

A Critical Appraisal of the Newly Designed Two Year B.Ed. Syllabus by the State Universities of Rajasthan

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1. Prologue

In 2014, the NCTE brought out a curriculum framework for a two year B.Ed. course of studies and provided some suggestive guidelines for syllabus designing in the light of the new norms and standards 2014. Consequently, all the universities of Rajasthan prepared a two year B.Ed. course of studies.

This paper aims at objectively and critically analysing and interpreting the cardinal issues involved in the two year B.Ed. syllabus prepared by each of the state universities of Rajasthan in terms of the following framework.

1. What is the status of Teacher Education in the state and its universities?
2. How have these state universities prepared a new two year B.Ed. course as desired by the NCTE?
3. Does the two year B.Ed. course (prepared by these each of the state universities) follow and reflect the spirit of the NCTE'S norms and standards 2014, and its Curriculum Framework for two year B.Ed. course ?
4. What are the shortcomings, anomalies and deficiencies in the B.Ed. syllabus designed by each of these state universities?
5. What should be done in order to overcome the shortcomings and remove the deficiencies in the syllabuses and improve upon them?

2. Analysis and Interpretation

Presently there are 813 teachers colleges in Rajasthan, being run by the private management. In addition to all this, there are five government colleges which have started B.Ed. course this year through their Department of Education. All these teachers colleges and the five Dept. of Teacher Education are affiliated to the different universities in Rajasthan.

It may be mentioned here that there is no Department of Education in any state university except in

the University of Rajasthan (RU) which conducts only M.Ed. course on its campus. Its B.Ed. course is conducted by the private teachers colleges affiliated to it. RU has Faculty of Education which has its Dean. On the contrary, in other universities of the state, a professor of Geography or Social Science or Psychology or any other faculty happens to be Chairman /Dean of Education.

This clearly shows how serious the universities are about teacher education programme in Rajasthan. As required by the NCTE, these state universities have prepared two year B.Ed. course. On the basis of careful, close and objective scrutiny of the new two year B.Ed. syllabus of each of the state universities of Rajasthan, the following specific and general observations along with concrete suggestions and an action–plan are presented below:

Specific Observations

1. Vague Objectives of the Course

Most of the objectives of B.Ed. syllabuses are not only vague and ambiguous but are also practically impossible to be achieved in the prescribed time- limit. The objectives are neither specific nor clear. They do not reflect the essential course contents and processes in the syllabus. No specific provision has been given in the syllabus for achieving certain objectives. Nearly all the objectives of the practical work are defective and overlap with the theoretical ones. In some syllabuses, some "**Learning Outcomes**" are also listed, many of which are wrongly stated and defectively presented.

2. Unnecessary Text of "Modes of Learning Engagement"

In most of the syllabuses, the text given under this heading has been bodily lifted from the NCTE's document entitled, "*Curriculum Framework: Two year B.Ed. Programme (Dec 2014,NCTE)*". Moreover, it is not required at all in the syllabus. It does not add any significant value to the section of the syllabus. Students are not supposed to be subjected to such intense undesirable indoctrination of a borrowed idea by the syllabus.

3. Defective Nomenclature of Teaching Subjects (" Pedagogy of ")

In some syllabuses, the word 'pedagogy' has been inappropriately used in place of 'Methodology' for all the teaching subjects mentioned in the syllabuses. Academically speaking, the word '*pedagogy*' means '*the practice of teaching or the study of teaching*'. (Longman Dictionary).The word '*pedagogy*' means 'The study of teaching methods. '(Oxford AL Dictionary).Pedagogy is 'a science of teaching' and is itself a separate subject of study during a study-paper of teacher-education such as M.Ed., M. Phil., Ph.D., D.Lit., etc. The word '*Methodology*' means '*the set of methods and principles that you use when studying a particular subject or involved in doing a particular kind of work*' (Longman Dictionary). The

term 'Pedagogy of Language, and Pedagogy of Social Sciences, Pedagogy of Sciences may be used because they belong to a concept operating in a similar group of subjects/ or under a discipline.

4. *Violation of NCTE's Norms Regarding the Teaching Subjects (pedagogy of subjects)*

The NCTE, a statutory body, in its Norms (2014) for B.Ed. has recommended only 4 teaching subjects (such as Sciences, Maths, Languages, and Social Sciences) and a "subject area of the same discipline" at the secondary stage of teacher education. But these syllabuses contain more than 18 teaching subjects (23 in a particular university) which is a clear and blatant violation of the NCTE Norms 2014. As per the NCTE Norms, a candidate may take another teaching subject if she/he wishes. Thus, a second teaching subject must not be imposed on students.

