

Teacher Education In India: A Critical Analysis

Abstract

India is experiencing fast and sudden changes in teacher education in recent times. In 2015, the one year B.Ed. Programme was converted into two year Programme and was implemented in the same year abruptly, without much preparation. The stakeholders of teacher education have been busy in deliberating and discussing about the pros and cons of 2-year B.Ed. programme, meanwhile it is announced that from the session 2019, the 4-Year Integrated B.Ed. Programme will be launched across India. It seems to be a stage of turmoil in teacher education. Teacher educators, pupil-teachers and all other stakeholders are in a state of dilemma about what actually is going to happen and if implemented, how it will be executed in B.Ed. colleges and universities' department of teacher education. The status of teacher education which gives direction and decides the fate of school education must be crystal clear in its vision and mission. The present paper tries to revisit the development of teacher education in India, analyses present challenges, prevailing curriculum framework, eligibility criteria for teacher educators, and foresee some probable wayout for overcoming this scenario.

Background

Teacher education in India began with the history of the establishment of British Government in the country. Initially, it was meant to train teachers in English language, which was a foreign language for Indian teachers. It was started initially by some private agencies namely the Calcutta School Society, the Native Education Society and the Madras School Society during the early decades of 19th century. They were given grants-in-aid to train their teachers in their schools (NCTE, 1998, cited from 'National Archives of India, Educational Records, 1781-1839, Part 1, Chap. III, 1965'). The first record of state initiative in teacher education is Lord Moira's Minute of 1815 on the judicial administration of

the Presidency of Fort William in which the training needs of school teachers was supported (NCTE, 1998, cited from 'National Archives of India, Educational Records, 1781-1839, Part 1, Chap. III, 1965'). With a view for expanding the school education system at a low cost by utilizing 'native teachers' and maintaining a certain level of quality by providing training to these native teachers, Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras, expressed in his proposal (1826) to open a school for educating teachers, as proposed by the Committee of Madras School Book Society on 25th October 1824. He also proposed to establish training schools in each collectorate to have a regular supply of trained teachers. The Secretary

of Bombay Presidency also made a similar request during this period. As a result of all these initiatives, the above mentioned three private societies were granted funds for teacher education (Moir, Minute 1815 *ibid*, p.25).

After Woods's Despatch of 1854, normal schools were established for training primary school teachers in each Presidency, beginning with Madras (1856). By the year 1881-82, the number of normal schools (for training primary school teachers) went up to 106 with a total enrolment of 3886. All trainees were also given stipends in all the three Presidencies.

The Indian Education Commission (1882), having observed the expansion and diversification of education system in India, provided some definite directions for strengthening teacher education in India. The commission approved teacher training programmes for elementary and secondary school teachers and recommended that a separate secondary school teachers training programme should be carved out having examination in the principles and practice of teaching. Success in this examination was made compulsory to have permanent employment as teacher in any government or aided secondary school (NCTE, 1998, cited from 'National Archives of India, Educational Records, 1781-1839, Part 1, Chap. III, 1965'). As a result, six separate training colleges were established for the first time, one each at Allahabad, Jabalpur (established in 1890), Kurseong, Lahore, Madras (established in 1886) and Rajamundry (established in 1894). These colleges used to provide Licentiate in Teaching (LT), equivalent to a degree at the end of the training course. In addition to these six training colleges, there were 50 more training schools for preparing secondary school teachers. By the end of the nineteenth century, the institutional structure

of teacher education diversified into normal schools, secondary training schools and training colleges, run by state as well as private enterprise. In this way the teacher education got established as a substantial structural set up in India.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, Lord Curzon, the new Viceroy (1902-05) of India took several significant steps to bring quality in education. He passed 'Government of India Resolution of 1904' in which he highlighted his concerns on quality education. The resolution, for the first time of its kinds, prescribed conditions of schools to receive grants-in-aid and recognition including the suitability of school teachers with regard to their character, number and qualifications. Some important recommendations were:

1. training colleges should have all the required equipment;
2. training courses for graduates should be of one-year duration and the training courses for undergraduate should be of two years duration;
3. theory and practice of teaching should be included in training course and should be closely associated with each other;
4. one practicing school should be attached to each training college so that the above recommendations can be fulfilled;
5. there must be good connection between training college and school so that trainees on leaving college and entering upon their career in schools as teachers may not neglect practice of the method which they have been taught.

