

## FOLLIES AND FALLACIES IN TEACHER EDUCATION: A CRITICAL OVERVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

*In the present article a critical evaluation is being given about the norms and new regulations which have been given by the NCTE, regarding the different teacher education courses being run in teacher education institutions of the country. The authors have compared the old and new curricula and have given their critical views. How the new rules and regulations will influence the status of teacher has been discussed. Admission process in B.Ed. & M.Ed. courses will also be influenced.*

### INTRODUCTION

#### Challenges of Being a Teacher

Apropos the latest document on rule, regulations, norms and procedures of teacher education institutions framed by NCTE of late on 22.11.2013 recommended the two year BEd/MEd programmes for immediate implementation all over the country to augment the quality of Teacher Education, advising all universities to develop in turn their own syllabi and training courses accordingly in the light of NCTE framework, with the assumption that it would provide professional propriety, vigour as well as compatability with the international norms and standards. The new regulations talk about curriculum framework for the half a dozen courses such as B.Ed (2 years) M.Ed (2 years), B.P.Ed., M.P.Ed., and B.El.Ed out of total fifteen programmes covered under these regulations. Each of the programme curriculum has three integral parts ICT, Yoga and Gender and Disability/Inclusive education besides the usual course of traditional curriculum in different subjects like Foundation of Education, Problems in Education, Pedagogy of Teaching subjects etc. much though couched in a new kind of nomenclatures thus putting old material in a new garb akin to "old wine in a new bottle".

School internship including four weeks stray awareness about different school environs and records for 20 (4+16) weeks has been suggested in a new curriculum without prescribing the number of teaching lessons to be delivered in the classrooms, nor any weightage spelt out for various activities to be conducted in schools or outside the school which makes only a

kind of fun obviating the seriousness of internship intensivity, leaving everything to student-teachers imagination. Nor does it spell out the role of the class teacher/teacher educator in any clear manner, leaving almost everything to any body's guess in all casualness bypassing the sancticity of the teaching profession. The slip shop treatment for teacher training is likely to bounce back to destroy the system still further leaving the student teachers in lurch for all purposes.

The primary focus of disciplines to satisfy their short-sighted claims, prejudices and vested interests, despite the fact that 1964-66 Commission had suggested to keep teacher education under one umbrella in the concept of Comprehensive College of Education as a tangible solution for sound and solid system of teacher education. The fallout of giving a lukewarm treatment to the Commission has been disastrous a cruel joke and criminal act to destroy the system as a whole.

A quick glance at the content of the old and the new curricula seems to indicate a favourable comparison between them, except the provision that the student teachers are now expected to study by themselves based on their experiences drawn from the field. Feedback from field of action and all the stakeholders in the teaching and learning process as a bench mark departure from the traditional approach to teacher training that considered itself to be an omnibus phenomenon for conducting any kind of teacher education in any subject of study, coupled with stray periods of teaching practice and at best block teaching spans later on

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provides for a kind of paid internship that made the hallmark of traditional approach for training teachers for various grades the core being common to all. Infact, the omnibus nature of teacher training represented the golden period for B.T., L.T., etc with no barriers whatsoever to choose, being a school teacher, a teacher, educator, and educational administrator at any level of teaching profession.

Apex level institutions like NCERT, RIEs and of total upcoming of regulations/ advisory authorities like NCTE, etc that disrupted well established universal omnibus status of one year BEd as an adequate induction input for entry into the field of education and teaching at any level that used to be doing very well and smoothly with due success in maintaining the set of established standards ever since the inception, with little ifs and buts prompted out by whole lot of Committees and Commissions so much as that it succeeded to stay put all the while, the NCTE opted to mulipurcate it into various water tight compartments based on subjects and grades.

All this would simply add to the booming numbers of unemployed and unproductive workforce presently looming large throughout the country due to policy mishaps, follies and fallacies over the decades making teaching a kind of bane rather than boon, telling in turn heavily on the fair name of teaching as a noble profession.

