

**GOVERNANCE REFORMS FOR QUALITY AND QUALITY OF FUNCTIONING OF
STATUTORY BODIES**

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INTRODUCTION

National policies on education are formulated by governments to give appropriate directions to various parameters of educational development. “Governments face increasing pressure to define and implement education policies, as they seek to improve the quality, equity and effectiveness of their education systems. They understand that more resources do not necessarily mean better outcomes –those resources need to be invested in the best possible ways” (OECD 2015, p. 22). In India, the first National Policy on Education was brought out in 1968 (Ministry of Education 1968). After eleven years, the central government attempted to revise this policy (Ministry of Education 1979). Before the policy could be passed by the parliament, the government failed. After seven years of this attempt and after eighteen years of first policy, in 1986, the central government brought out a new policy (MHRD 1986). After three years, new central government appointed a committee to assess the Policy of 1986 (Acharya Ramamurti 1990). Before the recommendations of this committee could be reflected in a new policy document, the government failed. In 1992, the Central Advisory Board of Education appointed a committee to review Acharya Ramamurti Report (Reddy 1992). Based on this report, 1986 policy was modified (MHRD 1992). Latest policy document stated that “The implementation of the various parameters of the New Policy must be reviewed every five years. Appraisals at short intervals will also be made to ascertain the progress of implementation and the trends emerging from time to time.” MHRD 1992, p. 36, Art.11.5). Since 1992 modification of the policy, there have been many changes in education system. There have been attempts to point out the areas of NPE 1986 with modifications undertaken in 1992 to be modified (Mohanty 2006 and 2009). A few strategies mentioned in the NPE 1986 (with modifications undertaken in 1992) that need attention of the makers of new education policy are: 1. Indian Education Service; 2. Investment on education; 3. State Advisory Boards of Education; 4 De-linking of degrees from jobs; 5. Training of educational planners, administrators and heads of institutions; 6. Evaluation Process and Examination Reform; 7. Flexibility in curricula; and 8. High quality instructional materials.

Recently, the Government of India has started process of formulating a new policy. It has been seeking public opinion on certain themes (MHRD 2015a & b). Themes related to higher education are: 1. Governance reforms for quality; 2. Ranking of institutions and accreditations; 3. Improving the quality of regulation; 4. Pace setting roles of central institutions; 5. Improving State public universities; 6. Integrating skill development in higher education; 7. Promoting open and distance learning and online courses; 8. Opportunities for technology enabled learning; 9. Addressing regional disparity; 10. Bridging gender and social gaps; 11. Linking higher education to society; 12. Developing the best teachers; 13. Sustaining student support systems; 14. Promote cultural integration through language; 15. Meaningful partnership with the private sector; 16. Financing higher education; 17. Internationalisation of higher education; 18. Engagement with industry to link education to employability; 19. Promoting research and innovation; and 20. New knowledge. Themes related to school education are: 1. Ensuring learning outcomes in elementary education; 2. Extending outreach of secondary and senior secondary education; 3. Strengthening of vocational education; 4. Reforming school examination systems; 5. Revamping teacher education for quality teachers; 5. Accelerating rural literacy with special emphasis on women, SCs, STs and

minorities through adult education and national open schooling systems; 7. Promotion of information and communication technology systems in school and adult education; 8. New knowledge, pedagogies and approaches for teaching of science, maths and technology in school education to improve learning outcomes of students; 9. School standards, school assessment and school management systems; 10. Enabling inclusive education – education of SCs, STs, girls, minorities and children with special needs; 11. Promotion of Languages; 12. Comprehensive education – Ethics, physical education, arts & crafts, life skills; and 13. Focus on Child Health. The central government may need to consider to include another theme “Learning at Pre-Birth Stage and Early Childhood Care and Education”, a government responsibility, as per the by 86th amendment of the constitution.

GOVERNANCE REFORMS FOR QUALITY

There are three types of institutions: fully government, government given autonomy. Govt. institutions are of two types-central and state. Central government institutions have better human and material resources than their counterparts under state governments. In case of government categories, autonomous institutions, like Indian Institutes of Technology under central government, are governed better, that is reflected in better performance of their students. Of course, these institutions get highly talented students. Institutions managed by central government are generally expected to be better.

Fielden, (2008, p. 43) in a study for World bank on higher education governance concluded that:

“The reforms in higher education governance in recent years are driven by the same external and internal pressures and are largely following the same pattern. They tend to have the following elements:

- Legislation that establishes universities as autonomous independent entities
- Withdrawal of the state from certain detailed control and management functions and the devolution of responsibility to universities themselves
- The creation of buffer bodies or agencies to carry out some of the detailed financial control and supervision functions in the sector or to provide sectorwide services
- Adoption of funding models that give institutions greater freedoms and that encourage them to develop new sources of income
- Creation of external agencies that monitor the quality of all courses delivered by institutions
- The development of new forms of accountability through reporting on performance and outcomes in achieving nationally set goals for the sector, as well as institutionally set targets
- Confirmation of the role of a university board as having overall responsibility to the minister or the buffer body
- Gradual withdrawal of the state from decisions on the appointment of the chair of the board or president and members of the board
- Expectations of managerial competence by the board and the president.”

