



REVIEWING NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR TEACHER EDUCATION (NCFTE) 2009: FROM GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Since the past few decades of 20th century the wave of globalization has been dominating every sphere of our life. Four basic aspects of globalization as identified by the International Monetary Fund are: trade and transactions, capital and investment movements, migration and movement of people and the dissemination of knowledge. Like all other sectors of higher education, globalization has affected teacher education also to a large extent. The soul of any teacher education programme is its curriculum which needs modification to keep itself alive. While framing the teacher education curriculum, global context should be considered besides local and national contexts. Some of the recent global challenges before teacher education are: quality assurance, professionalism, technology, equity etc. In our country efforts for rejuvenating teacher education towards modernization, contextualization and professionalization has been tried out through National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2009 by NCTE. Issues related to inclusive education, perspective for equitable and sustainable development, gender perspective, role of community knowledge in education and ICT in schooling as well as e-learning become the centre stage in the framework. The present paper makes an attempt to analyze briefly the NCFTE 2009 from a global view point.

Key Words: Globalization, Teacher Education, NCFTE.

Introduction: Since the past few decades of 20th century the wave of globalization has been dominating every sphere of our life. Four basic aspects of globalization as identified by the International Monetary Fund are: trade and transactions, capital and investment movements, migration and movement of people and the dissemination of knowledge. Like all other sectors of higher education, teacher education has also been affected by globalization to a large extent. The soul of any teacher education programme is its curriculum which needs modification to keep itself alive. While framing the teacher education curriculum, like other curriculum global context should be considered besides local and national contexts. Now a day some of the recent global challenges before teacher education are: quality assurance, professionalism, technology and equity. The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2009 has been developed keeping in mind the epistemological shift of learning as envisaged in the NCF 2005 and RTE 2009. Issues related to inclusive education, perspective for equitable and sustainable development, gender perspective, role of community knowledge in education and ICT in schooling as well as e-learning become the centre stage in the framework. In this context the present paper makes an attempt to analyze the NCFTE 2009 from a global view point.

Background of NCFTE 2009: The curriculum of teacher education has been passing through a process of modification from time to time as our national thinkers and educationists have expressed deep concern for improving the quality of teacher education programme in the post-independence period. Concentrated efforts have been made to modify and modernize teacher education curriculum to meet the social and educational requirements of contemporary period. In the first two decades of post-independence period three commissions on education was appointed by the Government of India namely, the University Education Commission (1948-49), the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) and the Education Commission (1964-66). Recommendations of these commissions clearly showed deep concern to improve the quality of teacher education by updating the curriculum taking into consideration the changing scenario in India and abroad. The last three decades of 20th had witnessed a slow move towards globalization. The National Policy on Education (1986) intended to revise the programme of teacher education in the light of the 21st century technological revolution. Three major attempts were taken by NCTE to develop teacher education curriculum. These were 'Teacher Education Curriculum' (1978), 'National Curriculum Framework Teacher Education A Framework' (1988) and 'Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education' (1998). Response was given to the latest developments in the field of education and provisions were made for multiple educational experiences to teachers through these initiatives.

Finally in the 21st century efforts for rejuvenating teacher education towards modernization, contextualization and professionalization has been tried out through the 'National Curriculum for Teacher Education: Towards Preparing Professional and Humane Teachers' 2009, by NCTE. In the process of developing this framework valuable inputs were invited from educationists and experts having experiences in the field of teacher education. The curriculum framers also reviewed the previous curriculum framework on teacher education initiated by NCTE and NCERT.



Salient Features of NCFTE 2009: The NCFTE 2009 is consisted of six chapters: (1) Context, Concern and Vision of Teacher Education (2) Curricular Areas of Initial Teacher Preparation (3) Transacting the Curriculum and Evaluating the Developing Teacher (4) Continuing Professional Development and Support for In-service Teachers (5) Preparing Teacher Educators (6) Implementation Strategies.

