



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

AN ANALYSIS OF A TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMME

KEY WORDS:

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ABSTRACT

The relationship of teacher and student has become more challenging and demanding than before .So, the role of teacher has become more diversified. Teacher education helps in development of competence and proficiency of teacher. This enables and empowers the teacher to meet a professional requirement and face the challenges. The preparation of National Curriculum Framework for teacher education 2010 has been a remarkable step in designing the teacher education in India . The first step in the professional preparation of teacher i.e. Pre-service teacher education form the base of the professional journey of a teacher. Research studies reveal that pre-service teacher education programmes have been ineffective to prepare prospective teachers to face class room challenges and act as a full-fledged teacher. NCFTE 2009 considers Bachelor of Elementary Education as one such programme which can be taken up as an exemplar to bring about quality change in elementary teacher education. B.El.Ed programme can prove to be a way forward in bringing about positive change in the field of Elementary Teacher Preparation.

Teachers serve as a key change agent in transforming education and Society. In this era of globalization where the world is changing socially, politically and economically our schools have also changed and so has the teaching and learning. The relationship of teacher and student has become more challenging and demanding than before .So, the role of teacher has become more diversified. The National Curriculum Framework (2005) lays so much demands and expectations on teachers.

It becomes all the more challenging to train such teachers who have to face the needs of the changing world. Keeping in view the demands of the global society, teacher preparation programmes must be strengthened. According to UNESCO (2005), teacher education " addresses environmental social and economic context to create locally relevant and culturally appropriate teacher education programs for both preservice and Inservice teachers". The quality of education of a nation depends on the quality of its teachers and thus on the professional preparation of teachers. Teacher education (TE) refers to the policies, procedures, and provision designed to equip (prospective) teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school, and wider community (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teacher_education). "Teacher Education. As per Collins English dictionary "Teacher education is training to become a teacher usually at an Institution of Higher Education". Teacher education helps in development of competence and proficiency of teacher. This enables and empowers the teacher to meet a professional requirement and face the challenges. According to Education Commission (1964- 66) "A sound program of professional education of teachers is essential for the qualitative improvement in education.

- Teacher education help the student teacher to:
- improve their general educational background
 - increase the knowledge and understanding of the disciplines they are to teach
 - gain pedagogical knowledge and understanding of children and learning
 - develop their competencies and skills (Perraton, 2010)

Professional Preparation of a teacher is a lifelong process. As knowledge keeps on growing so the teacher should be given opportunities where he or she can keep learning and developing throughout his or her professional life. RTE(2009) has special implications for teacher education in India .NCTE framed regulations for teacher education in 2007 and

modified them with changing needs of the children and the changing system in 2009 and 2014 subsequently. The preparation of National Curriculum Framework for teacher education 2010 has been a remarkable step in designing the teacher education in India .So, the teacher education system must cater to both effective pre-service and in-service teacher education. The whole spectrum of teacher learning includes initial preparation, induction and continuing professional development. The first step in the professional preparation of teacher i.e. Pre-service teacher education form the base of the professional journey of a teacher. It means, education of a teacher before entering into the teaching profession. It is the initial training given to the teacher before becoming a fully responsible teacher.

The period of training exposes prospective teachers to psychological, sociological, philosophical and technological aspects of the principles related to education. They are introduced to principals underlying teaching such as aims of education, curriculum, nature and characteristics of child development, methods of teaching and learning, resources on which pupils and teachers can draw for the purpose of teaching and learning.

The preservice education of a teacher becomes critically important and must reflect the expectations of the community on the role of the teacher and the skills, competencies, abilities required as an individual who enters the teaching profession. The pre-service teacher education programme must focus on preparing such teachers who are innovative thinkers and are able to take up the challenges in education in a creative manner. Student teachers must be oriented with core qualities to be a good teacher. Pre-service teacher education is regulated and controlled by NCTE. It lays down the standard, minimum qualifications for teacher educator, course content, duration and minimum qualification for entry of student teachers for the various courses

Pre-Service Teacher education program must give space to student teachers to develop their personality as reflective practitioners.

