

Professional Preparation Of Teacher Educators In India : A Perspective

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Professionalism of any profession including education is essential for improving its quality and maintaining standard. In education, professional teachers and teacher educators are prepared through teacher education programme. The professional teacher educators are prepared through Master of Degree in Education (M.Ed.) programme run in about 225 universities and 970 institutions in the country. They prepare competent and professional teachers at different stages of school education. It means the quality of school education depends upon the professional teacher educators. For making them professional, necessary knowledge, skills and attitude are inculcated among students through various activities and curriculum of M.Ed programme but this programme is generally known as generic in nature and do not prepare curriculum specialists and pedagogues in areas of sciences, social sciences, languages and mathematics and at different level of school education despite many efforts made in the past. Therefore, there is a need to relook into this programme for preparation professional teacher educators..

Policy Perspective

In this regard, the Govt. of India set up many Commissions and Committees particularly after independence to improve the quality of teacher educators programme. The University Education Commission (1948-49) stated that the teacher educators must look at the whole course from a different angle; theory and practice must

complement each other. Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) recommended that minimum three years teaching experience after graduation in education for admission to M.Ed. programme. Review Committee on Education of the University Grants Commission (1960) suggested that the content of the M.Ed. course should lead to at least one specialization and to a fair acquaintance with the methodology of educational research, besides promoting a desirable intellectual discipline. An extension of the course would not be immediately feasible in view of financial and other difficulties. One solution of great promise is the introduction of integrated B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses. The Study Group on the Training of Elementary Teachers in India (1961) stated that universities should provide specialized courses at the M.Ed. level to prepare teacher educators for training institutions. The Kothari Commission (1966) recommended that the postgraduate courses of education should be flexible and be planned to promote an academic and scientific study of education and to prepare personnel for specific fields requiring special knowledge of initiation. The duration of the courses should be increased to three terms. NCTE was set up in 1973 in National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to act as a National advisory body on all matters relating to teacher education and to review the progress of the plan schemes to ensure adequate standards in teacher education and brought out two National Curriculum Framework for teacher education during 1978 and 1988.

Teacher Education Curriculum Framework (1978) suggested the structure of M.Ed. programme with weightages for foundation course 20%, research course 20% and task interior courses 60%. The National Policy on Education (1986) recommended that the teacher educator to be given a leadership role in all aspects of the educational system, including policy making, strategy formulation, implementation and monitoring. For this purpose, organize a specially designed training programmes such that all the desired attributes of a teacher educator would be inculcated in the trainee. Curriculum for Teacher Education: a Framework-1988 stated that the M.Ed. programme is visualized as a course of advanced studies in education. The curriculum of M.Ed. programme will have to be modified in line with the needs and requirements of teacher education programmes of various levels. NCTE became statutory body in 1993 by Act of Parliament to maintain norms and standards of teacher education and brought out two National Curriculum Framework on Teacher Education, during 1998 and 2009. Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education-1998 recommended that education of teacher educators has necessarily to correspond to teacher preparation programmes & cater to the needs of stage-specific and category-specific alongside general M.Ed. programmes. The course structure in respect of the above alternative M.Ed programmes has to correspond to teacher education at various stages and categories.

National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education-2009 suggested that the need is now being effectively articulated for identifying the objectives for the education of teacher educators and the designing of programmes that offer specializations for meeting the needs of different levels of schooling. The NPE Review made a specific recommendation to organize a specially designed training programme to fit all the desired attributes of a teacher educator. Suggestions

have been made for post-graduate courses in teacher education of two years with provision for specialized areas in the development of scholarship in education and applied fields, such as teacher education, curriculum planning, evaluation, counseling, sociology and philosophy of education. Areas of specializations required to be carved through post-graduate study and research in education include: foundations of education: philosophical, historical, political, sociological and psychological; curriculum studies: disciplinary and interdisciplinary study; pedagogic studies: language education, mathematics education, social science education and science education; planning and finance of education; policy studies; gender and equity studies. Core areas should include philosophical and social science basis of education and a rigorous engagement with methods and approaches to educational research.

Justice Verma Commission (2012) stated that. "It is, therefore, important to look at the specialization profile required for teacher educators in view of the fact that a variety of foundational and school subject disciplines need to be represented. (M.Ed) in education as the essential qualification. This has led to the proliferation of a generic approach to the study of foundational disciplines of sociology of education, psychology of education, economic and philosophical basis of education. As a consequence, school teachers' preparation remains bereft of a deep engagement with socio-cultural, political and economic contexts of school education. In the light of the above, the M.Ed. programme should become a two-year programme with adequate provision to branch out into specializations in curriculum studies, pedagogic studies, policy, finance and foundational studies (2.6.3)".