World Bank (2012, p. 4) stated following eight policy goals for tertiary education governance:

- “1. Clear Vision for Tertiary Education: The country or government has a vision and plan for the tertiary education sector, and a willingness to translate its vision into a concrete action plan.
2. Appropriate Regulatory Framework: The tertiary education system is governed by an appropriate regulatory framework including for private providers.
3. Capacity of the Tertiary Education Authority (TEA): The TEA has staff and resources to implement reforms, and to guide, support and monitor institutions.
4. Leadership, Management and Organizational Autonomy: The regulatory framework allows for sufficient organizational autonomy. This means that the TEA has an appropriate policy on the role and functions of the boards of higher education institutions as well as for the selection of their leadership, and the respective responsibilities of the leadership and the board.

5. Sufficient Institutional Autonomy: The regulatory framework allows for sufficient financial, staffing and academic autonomy in institutions.
6. Presence of performance-based and equity focused funding: Funding mechanism is performance-based, transparent, and promotes equity in student enrolment.
7. Checks on Quality and Relevance: The TEA has an independent quality assurance and accreditation agency for both public and private institutions.
8. Standards of Accountability: Institutions are held to specific standards of transparency around financial health, fraud, student engagement and employment of graduates.”

Autonomy is an important aspect of governance of higher education. Varghese and Martin (2014, p.47) reviewing studies on governance reform in selected Asian countries observed that coordination of national ministries (finance, public service, and education) and the coherence of their policies as extremely important factors in the successful implementation of policies aimed at increased autonomy.

GOVERNANCE REFORM AND EFFECTIVE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Policy decisions are taken by political leadership of a nation. Hence, effective political leadership is crucial for high quality governance of education system. Any error on the part of political leadership percolates down to the grassroots. When personal or whimsical preference takes precedence over academic preferences, the vice-chancellors and heads of statutory bodies start functioning erratically to appease the whims of their political bosses or political leaders under whose patronage they were selected. There are instances of political leaders harassing honest heads of the government institutions for not fulfilling their personal desires. Given below two episodes related to a principal and two Education Ministers of a State. Following episode relates to a minister taking action against a principal.

In one state, the government abolished private teacher training institutions. After a few years, a few of these private institutions were taken over by the government and the persons working at the time of abolition were declared as government employees. In case of one private institution, its chairman, in course of time joined politics and became education minister of the state. The minister's son came to the college, where his father was earlier chairman, and asked the principal to send a letter to the government that by mistake, at the time of taken over, the name of his cousin had not been included in the list of employees at the time of abolition, so that government could declare that person as government employee (clerk). The principal did not agree. He was then sent a message by a higher officer that as he was not fulfilling the personal desire of the minister, he would face transfer to a distant place. The principal did not bother and went to the distant place.

Following episode relates to a Minister referring the complaint about action of a principal to the concerned Director.

In case of a college converted from private to government, one post of lecturer was found extra. Junior most of the taken over staff was to be transferred to another college. In the beginning of the academic session, the principal of the college instead of allotting classes to the junior most lecturers, deputed her service for adult literacy work under the local district collector and prepared the time table without assigning any class to the concerned lecturer and informed the Director of Education about this action. A few days after the Education Minister visited the city and met people in the Circuit house. The Director of Education was also in the city and came to the Circuit House to meet the Minister. Principal also came to circuit house, and took a seat at the far end of the hall. When the concerned lecturer complained to the Minister about not assignment of the class, the Minister asked the Director to look into the matter. The Director told him that the concerned principal had informed him and added that the said principal was present in the hall and could be asked to explain the situation. Minister asked the Director to take up the issue at the Directorate level.

In one case, the minister tried to interfere and in the other case another minister remained aloof. Hence, no governance reform can be effective unless the political leadership can remain honest and impartial.

STATUTORY BODIES FOR ENFORCING REFORMS FOR QUALITY

Central government has instituted a number of statutory bodies to monitor as well as enforce quality. These are: 1. University Grants Commission; 2. All India Council of Technical Education, Bar Council of India; 4. Central Council of Homoeopathy; 5. Central Council of Indian Medicine; 6. Council of Architecture; 7. Dental Council of India; 8. Distance Education Council; 9. Medical Council of India; 10. Pharmacy Council of India; 11. National Council for Teacher Education; 12. Rehabilitation Council of India; Indian Council for Agricultural research; Veterinary Council of India. Besides these bodies organisations have been given author for ensuring quality: 1. Directorate General of Shipping for Merchant navy related courses; 2. The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India; 3. The Institute of Company Secretary of India; 4. The Institute of Works and Accounts of India and 5. Department of Electronics for accreditation of computer courses (Gupta 2006).