Further, some new teaching subjects have been mentioned in the syllabus such as ***Pedagogy of Sociology, Pedagogy of Psychology, Pedagogy of Political Science (not Civics), Pedagogy of Computer Science***, etc., which have not been allotted and approved by the state government and universities' authorities concerned. Therefore, no college is in a legal position to introduce, launch, start, teach and offer these papers. Moreover, only a Post Graduate student may be allowed to offer these new papers. The subjects such as Pedagogy of Social Science and Pedagogy of Civics are already designed and one wonders how the course-papers entitled 'Pedagogy of Sociology' and 'Pedagogy of Political Science ' are different from them. What is the utility of these papers if not allotted and/or approved by the universities and by the state government?

5. *Unnecessary Justification for 'Internship'*

In some B.Ed. syllabuses prepared by some of the universities in Rajasthan, unnecessary justification and elaboration about 'Internship ' has been stressed. In fact, only the specific details of the internship are required, which are largely missing in the syllabuses.

6. *Ambiguity Regarding School-Observation Phase (Internship)*

A couple of universities have added a new element of School Observation in their B.Ed. syllabuses It briefly and cursorily mentions the School Observation Phase, but unfortunately no specific details are given about 'What to do? Why to do it? When to do it?' and how to do?' This new element of 'school observation' has been launched without any conceptual background and practical framework in view. Some of the activities mentioned in the syllabus for school-observation are, in fact, more relevant for Block Teaching Practice phase instead. It seems that it is the replacement/substitution of Micro Teaching and further it is widely believed that this phase of observation has been introduced in the B.Ed. course on the strength of the inspiration from the BSTC/D.Ed. courses, conducted for elementary school teachers across the state and the country.

Moreover, it is not seem to be prudent and advisable to leave this new and very sensitive course to the whims and individual misinterpretations of the concept without keeping in view the related literature and correct perspectives. It may be noted that Micro Teaching has been discarded (from both theory and practice) by some of these syllabuses without any rationale, without conducting any research-study and without any empirical evidence. However, it is to be noted that some universities have retained Micro Teaching for their two year B.Ed. course introduced from the session-2015-16.

Micro-teaching should not be whimsically dropped at least from the theory–paper because it has been developed historically and paved the way for substantial criticism against Behaviorism and gradually facilitated the genesis of the constructivist theory of learning, which these B.Ed. syllabuses seem to be vigorously promoting and aggressively propagating. Arguably, Micro-Teaching as an indisputably recognized mile-stone in the history of teacher education, cannot be discarded ungraciously. Micro–teaching may be removed for Practice for the time being, but not from Theory. It deserves a respectable place in the B. Ed. syllabus for theoretical purposes. Let it be noted that the road to knowledge is always under construction.

7. Defective Scheme of Teaching Practice

The syllabus of a couple of universities requires every B.Ed. student to deliver 10 lessons in classes during the first year followed by one criticism lesson in each of the two subjects. The remaining 10 lessons are required to be delivered during the second year followed by one Final Lesson in the subject of one's choice. This bizarre mechanism is not only theoretically and practically defective and inherently deficient but also pedagogically and methodologically unsuitable.

Further, this unusual bifurcation/division of the teaching practice phase (10 lessons in the first year and the other remaining 10 lessons in the second year, to be conducted separately with a gap of almost one year) does not serve the intended purpose especially in a professional course like B.Ed. Rather, the whole teaching practice phase (except the Observation Phase) should be conducted at one go (in one attempt only), that is, in the second year of B. Ed. during which a student will have fully studied and conceptually understood the teaching methods of the subjects concerned. And this is precisely the spirit of the NCTE's curriculum framework and norms 2014. It may be noted that the NCTE has provided some basic/fundamental guidelines and obviously has not suggested/dictated such unreasonable/eccentric/bifurcation/division/ splitting up of teaching-practice into two disconnected phases spread over two years.

Therefore, the whole issue needs to be conceptually studied, critically examined and objectively executed in a correct perspective in the light of JVC report. It may be mentioned here that the

two year B.Ed. syllabuses (syllabi) prepared by some universities of Rajasthan have not split up teaching-practice into two parts/years.