In 1913, through a Resolution of Education Policy, it was declared that '.....under the modern system of

education no teacher should be allowed to teach without a certificate that he is qualified to do so' (Sir Thomas Munro's Proposal, Point 5, March 10, 1826, in *ibid.* p. 74).

The Calcutta University Commission (1917-19) chaired by Dr. Sadler, recommended that a Department of Education should be created in the University of Dacca and Calcutta, and 'Education' should be included as a subject at Intermediate, Undergraduate (B.A.) and Postgraduate (M.A.) levels.

Non-cooperation movement of 1920-22, resulted into a marginal increase in the number of educational institutions in the country. A large number of indigenous nationalist learning institutions were opened up based on the idea of national education system. The British Government was alarmed on seeing the growing size and the revival of a parallel system of national education system and also the declining quality of education. To look into the matter and to come up with the relevant suggestions, a Committee was appointed in 1929 with Sir Phillip Hartog, as its chairman, popularly known as Hartog Committee. This committee made the following recommendations with regard to the training of primary school teachers:

1. increasing the duration of training programme;
2. provision of adequate staff for training institutions;
3. to bring improvement in service conditions of primary school teachers so that better quality teachers may be attracted and retained.

Based on these recommendations, in-service education programme for primary school teachers was set up and durations for different teacher training programme was specified, which were adopted by the Central Advisory Board

of Education (CABE) in 1943. These were Pre-primary teachers (2 years), Junior basic (Primary) teachers (2 years), Senior basic (middle) teachers (3 years), Non-graduates in high school (2 year), and Graduates in high schools (1 year).

After Quit India Movement (1942) the British government set up Sargent Committee in 1944, which gave the following recommendations with regard to teacher training:

1. The committee accepted the duration of the various training programmes as recommended by Hartog Committee and accepted by CABE.
2. Suitable students for teaching jobs should be identified and picked up during the last two years of their high school course and they should be given stipends for receiving teacher training.
3. Refresher course should be conducted to provide in-service training to regular teachers.
4. Research facilities should be provided to the teachers, and
5. Teaching practice should be strengthened.

As a result of Swadeshi Movement which began as an opposition to the partition of Bengal (1905) and Non-cooperation Movement of Gandhi Ji (1920-21), several national institutions were opened. Jamia Millia Islamia, presently a Central University in New Delhi, is an example, which was opened in 1920 at Aligarh, U.P by some of the students and teachers who accepted the call of Gandhi Ji; they left Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and established Jamia Millia Islamia in the campus of AMU itself. Later on in 1925 it was shifted to Okhla, Delhi. In 1937 Gandhi Ji called a conference on Basic Education in Wardha (Maharashtra)

and explained his idea of indigenous basic education, which was craft based and not only provided primary education to children, but also provided training in various crafts so that the students after passing school may start their livelihood. The idea of basic education was accepted by all, but the big question was how and who will prepare teachers for such schools. Dr. Zakir Husain, the then Principal of Jamia School accepted this challenge and Jamia Millia Islamia started Teachers Training for Basic Education in its newly established Teachers College in 1937. In addition to Jamia Millia, experiential training based on work-education was also provided at Wardha (Maharashtra) and Gandhigram (Tamil Nadu). *This was probably the first time that through 'Buniyadi Shiksha' as 'Nai Taleem' an attempt was made to streamline indigenous education towards nation building and social reconstruction of the country.* The main focus of 'basic education' was 'all-round development of the children', development of secular values, nation-building leading to the development of nationalism, use of immediate environment of the child and work as the source of knowledge, integrating knowledge and work, providing experiential learning, and use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction and learning.

By the time of independence, the teacher education had been recognized as necessity for all levels of school education. Now there was a need to give it more structured shape and make it effective in creating quality teachers to improve quality of school education.

Teacher Education in India after independence

The major challenge faced by India on getting independence in 1947 was to strengthen indigenous education system of the country. Only education

could bring desired changes in the lives of the citizens through social reconstruction. Three main objectives to achieve at that time were - expansion of pre-service teacher education, opening of supplementary channels for clearing the backlog of untrained teachers, and stabilization and expansion of in-service teacher education. The growth of pre-service teacher education was commendable. From only 10 secondary teacher training colleges in 1948, the number rose to 50 in 1965, 633 in 1995 and 4686 in 2017 (Source: <https://targetstudy.com/colleges/bed-degree-colleges-in-india.html>, 11.11.2017).

