



UNIT 8 PREPARING TEACHERS FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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8.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous block you have learned about the education system in India and the various institutions involved in providing education at different levels. You have also studied about 'education as a fundamental right'. The Right to Education Act originates from the constitutional provision of providing free and compulsory education to all children up to 14 years of age. This includes both the primary and upper primary classes, from class I to class VIII, which comes under the broader term of elementary education. Think about the implications of the universalization of elementary education for teacher education at elementary level.

In this unit we will study the background of the teacher education program. What are the considerations of having such program? How will you as an individual, help in achieving the national goal of preparing quality teachers for elementary education?



8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the Pedagogical issues and concerns of the primary and upper primary sub-stage of elementary education;
- give reasons for the thrust areas in NCF 2005 with respect to elementary education
- correlate the issues and the thrust areas;
- explain salient aspects of NCFTE 2009-10 with respect to elementary teacher education;
- justify the need for having different models;
- analyze the various concepts related to reflective practice;
- decide your course of action to become a reflective practitioner;

8.2 PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS OF THE PRIMARY AND UPPER PRIMARY SUB-STAGE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Disadvantages in education arise from inequalities of gender, caste, language, culture, religion or disabilities. They need to be addressed directly, not only through policies and schemes but also through the design and selection of learning tasks and pedagogic practices, from early childhood, particularly at elementary education.

UEE makes us aware of the need to broaden the scope of the curriculum to include the rich inheritance of different cultures and the diversity. The development of self-esteem and ethics, and the need to cultivate children's creativity, are of primary importance.

The following are some of the issues and concerns which need serious consideration and need to be addressed in preparing teacher education programme at elementary level.

- **Curriculum design:** In the present context, there are new developments and concerns to which our curriculum must respond. The foremost among these is the importance of including and retaining all children in school through a program that reaffirms the value of each child and enables all children to experience dignity and the confidence to learn. Curriculum must reflect the commitment to Universal Elementary Education (UEE), not only in representing cultural diversity, but also by ensuring that children from different social and economic backgrounds with variations in physical,



psychological and intellectual characteristics are able to learn and achieve success at elementary level.

- **Systemic reforms:** The education system in our country mainly encourages the individuals who memorize the textbook material and answer accordingly rather than the individuals who answer creatively. This approach lacks educational depth. Basically, it tests how much the student has mugged the given material. The society also encourages them who score the most, in examinations rather than the one who applies his learning in day to day activities. Various other factors which lead to all round development of an individual; personal, social, emotional are barely taken into account in the grading scheme. It is precisely these factors that would determine the effectiveness of an individual in life.. Education needs to focus on the values and principles that are at the core of the success of a student in his career, as well as, in life.
- **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)** offer an opportunity to make the system less bureaucratic, teachers more accountable, and the schools more autonomous and responsive to the needs of children. Decentralization and emphasizing the role of PRIs as systemic reform may accentuate local physical conditions, local life and local environment. Children acquire various skills naturally, while growing up in their environment. They also observe life and the world around them. When they bring their questions and queries to the teacher it will enrich the curriculum and make it more creative. Such reforms will also facilitate the practice of the widely acknowledged curricular principles of moving from “known to the unknown”, from “concrete to abstract”, and from “local to global”.
- **Critical pedagogy:** Critical pedagogy considers how education can provide individuals with the tools to better themselves and strengthen democracy, to create a more egalitarian and just society, and thus to deploy education in a process of progressive social change. It is an educational movement, guided by passion and principle, to help students develop consciousness of freedom, recognize authoritarian tendencies, and connect knowledge to power and the ability to take constructive action. Critical pedagogy includes relationships between teaching and learning. It is a continuous process of unlearning, learning and relearning, reflection and evaluation, and the impact of these actions on the students.
- **Curricular Concerns**
 - **Protection of environment:** The emergence of new technological choices and living styles during the last century has led to environmental degradation and vast gaps between the advantaged and the disadvantaged. It is our duty to nurture and preserve the environment. The need to create awareness of environmental concerns by integrating it in the educational process at



all stages of education and for all sections of society was one of the important core elements in NPE 1986. However making students sensitive to the environment and the need for its protection is still a major concern. A conscious effort is required to connect the learning in school to life outside the school.

