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THE RELEVANCE OF SECONDARY TEACHER- TRAINING CURRICULUM IN DAY-TO-DAY TEACHING AS VIEWED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

The present study was an attempt to study the relevance of the existing teacher education curriculum at the secondary level by taking into consideration the opinion of the secondary school teachers in this regard. The study was undertaken by the investigator ends with the implications like; teachers do not find the existing B.Ed. Curriculum useful as far as its utilitarian value is concerned in actual classroom situations. The B.Ed. Curriculum need be relevant one with regards to the real classroom teaching practice and should also be appreciated by the teachers as the utilitarian one. Teachers generally are of the opinion that topics included under various courses may prove to be useful; however, they are not sure how the same can be used into practice. This indicates that selection of the topics into B.Ed. Curriculum under different courses might be more or less adequate but their transaction during training programme lacks in their practical use. Hence, it is desired that the B.Ed. Curriculum (with special reference to curriculum prescribed by H.P. University) needs to specify the guidelines for its transaction. In this context it is suggested that a Handbook for B.Ed. Teachers specifying various activities to be performed during the transaction of B.Ed. Curriculum be developed. This Handbook must also include the evaluation procedures to be adopted for assessing students' competence in using theoretical concepts into practice.

Keywords: B.Ed. Curriculum, Relevance, Transaction of B.Ed. Curriculum

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INTRODUCTION

The teacher-training programme is conceived as the crucial one for creating large number of teachers imbued with requisite professional skills and competencies. The present day society needs teachers who can really face the multifarious challenges of the teaching-learning process and can infuse higher morale as well as spirit of inquiry among the learners. In view of this the B.Ed. Curriculum need be properly designed and implemented which can enable the teachers to perform their duties and responsibilities with competence. Very often it is seen that B.Ed. Curriculum happens to be more theoretical and less practical. Such a state of B.Ed. Curriculum leaves the teachers nowhere making them crippled in the classroom situation. Therefore, as per the recommendation of National Curriculum Framework, 2005 a linkage need be established between theory and practice. Further, it also gives stress upon linking classroom knowledge to situations outside the classroom as well as discouraging the method of rote learning. In view of such changing needs and demands in philosophy of teaching-learning process, there is urgent need to study the utilitarian aspect of the B.Ed. Curriculum as viewed by the teachers concerned.

SECONDARY TEACHER TRAINING CURRICULAM – IT'S STATUS

The B.Ed. course otherwise named as Bachelor of Education degree is specifically meant to develop the pedagogical competencies of the prospective teachers. Keeping in mind this major objective, the B.Ed. Curriculum of different universities attempts to include various need-based and utilitarian content-matters in its curriculum. However, the simple specification of the syllabus in no way solves the real purpose. As such, the B.Ed. curriculum need be relevant one with regards to the real classroom teaching practice and should also be appreciated by the teachers as the utilitarian one.

The review of literature related to the issue in question indicates that the researchers have generally concentrated on studying B.Ed. Curriculum with respect to its drawbacks and positive features. And on the basis of the findings of their researches or personal professional experience, different authors have attempted to forward certain suggestions for making improvements in B.Ed. Curriculum.

The researchers have, in general pointed out certain drawbacks in the existing Secondary Teacher Education Programme being run in India as well as abroad. These include:

1. There was great diversity regarding aims, titles, combinations, content classification, practical work, etc. in the foundational courses prescribed for B.Ed. Degree (Sharma 1982, p. 838).
2. The comprehensive B.Ed. Curriculum was not effectively implemented due to time-shortage, semester-system and internal-assessment, etc (Hemambujam 1983, p. 943).
3. There was no significant difference between the classroom performance of trained and untrained teachers irrespective of the subject taught (Jones 1991, p. 390-A).
4. The curricula of Secondary Teacher Education lack uniformity and clear-cut definition. B.Ed. Syllabus was found to be inadequate since it was more theoretical in nature (Walia 1992, p. 454).
5. There was an obvious disconnect in the program between the theoretical components and the realities of the classroom (Ackerman 2004, p. 960-A).
6. The main purpose of teacher-education programme is to develop values skills, professional attitude and personality as an individual, which is not possible within a short duration of one year or effective eight to nine months (Chandra, Beri and Beri 2008, p. 7).