The University Education Commission (1948-49) pointed out that too little time and too little weightage was given to school experience programme i.e. teaching practice. The commission labelled school teaching practice as unsatisfactory. It recommended that in one year's course, not less than 12 weeks should be devoted to supervised school teaching practice and further said that supervisor's presence throughout the 12 weeks should not be expected. The commission also recommended that the training colleges must not admit a number of students which they cannot provide proper school whom teaching practice facilities.

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) recommended the following important points with a view to bring qualitative improvement in teacher education:

1. The minimum eligibility to get admission into Primary Teacher Training should be Higher Secondary and the training should be extended to two years.
2. The eligibility to become secondary school teachers should be undergraduate and the duration of training continue to be one year which may be extended to two years as long term measures.

3. Four year integrated model of teacher education may be introduced as an innovative experiment in Regional College of Education (RES) of NCERT to provide multipurpose orientation to school education, which was started during 1963-65.

The Indian Education Commission (IEC) popularly called 'the Kothari Commission' (1964-66) recommended the opening of supplementary channels to clear the backlog and the large number of untrained teachers. As a result summer courses, part-time courses, correspondence-cum-contact courses, and vacation courses were started. The concern for maintaining quality in teacher education also emerged. A conscious effort was made to bring together all teacher educators for more focused attention at all levels of teacher education programme. The idea of setting up comprehensive colleges of education as recommended by IEC (1964-66) was a step in this direction. The National Policy on Education (1986) and its Programme of Action (1992) further reiterated these ideas with emphasis on their implementation. In 1982-83, the Teacher Education Commission status. "The status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society; it is said that no people can rise above the level of the teachers". With this reflection, the commission put forward the idea that education in general and teacher education in particular need to be given the highest priority by the government in terms of recruitment and selection of teachers, financing, educational process, assessment and placement of the pupil-teachers. The teacher education and school education system should not be made jeopardized and must not be administered and organized by people of low caliber, low morale, and people with no vision.

In India, it has been observed that school curriculum is developed first followed by teacher education curriculum, as we also see in the case of National Curriculum Framework (NCF)-2005. To fulfill the dreams set out by the NCF 2005, National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education was developed in 2009 and implemented in 2010. What about these mid five years term (2005 to 2010)? And what happened to the NCF 2005 and its objectives? Are the results of secondary and senior secondary boards are compatible with the ethos of NCF 2005? These are few of the questions which need to be debated. Any curriculum designed and implemented must be such which may be practically put on the ground. Dreaming high is good, but dreaming realistically is better, as it may be achieved and celebrated.

The four year integrated programme was instituted by Kurukshetra University in July 1960 on the recommendation of Dr. A. C. Joshi, the then Vice Chancellor of Punjab University. This scheme was on the pattern of American Teachers College. The scheme was also launched with a view to produce 'quality teachers'. For this bright promising students were to be admitted, good incentives such as exemption from tuition fees, awarding of monthly stipend, and assurance of service after training concluded were provided to motivate the students. Later on in 1963 it was introduced at all the four RCEs of NCERT, which is still continuing.

In the chains of reforms, National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) developed National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) in 1978, 1988, 1998, and in 2009. In the first NCFTE, which was brought in 1978, the focus was on pedagogic theory, working with the community, and content-cum-

methodology and practice teaching, including related practical work for all the stages of teacher education.

NCTE appointed a committee to draft NCFQTE (National Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education) in 1998 under the chairpersonship of Prof. J.S. Rajput. The main recommendations of the committee were- transition of one-year B.Ed. Programme to two years of duration, and outlining specific programme for teacher education at Masters level.