- **Peace Education:** We live in an age of unprecedented violence; local, regional, national and global. A disturbed natural and psycho-social environment often leads to stress in human relations, triggering intolerance and conflict. Sound development of an individual's personality can take place only in an ethos marked by peace. Education should empower individuals to choose peace as a way of life and enable them to become managers rather than passive spectators of conflict.
- **Democracy as a way of life:** The Constitution of India guarantees justice, equality and Liberty to all citizens. Democracy requires as well as creates a kind of citizen who pursues one's own autonomy and respects others' right to do so. Education should function as an instrument of social transformation and an egalitarian social order; to inculcate among children respect for all people regardless of their religious beliefs. To strengthen our cultural heritage and national identity, the curriculum should enable the students to reinterpret and re-evaluate the past with reference to new priorities and emerging outlooks of a changing societal context. Education should create citizens conscious of the rights and duties, and committed to the principles embodied in our Constitution.
- **Pedagogical considerations**
 - The pedagogical component has received a weightage of 80 per cent in the curriculum. The curriculum lays a great deal of emphasis on teaching through child-centred, activity-based and cooperative learning approaches. Enriching the trainee's knowledge of the content of school subjects is also an important objective of the curriculum
 - Quality in education includes a concern for quality of life in all its dimensions. Protection of the environment, concern for peace, democratic citizenship and a predisposition towards social change are the core components of quality. The representation of knowledge in textbooks and other materials needs to be viewed from the larger perspective of the challenges facing humanity and the nation today. No subject in the school curriculum can stay aloof from these larger concerns, and therefore the selection of knowledge proposed to be included in each subject area requires careful examination in terms of socio-economic and cultural conditions and goals.



Notes

ACTIVITY -1

Look at the following pictures. If you were the teacher in this picture what would have been your reaction?

Change the teacher's talk in the call out as per your idea.

Picture 1

Picture 2

Picture 1



Picture 2



To summarize, the following points are of concern which requires planning and implementation:

- connecting classroom knowledge to the experiences of children;
- connecting knowledge to life outside the school,
- ensuring that learning is shifted away from rote memorization,
- enriching the curriculum to provide for overall development of children rather than remaining textbook centric,
- making examinations more flexible and integrated into classroom life,
- nurturing an over-riding identity informed by caring concerns within the democratic polity of the country,
- using knowledge and skills of children from underprivileged sections of society to gain a definite edge and respect among their peers from privileged sections.



8.3 THRUSTS OF NCF, 2005 FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION AT THE ELEMENTARY STAGE

The **National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005)** provides the framework for making syllabi, textbooks and teaching practices within the school education program in India. This document is based on earlier government reports on education as ‘Learning without Burden’, National Policy of Education 1986-1992 and focus group discussions. The approach and recommendations of NCF 2005 are for the entire educational system.

8.3.1 Main Features of the NCF 2005

The document is divided into 5 areas:

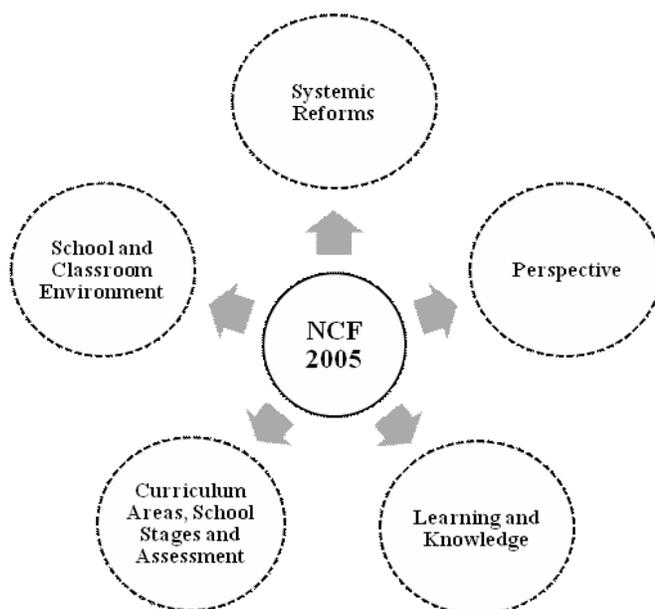


Figure 8.1

For UEE, Indian Parliament has passed a legislation namely “Right To Education” Act, 2009, making free and compulsory education a Right of every child in the age group 6-14 years which has come into force from 1st April, 2010. You are made familiar with this important constitutional provision in the earlier units.