It is my humble suggestion at this point that there should be a provision of One Teaching Subject only as per the NCTE norms. Let the student teach 40 lessons in one subject only so that she/he may get full, complete and meaningful training in the subject concerned because ultimately she/he has to become a second grade subject-teacher for which B.Ed. course is basically designed. The existing provision of two teaching subjects is defective in the sense that it not only dilutes the quality of the training/teacher education but is also of no practical value for the teacher being trained/educated. The suggestion for one teaching subject is legal because it in strict consonance with the NCTE's norms) and it would eventually save precious time, cognitive energy and academic resources of students, faculty, colleges and university as well.

8. Irrelevant Practical Work (Practicum Work)

Almost all universities have mentioned some Practicum Work in each of the theory papers. What is worrisome and noteworthy is the issue of side-lining of the criteria of manage-able quantity, desirable quality, practicality, feasibility and relevance of the so-called practicum work proposed in the syllabus. For instance, the paper of a particular university contains the following practicum work;

"I –Section-A:"*1. Preparing a teaching plan based on constructivist approach/child centred approach /activity based learning.*" It may be noted here that this is a compulsory paper and for all practical purposes it has nothing to do with lesson–planning in a specific subject. In fact, it is relevant in a pedagogy subject only. In addition to it, some universities are rather liberal so far as the internal assessment of the practicum work is concerned.

9. Fully Defective Paper-/Paper: Language Across the Curriculum (Including Reading and Reflecting on texts)

Some of the universities have included a separate paper entitled, "Language Across the Curriculum" as suggested by the NCTE. Unfortunately the underlying concept of the paper/paper has not been fully understood by these universities .Rather, it has been grossly and fully misunderstood across the state and even across the nation. LAC (Language Across the Curriculum) is applicable in a fully multilingual context like in Delhi where children (learners)

of a class in a primary school generally belong to various geographical regions such as Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Malayalam, etc. Moreover, LAC is not visible in Rajasthan. Of course, there are various dialects of Rajasthani language (which do not have an officially recognized status and script). Linguistically speaking, Rajasthani is also a variant of Hindi. Thus, teaching of all subjects including languages such as English, Sanskrit, etc. is usually made in Hindi. Since, multilingualism is not perceptively and practically operative in Rajasthan as such, the question of LAC does not arise.

Besides the conceptual misinterpretation, none of the units of the paper (of a university) addresses the intended meaning, broad concept and scope of the paper concerned with this issue. Therefore, all the units (of the paper /paper of the university concerned) are unnecessary and must be immediately replaced and recast/redesigned. The sub –title of the paper (a separate paper/course designed by some universities) given as in brackets is "*Including Reading and Reflecting on texts*". This is an unnecessary sub-title /elaboration for which two separate units (units 4-5 of the paper) have been given in the paper. A couple of papers in the first year only have been given such extra elaboration and addition. It is not clear as to why it has been done for these papers.

The paper contains 5 units followed by 'References'. But in fact, the list of references does not contain any book on the three units 1-3 of the paper / paper. What would students read/study for these units? How would s/he study the paper? No relevant suggested readings are mentioned. The student would be struggling like a fish out of water or would be lost like a rudderless ship. Even if the present units and sub-units are retained, then the very title /nomenclature of the paper will have to be changed in which case there would be no scope for LAC.

10. *Defective Paper for Pedagogy of English*

A close and careful examination of this paper /paper of a particular university reveals the following startling points:

(i) *Defective Objectives of the paper*

Out of the total 10 objectives of this particular paper, four objectives (No.1, 2, 4, 8) have no direct connection with the units mentioned in the paper. Even the other objectives are not essentially reflected in the paper - units both in letter and spirit. *The disconnection between the*

objectives of the paper and the units of the paper is clearly visible and should be appropriately rectified.

(ii) Defective Sub-units

The following sub-units in the paper are largely irrelevant, generally undesirable and hugely redundant for the paper of English : sub-units 1,2,4, and 5 (Unit-1), sub-units 2,3,4,5,6,7, 9, 11, 12,13, of the unit 2, sub-unit 3, (***telegram which has been discarded even by the Postal Department***) under 'd' of unit -3, sub-unit 1 under 'a'. Under sub-unit 4 of the unit -4 ,PPP and ESA methods have been mentioned as methods whereas they are the off-shoots of the Structural-Situational Approach and Communicative Approach which are mentioned under sub-unit 3 of the unit -4. Some globally popular and important methods for second language teaching need to get a respectable place in the unit such as The Grammar Translation Method, Dr. West's Reading Method, CBI, etc. Since the ESA, PPP are not the universally acceptable 'methods' but 'new models' of language teaching, a new nomenclature needs to be given to them for avoiding further ambiguity and more perpetuating damage to the conceptual understanding of ELT.

