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Quality assurance through curriculum reforms in Secondary teacher education

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Abstract

Quality of education should fulfill the purpose of social and national development. Curriculum revision is important to accomplish the needs and aspirations of changing era and to maintain quality of education. Through the Two year secondary teacher education curriculum student teachers develop knowledge, skill and attitude. But still the system needs to be revamped from the gross root level i.e. from planning, designing and implementing to maintain quality. The main objective of the study is to discuss the quality status in secondary teacher education curriculum. The secondary teacher education curriculum of WBUTTEPA was analysed by qualitative analysis method. The finding of the study is that some of the quality aspects for quality assurance in secondary teacher education curriculum is found in the two year secondary teacher education curriculum. It is concluded that no curricular change will be completed successfully and maintaining quality unless there is a change in understanding and mindset.

Keywords : Curriculum, Quality of education, Secondary teacher education.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Quality of education and training basically depends on quality of curriculum. There are various definitions of curriculum, Cater V. Good defines, *Curriculum is a body of prescribed educative experiences under school supervision designed to provide to the individual with the best possible training and experiences to fit him for the society which he is a part and to qualify him for a trade or professions.* These definitions prevails the need of earning for life, Academic preparedness for social change and qualifying the students for a profession etc. Social change evolves global demands and excellence in thrust areas of the course. In terms of NAACs methodology curriculum should fulfill the demands of all stakeholders such as, students, parents, alumni, society social organizations and the government etc. Curriculum is the medium of interaction between teacher and the taught. The role of teacher is very important in achieving behavioral

change among the taught. To attain good outputs, curriculum transaction and curriculum revision is important to accomplish the needs and aspirations of changing era. Nowadays curriculum at all levels has been attempting to meet the challenges of globalization. The apex regulatory bodies have initiated the reform movement in quality enhancement through curriculum revision and development through time to time. Teacher Education programmes in the country have been directed visionary changes by Kothari Commission (1964-66), Chattopadhyaya committee (1985), National policy on Education (1986), Acharya Ramamurthi Committee (1990), Programme of Action (1992), Yashpal Committee (1993), National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005), National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE 2009), NCTE Regulation 2014. Secondary Teacher Education curriculum is revised by NCTE in 2014, to bring quality improvement in access to changing needs and expectations of the stakeholders.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To discuss the quality status in secondary teacher education curriculum.
- To analysis challenges in two year secondary teacher education curriculum.

3.0 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The secondary teacher education curriculum of WBUTTEPA was analysed by qualitative analysis method.

4.0 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Curriculum reforms in teacher education

In light of various committees and commission, the UGC, NCTE, and Govt. of India made reformative changes in theory and practice components of teacher education courses. The major thrust from past to present remains the meaningful integration of theory and practice course contents. In recent decade NCTE revised teacher education curriculum during 2009 and 2014. National curriculum framework for school Education NCF 2005 by NCERT recommends that teacher education must fulfill, emerging needs and demands of school education in the country. According to these aspects NCFTE 2009 has taken a reformative turn by directing classroom pedagogy to depart from behavioural approach. The focus is on sustainable development of students personality fit for the purpose of Nation building. There is focus on long term objectives rather than specific objectives. It is shift from content based teaching to personality molding teaching, discipline oriented classroom to interdisciplinary classrooms (Darade, 2014).

The curriculum reform process in secondary teacher education in the country is sincerely and dedicatedly improving the secondary teacher education systems in India. NCTE is striving hard to bring out visible changes in teacher training programmes. The council is looking forward to meet the changing expectations and demands of the stakeholders. The NCTE 2014 Regulation is a reformative framework in this regard. Rationalizing curricular areas of teacher education from the stand point of knowledge domains of teacher

viz. Perspective in Education, Curriculum and pedagogic studies and Engagement with the field are the salient features of the current two year secondary teacher education curriculum. Majority of the universities have revised their curriculum of secondary teacher education programme according to the new guidelines of NCTE 2014.

Reforms in secondary teacher education curriculum

Some of the changes in secondary teacher education curriculum according to the NCTE Guidelines 2014 are as follows :

1. Secondary teacher education curriculum provided flexibility in selecting papers.
2. Most of theory papers have practicum section where there is scope to apply the theoretical knowledge practically.
3. According to NCTE Regulation 2014 Yoga Education, ICT, Gender, school and society, Inclusive education are bench marks for secondary teacher education curriculum which is included in the new two year secondary teacher education curriculum.
4. The duration of Internship is of 5 months, where student teachers act in school as teachers and get involve in every field of school work.
5. In curriculum transaction, innovative transaction modes such as group discussion, debate, seminar, panel discussion is included.
6. In evaluation, choice based credit system is applied.
7. The curriculum provided opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills by introducing new courses.
8. The curriculum fulfill the National and International demand.
9. The curriculum developed values, life skills and employability skills.