The new thrust in elementary education emphasizes i) universal access and enrolment ii) universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and iii) a substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning.



As a teacher of the elementary school, you should be aware of the basic questions addressed in NCF 2005. They are:

1. What educational purposes should the schools seek to achieve?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to achieve these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be meaningfully organized?
4. How do we ensure that these educational purposes are indeed being accomplished?

The provisions made therein and which have a direct relevance to you as a teacher of elementary education are described below

Training of Teachers

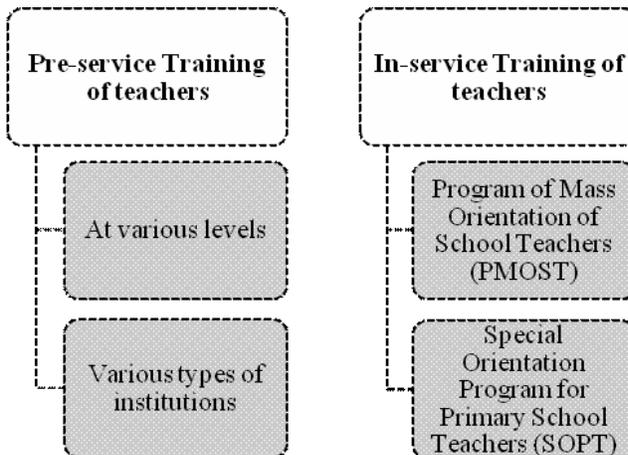


Figure 8.2

8.3.2 Pre-Service Training of Teachers

- The professional skills of teachers in all categories of institutions except the unrecognized ones are determined by the regulations of the state education departments and examining bodies. The level of professional skill required is fixed in terms of academic and professional qualifications which are taken into consideration for granting recognition and affiliation. Therefore, institutions of various types, set up in the public and private sectors, adhere to the norms prescribed by the state.
- Initial training of teachers (pre-service teacher training) is organized at the following three levels, i.e., pre-school teacher education, elementary teacher education, and secondary teacher education.



- Elementary teacher education is organized to train teachers mainly to teach primary classes from I to 5. The minimum qualification for admission into the elementary teacher education program is either 10 or 12 years of schooling. Recently, most states have prescribed 12 years schooling as the minimum requirement though some states still have the entry qualification as secondary school examination. The program duration in the majority of states is two years, while in others it is one year. Elementary teacher training institutions are of three types- government, private aided and private unaided. Recently, DIETs have been set up in all the states. An important feature of the DIETs is that besides providing pre-service teacher education, they also provide in-service education to teachers.

8.3.3 In Service Training of Teachers

In the context of the NPE 1986, the Government of India formulated a national scheme of in-service training of teachers to reach out to elementary school teachers. Some of the programs organized are as follows:

- **Program of Mass Orientation of School Teachers (PMOST):** The objectives of this scheme were to sensitize teachers to the emerging concerns in education, UEE, use of learner-center approach, action research, the emerging role and responsibilities of teachers, enrichment of their knowledge in curricular areas, and other thrust areas enlisted in the NPE. This was a 10 days program in operation from 1986-90 covering about 1.8 million teachers implemented by the NCERT in collaboration with the SCERTs in different states. Films relating to various modules constituting the training print package were telecast on the national network for the benefit of teachers in different parts of the country. Each viewing session was preceded and followed by discussion. A participatory, interactive approach was followed in the training.
- **A Special Orientation Program for Primary School Teachers (SOPT)** was launched from the year 1993-94 to improve the quality of primary/ elementary education as part of the strategy to achieve UEE. The main focus of this program was implementing the MLLs identified for the primary stage, training in the use of Operation Blackboard materials provided to primary-school teachers, supported by media and encouraging teachers to adopt a child- centered approach to teaching. It envisaged covering 0.45 million teachers every year.

8.3.4 Teacher Training for Special Needs

To look after children with special needs, a provision has been made by the NCERT to orient all teachers and education officers by incorporating a component on special needs in all major in-service training programs. The emphasis is on



preparing general teachers and also moving towards the organization of primary schools as inclusive schools focusing on meeting individual needs in the classroom. Teachers receiving this training are supported by multi- category trained teachers who were, provided training by 4 RIEs of the NCERT. Teachers absorbed into special schools, mostly single disability schools or those with multiple disabilities such as spastics, cerebral palsy, etc., are trained under the guidance of the National Institutes for the Handicapped as well as some non-governmental organizations with courses accredited by the Rehabilitation Council of India. A number of universities have also started offering B.Ed., and M.Ed., courses in special education.