EVALUATING QUALITY OF FUNCTIONING OF STATUTORY BODIES

Inefficiency in the working of statutory bodies has been responsible also for poor governance. For instance, universities as per rule cannot open courses without approval of appropriate statutory bodies. In order to get approval, they have to create posts and appoint persons. Six months ago, one central university appointed 10 faculty members (2 associate and 8 assistant professors) for its Department of Education, who are being paid salary for more than 6 months without any work. Perhaps inking such types of problems, a few years ago, another central university started M. Ed. course without approval of NCTE and unsure of approval of NCTE ran the course for more than two years without appointing a single regular faculty. The central government may consider evaluating the process of functioning of various statutory bodies as regards their role as quality monitoring agencies.

A Statutory Body: National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)

National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Act was passed in 1993. NCTE started functioning in 1995 in a rented accommodation in Indraprastha Estate in New Delhi. During two decades of operation of NCTE, there have been articles published in University News and in other journals in support as well as against the strategies of NCTE. A Few Riddles to be solved related to training of school teachers and role of NCTE may be as follows:

NCTE Act does not cover the whole nation

As National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Act 1993 does not cover the whole country, should this act be modified to delete the term 'National' from its title? Should the nation formulate another act for NCTE?

Not Increasing Duration of B.Ed. through Distance Mode to Four Years, while increasing duration of Face to Face Mode B.Ed. to Two Years?

Initially teacher training was part of the government system. Growth of private institutions for teacher training led to huge unemployment of B.Ed. passed candidates. Twenty five years ago, four years before NCTE Act was formulated by the Central Government, Odisha State abolished all private teacher training institutions, except the single institution run by minority group for training for elementary school teachers. Teacher training institutions, besides providing initial teacher training, also provide in-service training to school teachers, as a part of the effort to appraise teachers about new policies, new initiatives and train them in new skills. In early nineties universities started competing with each other to improve their financial position through B. Ed. correspondence courses. It is reported that one university in the north admitted THIRTY NINE THOUSAND. The Chairman and the members of the University Grants Commission did not realise the importance of training for school teachers, perhaps due to the fact that college teachers do not require any initial training to start teaching. Education professors did not voice their protest. National Council for Teacher Education, which was a non-statutory body operating from NCERT, could not control the situation. The Review Report on National Policy on Education 1986 stated that, "The first degree in teacher education should not be given through correspondence" (Acharya Ramamurti 1990 p.302). The

CABE Committee on Policy (Reddy 1992, p.65) stated that, “In the correspondence mode of teacher training, the trainees do not get adequate exposure to school conditions and practice teaching is perfunctory. Therefore, a correspondence course imparts at best a bookish knowledge which is not adequate for preparing a balanced professional teacher”. Learning without Burden Committee (Yash Pal 1993, p. 27) stated that “Pre-service teacher education programme, being a professional course, has to be rigorous, thorough, and intensive programme. Therefore, B. Ed. degree course by correspondence be de-recognised.” If the universities would have been allowed to continue with their one year B.Ed. correspondence courses, by the end of the twentieth century, in order to tackle problem of unemployment of B. Ed. degree holders, like Odisha state, all states would have brought out legislation to close all training colleges. Birth of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) was a God’s Grace to the collapsing teacher training system. NCTE made UGC agree for limiting intake for B. Ed. correspondence to in-service teachers. In its early phase, NCTE struggled hard to persuade UGC restrict the expansion of correspondence courses for B.Ed. courses. Finally, NCTE succeeded in making UGC agree to the suggestion that the correspondence courses be available only for in-service teachers and the duration of this course to be two years, while the duration of face to face B. Ed. to continue to be one year. Obviously, as per the standard followed by NCTE in the past, when duration of face to face B. Ed. is increased to TWO years, should not duration of distance mode B. Ed. be increased to FOUR years?

Giving Recognition to Many Departments of Education and State Government Institutions in spite of Not Following Norms and Standards of NCTE

Many years ago, the author inspected a private training college in a state for university affiliation. The author reported to the university that the college may be given affiliation subject to the condition that the college has a principal having M.Ed. qualification. The university instead of asking the college to appoint a qualified principal issued affiliation order. Similar situation is happening in case of NCTE. Although two year B.Ed. courses suggested in NCTE curriculum frame work of 1998 started functioning in NCERT’s Regional Institutes of Education, for many years, there were no Norms and standards. As even after two decades of its functioning, NCTE has recognised many government teacher training institutions / university departments of education which do not possess appropriately qualified principals or faculty members, as per its Norms, should NCTE act be modified to give autonomy to state governments and universities to have their own teacher training courses without seeking approval of NCTE? As even after two decades of functioning in many states, there are many state government managed teacher training colleges having no principal with a M.Ed. degree, should NCTE act be modified only to be applicable for private institutions?