Some of the Quality Aspect of curriculum are as follows :

- Curriculum aims and objectives
- Process of curriculum design
- Curriculum inputs and duration of the programme
- Curriculum content
- Time allocation for theory
- Development of expected attributes in a student teacher
- Synchronization of theoretical and practical inputs
- Ample scope for varied learning situations
- Effective implementation of the curriculum
- Curriculum Revision.

Quality aspects of Secondary Teacher Education Curriculum

Quality Aspect	Description
Curriculum aims and objectives	No aims and objectives is mentioned in the Secondary teacher education curriculum of WBUTTEPA
Process of curriculum design	No aims and objectives is mentioned in the Secondary teacher education curriculum of WBUTTEPA. According to the student and societal needs the objectives are formed. Without mentioning the aim and objectives, a curriculum could not be measured. And as per the objectives the curriculum content, curriculum transaction procedure are formed. So there is a gap in the curriculum design procedure.
Curriculum inputs and duration of the programme	The attainment level of content and pedagogical competencies Appropriate provision of time two year duration with 4 semester system
Curriculum content	Adequate flexibility to adopt demands of school teachers and emerging issues in National and International contexts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perfect match between school reality and teacher education curriculum • Current and futuristic needs of school education
Time allocation for theory	Proper time allocation for theory
Development of expected attributes in a student teacher	Development of competencies to deal with variety of students. (a) Leading to actual learning. (b) Assurance to required professional attributes in a teacher.
Synchronization of theoretical and practical inputs	Complete integration of theory and practicum and understanding to student quality, integration of field experiences in a holistic way.
Ample scope for varied learning situations	Understanding of diverse learning situations and development of sound knowledge base of content and pedagogy.
Effective implementation of the curriculum	Realistic implementation through participatory approach, Relevance to local and school context.
Curriculum Revision	Revision of curriculum based on Feedback from stakeholders

CHALLENGES OF SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

India witnessed major changes in the structure of Secondary teacher education, which came after 67 years after independence. The National council for Teacher Education (NCTE) recently came up with a new regulation called NCTE (Recognition Norms and Procedure) Regulation, 2014, which was published in the Government of India Gazette on December 1. As per the new regulation, the B.Ed. and M.Ed. have been recognized as a professional course with duration of two academic years instead of one-year course. The fresh curriculum for B.Ed. and M.Ed. has been implemented with new prospects and priorities across the nation. This document states, course structure offers a comprehensive coverage of themes and rigorous field engagement with the child, school and community. The programme comprises three inter-related curricular areas - i) Perspectives in Education, ii) Curriculum and Pedagogic Studies, and iii) Engagement with the

Field. All courses include in-built field-based units of study and projects along with theoretical inputs from an interdisciplinary perspective. Implementation of the courses will be carried out through a variety of approaches, such as case-studies, group presentations, projects, discussions on reflective journals, observations of children, and interactions with the community in multiple socio-cultural environments (Curriculum Framework for the NCTE Two-Year B.Ed. Programme, 2014). Above said ideas reflect some good steps of new two year B.Ed. curriculum, but a mere change of curricula to restructure the content of teacher education can turn out to be eyewash unless or until its transaction at grass root level is not improved.

Above said changes in norms and curriculum were made to make qualitative improvements in secondary teacher education in India and providing it true status of a professional course. After implementation of new regulations, the two year secondary teacher education curriculum is going on across the nation. But it is observed that there is still confusion over many aspects of two year secondary teacher education curriculum among administrator's, teacher educators, students and other stakeholders. Teachers and students are in problematic situation by the complexities of the rapid changes in educational programs and planning. So an attempt is made to highlight some of the dilemmas, problems which are overcoming some positive points of Two Year programme of secondary teacher education.

Gaps in Policy making: First of all a big question is raised at many platforms that policy makers who were involved in framing NCTE Regulation 2014 were not from the field of Teacher Education. They were not having an experience of grass root level problems related to teacher education. Nothing explicit has been mentioned about inadequacies and limitations of the previous system. All these comments are raised in all the seminars, conferences and other such gathering of teacher educators. All stakeholders may not be given a chance for their involvement as they desire or some communication gaps created non acceptance of new regulations with warm feelings. It is felt that the whole approach to formulate these regulations was from higher level to grass-root level which made it more difficult to accept. If majority of the people are thinking on same lines then a review process can be started to improve it.