8.3.5 Curriculum for Teacher Education at Elementary Level

- The primary teacher, specially, in the first three grades is expected to teach mainly literacy, numeracy and life skills. Besides these, the teacher is required to have knowledge of the process of a child's growth, development and learning.
- The curriculum for primary teacher education is developed by state governments/State Boards of Teacher Education and is reviewed from time to time.
- The NCERT has developed model curricula for elementary education. State governments and universities may adopt/ adapt this in their teacher education program. The NCERT revises these curricula from time to time. We will study the recent curriculum framework suggested by NCERT in the next sub-unit.

8.3.6 Institutional Infrastructure for Training

The infrastructure for in-service training of teachers exists at the central, state, regional, district and sub-district levels. You have learned about them in the unit 4 of this course.

At the national level, there are the NCERT, the NUEPA, the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), Hyderabad, and the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore. At the regional level, there are Regional Institutes of Education located in the four regions of the country-Northern, Western, Eastern and Southern. One Regional Institute has been set up recently at Shillong for the states in the northeastern part of India. At the state level, there are the SCERTs, State Institute of Education (SIE), State Institute of Science Education, IASE, CTEs, and SIETs. Districts have DIETs and In-service Training Institutes. DIETs cater to the in-service education of teachers working at primary and upper primary level. Recently, in-service training centers have been set up at sub-district level, i.e. block and cluster level. To begin with, these centers are being established in the districts covered under the DPEP.



8.3.7 Recruitment of Teachers

Different states follow different recruitment procedures. In some states, the recruitment is made on the basis of the candidates' performance in a competitive examination, whereas, in some other states, recruitment is made on the basis of the academic and professional background of the candidate. The merit of each candidate is determined on the basis of his/her score in the examinations he/she has passed in addition to previous teaching experience, if any. In some other states, a combination of the two procedures, i.e., performance in a competitive examination and merit determined on the basis of academic credentials is adopted; some weightage is given to the performance of candidates in an oral examination held through interviewing the candidates.

8.4. SALIENT ASPECTS OF NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER EDUCATION (NCFTE), 2009-10 FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

Teacher education and school education have a mutual relationship. Each affects the other. Good teacher education will result in producing good teachers. These teachers will deliver good education to school students overhauling quality education in school. Hence the qualitative improvement of the complete range of education depends upon revamping the Teacher Education in tune with the emerging concerns and imperatives of the fast changing canvas of education both nationally and globally.

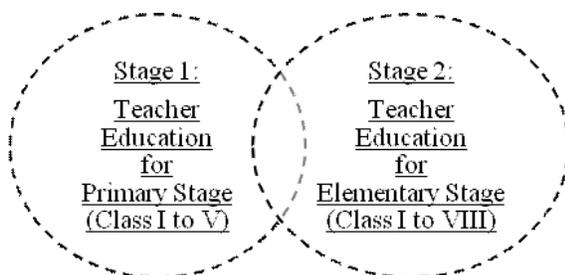


Figure 8.3

This framework for different stages is described below:

Stage 1: Teacher Education for Primary Stage (Class I to V):

8.4.1. Rationale

The teacher needs to be empowered through training inputs to gain greater insights into the complexities of the society and the historical perspective of the



developmental process. As you are aware, the teacher profile is changing particularly from teaching to facilitator of learning, so a flexible framework for elementary education with ample scope for adaptation to local environment is suggested by NCFTE.

8.4.2. Course Content

- The course on Emerging Indian Society mentioned in NCFTE takes into account the thrusts identified in NCF 2005, rights of children, human rights education, values and their broad features, perspectives of educational, social, economic and political development in the country, significant landmarks in the process of development in various fields including science and technology, etc. with a purpose of making the teacher aware of the contextual realities in which s/he has to work.
- The Courses on Psychology of Teaching and Learning, Health and Physical Education, Education of Children with Special Needs are for the necessary theoretical component for understanding the learner, community and the society, the internal and external forces impinging upon the school and the internal and external variables operating upon the learner.
- School Organization and Pedagogical Analysis of primary school subjects are essential as they provide a sound base to function as a teacher.