The above policy perspectives and recommendations of different committees and

commissions have emphasized the need to prepare the professional teacher educators through M.Ed. programme and also improve its quality.

Issues and Challenges

There are many issues and challenges which emerged during implementation of this programme and did not allow to prepare professional teacher educators through this programme.. Some of the issues and challenges related to curriculum and other activities of this programme are discussed below.

- The existing M.Ed. course followed by almost all universities does not meet the requirements of school education and also does not prepare professional teacher educators of different stages of school education.
- There is a paucity of talented faculty with disciplinary specializations in social science education, science education, language education and mathematics education.
- Eligibility and admission procedure of M.Ed. course is different in different universities and admit the students without knowing their aptitude. Some universities conduct entrance test for the admission in M.Ed. course.
- Medium of instruction in M.Ed. course is generally in English which is also hurdle to some students in the country.
- The curriculum of M.Ed.in many universities have not revised since more than last five years and following the same old curriculum.. NCTE had brought out National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education during 2009. Most of the universities have not changed their curriculum uptill now in the light of NCFTE-

2009..

- NCFTE- 2009 demands an updated or even freshly prepared classroom observation system taking into account constructivist approach but not largely followed in universities.
- Technology in education has made inroad into teacher education. Under SSA and RMSA, schools have also been provided technologies. But in M.Ed. curriculum and its transaction technology has not much used.
- Considering the RTE Act 2009 and policy perspective reflected in SSA Framework, inclusive education deserves to be treated as a course in itself. This is to become inclusive encompassing all children such as gender, SC, ST, OBC, migrants, minorities including linguistic diversities. But, such a course has not been designed with a sense of urgency.
- There is no provision of internship programme in this programme in some universities. Without this, students of M.Ed. do not get exposure for observing the classroom teaching of trainees of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and other programme of teacher education.
- In some universities, research exposure is not provided to students. Dissertation is made optional.

Yadav (2013)conducted a study on M.Ed curriculum run in thirty five universities including central, state and deemed universities. also found similar issues and challenges in his study.

Professionalism in M.Ed. Programme

Professionalism in M.Ed. Programme is urgently needed for preparing professional teacher

educators. In this regard, the following suggestions are to be incorporated in this programme by different universities and affiliating Bodies.

NCTE had notified revised Regulations and Norms and Standards on November 28, 2014 in the light of Justice Verma Commission for making it more professional. Many suggestions related to curriculum, internship, and other activities of this programme are made.. All the universities and affiliating universities to follow and implement recommendations made in revised regulations.

The duration of M.Ed. programme has been increased from one year to two year in the revised notification of NCTE. Though there is resentment at few places and facing the problem of admission of students, qualified, equipment's, physical facilities and qualified faculty etc. But this programme M.Ed. will be professional programme designed to prepare stage wise teacher educators, curriculum developers, educational policy analysts, educational planners, administrators, supervisors and researches and school principals. It will expand domain of education. Learning activities will occur in a diversity of learning environment. Students of M.Ed. will have access to knowledge through non-institutionalized means. Therefore, the universities and institutions which have not started this course, should also open and introduced this programme in their universities.

- The M.Ed curriculum and syllabus to be revised by incorporating development and rapidly changing world of knowledge skills and its application . ICT to be integrated into teaching learning processes. Teaching learning processes to respond to the learning needs of diverse groups of students for ensuring equal access to success for all learners. Relevance of the curriculum to the emerging needs of school education and teacher education along with other

education personnel to be introduced. More of field engagement and internship semester system and choice-based credit system to be introduced.

- In this revised M.Ed programme, there will be lot of scope for experiment, innovation and research in the field of teacher education. Core values (commitment, diversity and inclusion, integrity, communication, working with children and their parents, driving for achieving improved student learning outcome will be developed. It will also enhance functional competencies-planning and organising (teaching-learning evaluation strategies, goal setting, gathering resources for instructional design) and applying technical expertise to improve (learning strategies, TLM, assessment strategies) among students. They will also get opportunity for professional participation in the school system; contribute to the process of renewal; organise appropriate learning resources and community; create conditions conducive for learning, organize individual/group learning activities, monitor & evaluate leaning process; motivate pupils for self-evaluation and participate in out of school learning activities. Educational process will also be mediated by the media, ICT, books and journals etc.in this course.

By way to conclusion, it can be stated that there is urgent need to revamp the existing M.Ed. course run by different universities and affiliating Bodies and revise their course curriculum and syllabus of M.Ed by incorporating above mentioned issues and also in the light of RTE Act 2009 , NCFTE-2009 & NCTE Regulations, 2014 for improving its quality and preparing professional teacher educators through this programme.

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