Present NCFTE (2009) tried very hard to put teacher education on to the right track. Not only a comprehensive curriculum framework was brought out but also an attempt was made to root out the anomalies and corruption spread in teacher education. To improve the quality of teacher education and to bring quality in teachers and teaching many steps were taken including the initiation of nationwide teacher eligibility test (CTET & TET in various states) to filter and induct good teachers into the school education system. The layout of the curriculum for teacher education (NCFTE-2009) was conceived in such a manner which comprises three broad curricular areas. These were 'Foundation of Education' which includes courses on Learner Studies, Contemporary Studies and Educational Studies; Curriculum and Pedagogy, which include courses on Curriculum Studies and Pedagogic Studies; and School Internship Programme. Together they constitute the common core curriculum for all stages of teacher education. The NCFTE-2009 also showed concern towards some important issues like inclusive education, equitable and sustainable development, gender perspectives, role of community knowledge in education and ICT and e-learning in schooling. These issues and concerns have

been tried to be addressed in 2014 regulations and the model curriculum given by NCTE.

Owing to the deteriorating conditions of teacher education in the country, Justice Verma Committee (JVC) was appointed which submitted its report entitled "Vision of Teacher Education in India: Quality and Regulatory Perspective" in August 2012. It recommended a number of reforms for planned and coordinated development of teacher education in India. Some important recommendations were:

1. The government must raise its investment in establishing teacher education institutions.
2. The institutional capacity of teacher preparation must be increased, especially in the deficit states like eastern and north-eastern states of the country.
3. Teacher education should be made a part of the higher education system.
4. The duration of the teacher education program should be increased as also recommended by the Kothari commission (1964-66)
5. Each pre-service teacher education institution should have a dedicated school attached to it which should work as a laboratory where pupil-teachers get opportunities to observe, experiment, learn new ideas, reflect and hone their skills so that they may become reflective practitioners.

NCTE Regulations 2014 & Some Pertinent Issues

Uniformity in 'Teacher Education Curriculum'

Different universities have different curriculum and course structure. Some universities are running it in annual mode (2 Year Course) and others in semester mode (4 Semester Course).

NCTE need to develop the strict norms to run the course either in annual mode or in semester mode for all the universities to follow these.

NCTE has provided suggestive curriculum for different teacher education courses like B.Ed., M.Ed., D.El.Ed., B.P.Ed. etc. There are no clear-cut guidelines as to which portion/part or course is compulsory to be made the part of curriculum and which part of the suggestive curriculum may or may not be included. If NCTE would have given the core component whose inclusion would have been essential and the others may be suggestive in nature, it would have been helpful in bringing higher level of uniformity in curriculum. In this regard, the curriculum framework for B.Ed. Special Education and M.Ed. Special Education, put forth by RCI (Rehabilitation Council of India) are worth mentioning, wherein the entire curriculum is developed and provided by the RCI. Universities and college of Special education are made to follow and implement the curriculum as provided. Different universities are having different numbers and combinations of core, pedagogy, and optional courses in different semesters/years reflecting a large extent of variation in the curriculum, course structure, focus of the course, nature and extent of field work and internship, offered electives/optional etc. The critical analysis clearly shows that the universities are free to choose whatever they feel to include in the curriculum. The provision of courses and assessment of theory papers also speaks volumes about the spree enjoyed by these universities. The range of papers prescribed run between 7 to 23 with the weightage of assessment from 1450 marks to 4000 marks and the range of internal assessment of obligatory papers from 20 per cent to 50 per cent to 100 per cent. The NCTE

fixes just 1350 marks for the two year B.Ed. course (NCTE Regulation, 2014). Thus taking it away from uniformity and raising the question of threat to parity from university to university.

The NCTE regulation 2014, its immediate, compelling implementation and after effects need to be discussed and debated before taking any decision in teacher education. Some crucial and important issues are mentioned below:

Duration of the Course

As of now, since 2015, D.El.Ed., B.Ed. and M.Ed. all have been made equally a two year programme. D.El.Ed. is an undergraduate course; B.Ed. is a graduate course, whereas M.Ed. is a postgraduate course. We need to think about the rationality behind the equal duration of all courses. There should be variation in the duration of courses at all the three levels to make it more justifiable.

The enhancement of course duration has been recommended by earlier commissions and committees, but the way in which it was implemented, draws attention and raises many questions. It was launched abruptly; all the universities/institutions were instructed to implement it from 2015 itself. The universities had no choice, but to follow. They were compelled to develop the curriculum within two months and implement it. No much time was given to discuss, debate and come out with a curriculum which may be compatible with the present need and time.