8.4.3. Training

- Integration of the theory and practice in the training program establishes meaningful and interactive bonds between them.
- Correlation within the curricular areas of learning and external environment is established.
- Teachers need to tackle many problems in their profession. Action Research is included in the training to improve the way, through which the teachers address issues and solve their problems.

The NCFTE proposes that the states can include additional areas for making the course content relevant and region specific.

8.4.4. Transacting Curriculum

The three components of curriculum transaction; Theory, Pedagogy and Practicum, need to be integrated thoughtfully. You know that overall goal of the training program is to create the committed, reflective and effective teacher. How the above three components are dealt with is described below:

- **Theory:** The emphasis is on interactive, participative and activity-oriented approach using lecture-discussion, seminars, media supported teaching,



tutorials, self-study and practical activities. Knowledge of content is given due importance during the course of training.

- **Pedagogy:** Pedagogy is about how you teach. It is a science of effective teaching which deals with integrating content and appropriate method of teaching. Pedagogical analysis of school subjects is an essential component of practice teaching. Pedagogical analysis helps a student teacher to become conversant with the objectives, classroom management and evaluation strategies.

It is expected that a thoughtful integration of mastery of content, the insight gained through pedagogical analysis and the foundation courses will be employed for classroom instruction.

- **Practicum:** Practical work is an essential component for internalizing the theoretical concepts. Thus, it will have to be planned on each aspect of theoretical inputs. In addition, practical activities centering on different school experiences, work education, school-community interaction, action research projects and other educational activities directed towards development of personality of students will also be undertaken by prospective teachers.



ACTIVITY -2

Suggest three novel ideas for curriculum transaction for each of the following:

- Theory.....
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- Pedagogy.....
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- Practicum.....
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8.4.5 The Role of Teacher Educators

The role of teacher educators in curriculum transaction at this level becomes challenging as they need continuous planning, analyzing, monitoring and



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evaluating throughout the course. This necessitates the involvement of teacher educators more vigorously than now.

8.4.6 Evaluation

You are already aware that the purpose of evaluation is to determine the achievement of the desired objectives. Evaluation helps in determining the effectiveness of any program in meeting the objectives. The evaluation system should take into account the intended outcomes of the training program, in relation to Theory, Practice Teaching and Practicum. Naturally it should take place throughout each phase of the process (CCE) and not only as a last step, so evaluation of each of these aspects needs to be carefully planned. Hence, there is an increasingly felt need to introduce internal continuous and comprehensive evaluation system replacing external examinations. This has already been introduced as a part of the evaluation system along with external examination though total replacement of external system by CCE is not considered as possible by many.

8.4.7 Tools for Evaluation

Depending upon the objectives of each of the aspects appropriate assessment tools need to be selected or designed; such as,

- Paper-pencil tests comprising objective-based questions-A balanced combination of essay type, short answer type and objective type questions,
- Oral examinations,
- Performance such as practice teaching, participation in various activities measured through check-lists, rating scales, and observation schedules etc.

Evaluation can be internal, external or a judicious combination of both and assigning grades instead of marks is a professionally sound step as it minimizes categorization of students on the basis of marks eliminating unhealthy competition among learners. It also reduces societal pressures leading to a stress free learning environment.

 **ACTIVITY -3**

You have already read the above content. Frame 3 questions, each on what you have read. Begin the question with what, why and how that can be answered in at least 200 words.

What ①

②

③



Notes

Why	①
	②
	③
How	①
	②
	③

Stage 2: Teacher Education for Elementary Stage (Class I to VIII):

8.4.8 Rationale

The Right to Education Act has evolved from the constitutional commitment of providing compulsory education till age 14. This age range covers a gradual transition from concrete operational stage of development to abstract reasoning process. This demands transition of the teaching and learning processes and a gradual change in teaching-learning strategies from one stage to another matching with the maturity of learners.

8.4.9 Course Content

- The course on Education Emerging Indian Society will enable the prospective teachers to understand the demands that society expects education to fulfill. At this stage a course on ‘Elementary Education in India - status, problems and issues’ is proposed which will promote the capacity to examine if these expectations can really be met.
- The course on Psychology of Teaching and Learning will enable you to learn how to formulate your teaching strategies to promote learning among your students.
- Health and Physical Education will enable you to plan exercises for development of sound. These will also be helpful to deal with children with special needs.
- The course on counseling and guidance will enable you to help children when they are confronted with problem of any kind.