Chapter1. Context, Concern and Vision of Teacher Education deals with the following:

- The changing school context and its demands
- present teacher education scenario
- present teacher education scenario
- teacher education reform perspectives: past and present
- urgency of reforming teacher education
- systematic concern of teacher education
- contemporary context and concerns that need to inform teacher education reform
- professionalization of teacher education
- preparing teacher educators
- research and innovation
- open and distance learning in teacher education
- education of teachers in health and physical education
- education of teachers for vocational stream
- vision of teacher and teacher education

“A teacher education curriculum needs to be in consonance with the curriculum framework for school education. A teacher needs to be prepared in relation to the needs and demands arising in the school context, to engage with questions of school knowledge, the learner and the learning process. The expectations of the school system from a teacher change from time to time, responding to the broader social, economic and political changes taking place in the society. The teacher must be equipped not only to teach but also to understand the students and the community of parents so that children are regular in schools and learn.” A vivid description of both positive and negative aspects of present teacher education scenario has been made and stated that, “pre-service training needs to be improved and differently regulated both in public and private institutions, while systems for in-service training require expansion and major reform that allow for greater flexibility.” The curriculum framers have taken into considerations the recommendations of various education commissions, committees appointed in the past and National Policy on Education 1986 for preparing this curriculum. The framers of NCFTE2009 have realized the needs for urgent and comprehensive reform of teacher education both at elementary and secondary level. Teaching as a professional practice was taken into consideration. The current concerns of teacher education as described in NCF 2005 provided distinct pointers for addressing issues on the different aspects of teacher education curriculum reform. Contemporary issues like inclusive education, perspectives for equitable and sustainable development, role of community knowledge in education, ICT in school learning and e-learning formed an integral part of teacher education. Emphasis was given on developing teachers as reflective practitioners with positive attitudes, values, perspectives and skills for the craft of teaching. The NCFTE 2009, like NCF 2005, also referred to the need to focus on pedagogies appropriate for adult learners for the preparation of teachers. University departments and research institutions need to undertake research on educational practices reflectively and analytically which can be included in the body of knowledge for study to student teachers. Strategically Open and Distance Learning (ODL) can be a powerful instrument for providing continued professional support to the teacher educator. Teachers are to be adequately prepared to teach health, physical education and yoga as it constitute an important part of the core curriculum at school level. The success of vocationalization of education is determined by the quality of teachers and the modality of their professional training. Serious thinking on the part of teacher training institutions is required and a design will have to be planned in collaboration with professional institutions: “As we engage in the act of envisioning the role of the teacher and the shape of teacher education unfolding in the coming years, it would do us well to take note of the movement of ideas, globally, that have led to current thinking on teacher education.” Emphasis was put on changing contexts and to empower the teacher to relate himself/herself to them. As the modern teacher education functions under a global canvas, the curriculum has tried to make teacher education liberal, humanistic and responsive to the demands of inclusive education. The needs of contemporary times are multi-cultural education and teaching for diversity.

Chapter2. Curricular Areas of Initial Teacher Preparation:

The teacher education has been looked as a holistic enterprise involved actions of different kinds and from multiple fronts, where teacher is viewed as a human being who:

- “Care for children and love to be with them, understand children within social, cultural and political contexts, develop sensitivity to their needs and problems, treat all children equally.”



- Make learning joyful, participatory and meaningful activity.”
- “Critically examine curriculum and textbooks, contextualize curriculum to suit social needs.”
- Organize learner-centred, activity-based, participatory learning experiences like play, projects, observation, visits etc.
- “Integrate academic learning with social and personal realities of learners, responding to diversities in the classroom.”
- “Promote values of peace, democratic way of life, equality, justice, liberty, fraternity, secularism and zeal for social reconstruction.”

To achieve these objectives the NCFTE 2009 has tried to develop the curriculum such a way so that the trainee teacher could get the opportunity to

- Observe and keep in touch with the children.
- Understand the self and others, develop the ability for self-evaluation, self-analysis, creativity and innovation.
- Develop habits for self-directed learning and collaborative work.
- Develop professional skills in pedagogy, analysis and interpretation, story-telling, drama, craft etc.

An attempt has thus been made to organize the entire teacher education curriculum as an organic and integrated whole. Contents in this section include:

Curricular Area-A: Foundations of Education is divided into three categories –

- Learner studies (Childhood, child and adolescent development and learning),
- Contemporary studies (Teacher and learner in society & gender, school and society)
- Educational studies (Aims of education, knowledge and values, developing the self and aspirations as a teacher).

