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RESPONSIBLE TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM FOR EMPOWERING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN INDIA

Noufal P¹✉

Abstract:

National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) is the responsible organization for providing guidelines, regulating and supervising the teacher education programmes in India. NCTE takes care of various teacher education programmes at various levels. Present teacher education curriculum framework prescribed in the 2014, addressing based on the following themes of the programme at undergraduate and post graduate programmes. The present study mainly focusses on the analysis of the teacher education curriculum framework in terms of addressing diversity of India and promoting equality in education. Various parameters were identified from the two levels of curricular programmes. In addition to the curricular analysis, the views of prospective teacher educators were also included in this study. Sample selected for the study were from Kannur University, Kerala. 35 prospective teacher educators were given their views on various aspects of the teacher education curriculum in terms of diversity and equality of education in India. While analysing the curriculum, it can be observed that there are specialized courses and papers were included to address the equality and diversity. Majority of the samples were viewed that inequality in education is more in our country. Teachers have a major role in addressing the equality issues and reducing inequality in education. Diversity in terms of culture, language, and gender needs to be addressed more while implementing the curriculum.

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1.0 Introduction:

According to Justice Varma Commission (2012), Master of Education (M.Ed.) programme should focus on Curriculum studies, Pedagogic studies, and foundational studies along with the practical experiences. National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has brought four National Curriculum frameworks for teacher Education during 1978, 1988, 1998 and 2009. Quality of the education depends on the training and practice given to the teachers. Quality of the teachers depends on the training adopted during the master of education programme, especially while preparing the prospective teacher educators.

National Curriculum framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE 2009) address the concerns necessary required for qualitative improvement and to eradicate the issues and challenges faced

1 [Author] ✉ [Corresponding Author] Assistant Professor in Education, School of Pedagogical Sciences, Kannur University Kerala, INDIA. E-mail: noufalmrk@gmail.com

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in our society with special emphasis on school education and teacher education. Issues related to inclusive education, gender perspectives, community participation and availability of infrastructural facilities.

National Curriculum Framework (2005) has described the concerns need to be addressed during the pre- service and in-service teacher preparation programme. The main concerns are as follows:

- Critical examination of the teacher education and school education curriculum should be included by the prospective and in-service teachers.
- Language competency and mastery over the content knowledge should be emphasized and need to set a minimum standard for its requirement. Accordingly the assessment and evaluation patterns also need to be modified in the curriculum.
- Maintenance of professional development of the teachers should be sustained. Teachers need to spend their time for updation and modification of themselves.
- Teacher education curriculum should provide a holistic view of the development for an teacher, in terms of knowledge upgradation, repertoire of skills, inhibition of habits, values and attitudes and finally to reflect themselves.

According to NCFTE (2009), the teacher education curriculum comprises of three broad curricular areas such as Foundations of Education, Curriculum and Pedagogy and School internship.

Issues related to the social context of learning, aims of education, ideas of educational thinkers, contemporary matters such as diversity, equity and equality, child rights, environmental ethics to be practiced, digital and technological ethics, etc. would form the core of the prescribed teacher education curriculum.

In this paper, the researcher has made an attempt to include what are the major issues included in the post graduate education curriculum in terms of addressing the equality and diversity issues.

For this purpose researcher has analysed the official documents like NCF 2005, NCFTE 2009 and the NCERT prescribed curriculum for master of Education programme. Along with this document analysis, researcher has collected the views of prospective teacher educators of Kannur University, Kerala about the various equality issues occurring in our society with special emphasis on education.

2.0 Objectives:

- Analysis of the post graduate level teacher education curriculum in terms of addressing diversity of India and promoting equality in education
- Identify various topics which are related to the Diversity of India and promotion of equality of education
- Collect the views of prospective teacher educators on the various issues related to equality and diversity of education

3.0 Findings:

Objective 1: Rationale for including contents related to contemporary studies in the post graduate level teacher education curriculum

To understand about social, cultural, economic and political concerns necessary for our society. Different disciplines were included to address these contents, which includes sociology, philosophy, economics, etc. this will provide an space for engaging the issues and concerns of India's pluralistic nature, issues of identity, gender, equity, poverty and diversity. This

contextualization of education will consider acting as an agent of understanding the classroom as a social context so as to provide a setting for interaction, generation of dialogue and the opportunity to appreciate the diverse perspectives on various social issues.

Critical awareness of human rights and child rights equips the teacher a different view while dealing with the students. Constitutional provisions, national and international perspectives on establishing peace, protection of nature and natural resources, etc. can be taken as the key areas in these matters.

