NEW DIMENSIONS OF PSYCHOLOGY: AN INSIGHT INTO TWO YEAR B.ED. PROGRAMME

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ABSTRACT
Preservice teacher education is an essential component in the arena of higher education with B.Ed. being the most opted for. The new two year B.Ed. curriculum envisions the fulfilment of the aims and objectives of improving the teaching learning scenario of the teacher preparation programmes. Several changes have been induced. The paper aims to understand these changes in the curriculum with specific reference to the contents of psychology. The paper analyses the curriculum framework for teacher education proposed by NCTE'14 along with studying the syllabi of three universities in Delhi. It begins by looking at the contents of the discipline in NCTE framework, followed by analysing the syllabi of B.Ed. in respective universities with reference to the psychology contents. Towards the end the researcher concludes with certain implications for the stake holders.

Keywords: psychology, higher education, B.Ed. programme

INTRODUCTION
"Understanding the learning and growing child is the basic foundation on which a programme of teacher education needs to be built." - NCFTE 2009.

The need and relevance of the discipline of educational psychology can be easily inferred from the aforesaid statement. It deals with the understanding of the teaching learning processes as well as with the ways of improving them. Various essential topics are covered by the discipline such as learning theories, teaching methods, motivation, various aspects of development and the like. It would not be wrong if psychology is considered an important pillar over which the structure of the B.Ed. programme is built upon.

Based on the recommendations of NCFTE, in a recent development the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has released National Council for Teacher Education (Recognition Norms and Procedure) Regulations, 2014 vide no. F. 51-1/2014-NCTE (N&S) dated November 28, 2014 under which various significant changes have been brought in the teacher education of the country. Major changes are as follows:

1. The duration of the teacher preparation programmes was revised.
2. The duration of B.Ed. was made to be of two years.

Apart from the overall structure of the programme, pertinent changes can be observed in the psychology curriculum. The prominent change can be seen as the lack of limitation of the course under
a single head of ‘educational psychology’ since the contents can be seen to be spread across the entire curriculum. This has influenced the nature of the course as well.

**METHODOLOGY**

**OBJECTIVE**

To explore the contents of psychology in the two year B.Ed. programme in three universities of Delhi.

**METHOD**

The researcher implemented content analysis of the following documents:

1. NCTE curriculum framework for two year B.Ed. programme, 2014
2. Syllabi of two year B.Ed. programme, IASE, Jamia Millia Islamia
3. Syllabi of two year B.Ed. programme, CIE, University of Delhi
4. Syllabi of two year B.Ed. programme, School of Education, Guru Govind Singh Indraprastha University

**ANALYSIS**

The analysis of the curriculum framework and syllabi was done in two parts. The first part deals with the overall analysis wherein the contents related to psychology were deduced and studied. The second part focuses upon the nature of the discipline as is presented.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

1. NCTE Curriculum Framework for two year B.Ed. programme 2014
   i. The contents related to psychology in the curriculum:

The NCTE curriculum for two year B.Ed. programme does not have a paper with the heading ‘educational psychology’. However, the contents of the discipline has been spread across the curriculum.

The curriculum is divided into three major curricular areas namely, Perspective in Education, Curriculum and Pedagogic Studies, and Engagement with the Field. The elements of the discipline of psychology are spread over all these areas. Under the curricular area of ‘Perspective in Education’, the courses of Childhood and Growing up, Learning and Teaching and Creating an Inclusive School majorly have psychological foundations.

The second curricular area of ‘Curriculum and Pedagogic Studies’ contains a course named Assessment in Learning whose major component is of the discipline of psychology. Similarly, the third curricular area named, ‘Engagement with the Field’, includes Understanding the Self as a course on enhancing professional capacities. This course with its focus on development of self and personalities, constitutes psychology as a major portion.

Hence it can be noted that the two year B.Ed. curriculum framework recommended by NCTE in the year 2014 has the contents related to psychology spread all over the discipline and not just limited under a particular head of ‘educational psychology’.
Structure of content related to psychology in NCTE 2014 curriculum framework

ii. The nature of the discipline in the present two year B.Ed. curriculum.

Having looked at the organisation of the curriculum framework with respect to psychological content, the researcher now aims to present analysis of the nature of the discipline. The word ‘nature’ here connotes the understanding of the discipline and the way it is presented in the curriculum.