The curricular framers have felt that new teachers require engaging and understanding the children of different ages i.e. from child to adolescent. For this they have to interact and observe them in diverse social, economic and cultural contexts constantly. “Understanding the development of children in diverse contexts is necessary to equip student teachers to address diversity in the classroom and to teach within the frame of inclusive education.” Inclusion of comprehensive, systematic and scientific approaches to health education and health awareness in the teacher education curricula was suggested also. Emphasis should be laid on social, cultural, economic and political contexts of individual learner rather than psychological characteristics of the learner. Classroom should be viewed as a social context. Critical awareness of human and child rights is essential for a teacher which should be observed analytically from all contexts starting from institutional to global. Education for peace has got an important place in this curriculum. Besides, teacher trainee needs to study issues related to self and identity, human relationships, assumptions, beliefs and attitudes.” A greater insight into one’s aims of life, one’s strengths and weaknesses and the dynamics of identity formation provides the base for developing a professionally competent teacher who is sensitive to issues of equity, democracy and social justice.”

Curricular Area-B: Curriculum and Pedagogy is also divided into three parts,

- Curriculum studies (knowledge and curriculum and communication and language proficiency communication)
- Pedagogic studies mathematics, languages (sciences, social sciences, mathematics, languages).
- Assessment and evaluation studies

Prospective teachers should engage themselves with the conceptual knowledge they have acquired through general education. Teacher’s language proficiency and communication skills are most crucial factors in school education besides a sound knowledge-base, pedagogical and other professional capacities. The pedagogical courses would shift its’ focus from pure disciplinary knowledge and methodology to the learner and his/her context as well. The scope of learner assessment and evaluation should go beyond the limited context of syllabus-based achievement testing. Assessment should be viewed as an aspect of learning. Evaluation plays an important role in motivating the children to learn.

Curricular Area-C: School Internship has three parts including,

- Four days a week for a minimum period of 12-20 weeks including one week of classroom observation of a regular teacher
- Visit to innovative centres of pedagogy and learning
- Classroom-based research projects

Practice teaching which constitutes the main functional part of teacher education has been suffering from some major drawbacks like domination of theory over curriculum, mechanical routine, rigid lesson plans, inadequate mentoring and



supervision, little scope of original thinking, lack of comprehensiveness in evaluation process. The internship needs to be worked as a partnership model with the school and a sustained engagement with the schools is highly needed.

Chapter3. Transacting the Curriculum and Evaluating the Developing Teacher deals with:

- Transacting the Teacher Education Curriculum:
- Need for Complementary Structures and Mechanisms
- Evaluating the Developing Teacher.

Teacher education is a process of professional preparation of teachers. One of the most important aspects is curriculum transaction. Teacher education programme deals with adult learners. Therefore, professional knowledge and skills should be developed through a series of self-directed tasks like case studies, projects, seminars and research oriented activities. Learner's own experiences should be brought in to focus. Engagement with theoretical concepts and frameworks is essential to develop the power of reflective analysis of trainee teachers. Ample opportunities should be provided for observing and engaging with learners and to learn to work collaboratively in a group. A Teacher Learning Centre should be established for providing student teacher hands-on experience for self-reflection. Another significant aspect of teacher education programme is evaluation which is quantitative in nature. The qualitative dimension of teacher education remains outside the purview of evaluation. Evaluation of teacher education should be objective and comprehensive in nature. Evaluation protocol with qualitative indicators to each specific area should be developed. Grade should replace the marks eventually. Observational schedules and records, checklists, open-ended questionnaire and interviews should be used as instruments for evaluation both qualitative and quantitative.

Chapter4. Continuing Professional Development and Support for In-Service Teachers contains:

- Aims of Continuing Professional Development Programmes for Teachers
- Designing In-service Programmes: Some Principles
- Routes Towards Teachers' Continuing Professional Development
- Organization of Continuing Professional Development Programmes
- Impact
- Structural and Operational Issues of Continuing Professional Development.

The aims of continuing professional development programme would be to deepen one's knowledge of one's academic discipline, to understand and update oneself on educational and social issues etc. The in-service programme should be designed keeping in mind some general principles. There is a need to recognize various types of in-service programmes that can contribute towards and sustain professional development like short and long term courses, use of distance media, sabbatical for study and research, professional conferences and meeting, professional fora, resource rooms and materials, faculty exchange visits and fellowships etc. Training schedules should be declared well in advance at a particular time of each academic session for the convenience of the in-service teachers. Various agencies like DIET, IASE should come forward to implement such programmes.