The following sub-units are conceptually defective: 6, (unit-1), sub-units 2,3,4, 5 and 6 of the unit 5. The following sub-units have been overtly and covertly repeated in the paper : 7 of unit -1, sub-unit 2 of unit 3, sub-unit 3 under 'b-2' of unit-3, sub-unit 3 (genuine reading...) under 'C' of unit 3, The sub-unit 6 of the unit 1 of this paper of English *is directly related to Urdu* as it is stated verbatim (as such) in the subunit 2 -a, of the paper of Pedagogy of Urdu. The paper on English mentions the following sub-unit: "**Aspect of Linguistic Behaviour: Language as a rule governed behavior and linguistic variability; Pronunciation, linguistic diversity and its impact on Urdu**". One may ask: What has Urdu got to do with English here? Interestingly, the same text occurs on another page in the paper for Urdu. Obviously, it has been copied from that paper.

'Eclectic Approach' (sub-unit-3 of Unit 4) is not a special approach as such but an amalgamation of all the approaches and methods prudently used by the teacher as per the individual classroom needs and situations. The whole arrangement of these pedagogic ideas needs to be properly worked out in accordance with the chronology and methodology of ELT.

(iii) Defective 'Sessional' / practicum work

It may be noted that none of the 7 practicum work for this paper is directly related to the whole paper /paper .As a matter of fact, they are not only a replication of the practicum work given under the compulsory paper - 4 but also are absolutely theoretically and practically irrelevant for this paper. The practicum work mentioned at serial number 5 is not an action research but an

idea about a full-length experimental research work which cannot be done without employing valid and reliable tools for data collection. Further, a score of research studies have already been conducted in the connection. It may be noted here that an action research is one that basically deals with a local problem with the locally available solutions in the local contexts. Technically speaking, the practicum-work should be the one which not only enriches the theoretical and conceptual understanding but also enhances the practicability of the same in the classroom contexts.

(iv) ***Defective References***

The references given for this paper /paper of English are those which have been bodily lifted from the paper -4 (Language Across Curriculum). Moreover, most of it is from the NCTE'S document mentioned earlier. One is flabbergasted to not that the same has been repeated in the syllabus for the second year. It is a clear cut case of the 'cut-copy-paste-job' showing the non-application of mind for any linguistic and pedagogic understanding and professionalism. None of the references deals with the paper -contents of the Paper. They are good for nothing so far as this paper is concerned. This is not only erroneous but also disastrous. Rather, it speaks volumes for the competence, skills and the cavalier attitude adopted for the drafting of the two year B.Ed. syllabus.

11. *Unequal Weight to the Units in some papers of Pedagogy*

In a syllabus of a particular university, some papers of pedagogy are unusually rather large/lengthy (such English, Sanskrit, Urdu, Art, etc.) whereas some papers are evidently very short. No balanced and judicious distribution of sub-units is observed in the paper. For instance, the 5th unit in the paper of Pedagogy of Physics (of the university mentioned earlier) is too heavy and large as compared to the other papers of Chemistry, Biology, General Science, Home Science, etc. The paper of Physics is not only lengthy but also too ambitious to be completed in the prescribed time limit. The 2nd unit of the paper of physics is, in fact, related to the practical work, not to the theory. Almost the full text of a couple of units of the paper have been bodily lifted from the textbook for science designed by the NCERT for its students studying for two year B, Ed. course on its campuses of RIEs.

The pedagogy papers of Sociology, Political Science, Psychology, Art, Music, etc. have not been adequately conceptualized, fully developed and properly designed. In the paper for the pedagogy of Geography two sub-unit (1,2) of unit -3, some content of geography has been given whereas no other paper has such full length and specific provision. There should be uniformity in the policy in this regard.

12. *Undue Advantage through the Paper /course for Art and Craft*

This is a compulsory paper/course designed by a particular university. In addition to it, this is more or less the same as an optional paper entitled "Pedagogy of Art ", which contains most of the units of the compulsory paper on Art and Craft. Thus, the students offering it as a teaching subject will obviously earn marks in two separate exams for the same paper. The similar is the case with the paper of LAC in which case the language students are doubly rewarded. This is a grave mistake/error which should be immediately rectified.