The 2-year B.Ed. and 2-year M.Ed. was implemented in 2015. First batch passed out in 2017 and the second batch is about to pass out in 2018. The experiences of teacher educators, colleges of teacher education, schools providing school internship programme to student-teachers and other stakeholders are in a fix. Most of

the self-financed/private colleges are unable to fill even their seats. Due to low revenue through low admission, the colleges are compelled to run B.Ed. course in under staffed conditions. In some cases, it is observed, that only two teachers are teaching all the papers, and the number of B.Ed. students admitted is just 19. This situation is not uncommon.

Theory Components: Past and Present

In previous teacher education curriculum there were core papers to build and develop the understanding of prospective teachers in the three main roots of education—the educational psychology, the educational philosophy and the educational sociology. In the present curriculum, the core papers have been diluted. No any core paper is purely based on the psychological, philosophical or sociological foundations. All have been mixed together; opening the way for teacher educators without the specific background in these areas to be appointed for teaching these papers. Foundations in education must be taken into account. The core papers should be kept intact and should have strong base in the above three disciplines.

Inclusion of ‘Language across Curriculum’:

In the new two year B.Ed. curriculum implemented since 2015 a core theory paper introduced is ‘Language across Curriculum’. The philosophy behind introducing this paper, as envisaged by NCTE Curriculum Framework and Curriculum Design Committee, 2014, is to make pupil teachers understand the language in general and language of all school teaching subjects such as language of Science, language of Maths, language of History, etc. This paper is

presently taught by language teachers in almost all the B.Ed./D.El.Ed. Colleges and the teachers teaching this subject are having perception of doing no justice with the subject. They themselves are unable to understand what actually they are supposed to teach. They generally teach language education and other dimensions of language teaching in this paper. The very basic aims of introducing this paper are probably not met.

We have general and specific qualifications for appointment of teachers in all subject areas. What would be the eligibility for teaching this course has not been finalized. Teacher of any one language or one subject probably cannot teach this paper and cannot do justice with it. The situation revealed that the decision was taken in haste and it is leading teacher preparation programmes towards more confusion, proceeds towards weakening them rather strengthening.

Inclusion of Gender and Society

One new paper was introduced in 2015 with the title ‘Gender and Society’. The subject matter of this paper was taught in one of the core paper which was named as ‘Sociological and Philosophical Foundations of Education’ for a long time. Ideally it should be integrated as the basic value with every paper, instead a new paper was carved out which not only made the curriculum loaded, but also opens the scope of overlapping the content in many papers. It should be taught, deliberated and discussed in every paper as a key component.

Internship Components: Past and Present

In one year B.Ed. School Experience Programme (SEP) was of one month. In two year B.Ed., School Internship Programme (SIP) is of twenty weeks

(four months). This increase in duration is probably not rationalized and not planned properly. Previously the ratio of duration of course and duration of SEP was 12:1 (in terms of months). Now in two years B.Ed. this ratio is 24:4 or 6:1, hence the weightage of SIP duration has been increased by 200%. The rationale behind this increase is not clear. In addition the practical issues with regard to the availability of schools for SIP were not taken into consideration. It would be fine if NCTE would have made the DOE (Directorate of Education) of all states as a party to this reform and should have finalized this aspect in consultation with them. It would have simplified the process of getting schools for school internship programme. Schools should also be given clear-cut direction regarding their roles in SIP, which must be looked after by higher authorities in school education system. After all the teachers are being prepared to serve these schools in future. The more they coordinate and provide mentoring to the pupil-teachers, the more better teachers they will get inducted into the system.

There is also no uniformity in conduction of school internship programme. Some do it in the second semester, some in third; some prefer to do it in the last semester, perhaps there is not core philosophy behind the internship programme and how and when during the course it should be conducted. The variation also lies in the nature of internship programme like number of lessons to be delivered by each pupil-teacher in each teaching subject and in totality.

In all other such courses where internship is done by the trainees like medical, engineering, law etc. it is done mainly at the end of the course. In all such courses the onus of providing internship is on the organization

where trainee is doing internship. It is absolutely reverse in teacher education. Here teacher educators as supervisors become more important and are given more responsibilities of guiding and assessing the interns. This mechanism needs to be addressed properly and the role of school teacher/mentor needs to be raised. In fact the roles and responsibilities of teacher educator as supervisor and school teacher as mentor may be reversed during school internship programme.