Chapter5. Preparing Teacher Educators deals with

- Education of Teacher Educators- Basic Issues
- M.Ed. as a Programme for the Preparation of Teacher Educators
- Imparting Professionalism to a Post-graduate Programme in Education
- Needed Thrusts for Developing Teacher Educators
- Encouraging Innovation for Preparation of Teacher Educators
- Enhancing the Status of Educational Studies and the Professional Development of Teacher Educators
- Preparation of Teacher Educators- Future Directions and Possibilities

"This framework is visualized to act as a catalyst to change the profile of teacher education so that the teacher education institutions become active centres not only for research but also of practical experiments directed to the improvement of educational methods and curricula."

Chapter6. Implementation Strategies includes

- Advocacy
- Curriculum Development
- Special Teacher Education Areas
- Professional Orientation/Training Programmes
- Teacher Educators
- Research.



This chapter mainly deals with the various means and ways for implementing the curriculum and highlights the role of NCTE, SCERTs, DIETs to conduct seminars, discussions on different issues like curriculum development, special education, vocational education and orientation programmes. Teaching is a profession and teacher education is a process of professional preparation of teachers. "Every community should have a talented and dedicated teacher in every classroom. We have enormous opportunity for ensuring teacher quality well into the 21st century if we recruit promising people into teaching and give them the highest quality preparation and training." (Speech delivered by Bill Clinton, American President in his Call for Action for American Education in the 21st Century in 1996). Importance of teachers' role in improving the quality of education is beyond question. Therefore, the quality improvement of teacher education system through modification of curriculum is always desirable. Teacher education curriculum cannot be framed in isolation; global context should be kept in mind besides, national and local context. Recent global challenges before teacher education are: life-long education, developing a broad knowledge base to think critically, quality assurance, professionalism, technology and competency based curriculum adaptability use of integrated technology, research in teacher education, equity etc. These challenges should be met by any teacher education programme efficiently. Our students should be able to understand and recognize their inter-connectedness with other people's lives. Graduate future teachers should think globally and they should have international experience. A global dimension of teaching should be incorporated in the classroom. Again according to Cradler (2002), effective use of technology as an instructional tool, is a growing challenge. In this context, the major factor is that how far our teachers are prepared to infuse technology into curricula and instruction. As per the Delor's Report (UNESCO 1996), significant changes are required in pre-service teacher education programme "if we are to select and prepare a new generation of teachers equipped with the knowledge, skills and values to help their culturally different and their socially disadvantaged students to learn, to resolve conflicts peacefully, to respect each other's dignity and cultures, and to become socially responsible citizens".

A close look at NCFTE 2009 reveals some significant horizons in teacher education curriculum and some touches of globalization. In this process based teacher education emphasis was laid on such aspects like:

- Understanding the social, cultural and political contexts in which learners grow and develop
- Engagement with learners in real life situations along with theoretical inquiry
- Conceptual knowledge generated, on the basis of experiences, observations and engagement
- Knowledge generated in the shared context of teaching, learning and personal, social experiences
- Sustained engagement of long duration professional education
- Encouragement to team learning, group presentation
- School internship- flexible in nature and maintain a reflective journal
- Use of technology
- Inclusive education
- Need to connect knowledge to life outside school
- Teachers' professionalism
- Interdisciplinary approach
- Perspectives for equitable and sustainable development
- Community knowledge in education
- Research and innovation
- Promotion of values of peace, democratic way of life, equality, justice, liberty, fraternity

Conclusion: It is seen that various attempts were made to modify and improve the quality of teacher education curriculum in the post-independence period. The NCFTE 2009 has been acting as a mile stone in this regard. The teacher education curriculum has to face two kinds of challenges-diverse socio-cultural contexts of Indian society and new thrusts in global education. Therefore, it is a very challenging task to keep a balance between these two factors. To some extent, the global trends are being reflected in the NCFTE 2009 and provided it with a global outlook though it is deeply rooted in to Indian culture.

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