Giving no Freedom for High Quality Schools to Select and Train their Own Teachers

Autonomy The nation recently allowed Open University of UK and British Council to implement its Teacher Education through School based Support, which is functioning in seven states. Recently, Prime Minister of India visited UK and the experts in Education accompanying him might have also come across the system of school based initial training operating in selected schools and school systems. United States started the practice of giving authority to schools of appropriate quality to have their own teachers from among individuals not having any formal teacher training qualifications and training them on the job (Mohanty 2015a), Should the nation give autonomy to selected schools and selected school systems to have their own teacher selection and teacher training strategies and amend appropriate regulations and acts accordingly?

Imposing Two Year B.Ed. Programmes on the nation without Making a Comparative Study of Performance of Products of One Year B.Ed. and Two Year B.Ed. and Without Following Suggestions of Verma Commission which suggested to Follow Suggestions of Kothari Commission

During the above visit of Prime minister of India to UK, experts might have realised that the duration of initial teacher training provided by British universities for their graduates is 48 weeks. This course is known as Post Graduate Diploma / Certificate in Education. The Education Commission (1966) stated that

“At the secondary stage, where the duration of the course is only one year, it has been suggested that it should be increased to two years, to do justice to the existing heavy courses and to incorporate the proposed subject- matter courses. From a financial and practical point of view this does not seem feasible. However, it is possible to make better use of the existing duration by extending the working days in the academic year from the existing level of 180-190 days to 230 days. Academic years of such lengths have been adopted in some secondary training institutions with very good results; and we recommend that the reform should be extended to all institutions without delay.” (Kothari 1966, p.132)

Justice Verma Commission stated that *“The duration of the programmes of teacher education needs to be enhanced, in keeping with the recommendations of the Education Commission (1966) the implementation of which is long overdue”* (Verma 2012, p. 95). After analysing the process of functioning of NCTE, Singh (2015, p.9) stated that *“There is a general feeling among the stakeholders that the decision to double the duration and fees of B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses across the country has done harm to the teacher education institutions. There is a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction, insecurity among teacher educators in the country.”* In light of above facts, should the central government reconsider to go back to ONE year B.Ed. of 230 days duration?

Failing to Upgrade the Level of Training for Primary school Teachers to University Level

Primary school teachers in UK are graduates and they have either school based training or university based post graduate diploma/ certificate in Education of 48 weeks duration. Kothari Commission (1966, Art.4.10, p. 118) recommending up gradation of all levels of training of school teachers to higher education level stated that

“An important reform, therefore, would be to raise the status of training institutions for pre-primary or primary teachers to a collegiate standard and to end the fragmentation of teacher education which results in weakness at each level and greatly reduces the effectiveness of the programme as a whole.”

Recently, as Verma (2012, p. 95) stated that *“Teacher education should be a part of the higher education system.”*, should the Government of India transfer NCTE from Department of School education to the Department of Higher education?

Not Providing Higher Pay Scale for Teachers after Passing Higher Secondary Examinations Having Studied for Five Years (Degree 3 years and B.Ed. 2 years) than Pay Scale of Teachers having Studied for Four years (Integrated BA;B.Ed / B.Sc.;B.Ed.)

In sixties, Four Year B. A. / B. Sc. & B. Ed. integrated course found in United States were introduced in the country. A higher secondary passed student takes four years to complete either this course or one year B.Ed. course after graduation. In 1998, NCTE recommended 2 year B. Ed. course, which were introduced in last decade in four Regional Institutes of Education of NCERT (Mysore RIE withdrew it after a few years), without increasing the duration of integrated B. A. / B. Sc. & B. Ed. course from four years to five years. Should the nation consider giving a higher scale of pay to teachers having passed two year B.Ed. than the scale of pay applicable for teachers passing one year B.Ed. or four year integrated B.Ed.?

Teachers of Higher Secondary Classes Attached to Junior Colleges without B.Ed. Degree

As even after two decades of functioning of NCTE in many states, a teacher for higher secondary classes attached to junior colleges need not have a B.Ed. degree, should states be given autonomy in respect of higher secondary classes or NCTE act be modified to cover higher secondary classes as part of colleges/ junior colleges?

No State Specific Special Training for Teachers Teaching 128 students in a Classroom

As after two decades of functioning of NCTE, there are large numbers of higher secondary classes having approved maximum class size of 128. As teaching a class having maximum size of 128 is different from teaching a class of 40, is it necessary to give the states having 128 as maximum number of students in their higher secondary classes train their teachers in their own way?

Not Providing Special Training Programme for Single Subject Teaching Training for Postgraduate Teachers Teaching Higher Secondary Classes

In many situations, schools do not give higher secondary classes for internship of B.Ed. students. Hence, present B. Ed. Students do not get the training in teaching of higher secondary classes. Should there be an independent single subject teaching teacher training course for preparing teachers for higher secondary school teaching, as such teachers are not required/ eligible to teach other subjects, as seen in case of B.Ed. degree holders?

Not Providing Yearlong Induction Programme in a school under Specifically Trained Mentors like Internship at Post MBBS stage

In case of certain advanced nations, a candidate, who has successfully completed initial teacher training course, before becoming a full teacher, has to successfully go through one year induction programme in specified schools under the direct supervision of specially trained mentor teachers. OECD (2012, p. 490) found varieties of strategies followed in OECD countries to declare a person as fully qualified teacher.