13. *Defective and Inadequate References /Web- links*

The syllabus (of a particular university) wrongly uses the term/word "**References**". Technically speaking, the term/word 'References means, a book or article from which information has been obtained.'(Longman). It is pertinent to mention here that there is a more appropriate term '**Bibliography**, which means," a list of books and articles that are about a particular subject."(Longman). Since it is a syllabus, it should either have a bibliography or a list of suggested readings. Further, it is to be noted that the books mentioned in the list of references are inadequate because they do not touch upon/cover all the units of the paper. There is no provision of Micro–Teaching in the syllabus but one is dismayed to discover that there are books on micro teaching mentioned in the reference section of the syllabus, and the reference of Peace Education is given in the paper of Pedagogy of Maths. The reference list of the First Year has been repeated /copied for the second year .The reference lists have been largely copied from the NCTE's document without applying the criteria of suitability, relevance, and availability for the papers concerned .Most of the books mentioned are either out of print or outdated.

Some of the members of the Paper Development Committee have inserted/thrust the names of the books (written by themselves) into the list of references without keeping in view the criterion of the utility of the books they claim to have authored. It seems that they have used the syllabus as a launching pad for the publicity of their own books. Only relevant books authored by them should be welcome. The list of books for pedagogy of Music is incomplete, inadequate and does not have details about the year, and place of publication. New books need to be mentioned for providing the students with the latest information in all the subjects/papers concerned .The list of suggested readings should ideally and practically be available either in the college library or university library or bookshops in market so that students may have an easy access to the intended reading materials. Otherwise, the list of books would not serve any meaningful purpose but be just a formality or window-dressing. In a couple of paper, some web-links have been given but in the rest of paper, no web-link has been provided. Since it is a policy issue, it should be consistently adhered to.

Significant General Observations

1. *Is it a syllabus or a curriculum?*

Firstly, it is not clear whether the two year "B.Ed. syllabus" prepared by some of these universities is a 'syllabus' or 'curriculum' because careful and close scrutiny reveals that the syllabus/curriculum is an amalgamation of the both. Secondly, with so much redundant elaboration and explanation in defence of the new schemes, it seems more like a curriculum than a syllabus. It may be mentioned here that "*a syllabus is a specification of the content of a paper of study. The term itself is closely associated with papers of general or academic study. In drawing up a scheme of work and individual lesson plans, the teacher translates the contents of the syllabus into an appropriately sequenced series of lessons designed to enable learners to achieve the learning outcomes which the syllabus sets out.*" (Oxford Dictionary of Education).

"A syllabus is a plan that states exactly what students at a school or college should learn in a particular subject." (Longman). Whereas the term 'Curriculum' is broad in nature and scope and thus it refers to 'the subjects that are taught.....' (Longman). It may be further mentioned that the NCTE has already brought out a curriculum framework for a two year B.Ed. course.

The Committee for Course Development, presumably owing to a gross misinterpretation or possibly under a wrong impression, has bodily lifted /copied/ plagiarized some matter/text of the NCTE's two year B.Ed. curriculum framework (shockingly, without acknowledging it). This whole unfettered exercise has inadvertently caused a considerable organized 'chaos' in the syllabus which needs an immediate course -correction in a holistic, objective and unbiased manner.

Arguably, the university/universities should have a 'syllabus', not a curriculum at this stage for the intended clientele (B.Ed. students). In addition to the syllabus, the university, if required at all by the stakeholders, may eventually prepare a separate document as 'B. Ed. Curriculum'. Therefore, the university must take up a redoing of the whole syllabus both in terms of the modus-Vivendi and modus -operandi so that an unequivocal syllabus is prepared for the prospective secondary school teachers by spelling out their present and future professional needs.

A. It may be humbly mentioned that a syllabus for B.Ed. course should be designed by keeping in view the following cardinal questions:

- I. What are the major, specific and achievable goals (not aims) based on the present and future needs and challenges in the prescribed time limit (here 2 years)?*
- II. What theoretical and practical inputs, in a form of a fruitful course of studies, are essentially required for achieving the predetermined goals?*
- III. What is the practicable, implementable and largely acceptable plan of action for it?*

2. Unnecessary "Introduction" and Justification for Two Year B.Ed. course

It may be noted that the two year B.Ed. syllabus of a couple of universities contains a very long "Introduction" which is an unnecessary, undesirable and conceptually vague attempt made to present a rationale about the newly launched two year B.Ed. course. It may be mentioned here that it was JVC (Justice Verma Committee constituted by the Hon. Supreme Court of India) report which vigorously and forcefully has argued for a longer duration (*of course, not for two year duration*) for B.Ed. course which the NCTE, under the directions of MHRD, has accepted without really understanding the spirit of the JVC report. It is beyond comprehension as to why universities are defending a decision which they have not taken. It is just a legal obligation for universities to follow what has been dictated by the NCTE via MHRD. Obviously, universities cannot do something which NCTE (a statutory body) and MHRD do not approve of.