8.4.10 Training

The prospective teachers are to be prepared as to enable them to perform successfully in the pre-instructional, instructional and post-instructional phases of teaching. For this the following capacities/abilities need to be developed



- Action Research will develop your capacity of problem solving
- The pedagogical analysis will provide an understanding of the complexity involved in the teaching of the subjects at the elementary level. This will enable you to plan the educational strategies. A critical observation of model lessons and practice teaching in the actual class room situation will result in preparing you an effective and competent teacher.
- Internship in a school will offer varied experiences needed for working in a school. They will internalize educational value of the work and experience the dignity of manual work.
- The school community interaction would not only promote the interactive support between both but also enable you to evolve suitable pedagogy for children. The organization of education activities will develop the capacity for planning and undertaking such activities as are essential for the development of personality of the student. The theoretical and practical courses suggested in this frame are capable of preparing a competent elementary school teacher.

8.4.11 Transacting Curriculum

Theory: Several well-designed approaches like lecture-discussion, cooperative study, practical and demonstration techniques, self-study as well as projects are needed to be adopted. The teachers should combine different strategies and instructional materials, use supportive media, plan more of hands on experiences, organize field trips and visits etc. Due attention is to be given to children with special needs. The curriculum transaction will have to be adjusted with the needs of students and locally available resources.

Pedagogy: During the process of teaching and learning, the existing transactional strategies marginally promote the capacity for independent study, self-discovery and self-study. They rarely seek prospective teachers' participation and remain mostly a one way communication. Even the cooperative learning approach is taught through lecture. Hence you are not able to practice the learner centred approaches. The above strategies will help the prospective teacher to practice them for their own students because they get a first hand demonstration of their use.

Practice teaching, the weakest link of teacher education, possesses the potentiality of converting itself into a strong component if properly organized. The process of curriculum transaction needs improvement and enrichment. Pedagogical analysis of teaching subjects is sure to refine teaching and learning as it will transform the teachers' performance and develop competencies not covered by the method-cum-content approach. With the background of pedagogical analysis and model and demonstration lessons given by the teacher educator, the class



room performance is sure to improve if it is supervised in detail by the subject specialist.

Practicum: Work education is an important component of practical work and its potentiality has to be utilized by teacher education for developing certain qualities of character. The mutually supported school and community interaction helps the teachers to evolve suitable teaching strategies.

The teachers will be required to organize educational activities in school. They have to learn to plan and organize such activities as are essential to provide opportunities for self-expression and lead to development of personality of students. They have to be trained for utilizing supplementary materials essential for promoting and accelerating learning among students.

8.4.12 The Role of Teacher Educators

The teacher educators will be facilitating physical, social, emotional and aesthetic development of the prospective teachers. Their creative and constructive potentialities need to be fostered. Practical activities will help to achieve these aims. It is, therefore, necessary to organize these activities on continuing basis. The influence of teachers' personality and behaviour has lasting impact on students. In the selection and adoption of transactional strategies the teacher educator has to ensure that teaching becomes participatory, cooperative, activity-centred and joyful so that the prospective teachers can also bring about similar modifications in their teaching-learning practices.

Teacher education has to inculcate professional commitment, develop competencies and make teacher reflective to deal with specific situations.

8.4.13 Evaluation

At this stage, evaluation has to be continuous, formative and comprehensive to bring improvement in teaching learning process. Systematic evaluation will enable a teacher to select proper teaching strategies and effect suitable changes in the curriculum process.

The evaluation of the pupil teachers at the elementary stage will not differ much from that of primary stage and the same principles and similar practices which have been adopted at the primary level may be utilized at this stage.

8.4.14 Tools for Evaluation

The success or failure of the curriculum transaction is ascertained by evaluation done by means of valid and reliable tools which you are already familiar with.



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ACTIVITY -4

Compare the two stages of elementary teacher education on at least 5 points.

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8.5 MODELS OF ELEMENTARY TEACHER EDUCATION, INCLUDING INTEGRATED MODELS

The Education Commission (1964-66) stated that “New courses required to meet special needs should also be developed” (Kothari 1966, Art. 4.26, P. 136). Effective teacher training programmes should promote a culture of innovations and new ideas which can be practiced effectively as per the need and requirement. Training teachers is a complex issue.