The amalgamation of the content related to psychology with that related to sociology, philosophy and other disciplines makes it interdisciplinary in nature and provides a holistic understanding about a topic for the students. For instance, in the description about the course ‘Childhood and Growing Up’, NCTE states, “The course builds an interdisciplinary framework to interpret and analyse observations and interactions. The theoretical frames would be drawn from cross-cultural psychology, sociology and anthropology to bring together theories of child development and crucial aspects from the construct of childhood, which has political, social and cultural dimensions.” (pg. 8)

Another aspect worth mentioning is its focus on engagement with children. This means the student teachers are supposed to interact with school children in the real life contexts outside the classrooms. Emphasizing this, NCTE 2014 states, “The two important field based components would be to observe children in their natural settings, especially at play (or in a community setting), and to interact with children using activities as a base to establish rapport.” (pg. 8)

The curriculum reinforces the study of development in a socio cultural context of the child i.e. including social, philosophical as well as cultural aspects and not just focussing upon the psychological theories. This helps for the development of understanding of the aspect of diversity by the student teachers. “The students would read about theories of child development, childhoods and adolescence as constructed in different social-economic and cultural settings. The course would importantly include perspective building on the issues of marginalization, of difference and diversity, and stereotyping.” (NCTE, 2014, pg. 8)

Further, the framework emphasizes to establish links of the teacher education institutions with the schools i.e. student teachers get to know the learners in their real life scenarios and not just limiting the implementation of the study to the classrooms. It becomes imperative for the teacher to be aware of these realities in order to understand the child as an individual. In this regard, the NCTE framework posits, “Opportunities would be provided to engage with children’s lived realities in many ways: through biographies, stories, narrations of growing up in different cultures, observations about children by parents and teachers, children’s diaries, testimonies and the media.” (pg.8)
Nature of the discipline

2. Jamia Millia Islamia

1. The contents related to psychology in the syllabus:

Similar to NCTE curriculum framework for two year B.Ed., the syllabus of the university does not have an entire paper under the name of educational psychology. However, the contents of the paper can be seen in different courses.

The two year syllabus is structured under three components, on the pattern of NCTE framework. But these components are different from that of the former. The three components of the syllabus are theory, Courses on Enhancing Professional Capacities (CEPC) and School Experience Programme/Internship.

The paper entitled, ‘Child Development, Learning and Teaching’ is the paper with foundations in psychology under the theory papers. It is a full paper of 100 marks taught in the first year of B.Ed. Apart from this, there is a practicum paper of ‘Understanding the Self’ under CEPC papers. This practicum paper does not present any details of the contents except the one line descriptions of each unit that includes the objective as well as the methodology for that unit such as workshop, performance and the like. For instance, the description of unit III is given as follows:

‘Unit 3: to develop effective communication skills including performing arts.’

Although neither the contents nor the objectives of the paper portrays it to be related to psychology, however, inclusion of this paper under the discipline of psychology in the NCTE curriculum framework was the reason for this choice. It was observed that no specific focus was given to the discipline in this paper in the syllabus, hence portraying the paper as merely for the overall development of the student teachers.

As far as the spread of psychology contents over the syllabus is concerned, it was found that the paper I, named, ‘Sociological and Philosophical Foundations of Education’ has certain aspects that related to the development of the learner. For instance, unit four and five of the syllabus talks about the influence of various aspects such as family, life skills education, media and internet on the development of the learners. The place of child and adolescence in the eyes of law and allied aspects are also presented.

Further, NCTE two year framework has the discipline of psychology spread across three papers, including EPC and pedagogic curricular areas. However, the structure of the discipline for IASE, JMI was different. The university has only one theory paper assigned to the study of psychology related contents with some aspects of the discipline in two other papers (paper I and a CEPC paper).

2. The nature of the discipline in the syllabus.
As stated above, the word ‘nature’ connotes understanding of the discipline as presented in the syllabus. In the case of psychology content in B.Ed. of JMI, it was found that the syllabus aims to strengthen the aspects of teaching and learning among the student teachers. In the course objectives, it states, ‘Reflect on and critique notions of learning and teaching from their own experience and question the wide belief that teaching is telling (informing/demonstrating) and understand their role in building inclusive, culturally responsive classroom that promotes learners.’ Further ‘analyse teaching as a complex profession and examine the values, beliefs, practices, responsibilities in institutional setting.’

Another aspect that was found predominant in the syllabus was that of ‘cognition’. The study of cognition is emphasized in the psychology syllabus. Different components of cognition have been reinforced in different units. It was seen that a complete unit (unit II: learning and cognition) has been dedicated to cognition. Apart from this certain aspects can be seen in unit three and five wherein the aspects of intelligence and knowledge have been mentioned respectively.

Developing an understanding of the socio cultural context is also a component of the syllabus, as was seen in the NCTE framework. This is evident in a sub part of unit three, ‘Understanding the Learner in his/her physical, social, cultural and economic environments’. Further, inclusion in schools/ learning was also observed to be present in the syllabus; ‘Inclusive classroom: Physically, socially, emotionally and economically backward children in the classroom and their learning strategies. Intellectually different children, identification and programme for their education. Learning disabled, slow learners, creative and gifted children.’ This shows an inclination towards the study of diversity among learners. This was also observed in NCTE curriculum framework’s psychology contents.