Novel Idea regarding School Internship Programme (SIP)

Taking into consideration the need of creating well-trained teachers who have all the experiences of school activities which are done by regular teachers on daily basis, the prospective teachers should be provided the experience of entire session i.e. from admission to declaration of final results. This needs training of pupil teachers for the whole session. It may be suggested that 1st year should be entirely theory based. In the second year they should be placed in school for SIP by the DOE as per their needs and vacancy in schools. These pupil teachers should also be given some amount in the form of stipend. This move may help DOE in fulfilling the needs of teachers in schools and also low down their financial burden that they make on guest teachers, as this approach will reduce the requirement of guest teachers in schools. Hence this can be helpful for DOE, Pupil-teachers, Schools as well as Teacher Education Colleges. The other modalities of SIP may be finalized by NCTE in consultation with DOE of all states and Education Departments of Universities.

Enhancing Professional Capacities

The commendable part of the 2-year B.Ed. curriculum as per the regulation

2014 is the inclusion of courses on EPC (Enhancing Professional Capacities) like 'Understanding the Self', 'Reading and Reflection on Texts' etc. As far as the CEPC (Courses on Enhancing Professional Capacities) is concerned, there also seem to be some confusion. Some universities put some of these papers into core courses, some under optional papers and some treat them as independent entities. The idea of inclusion of these courses has long lasting positive impact provided they are transacted in right manner and spirit, which probably is lacking everywhere.

Implementation of 4-year Integrated B.Ed. across India

In response to the NCTE Curriculum Framework (1998), RIE Ajmer, Bhubaneswar, Bhopal and Mysore commenced a two year B.Ed. Programme in 2001, on pilot basis. The designed curriculum was projected as a Content-cum-Methodology/Pedagogy course. As it was run on a pilot basis, a study should have been conducted to find whether two year B.Ed. is better than one year B.Ed. If yes, in what respects, if no then, why to think about two year B.Ed. which became operational in 2015 throughout the country. Neither the impact of 4-year integrated B.Ed. of RIEs have been properly researched and studied nor the recently introduced 2-year B.Ed. impact is well comprehended; the country is probably ready to switch over to integrated B.Ed. and M.Ed. programme very shortly. National level consultation-cum-workshops are being conducted in this regard.

It is heard from media sources that the Govt. of India, through NCTE, is planning to implement 4-year B.Ed. Course from 2019 across the country. In this way, it is going to eliminate 2-year B.Ed. from the next session within just four years of its implementation (2015).

In other way, it may be comprehended that the 2-year B.Ed. Course, which was implemented in haste, has proved to be discardable, hence being discarded. It seems that the again introducing 4-year B.Ed. programme abruptly will increase confusion. It would be fine and commendable, if it would be announced three year before its actual implementation and would be implemented with full preparation i.e. after finalizing every detail and modality regarding its execution on the ground.

In the initial three years after launch of 4-year integrated programmes in teacher education, the two year B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes should also be continued to serve the aspirations of those who have already completed or are in process of completing their undergraduate and postgraduate courses. In the other words, for those who have already got admitted in three years B.Sc., B.A. or B.Com programmes and want to pursue B.Ed. after completing their graduation, the doors for them to B.Ed. should always be open.

After-effects of the implementation of 4-year integrated B.Ed. Programme must be thought out in advance from all perspectives. All B.Ed. departments of the universities and colleges will have to provide teaching facilities in Science, Humanities, and Arts discipline with all its subjects. They will have to develop laboratory and library facilities accordingly. They will also need a large number of faculties to teach all the theory papers in the three disciplines. Is the UGC going to provide grants to develop these facilities? and Are the colleges and university department of education going to be sanctioned with huge number of teachers positions to cater to the needs of all discipline in B. Sc. Ed, B. A. Ed programmes? If the answer is in affirmative, then it may be

be on the right track, but if the answer is in negative, then it is going to prove as a great disaster in teacher education. The UGC and the NCTE must come out with clear-cut guidelines as to how to go about it. It should not be just opened up in vacuum.

