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Progress of Teacher Education after NPE, 1986

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ABSTRACT

The article reviews and discusses the changes or reforms and progress in teacher education in India that have taken place from NPE, 1986. Different commissions and reports emphasize on quality of teachers and teacher education. The existing teacher training institutions have yet a lot to do for teachers to articulate innovations in terms of approach, pedagogy for qualitative improvement of school education for social wellbeing. Here, NEP 2020 (the new education policy) has also been analyzed and focused on the recommendations and policies which have been prescribed for teacher education.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Reports & Recommendations of different Commissions after NPE, 1986

1. Main text

In 1986, NPE (National Policy of Education) advocated that teacher education is a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components are inseparable. To improve the quality of teacher education NPE, 1986 and its Programme of Action (POA) made a strong case because it was the prerequisite to improve the quality of school education. Here, some training schools were upgraded to District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETS) and some training colleges were upgraded to Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASES).

In 1990, Acharya Ramamurti Committee emphasized on internship model for teacher training because "...the internship model is firmly based on the primary value of actual field experience in a realistic situation, on the development of teaching skills by practice over a period of time."

In 1993, Yashpal Committee emphasized on enabling the trainees to acquire the ability for self-learning and independent thinking. It is because of Yashpal Committee noted that inadequate programme of teacher preparation leads to unsatisfactory quality of learning in school. Therefore, the B.Ed. programme should offer the possibility of specialization in secondary or elementary or nursery 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 need of school education.

In 1993, NCTE Act was passed by the Parliament by which it is the responsibility of NCTE to look after the Teacher Education of the country. Teacher education in India is regulated by the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE). Its main objective is to achieve planned and coordinated development of teacher education through the development and implementation of Regulations (Norms and Standards) for teacher education institutions seeking recognition for starting teacher preparation programmes.

By the year 1998-99 there were 45 District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETS), 76 Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and 34 Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASES). The statutory NCTE further came out with a Curriculum Framework (1998) to provide guidelines in respect of the content and methodology of teacher education. As a result of this, many universities and state governments revised the courses of teacher education.

In 2005, The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for school education sites different demands and expectations on the teacher, which need to be addressed by both initial and continuing teacher education. Teacher quality is a function of several factors like teacher's status, teacher's academic and professional education, remuneration and conditions of work.

In 2007, National Knowledge Commission (NKC) has made considerable progress in school education since independence with reference to overall literacy, infrastructure and universal access and enrolment in schools.

In 2009, The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, which became operational from 1st April, 2010, has important implications

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for teacher education in the country. To enhance quality of school education Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) for Teachers and Principal Eligibility Test (PET) are conducted at both level at state and at central level. For teacher education UGC conducts National Eligibility Test (NET) at national level and State Level Eligibility Test (SLET/SET) at state level. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 has implications on the present teacher education system and the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher Education. The Act inter alia provides that: The Central Government shall develop and enforce standards for training of teachers; Persons possessing minimum qualifications, as prescribed by an academic authority authorised by the Central Government, shall be eligible to be employed as teachers; Existing teachers not possessing such prescribed qualifications would be required to acquire that qualification within a period of 5 years. The Government must ensure that the Pupil-Teacher Ratio specified in the Schedule is maintained in each school. Vacancy of a teacher in a school, established, owned, controlled or substantially financed by the Government, shall not exceed 10% of the sanctioned strength. The RTE Act provides a strong policy framework for mandating time-bound changes in teachers and subsequently in teacher education systems, while the NCF TE as well as the Justice Verma Committee Report submitted to the Supreme Court in August 2012 provides a clear roadmap with concrete recommendations for the substantial reforms needed in the Teacher Education sector.

In 2010, National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) underlined that the education and training of a prospective teacher will be effective to the extent that it has been delivered by teacher educators who are competent and professionally equipped for the job. To improve the quality of teacher education program, NCTE elevated a number of initiatives during the last decade. To foster quality assurance and sustenance NCTE joined hands with the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).

In 2014, the fourth set of regulations has been published by NCTE after the publication of three successive regulations of 2005, 2007 and 2009. This regulatory change emerged from two related national frameworks for reforms in teacher education—the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE), 2009 and the report of the Supreme Court's high-powered Justice Verma Commission (JVC) on teacher education in 2012 (Ministry of Human Resource Development 2012).

After the submission of the JVC Report, the Supreme Court formed a committee to develop an action plan that outlines the processes and timelines required for the implementation of the recommendations. Following this action plan, NCTE constituted various subcommittees, including subcommittees for designing curriculum frameworks for various teacher education programmes, to work on the different recommendations. This resulted in the NCTE's Regulations (Norms and Standards), 2014 (NCTE 2014a). A summary of the major reforms suggested in NCFTE and JVC Report that were also pursued by the NCTE sub-committees is presented below

- a) Reform in the curricula: main principles of curriculum reforms that were proposed included the following:
 - (i) A holistic approach to curriculum;
 - (ii) an emphasis on engagement with theory and foundational perspectives on education;
 - (iii) preparation for future teachers to be reflective, humane and professional practitioners;
 - (iv) longer and intense internship/school experience;
 - (v) preparing would-be teachers to organise teaching-learning in a child-centred manner;
 - (vi) stage specificity in training for various school levels; and
 - (vii) location of teacher education programmes in interdisciplinary environment
- b) Increased duration of teacher education programmes: From NCFTE possibilities of two kinds of initial teacher education programmes emerge:
 - (i) two-year second bachelor's degree for initial teacher preparation at the elementary and secondary school levels; and
 - (ii) four-year (or longer) integrated first bachelors model for both the levels.