“Twenty-two OECD countries and Brazil require that, in addition to holding a diploma from a tertiary institution, candidates for the teaching profession must also acquire a licence or supplementary credential, pass a competitive examination, and/or participate in an on-the-job teacher practicum as part of an induction process or probationary period.”

One year Induction programme at school level might be flushing out large number of candidates coming out of initial teacher training courses, who are not sure of joining teaching profession. Should the nation go for one year initial teacher training courses as found in UK and have in addition one year induction programmes in specially selected schools under specially trained and appropriately paid mentors as well as concerned heads of schools?

Not Treating M.A. (Education) and M.Ed. for Post of Lecturer in Education without Making a Comparative Study of Their Performance

As in case of many state governments, NCERT, IGNOU and many central universities, a post graduate degree in Education - M.Ed. or M.A.(Education), without any additional PG Degree was the minimum qualification for a Lecturer in Education, and persons so appointed acted as Professors of Education in state governments, NCERT, IGNOU and many central universities, and some of them became Vice chancellors and the Chair Person of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), Director of National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT), President of Indian association of Teacher educators (IATE) and Head, Research Division in Association of Indian Universities should the same qualification continue? There is a belief that as M.A. Education students who hail from Odisha State had got their B.A. Degree with Education as a subject had started learning Education subject from higher secondary stage including teaching in primary schools might be more open to ideals of Education than M.Ed. degree holders. To justify, what should be a minimum qualification of a Lecturer in Education, should there be a comparative assessment of teaching skills and research efficiency of three groups of Professors of Education having:

- (a) A Bachelor degree, followed by M.Ed. and Ph.D. (Education),
- (b) A M.A. (Education), followed by Ph.D. (Education), and
- (c) A Master degree in a subject other than Education, M.Ed. and Ph.D. (Education)?

Although M.Ed. is Not a Teacher Training Course, bringing it under Purview of NCTE and Failure of NCTE and UGC to maintain Standard

A year ago, in a National Consultation on the Review of National Council for Teacher Education (Recognition Norms and Procedure) Regulation, 2014 held on July 31, 2014 at New Delhi, organised by NCTE, it was pointed out that as NCTE and UGC did not bother about nearly TWO THOUSAND M.Ed. students in an academic session in a Department of Education of one university, there was no need to increase duration of M. Ed. from one year to two years, and there was a need to take M.Ed. course out of ambit of NCTE. An ex-chairperson of NCTE, who was one of the resource persons in that meeting, replied to the allegation that as the system did not co-operate, this action could not be prevented by NCTE. In view of the above facts, should not M.Ed. course be out of jurisdiction of NCTE?

Sixty two years ago Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) stated that “ For the Master’s Degree in Education, only trained graduates who have normally done a minimum of three years’ teaching should be admitted”(Mudaliar 1953, p. 171). Should this suggestion now be made applicable for admission to M.Ed. and M.A. (Education) courses?

Failure to Take into Consideration variation in Curricula and Previous Academic Background of Students of M.Ed. and M.A.(Education) Courses and Leave the Responsibility to UGC NET to Select Lecturer in Education

Universities differ in admission criteria for admission into M.Ed. courses. Till this year, University of Kerala required a post graduate degree in a subject and a B.Ed. for admission into M.Ed. course. There are variations among universities even in a State. Till last year, two universities in Kerala required a PG Degree in a subject in addition to B.Ed. for taking admission in M.Ed. courses. Whereas, University of Calicut of this state did not have this requirement. Certain universities require M.Ed. students teach B.Ed. students as part of their practical work. Certain other universities require M.Ed. students teach school students as practical work. In certain universities, a student of M.A. (Education) course may or may not be a graduate having Education as a subject at degree stage. In Odisha state “Education” is a subject in higher / senior secondary classes. A size of the approved classroom in a college can be as large as 128. The higher secondary Education students also deliver teaching in schools. There is also school teaching practical at the degree stage in both pass and Honours in Education. Present Director National Council of Educational Research and Training and present Chair Person of National Council for Teacher Education are graduates with Education as a subject, who had practical in school teaching at their degree stage in Odisha. A M.A. (Education) student in Odisha has practical in school teaching. Whereas such practical in school teaching is not part of M.A. (Education) course of Kurukshetra and many other universities. Should not it be appropriate to rely on UGC NET for selection of Education Lecturers, just as NET is applicable for lecturers in other subjects?