3. The Tall but False and Unfulfilled Claim in the syllabus "... developing language proficiency of teachers ..."

In a syllabus of a university, the paragraph related to this claim reads, "*The curriculum also aims at developing language proficiency of the pupil teacher by providing him opportunities through different activities and paper content.*" The close and critical study of the syllabus shows that the syllabus does not contain any specific course contents and any activity for the above stated/quoted goal. In order to realize the objective of developing language proficiency of B.Ed. students in a particular language (in Hindi or English or both), the syllabus should have a provision of a separate paper/course. It is pertinent to mention it here that the paper/course (language across curriculum) has nothing to do with this objective. That is an entirely different proposition.

4. Unnecessary Diagram (Components of the B.Ed. course)

It is very surprising that the B.Ed. syllabus contains a diagram followed by a redundant explanation. While reading it, one feels that they are reading a textbook or a document, not a syllabus. It may be noted that this diagram/figure / has been bodily lifted from the NCTE'S curriculum framework. It is confounding to note that no acknowledgement of the same has been made in the syllabus.

5. Inessential and Irrelevant Scheme of Distribution of Time / Periods for Theory and Practice Teaching.

No other syllabus /paper (related to the academic stream) of the university does it because theoretically and practically it is never required. When the NCTE has already provided the basic guidelines in this regard, it is beyond comprehension as to why this section has been given

in the syllabus. This addition overtly and covertly shows the deep -rooted distrust in the teachers colleges affiliated to the university and is absolutely unnecessary for checking and controlling the academic autonomy of the colleges concerned. It not only denigrates the syllabus but also paves the way for unnecessary administrative interference by the university in a purely academic matter concerned with the individual colleges. A university is expected to just provide the academic and assessment details .Arguably, a syllabus should not get involved in the management of the institutions for which the office of the Registrar (of the university concerned) is already available. It is not only an insult to the autonomy but also an unnecessary imprudent effort to control teachers colleges /institutions .Since the specific details of each of the programme are already given in the relevant section of the syllabus, this scheme of time distribution is absolutely uncalled for and must be immediately done away with.

6. The Frequent Use of An Inappropriate Word" children" in place of 'learners or students'.

The B.Ed. syllabus of these universities is loudly claimed to have been designed by 'teacher educators who are supposed to know the subtle difference between ' children', 'pupils', 'students' and 'students'. The syllabus of a couple of universities (being discussed here) frequently erroneously uses the word 'children'. It may be mentioned that Educational Psychology makes the difference discernibly clear between the words/terms '*children*',' *pupils*',' *learners*' and '*students*'. Generally at the primary/elementary level, the term 'children' /'pupils' is used whereas the term 'students' / 'learners' is used for the secondary school students when 'students/ 'learners ' attain greater cognitive ability and thus are required to 'study ' and thus they become 'student' from being 'children'. Therefore, the syllabus for B.Ed. should use an appropriate term which is either 'learners ' or 'students ' in place of 'children'.

7. Defective "Year-wise Distribution of Paper s/Papers.

The annual distribution of the papers/ courses of studies as decided and presented for the First Year and the Second Year also needs reconsideration because of the following reasons:

The Paper (Knowledge and Curriculum) and the Paper - (Assessment for Learning) are more suitable for the First Year rather than the Second Year (as presently wrongly given) because the student-teacher should be enabled to know the basic concepts of 'knowledge ' and 'curriculum' in the First Year which would eventually help the student –teacher prepare lesson-plans and unit- tests for delivery in the real classrooms situations during the teaching –practice phase .

The Paper -1 (Childhood and Growing up) is theoretically misplaced, because the B.Ed. course does not aim at preparing the per-primary, primary and elementary school teachers who should

know about 'Childhood and Growing Up'. The B.Ed. course is essentially designed for the teachers who are required to deal with the school -students (not children) who are generally going through the 'adolescence' period. Thus, the nomenclature " Childhood and Growing up " may be more suitable for the D.Ed./BSTC paper. It should be simply 'Educational Psychology' at the secondary stage or a more suitable title. The Paper -7 is also not suitable for the B.Ed. course because of the reasons cited above. As the name itself suggests, the paper/course -9 (Open Air Session /SUPW) camp is a ***field -work*** and it *has no course* (units and sub-units) to study. Evidently, it is a practical activity to be conducted in a period of just five/two days as the syllabuses propose.