The two aspects those were found to be missing in the Jamia syllabus but were present in the NCTE framework were, the interdisciplinary nature of the discipline and secondly engagement with children. These two and there evidences are discussed in the following section.

3. University Of Delhi

i. The contents related to psychology in the syllabus

Similar to NCTE curriculum framework for two year B.Ed., the syllabus of the university does not has an entire paper under the name of educational psychology’. However, the contents of the paper can be seen in different courses. The brief summary of the distribution of contents across the syllabus is presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name of the paper</th>
<th>Marks allotted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Foundation course</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Human development, diversity and learning</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Pedagogy II</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Foundation course</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>The inclusive school</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Elective course</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>Education for mental health OR adolescence education</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: two year B.Ed. syllabus, CIE, DU.

As could be deduced from the table, the contents of psychology are spread over the two years, across different courses. NCTE two year framework has the discipline of psychology spread across three papers, including EPC and pedagogic curricular areas. However, the structure of the discipline for CIE, DU was different. As is evident form the table, the contents are spread through foundation papers, pedagogy paper, as well as an entire elective paper is dedicated to studying psychology.

ii. The nature of the discipline in the syllabus.
By the word ‘nature’ it is meant, the understanding of the discipline that is presented and encouraged in the syllabus. As can be seen from the vision and objectives of the paper: Human development, diversity and learning’, an emphasis is given to the socio cultural context of learning and development. This also encapsulates the appreciation and acknowledgement of human diversity and its role in development. Hence, the objectives clearly mention importance of having inclusive education as an essential component at all aspects: theory, classroom discussions as well as practicum. One of the objective states that, ‘To embed the classroom discussions, perspective building and practicum tasks in inclusive education.’ The similar views are extended in the vision as well. ‘Development, diversity and learning are conceptualized as highly interrelated processes, the understanding of which gets complemented by practical experiences in real contexts and not merely theoretical abstractions.’ Hence, the paper presents the contents of psychology emphasizing socio cultural context, inclusion at all levels, reinforcement of learning and development keeping in mind the aspect of diversity and the rich theory-practice interface which implies an active contact with the learners at all levels. It could be inferred that these aspects are same to the ones emphasized by NCTE two year curriculum for B.Ed., 2014. However, what seems to be missing is the interdisciplinary nature of the course that had been a central theme of the framework.

As far as the aspect of inclusion in the syllabus is concerned, an entire paper is designed to cater to it. The paper takes care of covering the concept of inclusion as a whole, from its meaning, to different perspectives, to pedagogy for children with special needs, to creating learner friendly environment as well as evaluating policy formulations.

Further, the university dedicates an entire paper on the study of ‘psychology’ as a discipline. The paper has two parts. The first part deals with the core aspects of the discipline. This includes history, evolution, developments, contemporary issues as well as debates in the discipline. However, the second part is inclined towards the applied form of psychology in schools. The title says, ‘psychology in schools’. The emphasis here is on the teacher of psychology, his/her assumptions, his/ her roles and functions, expectations of the institution and oneself and methodology for the paper. These aspects are not enlisted by NCTE, but the university included hem in the syllabus in the form of a pedagogy (optional) paper.

The syllabus also takes into consideration the aspects of mental health. This is proposed in an elective paper. Another elective is entitled, ‘adolescence education’. Both these papers, among six other elective papers, consist substantial aspects of the discipline of psychology which are directly related and helpful for prospective teachers. However it should be noted that most of the topics covered in these papers, especially in ‘education for mental health’, have not being recommended by NCTE. Probably this is the reason for keeping these papers as ‘elective’ for the student teachers. One of the two papers would be chosen, if the inclination of the student is towards psychology.

4. Indraprastha University (GGSIPU)

   i. The contents related to psychology in the syllabus

Similar to NCTE curriculum framework for two year B.Ed., the syllabus of the university does not has an entire paper under the name of ‘educational psychology’. However, the contents of the paper can be seen in different courses. The university conducts the programme of B.Ed. under four semesters rather than under two years. The brief summary is presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Name of the paper</th>
<th>Marks allotted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Theory paper</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Childhood &amp; Growing up</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Understanding Self</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Theory paper</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>Learning &amp; teaching</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Theory paper</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>Assessment of learning</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be deduced from the table, the contents of psychology is spread over all the four semesters except the third semester which includes only internship throughout.