- Objectives of pre-service teacher education**
- to prepare teachers to care for children, enjoy being with them, seek knowledge, own responsibility towards society and work to build a better world, developed sensitivity to the problems of the learners, for commitment to justice and zeal for social reconstruction

- to view learners as participants in their own learning and not as mere recipients of knowledge
- to engage trainees in theory as well as field experiences
- to help trainees to view knowledge as actively constructed during learning and not as external to the learner
- to train teachers in organising learner centred, activity based, participatory learning experiences
- to engage teachers with the curriculum, syllabus and textbooks to critically examine them rather than taking them as 'given' and accepted without question
- to help teachers or potential teachers to develop social sensitivity and consciousness and final human sensibilities
- to educate teachers to connect School knowledge with community knowledge and life outside the school
- to help teachers for the evaluation of attitude, values, dispositions, habits and hobbies, in addition to the conceptual and pedagogical aspects through appropriate quantitative as well as qualitative parameters

Components of pre service teacher education

A good teacher preparation program must be research-based. It must be a perfect blend of theory and practice in the field. The themes to be included in a pre-service teacher education programme are empathy, leadership, self and Societal reflection , confidence, professional practice and knowledge, and skills Basic elements of a teacher preparation program must be community service; awareness of learning goals. In general ,components of a pre-service teacher education programme are:-

1. Foundation/ core courses

they are intended to provide a conceptual understanding of relevant concepts and processes in teacher education and also situated them in the broader perspective of education and development example philosophy of education psychology of education sociology of education history of education Economics of education except

2.Specialisation for pedagogy courses

These pertain mainly to enabling student teachers become effective teachers. For this, a few preparatory aspects are necessary to help the student teachers not only reorganise one's previous understanding of one's subject of specialisation but also become conversant with required competencies to visualise and create enabling learning situations for learners. Further, student teacher has to try out evolving a few learning situations and carry them out both in simulated as well as real situation.

3.School Experience program

It is school based experiential learning for the student-teachers in not only aspects related to teaching, learning of their subject areas in the classroom, but also to gain insight and sensitivity into the holistic part played by the teacher in sustaining and evolving school ethos.

There are specialised programmes for teaching at different stages in school level

1.Pre-Primary level-For preparing pre-primary teachers the training programme available is Diploma in early childhood care and education which is a two year diploma.

2.Elementary level-For preparing Elementary teachers the training programme available is 2year diploma and 4 year degree programme. The programme has different nomenclatures at different places namely Diploma in Elementary education, BTC. Diploma in Education, Bachelor of Elementary Education and so on.

3.Secondary and senior secondary level-For preparing

teachers at secondary and senior secondary level 2 years bachelor's degree programme is offered after graduation.

Teacher preparation and teacher performance are interlinked and share a symbiotic relationship, it is imperative to understand the role of teacher education programme in preparing teachers to perform their expected role in classrooms and schools. Research studies reveal that pre-service teacher education programmes have been ineffective to prepare prospective teachers to face classroom challenges and act as a full-fledged teacher (Kumar , 1996); Behari 1998; Sailaja 2000; Das 2006; Kaur, 2007; Kumar, 1997; Behari, 2008; prasad 2008, menon, 2009; Mehra, 2010; Arora, 2011; Gupta, 2011; Sarangi, 2011). It has been suggested by many committees in education that the duration of teacher training must be increased to four or five year programme.

In this regard, Maulana Azad centre for Elementary and Social Education (MACESE) in the Department of Education of the University of Delhi, as a modified IA SE initiated work in the field of elementary education that led to the creation of the Bachelor of Elementary Education (B.El.Ed.) programme in 1994. It is a four year integrated professional degree programme of elementary teacher education. It is a full time graduate course in which the first three years are a combination of theory and practicum courses and fourth year culminates with a direct experience of school functioning, teaching practice and reflection.

(B.El.Ed) programme is an attempt towards fulfilling the need for professionally qualified elementary school teachers. It is noteworthy that the programme offers the opportunities to assimilate and integrate the study of subject knowledge, human development, pedagogical knowledge and communication skills. It is designed to provide opportunities for students to interact and learn from scholars and faculty from diverse disciplines of education, psychology, linguistics, social sciences, biological and natural science, mathematical sciences and the languages. Norms and standards of this programme have been formally approved by National council for Teacher Education (NCTE). Moreover, it gives scope to students for professional and academic options after pursuing this course. It is an undergraduate level four years professional degree of teacher education that acquaints the students to learn theory as well as provides internship in primary schools. It is a holistic programme encompassing teaching strategies, human and child development, subject-wise knowledge and relevant theory classes/courses. The syllabus can be divided into the following parts- foundation courses, core courses, pedagogy courses, subject-wise courses and practical training.

It is pertinent to understand the role of B.El.Ed. Programme in preparing teachers to address class room challenges and according to new vision of teacher education. NCF (2005) the national focus group on teacher education (2006) view the role of the teacher as an encouraging, supportive and humane facilitator in teaching learning situation in order to enable students to discover their talent and realise their physical and in actual potential to the fullest. In present context teachers are expected to become learner centric, facilitator of learning, provide opportunities for learner autonomy, peer learning, cooperative learning, multiple exposures individualised learning and focus on multidisciplinary approach.