8. Vague Units in Papers

In the B. Ed. syllabus of a particular university, some units of some papers are largely vague and ambiguous and presented broadly haphazardly. It is difficult to set questions on some units for exams. In the Unit-1 of the Paper -2, there is undue emphasis on educational thinkers due to which the main philosophy of education, the particular thought or 'ism' /ideology has been craftily or erroneously sidelined/discarded which has caused considerable damage to the paper. Sociological aspects of education have not been given due importance as has been the case over the last 70 years. CCE and Constructivism have been unduly included in almost all the teaching –subjects while as a matter of fact, these two new additions should be ideally be part the core- paper (dealing the issues of teaching and learning) without unnecessary replications in other subjects because they are not subject- specific concepts /constructs but are basically related to teaching and testing aspects in general.

Peace- Education has been made a separate 'optional paper' while as a matter of fact, it should be a sub-unit in a core course. In most of the cases of the paper, the old materials have been ritually included but consequently in this cosmetic exercise and incomprehensible haste, the vital threads/ideas of the major educational developments, significant theories and pedagogic framework have been unobtrusively distorted, unreasonably abandoned/misplaced, vaguely worded and unprofessionally presented.

9. No Connectivity with the RPSC, RBSE and PTET Syllabi

It may be specifically noted that the RBSE (Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education) conducts eligibility exams for school teachers. The PTET (Pre Teacher Eligibility Test) conducts an exam for the selection of candidates for B.Ed. course. (The B. Ed. course aspirants generally study B.Ed. books in order to get through the PTET). The RPSC (Rajasthan Public Service Commission) conducts the selection exam for recruitment of teachers for jobs in government set-

up. All such state controlled and state funded examination conducting bodies have their own specific syllabi and exam schemes for school teachers.

In this context, it may be mentioned that the two year B.Ed. course prepared by the these universities does not seem to be largely catering to the prospective needs of such candidates/ job –aspirants who would be eventually produced by the universities in the coming couple of years . For instance, a particular university has done away with some important paper contents, Micro Teaching and such other pedagogic activities for which questions will be asked by the RPSC, RBSE in their exams.

Thus, these two year B.Ed. students of the university would be at a big loss without their any fault and would obviously perform poorly in comparison to the students of the other universities of the same state. This would cause apprehension, inequality, injustice and discrimination. Therefore, the syllabus should be recast, be broad based and thus adequately help students cope with the future challenges and successfully write the exams conducted by RPSC, RBSE, etc.

10. Spelling Mistakes and Grammatical Errors

The syllabus of these universities is generally full of spelling and grammatical mistakes and errors.

The whole document of the syllabus requires careful proof reading and linguistic editing for greater clarity and objectivity. The cover page of a syllabus contains," Two–years programme, year 2015-16, 2016-17". Such monumental mistakes and errors should be immediately rectified.

11. Why is the Syllabus only in English, not Bilingual?

All the universities have published the B.Ed. syllabus in English (except for the methodology paper of Hindi). It is generally observed that 99% of B.Ed. students are those who pursue their studies in the regional language (here Hindi). Further, most of them are from the rural and tribal background and have done their graduation through the vernacular .These students generally have to face linguistic difficulties posed by the syllabus which is only in English. The faculty members of the teachers colleges also have the similar challenge to deal with .The examiners too translate the questions in Hindi and they are found to be translating defectively and hugely differently. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that the syllabus be prepared both in correct English and Hindi.

12. Inessential List of the "Development Committee "Members in the Syllabus

The list of drafting committee is given in a syllabus of a particular university which is never ever given in a syllabus .The other syllabi of the university do not contain such lists of

14

committee members. Further, the list of committee members for syllabus designing clearly show that the two year B.Ed. syllabus has been prepared by the all (mostly local teachers) teachers of private B.Ed. colleges affiliated to the university.

The list of the committee does not have any serving state university professor or government college faculty members of Rajasthan. No faculty members of other universities or colleges of Rajasthan have been involved in the task of syllabus designing. No member of any national body like RIE (NCERT) Ajmer, NCTE (Delhi) has been involved. The active presence of the experts from the national level, state level and the representation of the government colleges would have not only added great value, enhanced quality and provided desirable national perspective to the syllabus but also would have given it greater legitimacy, universality, wider acceptability and undisputed credibility .

It may be incidentally mentioned that these universities are, in fact, fully government/state - funded and it is desirable they involve the faculty members from the government teachers college of Rajasthan in the B.Ed. course designing task .*The list of the contributors may be used as a document in a relevant file for use of Academic Council of the university concerned, if required,*

in the university for official purposes. The list of the development committee as given in the syllabus of the university concerned must be immediately removed from the syllabus as well as from the university website.