Curbing Ongoing Process of Self Learning Opportunities of Teachers and Assessing Learning through University Examinations

As mentioned earlier, Odisha State was much advanced in teaching Education as a subject. The State universities allowed a Graduate with Education as subject to appear at B.Ed. examination as a private candidate with a certificate from a Head of the Department of Education/ Training College that they had carried out satisfactory practical work under their supervision. A candidate who had completed a Certificate course in teacher training for elementary school teaching, if acquired a degree was also eligible to appear at university B.Ed. examination as private candidates. Instead of making other states to make such provisions in their universities, unfortunately, the Eastern Regional Committee of NCTE located at Bhubaneswar, Odisha state decided to scrap this process of continuous self learning of teachers. Interestingly, the then Chair Person of NCTE Regional Committee was also from Odisha state and he was a person who started his career as Lecturer in education under the Government of Odisha without having possessed B. Ed. or M. Ed. or M. A. (Education) degree and later joined NCERT and became professor of Education. Should not this process that was on going on Odisha state be restored and made applicable to other states?

Not Evaluating Process of Delivery of Teacher Training

Three strategies pointed out by Worrell, Brabeck, Dwyer, Geisinger, Marx, Noell, and Pianta (2014, p.3) in a study conducted on behalf of the American Psychological Association for assessing and evaluating teacher preparation programmes in United States, which are : “(1) value-added assessments of student achievement, (2) standardized observation, protocols, and (3) surveys of teacher performance.” It is an open secret that not only private but also government teacher training institutions fill up their posts on the eve of the visit of NCTE team or university affiliation team and send back the faculty so appointed after the visit. This is also the case with material resources. Should NCTE act be modified to make NCTE get itself involved only in assessing the quality of initial teacher training programmes and disseminating the findings of the evaluation?

Not Giving Stress on School Experience of Faculty Members Teaching Methodology

The University Education Commission 1948-49 (Radhakrishnan 1949, p. 143) made following remarks regarding school experience of method teachers:

“But it is quite impossible for this sense of vocation to be instilled by a staff that has never themselves taught in a school. They need not have many years of school experience, and there is room on the staff of a training department for a few specialists who have not been school teachers. But the bulk of the staff including emphatically the lecturers in Education and in Methods must be able to speak from firsthand experience of school teaching if they are to command the respect of their students, and to have any chance of convincing them that they are entering a noble career.”

The Secondary Education Commission 1952-53 (Mudaliar 1953, p.157) stated that “We believe that it would be an advantage if for this higher degree in education trained teachers who have done normally a minimum of three years teaching in a school are only selected.” It also stated that “Professors in training institutions should be enabled for short periods to take up the duties of the headmasters or inspectors so that they may become familiar with the actual conditions of the school life and realise how the training that is imparted by them in the training colleges is actually put into practice. (p.168)” The Report of the Education Commission 1964-66 (Kothari 1966 Art. 4.09, p. 129) stated that:

“The training college staff itself, which will find a fruitful field of research in educational methods and practices opened up to them through their collaboration with schools, will benefit considerably if they can do some continuous teaching in the co-operating school. For this purpose, they may be deputed annually to teach at least for a month or so in a school or to complete at least one unit of the school syllabus”

Confederation of Indian Industry (2013, p. 48) stated that

“Teacher educators need to have experience in teaching / training in addition to the M.Ed. degree which is currently the only qualification required to become a TE. Devoid of field and work experience outside of the institute they may not be the best fit for educating future teachers. It is recommended that TEs have some years of work experience in addition to the M.Ed. qualification. The experience may be drawn from various professions – teaching, corporate, business – the important thing is to have a TE who wants to become one by choice and can bring to this qualification experience from different walks of life.”

In view of above suggestions should prior experience of school teaching and continued school teaching experience be part of duty of faculty members of teacher training institutions and university departments of education? Should they also be declared as honorary academic supervisors of schools and by law allowed to take specified number of classes in schools?

Not Making Provision for Adequate Number of Academic Staff in NCTE

NCTE has been functioning for more than two decades without adequate number of academic staff and managing its activities by employing consultants, who are retired persons. Necessity of academic staff for NCTE is not considered seriously, as posts of chair persons and vice-chairpersons remain vacant and also there have been chair persons of NCTE who did not have not only a Ph.D. degree in Teacher Education, but also no M.Ed. or B.Ed. degree. As the Department of Teacher Education of the National Council of

Educational Research and Training has more number of academicians and this Department was the headquarters of the Advisory National Council for Teacher Education, before a statutory NCTE was formed, should statutory powers be vested with NCERT, which has not only more manpower but also a huge library and reading room that can be utilised for its National Resource Centre for teacher education activities?

Not Stopping Commercialisation of Teacher Education

Four years before NCTE act was formulated and six years before NCTE started functioning, the government of Odisha took steps to abolish all private teacher training institutions except the one run by a minority group providing certificate in teacher training for primary school teaching. Should the policy document accept Mizoram and Odisha model of teacher training institutions run by the government, except the ones under minority groups, for the whole nation?