### WHAT REALLY AILS

The new regulations falsely claim teacher education in Composite Colleges as a major departure for the standalone teacher education institutions Composite institutions with UG/PG courses in liberal arts, success as well as education have been existence in many parts of the country succeeding, catering for degree courses in various disciplines including BEd/MEd as well, especially in most of the govt. aided Composite Colleges duly financed by the state/central govt with a full fledged section or department of education in such colleges.

It is indeed fallacious to that NCTE as an apex level regulatory authority in teacher education stands oblious of it despite its being never than function for over four decades of existence, maybe it has to deal with the teacher training sections/departments and perhaps not with the

college as such hence the leg ekes out on its own.

Similarly the land and building norms stand floated most often rather than strictly followed. Regulations prescribe that sponsoring society of an institution ought to ensure that the proposed teacher education institutes has a well demarcated land area as specified norms, and that the society required to transfer and vest the title of the land and building in the name of institution within a period of six months from the date of formal recognition under sub-regulation 16 of regulation 7. This regulation defies compliance due to practical difficulties encountered in seeking transfer of ownership in the name of the college of education or department of education especially in composite institutions or groups of colleges maintained by a society/trust creating a kind of red herring situation for the NCTE to look into practical problems afresh and revisit relevant regulations and norms to make-them practicable at the grassroot. This glaring gap needs to be addressed urgently.

The regulations are, by the large, silent about self-financing teacher training institutions and the whole lot of their problems despite the best of infrastructural facilities made available by most of them to run their programmes. Their status needs a relook to help them make their contribution meaningful to the cause of quality teacher education, most of them being new entrants seemingly full of vitality to build their emerging institution, needing guidelines instead of prescription on issues like service conditions and allied problems.

### RISKS WRIT LARGE

Consequent upon changeover to 2 year BEd and 2 year MEd, risk proneness syndrome is likely to breed like weldfire in almost every rung of life; and, especially among would be teachers and allied candidates who used to be either keen to join the field of education by their instinctive preference or as the last resort faling to be in any other profession. The immediate fall out reveals a step fall in preference for this field due to many a road blocks extended over the years to debar their entry in this area, on one count or the other, as witnessed during the recent past. More so in order to meet the required quota of seats, even

when these courses were of one year duration in many universities had to resort to the intervention of out sourcing agencies inviting them through media advertisements, at a high premium cost, to help them as noticed till recently. What would these universities do after raise in duration and course cost almost more than double which the common folk can risk or afford, on and on-hand, and take the risk of forming such courses without any guarantee of job, on the other and to suffer humiliation of all sorts in being a guest teacher, etc with no security of service or allied benefits. A difficult dilemma, neither palatable nor easy to reconcile with the condition it has been in vogue for nearly twenty years or so, both at school as well as higher level of education, causing widespread heart burning and burnout in teaching profession. Hence, loss of all prestige for the so-called noble profession since time immemorial. Does it not put the Nation at Risk? The quality of schooling is unlikely to muster courage in the contemporary scenario, despite the proposed changeover which is hardly innovative in any way, except increasing the duration as well as expenditure involved and absolute freedom to the student-teachers to wield their learning on their own.

#### **SUMMING UP: A HARD NUT TO CRACK**

Consequent upon the change over, several teacher education institutions being wound up and termination notices for teacher educators' services are served instantly over the last couple of years so much so that even some Central Universities seem to have been compelled to reduce their intake drastically indicating the onset of some sort of a chaos and turmoil to hit the teachers and teacher education system never witnessed earlier at any point of time. being caught up in catastrophe, the fate of two year B.Ed/M.Ed intervention without adequate preparation and in a huff seems by and large not a welcome move and hard nut to crack in the prevalent country, have either decided to cut down their intake to the minimum or shut their shop for their courses preferring diversion to other avenues or programmes to sustain themselves, resulting in a kind of threat to the

faculty to be ready for loosing their job any moment.

It is high time to look into the follies and fallacies that have crept and taken over the teacher least it should demoralize and degrade the teacher status and prestige any further. The time is ripe to restore faith and trust in the teachers and to respect them for what they can and should do in the nation building task they are supposed to do. The need is to create conditions congenial enough to fulfill their task rather than create any Catch-22 situation to make them look the other way around than teaching as their primary concern.

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