Another aspect worth noting about the structure of the syllabus with respect to the psychology content is that all the papers are theory papers except for one practical of ‘understanding self’ in the first semester. The reason for this could be the relevance attached to the paper of psychology as a foundation paper. Although it has been diluted by NCTE framework however, the university seems to still keep it intact. The structure hence seems quite heavy in terms of content for the students, especially when each paper has equal value (MM: 100) attached to it.

ii. The nature of the discipline in the syllabus.

By the word ‘nature’ it is meant, the understanding of the discipline that is presented and encouraged in the syllabus. The objectives of the paper ‘Childhood & Growing up’ emphasizes the conceptions of the terms, child and childhood. Along with it also aims developing an understanding of these aspects on a context that will be social, cultural as well as educational in nature for the learner. Hence, the aim is to understand childhood and its development in a holistic manner. Along with this it also proposes to look into the different aspects of childhood with different abilities. Thus making it a point to include the aspect of diversity within the paper. To further elaborate contextual development of learner, the syllabus envisions to understand the role of different agencies in the process. In this regard, the syllabus also takes into consideration about the challenges of the 21st century learners, like poverty, globalisation and adult culture.

The practical paper ‘understanding self’ aims to develop the self of the prospective teachers. It includes reflecting the journeys of their lives, to develop the life skills and at the same time to grow as an individual. It is a workshop/ seminar based paper that does not have any written assessment or theory classes. This paper focusses on the individual being of the prospective teachers. In this regard, it encourages the overall development of teachers in order to successfully achieve that of the learners.

Semester two of the B.Ed. syllabus constitutes a paper entitled, ‘learning and teaching’ which seems to be in line with the NCTE framework. The paper looks into the overall process of teaching and learning. It aims to enhance the understanding of student teachers about learning, learners, different contexts ad perspectives about learning and at the same time, discusses about the concept and nature of intelligence, personality and adjustment.

Another theory paper (assessment in learning) in the first year talks about the assessment and evaluation procedures. These are aimed to enhance the understanding of the concept among the student teachers. It deals with different modes of assessment that are used and can be used as well. Along with discussing with tools and techniques of evaluation, it also deals with the statistical methods and interpretation of scores. Although NCTE does not propose understanding of evaluation procedures as part of psychology curriculum, but the syllabus includes it as an essential part. The researcher considered as part of psychology content due to its consideration of statistics and scoring which makes an important part of discipline of psychology.

Semester four includes a paper named ‘guidance and counselling’. Again, although NCTE, 2014 does not propose it, however, the university decided to include it as a compulsory paper. The reason for this could be guidance being an inevitable area in the teaching learning process and especially in the life of a teacher. Further, counselling and psychology seems to co-exist in almost any scenario, and in a classroom context, it becomes imperative. The paper aims to deal with the understanding of the concept, the techniques involved and at the same time the role of a teacher as a guide and a counsellor.
Apart from this, an entire paper is dedicated to inclusion, ‘creating an inclusive school’. NCTE 2014 proposes to develop an understanding of the concept. Probably on the same lines, the university has developed an entire paper on the same. It aims in acquainting the student teachers with the idea of inclusion in different contexts, understanding the issues in this regard, and also understanding the different needs of the learners. Further, the objectives shows the aim to enable the student teachers understand the nuances in creating an inclusive school.

Hence, as can be seen from the above description, the syllabus of GGSIPU for B.Ed. programme has quite extensive topics covered under the themes of psychology making it a widespread discipline across the syllabus. However, in the backdrop of NCTE, 2014 it could be noticed that the nature of the discipline varies a little. The present syllabus does not takes into the aspect of engagement with children, with respect to psychology, as is proposed and emphasized by NCTE.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

As can be seen from above analysis, the universities present an upgraded view of contents related to psychology. Certain recommendations have been kept intact along with certain naval concepts in the structure and nature of contents. It is evident that the focus of NCTE in psychology is on the practical aspects while linking the theory with practice. However, some gaps with respect to this are visible in specific universities.

With the justified increase in the duration of the course, it is important to make the relevance of the discipline understood by the student teachers in order to keep the motivated and indulged. For this it is imperative to depict direct contact of the theory with the real life outside, hence maintaining a focus on practicum papers.

Further, although spreading the psychology contents across syllabus has inevitable relevance, however, care should be taken not to overdo it making it a heavy discipline for the students to deal with. They should be able to grasp and enjoy the discipline rather than considering it to be a burden.

FURTHER STUDY

1. The curriculum could be compared and contrasted in universities across India.
2. An experimental study could be devised wherein a module for teaching learning of the content related to childhood and cognition could be developed and implemented.
3. An ICT based teaching learning module for the discipline could be developed.
4. The classrooms of the discipline could be observed and analysed to assess the classroom transactions and processes.
5. A comparative study of the government and private teacher educations institutes could be conducted with regard to the implementation of the syllabus.

REFERENCES