Making a Lecturer in Education study Two Years More than a Lecturer in Other Subjects without having Provision for Appropriate Extra Remuneration

Extra without University of Cambridge, UK (2015, p.1) stated that “The PGCE is offered by the Faculty of Education as a full-time course in initial teacher training for a specified age-range and forms the first year of a Master’s degree in Education.” PGCE(Post Graduate Certificate in Education is one year course meant for graduate for teaching in primary/secondary schools of England, equivalent to one year B.Ed. course of India. Following British pattern M.Ed. was one year course. As M.Ed. has been made a two year course, similar to qualification for admission into courses like M.A. (Education), Master of Public Administration, should Master of Education (M.Ed.) courses have minimum qualification a Bachelor Degree, instead of a B.Ed.?

Kothari Commission (1966, p. 127) while recommending a PG Degree in addition to M.Ed., recommended two advanced increments for such lecturers. The Commission stated that “Salary scales should be the same as for lecturers, readers and professors in arts and science colleges; but two advance increments should be given in recognition of the professional training received.” In view of this, if B.Ed. shall be two years and M.Ed. two years, should a lecturer in education having a PG Degree in a subject other than Education and M. Ed. get FOUR additional increments? If Two Year M.Ed. is made open to any graduate, not insisting on B.Ed. qualification, should TWO advance increments be given to Lecturers in Education having such qualifications?

Kothari Commission (1966, Art 4.42 p.127) stated that “We make the following additional recommendations: (1) The supply of trained teachers qualified to work in these institutions should be quickly and greatly increased by securing a substantial increase in the output of Ph.D.s, M. Ed.s and M.A.s in Education.” As this statement indicates that Kothari Commission, had treated M.A.(Education) at par with M.Ed., should the minimum qualification for a lecturer in education be either M.Ed. or M.A.(Education) and minimum qualification for admission into Two Year M.Ed. course be a degree in any subject?

Modifying NCTE Act

Certain nations have set up regulatory bodies for improving quality of initial teacher training programmes offered by teacher training institutions and schools / departments of education of universities. Recently, in Australia, recommendation by Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (2014) for establishing a national initial teacher education regulator through a reconstituted Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership to overhaul and manage the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes and work with the states and territories to ensure rigorous accreditation processes operate effectively with teacher registration” was not accepted by the Govt. of Australia. Dept. of Education and Training, Australia (2015, p. 5) said that

“The Government notes the Report recommendation for a new national regulator of teacher education courses, but does not believe establishing a new body will necessarily deliver better quality assurance nationally. Instead, the Government will utilise the expertise of existing bodies to achieve this outcome. AITSL will be given greater responsibility for driving improvement in the quality of initial teacher education and will work with state and territory teacher regulatory authorities to increase the rigour of assessment of courses for accreditation.”

In case of NCTE, Singh (2007, p. 9) in his analysis of various aspects of functioning of NCTE including faults reported in Anand Sarup Committee, raised following questions:

”The question one would like to know is:

Why then do we have the NCTE, at all?

Should the government not close it down?”

However in the issue of the University News in which Singh(2007), Mohanty (2007) referred to the news in Hindu dated May 26, 2007 entitled “Teacher education council to be closed” and pointed out various factors that have resulted in malfunctioning of NCTE. Various factors that have contributed to malfunctioning of NCTE may be:

- (a) Making an act for NCTE which does not cover the whole nation;
- (b) Failure of the central government to provide adequate number of academicians and not ensuring that chair persons and members of regional committees have direct experience of school teaching and school teacher training in addition to possessing a teacher training qualification;
- (c) Inadequate study of regulatory bodies and their functions in developed systems outside India,
- (d) Forcing states follow national level norms and standards for teacher training programmes which do not take into account the diversity that exists among states in respect of school education;
- (e) Failure, even after 15 years, to make provision for additional remuneration for teachers having acquired two year B.Ed. degrees from three Regional Institutes of Education of NCERT at Ajmer, Bhopal and Bhubaneswar, during last fifteen years;
- (f) Failing to take action against NCERT managed Regional Institutes of Education of NCERT and other institutions of state governments, which failed to abide by its Norms and Standards.
- (g) Failure to check large scale corruption in NCTE recognition process involving not only visiting team members, but also NCTE officials as reflected in large number of court cases for which, academicians humorously describe NCTE as “*Network for Corruption in Teacher Education*”

A few months ago, the central government invited feedback on certain modifications it proposed for NCTE Act of 1993. Should the Government consider following suggestions for improving the quality of functioning of NCTE?

1. Making provision for a State Council for Teacher Education in each state;
2. Giving autonomy to each state council to have its own norms
3. Making at least a B.Ed. degree, if not M.Ed. or M.A. (Education) and experience in school teaching must for chair persons and members of committees of the State Councils of Teacher education and of NCTE
4. Making provision for at least one member from each of the stages of teacher training: pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and higher secondary in each State Council for Teacher Education.
5. Developing benchmarks and standards for various stages of school education-pre-primary, primary, secondary, higher secondary;
6. Developing benchmarks and standards for teacher training at primary level, secondary level and higher secondary level teaching and subject specific standards for other levels of school education at each state level;
7. Giving power to examining bodies to give permission to institutions / departments to have initial teacher training programmes for two years and to continue to provide training only after the programme is found to be of appropriate level of quality determined by the concerned State council.