Eligibility criteria for Assistant Professor in Methodology Courses in Teacher Education

Discussion: As per NCTE norms the qualification for the pedagogy or methodology courses includes M.Ed. as the essential criteria. Pedagogy papers were not taught in M.Ed. and there was no internship in M.Ed. when it was a one year programme. Now it has been introduced in two year M.Ed. programme. As known to everyone that two Pedagogy Papers are taught in B.Ed. Hence B.Ed. should be made compulsory for Pedagogy papers. It seems that the qualification for Asst. Professor in pedagogy courses needs to be rationalized. It may be done in the following way:

For Foundation Courses: Post graduate degree in any school subject with M.A. in Education or M.Ed. with other condition remaining the same as per UGC and NCTE.

For Methodology/Pedagogy Courses: Post graduate degree in the relevant subject with M.Ed. or Post graduate degree and B.Ed. in the relevant subject with M.A. in Education; with other conditions remaining the same as per UGC and NCTE.

Eligibility criteria for Associate Professor in Teacher Education

Discussion: Here in this case the required qualification among others includes a minimum of three years of teaching at M.Ed. Level. The question arises-why? Why NCTE wants to exclude lakhs of assistant professors who are teaching in B.Ed. Colleges

where there is no M.Ed. Similarly there may be an Asst. Professor in a university department of teacher education, who may not be given opportunity to teach M.Ed. classes. What is the fault of these Asst. Professors? There may be good, dynamic, knowledgeable and research oriented Assistant Professors teaching at B.Ed. or D.Ed. level. They must not be ignored. The opportunity of vertical mobility must be equally provided to all. Let them face the selection committees and see their potential. Opening gate for these people will boost their morale and mobility in higher education in general and teacher education in particular will be possible which will bring new life to them and the institution.

Drawing Best Talent to Teaching: A challenge for the system and a service to the nation and the humanity

A well designed mechanism is required to draw best talents towards teaching. Teaching should be made a lucrative job for those who are high achievers have passion for teaching and like to join teaching by choice not by chance or compulsion. Following provisions may be thought out and tested:

1. Only freshers (with not more than one year's gap) should be allowed to enter into the course of teacher education after getting their minimum eligibility (qualification).
2. There should be multi-level screening and entrance tests to select candidates for induction into the teacher education courses like:
 - A predetermined criterion of having 60% or more marks in aggregate as well as in the relevant subjects in the qualifying exams.
 - A criterion of scoring 60% or more in the entrance test.
 - Interview along with the presentation to judge the candidates

on verbal communication, written communication (writing skills in relevant languages).

- Overall behaviour of the aspirants which especially includes values and ethics, morality, conduct in the previous institutions as indicated in their score cards at school levels (X and XII). 'A' grade should be given preference, followed by 'B'. Other graded candidates on morality should be made ineligible to apply, as the job of teacher requires very high levels of the abovementioned behavioural components.
- 1. Teacher education colleges' inspections should be conducted on random basis, without informing the college, so that the actual status of teaching-learning/training and available infrastructure may be observed. For this a dedicated, experienced and honest team of observers should be created by the NCTE.
- 2. For non-performing and Norms-ignoring colleges of teacher education strict actions may be taken.
- 3. During the school internship programme there should be the provision of stipend to the pupil-teachers.
- 4. Ensuring guarantee of appointment/ placement after rigorous selection and training process of bright candidates can lift the morale of the candidates and may ensure quality in school education.

Conclusion

Teacher education owns the responsibility of preparing quality teachers to shape the future of the young generation which in turn shapes the destiny of the nation. It is a kind of chain reaction, if teacher educators are good; they will prepare quality school teachers and these will ultimately shape the young minds to build the future of the country. There is no question of lapse and compromise at any level, if it is allowed, nation will have to pay its price. The current educational scenario of the country in general and teacher education in particular reflects the trends of continuous decline in quality education. There are various issues and challenges faced by teacher education as well as school education which need to be addressed on immediate basis, but in a well-planned manner and with farsightedness. The degrading quality of teacher education, dwindling morality and values among teachers, induction of people of low academic caliber in teaching, absence of passion towards teaching, lack of dedication, sincerity, and essential teaching skills among teachers are some pertinent issues and challenges we are facing today. These challenges required to be addressed properly on urgent basis to fix these issues. NCTE should take appropriate steps to root out all the anomalies and to bring maximum possible and desired level of quality, stability and uniformity in teacher education curriculum at all levels.

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