

Shifting towards two -year B.Ed. programme

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ABSTRACT

Since independence, India has been attempting to raise the standard of their masses. The success of such efforts depends to a great extent on the quality of manpower, which in turn is influenced by standard of education in the country. Achievement of these goals largely depends on the quality characteristic and commitment of teachers to their profession. The teacher is required to acquire adequate knowledge, skills, interests and attitude towards the teaching profession. The teacher's work has become more complicated and technical in view of new theories of psychology, philosophy, sociology, modern media and materials. The teacher can be made proficient with well-planned and imaginative pre-service training programme. In this connection Teacher Education plays a vital role. Considering this, various commission and committees have been appointed to study the status of teacher education and to suggest recommendations. To produce quality teachers most of these commissions recommended for longer duration of teacher education programme. The present paper deals with justification of duration increase of teacher education programme especially for the quality enhancement of aspiring teachers. It discusses existing scenario of Teacher Education, privatization in Teacher Education, arguments favouring one-year and two-year B.Ed. programme, qualitative improvement in teacher education.

Key Words : B.Ed. Programme, Teacher education, Skills, Interests

INTRODUCTION

The quality and standards of an education system largely depends on the quality characteristics and commitment of the teachers to their profession. The aims of education of taking the nation into 21st century cannot be achieved unless teachers have the necessary skills and competencies. The skills and competencies can be developed through Systematic approach to revitalize and modernize teacher education programme. Teacher education has to be reformed in order to adequately prepare teachers for their new and more diversified functions in the school and community. In recent years several innovations have been developed to equip teachers with requisite competencies and skills to teach effectively. Considering this various commissions and committees have been appointed to study the status of teacher education and to suggest recommendations. Recently, in this connection, Justice Verma commission has attempted a scrutiny of the existing provisions and the quality of teacher education to facilitate identification of the deficiencies therein, and then to enable it to make recommendations which can rectify the defects and provide the level of teacher education necessary to produce quality teachers. In this connection HRD minister Smriti Z Irani called upon a meeting of VCs of state/central/deemed & private Universities to discuss teacher education in the context of Justice J.S. Verma Committee report. In this meeting there was a broad agreement among VCs to increase the duration of B.Ed./M.Ed. Course to two years for the qualitative improvement in teacher Education. NCTE has already his plan to start Two –year B.Ed. program from 2016. However, it is a

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general consensus that the duration of teacher education programme has a close tie up with developing requisite competencies and skills in teachers. The present paper deals with duration increase of B.Ed. program from one-year to two-year.

Existing model of teacher education programme :

At present, our country has multi model teacher education programmes-

- One-year B.Ed. regular face-to-face teacher education programme prevailing in almost all the Govt., Govt. Aided and Self Finance teacher education institutions.
- Two-year B.Ed. regular face to face teacher education programme being run by four Regional Institutes of Education of NCERT.
- Two-year B.Ed. through distance mode. It is a part time course for in-service teachers. IGNOU and Rajshree Tandon open University are running this programme for in-service teachers.
- Four-year integrated teacher education programme B.Sc.-B.Ed./B.A.-B.Ed. being run by regional Institutes of Education (RIEs). Few other institutions are also running four year teacher education programme.
- A variety of innovative programmes run by individual institutes such as, Vedchichi programme of teacher education (Gujarat Vidyapeeth), Eklavya (M.P.) Anweshana (Banasthali Vidyapith Rajasthan), Zero-lecture programme of Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya (Indore), etc.

So far as integrated four-year teacher education programme is concerned, the teachers that emerge from this programme are much better than the products of the traditional one-year B.Ed. programme. (NCERT 2005). Among other things, the difference is also attributed to greater length to training.

Privatization in teacher education :

For the last 12 to 13 years, privatization in teacher education has influenced a lot in many ways the teacher preparation at the secondary level. Some of these features are:

- There has been mushrooming of teacher education institutions of different shades, due to lack of proper planning at the state and central level.
- Academic year is disturbed in several universities due to late admissions and examination.
- Certain malpractices are rampant in many institutions.
- Both, the students and the functionaries are not very serious about the training programme.
- Commercialization has become common in different aspects of B.Ed. programme, eg. admission, practical examinations, selection of teaching faculties etc.
- The overall standard of teacher education programme has gone down.

However, the commercialization could be curbed out to some extent if the duration of B.Ed. programme is increased as it involves lot of curricular, financial and other facilities.

Argument in favour of existing one-year B.Ed. programme :

People may fear that it may be a difficult proposition to increase the duration of programme from one year to two year because of following reasons.

- Financial constraint as it involves recruitment of almost double of present human resources and expansion of physical resources. Most of the existing teacher education institutions don't even meet the minimum requirement of NCTE so far as human and physical resources are concerned for one-year B.Ed. regular course.
- Are we, the teacher educators utilizing whatever the available time in the existing B.Ed. course effectively for our prospective teacher? Its not how much time we devoting for B.Ed. course but how qualitatively we are using this time is more important.
- The supporters of one year B.Ed. says that trainee teachers posses the basic content

knowledge before the admission into B.Ed. course and, therefore, after admission into B.Ed. course the trainee teachers are given more treatment in pedagogy of teaching/teaching learning, strategies along a tinge of content tasks. And for this purpose one year B.Ed., is a sufficient/Sound time and duration for developing pedagogical skills in teaching/developing knowledge on teaching-learning strategies among the trainee-teachers, say the supporters of one year B.Ed. course.