8. Modifying NCTE act to make it function as a National Resource Centre for Teacher education and locating its headquarters in the campus of the National Council of Educational Research and Training, utilising NCERT library and resources.
9. Making provision of adequate number of academicians – school teachers, school principals and school inspecting officers covering various stages of school education-pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher secondary.
10. Making provision for one academic year induction training under the guidance of an expert school teacher, specially trained for the purpose with provision for remuneration;
11. Developing benchmarks and standards in teacher training at national level;
12. Facilitating development of benchmarks and standards in teacher training at state levels;
13. Developing teaching techniques to promote effective learning strategies;
14. Conducting continuous professional development programme for teacher trainers;
15. Awarding teacher trainers for excellence at various levels;
16. Supporting innovative pedagogy;
17. Developing communities of teaching and learning practices;
18. Providing research and learning environments (libraries, computing facilities...);
19. Evaluating ongoing teacher training programmes;
20. Carrying out follow-up studies on products of teacher training programmes;
21. Carrying out comparative studies of teacher training programmes of different states'

The instance of NCTE is given above as an example of functioning of a central government statutory body.

Failure of UGC as a Statutory Body to Perform its Quality Assurance Role

Like NCTE, there may be issues related to other statutory bodies like University Grants Commission, Medical Council of India, and All India Councils of Technical Education etc. For instance, in case of the University Grants Commission its role in having four year degree course in Delhi University and again reducing the duration from four years to three years is an interesting issue. Before NCTE came to existence, University Grants Commission was silent spectator of nearly THIRTY NINE THOUSAND B.Ed. students enrolled by one university near Delhi in its correspondence course and did not care the damage it was causing to school education. The episode of nearly TWO THOUSAND PG students in one face to face mode department of one university mentioned earlier is another instance of UGC. Its process of granting autonomy to colleges has also been questioned (Mohanty 2015b).

Should Opinion of State Governments on Modifying Acts Related to Statutory Bodies?

In order to assess the process of functioning of the statutory bodies; it may be perhaps useful to invite the state governments to come out with various issues related to quality monitoring process of these statutory bodies in their own states.

Should Various Acts Related to Statutory Bodies Under the Central Government be Modified to Restrict Their Action to Evaluation of Programmes?

An institution might be having manpower and material resources at the time of inspection by statutory bodies for getting recognition. It is a well known fact that soon after the inspection, these resources may shift from their location. Even head of the institutions may also be removed. Hence evaluation of the process in which programmes are run is more important than the stock taking of physical and human resources available at the starting of the course. It is a fact that nonattendance of theory and practical classes is not only found in profit making private institutions, but also found in case of government institutions. There is an interesting fact in case of one government teacher training college. The principal of the college struck off names of some students, who were continuously absent from the classes for more than four months, without any intimation. After a few months, one of the aggrieved students filed a case in the local district consumer court that as he was suffering from TB he could not attend classes. The court fined the principal

for his action. However, the Directorate of Teacher Education of the State challenged the decision at the High Court, which quashed the punishment to the principal.

Episodes as found in case of NCTE can also be found in case of other statutory bodies. Hence, proposed NPE may consider giving freedom to affiliating bodies like universities giving preliminary recognition and in making role of statutory bodies restricted to evaluate performance of institutions (PROCESS EVALUATION) in respect to various programmes by considering aspects such as (a) admission procedure, (b) teacher preparation, (c) teaching techniques of teachers, (d) student use of library and internet facilities, (e) profiles of teachers and students, (f) peer feedback and department head/ institution head feedback records, (g) opinion of ex-students and their parents regarding the performance of the institutions, etc. There are many occasions, when the Central Government gives direction to statutory bodies. For instance, Economic Times, Chennai Edition (2015, October 29, p. 2) had a news item entitled “UGC asked to change rule to let Sanskrit Sansthan expand”. There have been also reports that there may be instances where even state government institutions might be submitting inflated data to UGC to get more grants. Hence, should the proposed policy document consider restricting roles of regulatory bodies to activities of national resource centres in the concerned areas and monitoring of the process of implementation of various programmes?

Should Various Acts Related to Statutory Bodies under the Central Government be Modified to give the Responsibility of Starting of the Programme to Affiliating Bodies?

State governments can transfer teachers from one institution to another. On the eve of inspection by a visiting team sent by a statutory body, there have been instances of posts being filed up and the teachers so posted going back to their original posts soon after the inspection. Such types of occurrence in government institutions might have prompted certain private organisations having varieties of institutions moving furniture and equipment from one institution to another to fulfil conditions of recognition.

CONCLUSION

In order to have an effective NPE 2016, it may be necessary to have a review of the functioning of all statutory bodies as regards their efforts for governance reforms for quality and take into consideration the problems being faced by affiliating bodies and state governments in running various courses in their own institutions and departments. Such a study may take into consideration quality control mechanisms being followed by US, which has more number of States than ours. The proposed NPE may also consider having state level quality control mechanisms.

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