13. About the "Coordinators" and "Review Committee"

A syllabus drafting- committee prepared the B.Ed. syllabus. The same committee reviewed the syllabus. Generally, review is done by other external committee. The list of the coordinators committee and review committee must be immediately removed from the syllabus and as well from the university website. Further, review of the syllabus must be done by a committee of external experts.

14. University's Autonomy ignored/ side-lined / flouted

On close scrutiny of the B.Ed. syllabus prepared by the universities, it is crystal clear that almost 95 % of the B.Ed. course has been bodily lifted /copied from the NCTE's curriculum framework. It is, of course, not a crime to take ideas from the document. But cognitive and pedagogic consistency, professional novelty and logistic practicality of the course in the local context of situations are generally lacking in the syllabus prepared by these universities.

However, in this process of borrowing materials from the NCTE's curriculum framework, the autonomy of the university has been knowingly or unknowingly overlooked. Of course, the NCTE norms are mandatory so far as the issues of course–duration, teaching and non-teaching staff-patterns, admissions, eligibility -criteria, infrastructure, etc. are concerned. Let it be noted that the curriculum framework is a set of guidelines; it is not mandatory like the NCTE'S norms and standards 2014. It may be mentioned here that in scores of legal cases, the Hon'ble supreme-court has also recognized the autonomy of the UGC recognized universities so far as academic issues are concerned. As a result of all this, the NCTE now does not normally dictate terms to universities and interfere in the academic matters of universities which are duly established by the state assemblies and recognized by the UGC.

University autonomy is a special prerogative of a university under the Act of university concerned. Unfortunately, in the case of two year B.Ed. course, the autonomy of these universities has become a casualty and further it has been ignorantly side-lined and encroached upon. The university can make use of at least 20 to 25 % of academic autonomy even in a professional course like B.Ed. which would provide due space to the local socio-economic and educational contexts and needs and thus can honour the regional aspirations. These universities have maintained such autonomy in the past as well. Therefore, by keeping the autonomy in view, the universities should make the essential changes, as suggested here, in the two year B.Ed. syllabus.

An Action Plan for Modifications in the Syllabus

In order to rectify the huge amount of mistakes and errors in the syllabus and to bring about the desirable qualitative change ,the following steps should / may be immediately taken up in the interest of the academic stakeholders.

A high powered Committee for Review and Reorganization of the two year B .Ed Syllabus may /should be constituted consisting of the select senior faculty members from NCERT, RIE, MS University, Baroda, representatives of the state universities and department of teacher education of the government colleges, etc. Workshops may/should be organized for the intended modifications and improvement in the various subjects/papers/courses, schemes, etc. in the syllabus by judiciously involving senior, competent, experienced, skilful, resourceful and unprejudiced faculty members having positive , constructive and democratic attitude. The above mentioned 'Business Meetings' and 'Informed Discussions' along with 'Focused Workshops' may/should be immediately conducted so that the Modified Syllabus is ready and available for use by stakeholders .

Epilogue

Unfortunately the state- funded universities in Rajasthan probably have designed the B.Ed. course under the tremendous pressure. Obviously, owing to the crunch of meaningful resources of time, energy and expertise, both the quantity and quality of the syllabus have become the first causality. Consequently, substantial content has not been added to the existing courses of studies. Rather, the old wine has been poured into a new bottle. Only certain cosmetic, unsuitable, unworkable and unwarranted changes in the operational part of the course (such as duration, bifurcation of teaching practice phase, etc.) have been made. There is no uniformity in these universities' approach to B.Ed. syllabus–designing as they do not seem to sticking to the basic principles of curriculum construction. The syllabus of a particular university is a classic case of hotchpotch. Evidently, the syllabuses have fatal flaws. Conclusively speaking, the new B.Ed. syllabus of each of these universities is worse than their previous one and is no better than that of the other contemporary university's syllabus. This is a very disappointing, frustrating and disastrous situation for teacher education.

The universities concerned would do well to pool their rich , trusted ,time tested and reliable academic resources and expertise once again to objectively conceive , systematically design and methodically develop a meaningful B.Ed. course of studies largely in consonance with the intensions of the apex bodies. The universities should also protect their own academic autonomy provided by the Act of the university concerned and of course, the syllabus is to be in tune with the guidelines of the UGC. After all, the vital issue is concerned with a professional course like B.Ed. Therefore, the new two year B.Ed. syllabus of each of these state funded universities should undergo metamorphosis. The earlier it is done, the better it is. One wonders someone is listening to all this.

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