Argument in favour of Two-year B.Ed. programme :

The critics of one year B.Ed. argue that

- One year B.Ed. is a in-sufficient time duration to provide, adequate and stable knowledge in content areas, in pedagogy of teaching and at last in developing a sense of positive attitude towards teaching among the trainee teachers. The National commission on Teacher-I (1985) under the chairmanship of D.P. Chattopadhyaya stated that the existing one year B.Ed courses must be made effective both by the Lengthening the time available and by revamping the current course and curricula.
- The education and Pedagogy courses of the entire integrated four-year course run by RIEs comprise more then 35% of the course content. This support the view that duration of one year B.Ed. programme must increase.
- Two year B.Ed. programmes already exist at some institutions. The programme is quite demanding and has a good reputation. However, research studies are yet to be undertaken to evaluate their effectiveness
- In Two-year B.Ed. course, those students will entre who have aptitude for teaching. Due to this right person will be in right job.

Qualitative improvement in teacher education :

Various Commissions and committees recommended for longer period of teacher education at secondary level for qualitative improvement. The Education Commission (1964-66) did not recommend for 2 year B.Ed. programme for financial and practical reasons. But it has recommended that there should be at least 230 working days in the one year B.Ed. programme. It recommended professionalization of teacher education, development of integrated programmes, comprehensive college of education and internship. Chatopadhyaye Commission (1983-85) recommended for five years of secondary teacher education after 10+2. The commission also recommended that if one year B.Ed. is to be continued then it should operate for at least 220 days and working hours to be increased. Practically, it is almost impossible to manage 230/220 days in a year if we exclude the vacations, holidays examinations, admission etc. from it. The National policy on education (NPE 1986) recommended the overhaul of teacher education to impart it a professional orientation and referred to the same concerns voiced by the earlier committees.

As a strong measure of qualitative improvement of teacher education, NCTE published in 1998 curriculum Frame work for Quality Teacher education (p60-61) The salient arguments are

- The new curriculum frame work included several additional components. Additional courses would develop additional competencies of prospective teachers.
- Pedagogical analysis of the teaching subjects would be made compulsory.
- Practice teaching would be done with thorough preparation, detailed supervision and adequate time.
- Internship programme would provide all experiences that a teacher needs. It will provide skills for organising co-scholastic programmes.
- Field work and community interaction will enable the student teacher to develop need-based pedagogy.
- Lesson to be supervised intensively and formative approach to be adopted.
- Teacher educators will devote more time in preparation and planning of their own activities.

- Professionalism will be developed which involves change in attitude and value system of the teacher.
- Teachers can earn recognition as a professional from society after acquiring new competencies and commitment.
- It will provide strong base for pursuing M.Ed. course.

In order to fulfill the above arguments, the document recommended for enhancement of duration of conventional B.Ed. program from one year to two year in order to transact the curriculum to ensure achievement of objectives of teacher education at the secondary stage. NCTE held national consultations in which a strong consensus emerged in favour of two year B.Ed. programme. Subsequently NCTE (2004) recommended that prospective teacher will pursue a common course of study for two or three semesters and specialized studies including the practice teaching and internship for the rest of the period.

As a follow up of the above recommendation of NCTE (1998), NCERT started 2-year B.Ed. course in its four RIEs in 2001 with satisfactory experiences. In 2004, the NCERT developed its own curriculum Framework for Teacher Education which also recommended for running innovative and integrated four years and two year teacher education programmes. (P66).

Justice Verma Commission (2012) also recommended that teacher education should be a part of the higher education system. The duration of programme of teacher education needs to be enhanced, in keeping with the recommendations of the education Commission (1966), the implementation of which is long overdue. Current teacher education programme may be redesigned keeping in view the recommendations in the National Curriculum framework for Teacher Education (NCTE, 2009).

Conclusion :

The findings of Justice Verma Commission make us to rethink what we have learned from the earlier Commissions and Committees on Teacher Education. Though, there is a tendency to resist any change be it social, or educational. Innovations are not easily accepted. Innovations take time to get institutionalized. They appeal at their face value and quality is sometimes at stake. Quality should not be compromised because of financial constraints.

The quality of teacher education is closely related with the duration of teacher preparation. A reasonable time duration for teacher preparation that provides enough opportunity for rigorous theoretical study, self-study, cooperative learning, reflection, pedagogical skill development, involvement with the children, the school, the classroom, and the community. In the existing one-year model of B.Ed. course, the duration of practice teaching most often found to be of short duration, not more than five to six weeks and that too piece-meal in approach. There is hardly any scope to integrate the theory and practice. Due to lack of time, 'lessons are planned with inadequate reflection on the content and subject-matter, its organization and pedagogy. Hence, there is a growing concern among the educationists and pedagogists for increasing the duration of B.Ed. programme from one academic year to two academic years. On the basis of recommendations of J.S. Verma Commission NCTE had prepared an action plan in 2013 for improving teacher education system. The plan included the introduction of the Two-year B.Ed. course and four-year integrated teacher education programme.

Teacher Education has to assume responsibility to prepare teachers with proper attitude and ability to translate the philosophy of education into practical learning experience. Unless and Until the present system of Teacher Education is revamped and re-organized, it would be difficult to provide suitable pre-service education and upgrade the quality of education in the country.

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