This National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE, 2009) focusses on the concerns and vision of teacher education. It elaborates that teacher education and school education have a symbiotic relationship. The developments in both these sectors highlights the concerns for qualitative improvements in the field of education. The new concerns of classroom transaction at all levels of schooling has been emphasized in the document. The framework focusses on

Issues related to inclusive education, perspectives for equitable and sustainable development, gender perspectives, role of community knowledge in education and ICT in schooling as well as e-learning .

The document reiterates that Pre-service training of elementary teachers continues to suffer from isolation and low focus as it is a non-degree programme at most of the places in India.in the light of the emphasis given to free and compulsory Elementary Education since independence it becomes all the more important to upgrade elementary teacher education in terms of:

- increased duration of training making it equivalent to a degree programme managed by the Universities.
- Preparing specially qualified teacher educators in elementary education. NCFTE,2009
- Critical engagement with theory and practicing the same in the field

NCFTE 2009 considers Bachelor of Elementary Education as one such programme which can be taken up as an exemplar to bring about quality change in elementary teacher education. The document highlights the major concerns in the field of teacher education. These concerns are studied here in light of B.El.Ed programme

1. Curriculum syllabi and textbooks must be critically examined by student-teacher

Document and text analysis is one of the component of the B.El.Ed practicum paper on 'Classroom Management , Material Development and Analysis' wherein students are to study significant issues of NCF documents, national policy document and other relevant official documents on education and their linkages with issues of pedagogy and curriculum design.

The student teachers also review elementary school textbooks in order to understand the sequencing and progression of concepts;the requirement of diverse learning experiences, opportunities for individual learning capacities and pace;conceptual demand in the scope for spiral learning.

Student teachers are required to undertake a comparative study of state curriculum and an alternative curriculum developed by them or outside the country

2. The teacher preparation program must recognise the centrality of language in the curriculum

The paper language across the curriculum aims to promote the language as a process and the functional use of language across the curriculum

3. Teacher Education programs provide little scope for student teachers to reflect on their experiences. There is no opportunity for teachers to examine their own biases and beliefs and reflect on their own experiences as part of classroom discourse and inquiry

In the school internship program which is conducted in the fourth year of B.El.Ed program the student teachers maintain reflective journals wherein they analyse and reflect upon their experiences in the Colloquia: School contact program. The students communicate with children, observe children and are able to reflect upon their experiences.

4. Disciplinary knowledge is viewed as independent of professional training in pedagogy

The core courses namely; Nature of Language,Core Mathematics,Core Natural Sciences,Core Social sciences and pedagogy courses namely; Language across the curriculum, Logico Mathematics education and Pedagogy of environmental studies are compulsory courses to be taken up by all the students and these courses focus on disciplinary knowledge.These courses prompt the student teachers to reconstruct concepts learnt at school and integrate them within multidisciplinary perspectives

5. It is assumed that link between learning theories and models and teaching methods are automatically formed in the understanding developed by student teachers.

In the optional pedagogy papers which the students opt as per their choice, they learn the theories, teaching methods and Strategies for the paper. They also learn the activities to be undertaken in particular method. They get the opportunity to implement these in School contact program

6. Theory courses have no clear link with practical work in ground reality

the practical course of observing children help the students to establish crucial links between theoretical concepts and ground realities. When students are engaged in observations, they study children in various structured and naturalistic settings.

The learn the craft in a practical course. They are engaged in skills like paperwork, painting, modeling, using waste material for craft, puppet making, paper mache. These can be used in making classroom transaction effective.

They are engaged in practicum on performing and fine arts wherein they are provided with the theoretical background on the relation between education and drama. They are able to draw linkages between various art forms. They are able to develop a repertoire of skills for use in teaching-learning situation.

The skills gained in craft, performing arts and fine arts are executed in colloquia: School contact program, where they organise creative activities using skills of the craft, theatre, music and so on The practicum course colloquia: School contact program help students to relate and communicate with children, observe children and collate experiences of interacting with and relating to children .here they get opportunities to setup linkages between theory courses and practical work.

On Critically analysing the B.El.Ed curriculum in light of National curriculum Framework for Teacher Education(2009) policy document it was observed that B.El.Ed curriculum overcomes many major concerns highlighted in the given policy document. However, this elementary teacher preparation programme needs revision. The component of Information and communication Technology, Professional Ethics and community engagement are not included in the B.El.Ed Curriculum. The importance of these papers has been highlighted in NCFTE-2009) and also in this era of globalisation study of these papers becomes a mandate. With inclusion of such concepts the B.El.Ed programme can prove to be a way forward in bringing about quality improvement in the field of Elementary Teacher Preparation.

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