Teachers should understand the role of the gender in our society. It will be more practicum oriented realities rather than enriching the theoretical understanding. By including the gender perspectives in the teacher education curriculum, prospective teachers can understand the gender roles in the society, analysing the social and school cultures, and developing the gender perspectives of our society in understanding the development of childrens on the issues of society, culture, equity and diversity.

4.0 Objective 2:

Content wise details addressing equality and diversity in the post graduate level teacher education curriculum.

Table 1: Content wise details addressing equality and diversity in the post graduate level teacher education curriculum

Socio Cultural context of education	Social purposiveness of education, Understanding Indian Society interms of multilingual, multi cultural, Process of Socialization and acculturation, Equality of educational opportunity, Education for socio-economically deprived groups, Policy of inclusion and multi foundational approaches to learning disability.
Understanding the learners and their development	Causes of socio-cultural and economic contexts on learners, learning difficulties, educational support required for learners holistic development, respecting the rights of the childrens,
Perspectives of education	UEE inetrms of access, enrolment and retention, with special focus to first generation learners and migrant population, Issues and challenges of enrolment of different types of learners, Importance of Inclusive education,
Resource management	Identification, utilization and maintenance of resources-human, material, financial,
Distance education and open learning	Nature of adult learners, Instructional process and curriculum design for distance and adult education
Learner support services	Academic, administrative and informative, local, national and international agencies
Inclusive education	Responsibilities and professional ethics, national and international agencies, curriculum adaptation, supportive services for inclusion, problems of disadvantaged section and addressing social group inequality, organization and mangement of schools to address socio-cultural diversity, bias in textbooks, teacher attitudes and expectations, schemes and programmes for education for disadvantaged sections, research priorities(status studies, case studies, etc.,)
Women education	Gender equality/inequaluty, gender sensitivity, gender justice, constitutional commitments for gender equality, status of women education in school and higher educational levels, media and gender roles, gender bias in textbooks, educational implications of co educational practices, programmes for women education, research priorities
Non formal Education	Clientele of Non formal education, Universalisation of education, Geriatric counseling, women empowerment programmes, employability trends of women



4.0 Objective 3:

Views of prospective teacher educators on the various issues related to equality and diversity of education.

Table 2: Views of prospective teacher educators on the various issues related to equality and diversity of education

Problems of inequality	Difference in economic status of home. Gender disparities. Regional Imbalance. Physiological difference. Difference in home conditions. Disparity between backward and advanced classes. Non-availability of adequate opportunities. Difference in mental and Physical abilities
Causes for the Inequalities	Due to the poverty of a large number of people. Children in rural areas studying in poorly equipped schools have to compete with the children in urban areas Places where no primary, secondary or collegiate educational institutions exist, children do not get the same opportunity as those who have all these in their neighbourhood Differences in home environments Sex disparity in India Socio Economic Status
Measures taken for Equalization of Educational Opportunity	Constitutional Provisions Debarring restriction on admission in educational institutions Wide distribution of Institutions Provision of Pre-school education Provision of scholarship and other facilities Special treatment for S.C., S. T. and Other Backward Communities Residential School Special education of the handicapped Emphasis on women's participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels. Numerous incentives, helps, benefits, facilities will be provided to SC and ST population to equalize them with other developed communities. People of educational backward areas like rural areas, hill tracks and desert areas will be given adequate institutional and infrastructural facilities. Minority community will be allowed to set up and administer their own educational institutions. Education for physically and mentally handicapped children should be integrated with the general community
Types of inequality	Gender inequality, Social inequality, intellectual inequality, inequality in schooling, resource management inequality
Types of diversity	Geographical, linguistic, racial, Physiological, Social, religious, Political, economical, Cultural, Caste,

5.0 Conclusion:

India has pluralistic society, which is characterized by its unity and diversity. Multi-cultural society, heterogeneous people and centralized nature of the governance, will be helpful for the upliftment and joining of our society in a unique way. As Dr. Radhakrishnan had pointed out, "Democracy only provides that all men should have equal opportunities for the development of their unequal talents." The Constitution of India provides for educational opportunities to all citizens of the country. It also provides that the State shall not discriminate between persons on grounds of their religion, caste, race, sex or place of birth. It means that our Constitution is committed to the principle of equality. In short, Diversity and inequality is a fact in our country. In order to address these, Educational fraternity especially teachers and teacher educators should



take the lead. The curriculum should include the contents related to it, and should transact in an effective way.

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