The researchers have also identified certain positive aspects in the existing B.Ed. Curriculum which include:

1. As a result of the training, there was improvement in lesson planning and standard of teaching, trainees' knowledge of the content was found to be much improved, trainees were encouraged to teach in a planned manner (Bhatt 1966, p. 926).
2. Through teaching-practice the commonly observed significant elements of the teacher's effectiveness were: his ability to motivate the class, ability to speak effectively, ability to use blackboard aptly and certain personality maturity (Sohoni 1977, p. 848).
3. In the sphere of professional efficiency, the trained teachers were better than the untrained teachers in the knowledge of the subjects, preparation for teaching, self-confidence, voice, pronunciation, facial expression and in actual classroom teaching taken as a whole. The trained teachers were better than the untrained about the aims of the lesson, its appropriateness, its organization, the use of teaching devices, presentation, questioning, answering students' questions, the use of blackboard and other teaching aids, eliciting students cooperation and participation, and effective closure (Sinha 1980, pp. 847-848).
4. Student-teachers trained in the use of Content Analysis System showed a significant increase in defining, concrete examples, negative examples and amplifications (Dogra 1986, pp. 932-933).
5. Most of the group of trainees changed their teaching attitude positively and significantly after training. All trainees showed significant and appreciable improvement in their classroom teaching performances after undergoing training programme (Srivastva 1989, p. 456).
6. Internship was very fruitful for the prospective teachers. During the internship various activities like microteaching, lesson-planning, teaching aids, various teaching training skills, preparation of achievement tests, practice-teaching, etc. seemed to be very helpful for the trainees (Srivastva 2002, p. 10).

7. The pre-service teachers who enrolled in a teacher preparation program reported benefits of learning about teaching as well as learning to teach individual, small group, and large groups of elementary grade students. In addition, they reported the benefits of learning how to manage the classroom and communicate with students, teachers, and parents (*Ewell 2004, p. 4445-A*).
8. B.Ed. Programme increased the quality of student-teachers' academic performance and they became more confident, disciplined, hardworking and sincere (*Patil 2005, pp. 51-52*).

On the basis of their studies and personal professional experience different researchers and authors have forwarded certain constructive suggestions for the improvement of Secondary Education Teacher Education Programme which include:

1. The duration of the Secondary Teacher Education Programme should be two academic sessions. The aspects of Secondary Teacher Education Programme (STEP) should be: (a) educational theory, (b) practice teaching, (c) community work, (d) work experience, (e) sessional work, and (f) co-curricular activities (*Kakkad 1983, p. 947*).
2. The theory load should be cut down and the ratio of the theory and practice teaching should be 50:50 (*Bhatia 1987, p. 923*).
3. It is practice teaching or practical skill in teaching which was found to be more helpful than the rest of the teacher education programme in developing abilities, especially skills (*Behri 1998, p. 103*).
4. It will be important in this era of intense focus on single measures of teacher education outcomes to press for the use of multiple measures that allow a comprehensive view of what candidates learn and what a program contributes to their performance (*Hammond 2006, p. 135*).
5. Teacher training programme can have lasting impact only if parallel and simultaneous inputs are provided to related sub-systems like provision of infrastructural facilities, curriculum reform, efficient systematic management, use of communication technology and due recognition of teacher's status (*Gupta 2007, p. 26*).
6. The curriculum for teacher-education should be developed with coordinated effort of all the three agencies NCTE, UGC and NCERT by involving field level agencies and institutions. A clear-cut plan with detailed activities is needed for monitoring and evaluation of the programme (*Maheshwari 2008, p. 22*).

It is evident from the above that researchers have not delved into the issue how far different components of B.Ed. Curriculum prove to be useful for the teachers in their day-to-day classroom situations. It is felt that the curriculum, besides having theoretical quality should also be practically useful to the teachers during transaction of the content-matter related to their teaching subjects. Keeping in view these aspects into consideration the investigator undertook the present piece of research.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objective was laid down for the present study:

1. To study the relevance of B.Ed. Curriculum in day-to-day teaching as viewed by secondary school teachers with reference to the following courses:
 - A. Education in Emerging Indian Society
 - B. Development of Learner and Teaching-Learning Process
 - C. Development of Educational System in India
 - D. Essentials of Educational Technology
 - E. Education for Values, Environment and Human Rights
 - F. School Management
 - G. Skill in Teaching

RESEARCH METHOD

The present study was conducted by adopting descriptive method of research.

Sample

The sample for the study was chosen using convenient sampling technique from amongst the teachers teaching in middle/high/senior secondary schools situated in Tehsil Sadar of District Mandi and Tehsil

Bharanj of District Hamirpur of Himachal Pradesh. From each school only the willing teachers were included in the sample. Finally, the sample consisted of 100 teachers.

Tool Used

In order to realize the purpose of the study, a rating scale was developed by the investigator.

Statistical Techniques Used

In the present study, the investigator used percentages in order to analyze the collected information.

