Paper Presented in National Conference on Management of School Education in India, NUEPA, New Delhi.
- MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. 1966. *Report of the Indian Education (1964–66)*, Commission Government of India, New Delhi.
- MHRD. 1986. *National Policy on Education*, Government of India, MHRD, New Delhi.
- MHRD.1993. *Learning Without Burden: Report of the National Advisory Committee*, MHRD, Government of India, New Delhi.
- NCERT. 2007. *Position Paper: National Focus Group on Teacher Education for Curriculum Renewal*, NCERT, New Delhi.
- NCERT AND NCTE . 2006. *Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education*(Draft) NCTE with collaboration of NCERT, New Delhi.

Pre-service Elementary Teacher Education...

- NCERT. 2004. *Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education*, NCERT, New Delhi.
- NCTE. 1978. *Teacher Education Curriculum — A Framework*, NCTE, NCERT, New Delhi.
- NCTE. 1988. *National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education: A Framework*, NCTE, NCERT, New Delhi.
- NCTE. 1998. *Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education*, NCTE, New Delhi.
- NUEPA. 2002. *District Institutes of Education and Training in Haryana: A Critical Evaluation*, NUEPA, New Delhi.
- PANDEY, SAROJ. 2000. Research in Teacher Education: A Trend Analysis and Future Directions, *Teacher Education in India: Post Independence Development*, DTEE, NCERT, New Delhi.
- REPORT. 2000. *The Bachelor of Elementary of Education: Programme of Study*. Maulana Azad Center for Elementary and Social Education, Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi, Delhi.
- SANDHIR. S., LAL, RATTAN AND CHAUDHARY, MAMTA. Developing Status-cum-Trend Report on Research in Elementary Education in Haryana: DPEP Cell, SCERT, Gurgaon, *DPEP Research Abstracts*, 1994–2000, p.94.
- SINGH, L.C AND MALHOTRA, S.P. 1991. Research in Teacher Education, *Fourth Survey of Research in Education*, NCERT, New Delhi.
- YADAV. S.K.; CHUTANI. M.C AND LAL RATTAN. 1998. Teacher Policy, Training Needs and Perceived Status of Teachers in Haryana. New Delhi and Haryana: Department of Teacher Education, NCERT and DPEP Cell. SCERT, Gurgaon, *DPEP Research Abstracts*, 1994–2000, pp. 92.
- YADAV, S.K. 2000. *Case Studies of DIETs: Some Reflections*, DTEE, NCERT, New Delhi.
- YADAV, S.K. 2002. Quality Appraisal of SMART-PT Programme. *Indian Educational Review*, Vol 38 (I).
- YADAV, S.K. 2003. Research Perspective in Teacher Education University, New Delhi, *A Weekly Journal of Higher Education*, Vol 41, No.22, June 02–08, 2003.
- YADAV, S.K. 2003. Teacher Support Services—Research Reflection. *Indian Educational Review*, Vol. 39, No.2, July 2003.
- YADAV, S.K. AND SUMBUL, R. 2006. Teacher Education in India : Issues and Concerns, University News. *A Weekly Journal of Higher Education*, Association of India Universities, Vol.44, No.38, September 18–26, 2006.