In addition, JVC also points towards the need for two-year Master of Education programmes. After 2014, the duration of these programmes was enhanced to two-years each across the country. This recommendation is based on the assumption that longer duration programmes will provide sufficient time and opportunity for rigorous engagement of the future professionals—in view of a larger objective of professionalizing teacher education.

- c) Reformulation of the regulatory mechanism: The changes recommended in JVC covered a broad range so as to reshape the way NCTE functions.
- d) Upgrading teacher education programmes: JVC and NCFTE both recommended that to address pre-service quality issues, teacher education (especially elementary level) be upgraded to the level of degree programmes as against largely being offered through diploma programmes.

The NCTE regulations, 2014 after PoonamBatra Committee, have introduced some new provisions and have modified some of the provision in the regulations which were in force since 2009. The NCTE Regulations 2014 made the following modifications:

- Duration of B.Ed., M.Ed., and B.P.Ed. Programmes have been enhanced from one year to two years.
- The unit size of B.El.Ed., and M.Ed. has been increased from 35 to 50.
- The size of the one basic unit for B.Ed. has been reduced to 50 from 100. To have two basic units of 50 each, they need to construct the additional built-up area, appoint additional staff, furnish additional endowment and reserve land.
- All the existing vacant positions and vacancies occurring in the future shall be filled up by the institution with candidates having qualifications as per new regulations.
- The new regulations contemplate the existence of teacher education institutions in composite only.

In 2018 NCTE announced the new regulations for a four-year teacher education programme. There are indications of a major reshaping of the key ideas that were instituted through the recent regulations.

In 2020, The Government of India is developing a new National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) that will revisit reforms in teacher education. As per the new policy, by 2030, the minimum degree required for teaching will be a four-year integrated B.Ed. NEP, 2020 has been recommended several changes in teacher education like –

a) Changes in TET

Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) will be changed as per the new school system. Earlier, the TET was divided into two components — part 1 and part 2. Now that the school structure has been divided into four parts i.e. foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary — TET will also be developed accordingly. For subject teachers, suitable TET or the National Testing Agency (NTA) test scores in the corresponding subjects will also be taken into account for recruitment. The NTA will hold exams for all subjects and a common aptitude test. Those who qualify TET will have to give a demonstration or appear in an interview, and show their knowledge of the local language, as per the new policy. As per the NEP, “Interview will become an integral part of teacher hiring”. These interviews would also assess comfort and proficiency in teaching in the local language. It would be a must for teachers in private schools as well to qualify TET. The hiring and vacancies in schools will be managed digitally. A technology-based comprehensive teacher-requirement planning forecasting exercise will be conducted by each state to assess expected subject-wise teacher vacancies over the next two decades.

b) Changes in B.Ed.

Since schools will need teachers who can teach in multiple languages and have knowledge of new-age courses like computational thinking, coding etc., introduced at the school level under the NEP, B.Ed. course will also be changed accordingly. The B.Ed. courses will be of four-year duration. Dual B.Ed. degrees with a focus on one language and having bilingual lectures will be offered too. B.Ed. programmes will allow specialization in the education of ‘gifted children’. One and two-year B.Ed. options will also be available. Two-year-B.Ed. will be for candidates having a Bachelor’s degree, and one-year B.Ed. programmes will be offered only to those who have completed the equivalent of four-year multidisciplinary Bachelor’s degree or who have obtained a Master’s degree. These candidates will be later hired as subject teachers in the area of speciality (or the subject pursued at UG or PG level). Additionally, shorter post-B.Ed. certification courses will also be made widely available, at multidisciplinary colleges and universities.

c) Offered Merit-based scholarships

To ensure that outstanding students enter the teaching profession – especially from rural areas – a large number of merit-based scholarships shall be instituted across the country for studying quality 4-year integrated BEd programs. In rural areas, special merit-based scholarships will be established that also include preferential employment in their local areas upon successful completion of their B.Ed. programmes. Such scholarships will provide local job opportunities to local students, especially female students so that these students serve as local-area role models and as highly qualified teachers who speak the local language. Incentives will be provided for teachers to take up teaching jobs in rural areas.

d) Mandatory training courses

Teachers who have already been hired will be expected to participate in at least 50 hours of continuous professional development (CPD) every year. The merit-based structure of tenure, promotion, and salary structure will be developed. Under this model, teachers will be incentivized. The system of assessment will consist of multiple parameters. These parameters will be developed by each state and will include peer reviews, attendance, commitment, hours of CPD, and other forms of service to the school and the community.

A common guiding set of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by 2022, by the National Council for Teacher Education. The professional standards will be reviewed every 10 years. “In order to fully restore the integrity of the teacher education system, stringent action will be taken against substandard stand-alone Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) running in the country, including shutting them down, if required,” as per NEP.

Conclusion

‘Teacher Education’, it demands more emphasis on the matter. If there is no social responsibility, then citizens will be endangered. That’s the global demand now. Professionally, powerful teaching is very important and increasing in our contemporary society as a result of the steam of dynamic initiatives of human development and evaluation. Teacher professionalism comprises competence, performance and behaviour which reflect on teacher’s personality in school and society. As a result teachers would need to acquire additional knowledge and skills, both general and specific, to be able to survive and be successful in the 21st century School environment. All the above-described commissions and reports emphasize on quality of teachers. At present teachers regarded as facilitators in the path of student’s urge for more knowledge. The existing teacher training institutions have yet a lot to do for teachers to articulate innovations in terms of approach, pedagogy for qualitative improvement of school education for social wellbeing. Hopefully, NEP, 2020 will show us the light of hope as it recommends the present urge of teacher education which will make the teacher community more careful to develop social responsibilities, social ethics and society-friendly attitude.

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