General Conclusions

On the basis of analysis and interpretation of data, the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. All the ten topics included in HPU B. Ed. Course-I, namely, "Education in Emerging Indian Society" were viewed useful in general, but none of the topics has been rated as 'highly useful' by considerable number of teachers. Hence, it may be said that Course-I prescribed under B.Ed. Curriculum by Himachal Pradesh University lacks satisfactory utilitarian value for the teachers in their day-today classroom teaching.
2. All the ten topics included in HPU B. Ed. Course-II, namely, "Development of Learner and Teaching-Learning Process" were viewed useful in general, but none of the topics has been rated as 'highly useful' by considerable number of the teachers. Hence, it may be said that the Course-II prescribed under B. Ed. Curriculum by Himachal Pradesh University does not fulfill the needs of teachers related to day-today classroom situations.
3. All the thirteen topics included in HPU B.Ed. Course-III, namely, "Development of Educational System in India" were viewed useful by varied number of teachers, but none of the topics was rated as 'highly useful' by considerable number of teachers. The comparative analysis reveals that Course-III was considered least useful of all the courses by teachers. Hence, it may be said that the relevance of Course-III prescribed under B.Ed. Curriculum by Himachal Pradesh University seems to be inadequate.
4. All the ten topics included in HPU B.Ed. Course-IV, namely, "Essentials of Educational Technology" were viewed useful in general, but none of the topics has been rated as 'highly useful' by considerable number of teachers. Hence, it may be said that Course-IV prescribed under B.Ed. Curriculum by Himachal Pradesh University needs to be revised as per teachers' classroom situations.
5. Ten out of eleven topics included in HPU B.Ed. Course-V, namely, "Education for Values, Environment and Human Rights" were viewed useful by more than 70 Per Cent of the sampled teachers, but none of the topics has been rated as 'highly useful' by significant number of teachers. Hence, it may be said that the contents included in Course-V prescribed under B.Ed. Curriculum by Himachal Pradesh University too demand evaluation.
6. Eight topics out of ten included in HPU B.Ed. Course-VI, namely, "School Management" were viewed useful by more than 91 Per Cent of secondary school teachers and four of them have been rated as 'highly useful' by more than 67 teachers. Hence, it may be said that the Course-VI prescribed under B.Ed. Curriculum by Himachal Pradesh University though requires revision but has been viewed comparatively more useful by school teachers than other theory courses.
7. All the four components included in HPU B.Ed. Practical Course-IX (A&B), namely, "Skill in Teaching" were viewed useful by almost all the teachers, but none of the topics has been rated as 'highly useful' by ample number of teachers. Hence, it may be said that the Course-IX prescribed under B.Ed. Curriculum by Himachal Pradesh University is quite useful; however, its implantation part appears to have serious limitations and requires a fresh look.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of the present study reveal that all the topics included in selected seven B.Ed. courses prescribed in B.Ed. Curriculum of Himachal Pradesh University have been viewed useful in general by varied number of teachers, however, with an exception of two topics none of the topics has been thought to be 'highly useful' by majority of them for their day-to-day classroom activities. This indicates that teachers do

not find the existing B.Ed. Curriculum useful as far as its utilitarian value is concerned in actual classroom situations.

The B.Ed. course otherwise named as Bachelor of Education degree is specifically meant to develop the pedagogical competencies of the prospective teachers. Keeping in mind this major objective, the B.Ed. Curriculum of different universities attempts to include various need-based and utilitarian content-matters in its curriculum. However, the simple specification of the syllabus in no way solves the real purpose. As such, the B.Ed. Curriculum need be relevant one with regards to the real classroom teaching practice and should also be appreciated by the teachers as the utilitarian one.

This limitation in our B.Ed. Curriculum is reflected in the teaching of school teachers in the sense that they are not able to translate their theoretical knowledge gained during teacher-training programme into practice while dealing with students in classrooms. The teachers, the results of the study indicate, generally are of the opinion that topics included under various courses may prove to be useful; however, they are not sure how the same can be used into practice.

This indicates that selection of the topics into B.Ed. Curriculum under different courses might be more or less adequate but their transaction during training programme lacks in their practical use. Hence, it is desired that the B.Ed. Curriculum (with special reference to curriculum prescribed by H.P. University) needs to specify the guidelines for its transaction. In this context it is suggested that a Handbook for B.Ed. Teachers specifying various activities to be performed during the transaction of B.Ed. Curriculum be developed. This Handbook must also include the evaluation procedures to be adopted for assessing students' competence in using theoretical concepts into practice.

Such a step will bring uniformity in training programme in different institutions on the one hand and will help to increase the utilitarian value of the curriculum on the other. This will further assist the teacher educators to realize the objectives of teacher-training programmes to a greater extent.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of experience gained during the conduct of present piece of research, the investigator of the study feels a gap that exist in the theory and practice of secondary teacher education curriculum which need be bridged up with proper reference to the NCF 2005. However, to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum a Handbook for B.Ed. Teachers with regard to Transaction of Curriculum may be developed by the competent authority and it need be provided on priority basis to the teachers.

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