Theoretical difference: No doubt about that new Secondary teacher education Programme a significant departure from the previous one-year programme in some areas instead of simply a sort of course-extension, but some teacher educators are not satisfied with model curriculum which was put in public domain. Some voices are raised that philosophical foundation of education are not given their due importance in model curriculum prepared by NCTE. Certain important parts have not been covered like Peace and Value Education, Sustainable development, School Management, Teaching as a Profession, Physical Education, Work Education etc. The curricula have courses on EPC including reading and reflecting on texts, drama and art in education, critical understanding of ICT, and understanding the Self. But still the course suffers from ambiguity particularly the course EPC 1 i.e. reading and reflecting on texts suffers from ambiguity and appears to be overlapping with the course Language across the curriculum. So NCTE should come forward

and try to address these issues so that it should be practiced in true spirit.

Questions on quality improvements: These new regulations were made for qualitative improvement in Secondary Teacher Education Institutions but at the end of few session on two year programme, discussion among most of the teacher educators are not related to quality dimension at all. New trends of dummy admissions, confusions over the content to be taught, questions, doubts and criticism on the curriculum prepared by various universities are main points of discussion in the community of teacher educators. In case of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation in schools, teacher education have witnessed some sweeping changes in this system but still there is ambiguity. One of the problem related to quality improvements is the Internship, because school and teacher training institute does not follow the internship programme properly. Teacher educators has no scope to attend the teacher orientation programme, so how they will upgrade themselves. Huge number of private teacher training institutions have no maintain the quality of education.

Low admissions: It is true that in most of the countries across the world have two year secondary teacher education courses, so same was the demand in India also. But this programme now facing admission crisis in every state after increase of time duration of these courses. Some of the reasons cited for low admissions are such as the majority of the students, who join B.Ed., M.Ed. courses, are from socially and economically weaker sections of the society. Due to increase in duration of the course, it will frighten many bright students from taking up this profession due to increase in financial burden. Next reason for low admissions is that in most of the states a large number of unemployed trained teachers are waiting for their turn to get good job. So, how new students can plan to join two year course when there is so much uncertainty of job. All these factors are adversely affecting teaching aspirants and some bright candidates are also reluctant to join two year B.Ed. course. Thus NCTE prescribed the Four year Integrated B.Ed. course with B.A./B.Sc. but still it is not implemented in every institutions.

Lack of detailed guidelines at grass root level : Teaching practice is most important part of secondary teacher education curriculum, where would be teachers gets a chance to apply learned theories, methods and strategies in real classroom scenario. It was felt that 30-40 days are not sufficient for practice teaching. Now in two year course a full semester is devoted for internship but no clear guidelines are available in the colleges of education and school authorities regarding this. It was seen that there is fake internships as were in practice during one year B.Ed. in some colleges. Now the problem will be more severe because earlier this type of bad practices for approximately one month, now it will be for 5 months. So there is dire need to frame some concrete plans with the involvement of representative's of State Education Board, CBSE, ICSE, Schools and Teacher education Institutes. Some procedures should be implemented to ensure quality practice during internship.

Lack of vision among Teacher Educators: For so many years Two Year secondary teacher education programme was withheld and was discussed in all academic gathering related to teacher education. Most of the teacher educators have recommended increase of time duration of teacher education courses through their discussions, research papers and articles on different platforms from past many years. But after few months of implementation of two year course, the situation is reversed. Now the buzz word is changing from two year to one year.

So above said points are main questions in the mind of each and every stakeholder who is concerned with the quality in secondary teacher education. To improve quality in secondary teacher education, it also need attitudinal changes among all the stakeholders. So now all should move forward with positive attitude toward these changes by making best possible efforts at classroom level, college level or university level to make things realistic, practical and effective for pupil teachers.

5.0 CONCLUSION

There are issues and concerns in curriculum designing, curriculum revision and implementing reforms at any stage of education. The content of curriculum and pedagogic rational need to recount implicit goals of curriculum into observable change in behaviour of the students. According to NAAC curriculum designing is a continuous process which should be regulated by curriculum research and development cell in the college. Revision of curriculum and inclusion of any reform should be done on database and experiences of all the stakeholders. No curricular change will be completed successfully unless change in understanding and mindset. According to NCTE Regulation 2014 Yoga Education, ICT, Gender, school and society, Inclusive education are bench marks for secondary teacher education curriculum which is included in the new two year secondary teacher education curriculum. To bring quality in secondary teacher education curriculum it is also should be in mind that secondary teacher education should be transacted in a holistic way. It is concluded that no curricular change will be completed successfully and maintaining quality unless there is a change in understanding and mindset.

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