There are three distinct possibilities of designing courses in teacher education for elementary stage, which are depicted below in Fig.8.4

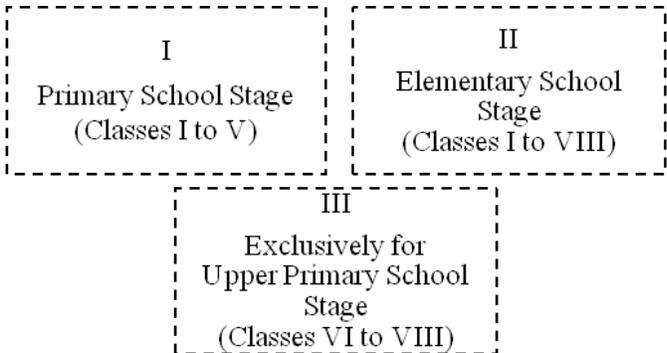


Figure 8.4

Considering the requirement of UEE the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE), 2009-10 recommends separate courses for primary and elementary level (which we have studied in the previous subunit in details) rather than separate course for class VI to VIII as the upper primary schools are comparatively less in number (about 1.76 lakhs) than the primary schools (about 5.98 lakh)*.



*Source: Selected Educational Statistics, 1996-97 retrieved from <http://www.ncte-india.org/pub/curr/curr.htm#26> on 17th August 2011.

8.5.1 Current Status of Elementary Teacher Education

Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.)

This Diploma is designed for students who have completed twelve years of school and are desirous to teach in Elementary school. The duration of the course is two academic sessions with an additional six months period of internship. The curriculum comprises of three components:

1. Theory: Comprising of nine papers for D. El. Ed. first year and eight papers for D. El. Ed. second year including related practical work for each paper.
2. Practical: This includes activities such as Microteaching, Practice Teaching, Social Service, Music, Arts and Physical education.
3. Internship: It is useful to enhance the various teaching skills and practicing appropriate methods of six month duration.

8.5.2 Upgrading Elementary Teacher Education

Education as an area of interdisciplinary knowledge is not merely an application of a few core disciplines, but a praxis and a context where theories and practical wisdom are generated continuously. The secondary teacher education institutions developed in due course into university departments of education and thus elementary teacher education and early childhood education remained neglected as distinct areas of knowledge with their own distinct concerns, concepts and methodological perspectives.

On the basis of NCF 2005 the contents of Pre-service training for a primary school teacher, must emerge from the roles and functions of primary school teacher and should have the potential to prepare the trainees to handle effectively the curriculum of primary classes.

D. Ed. course is undergoing lots of changes, keeping in tune with the changing times and evolving perception about its role and significance in school system. This is particularly relevant with the current initiatives like NCF 2005, RTE-2009, Human Rights and Child Rights, Fundamental Duties, Multiple Intelligence, Participatory Learning and so on. Incorporating the new themes which are well suited with the current scenario necessitates participatory curriculum planning involving all stakeholders. Modular approach, skill learning and practice, a professional approach to training strategies and development of materials, and application of relevant technological, curricular and organizational alternatives, are called for in teacher education processes.

Keeping in view the role of the elementary teacher, the curriculum comprises different types of course contents,

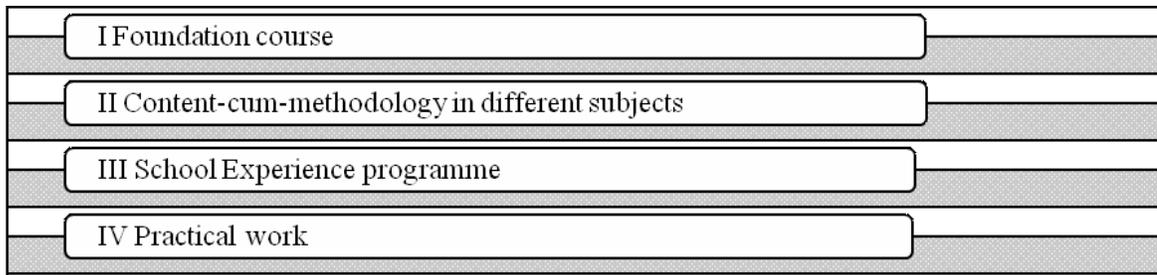


Figure 8.5

Education is closely linked with many disciplines. In fact, its basic concepts have roots in other disciplines like Philosophy, Psychology and Sociology. To understand different processes of education, understanding of these disciplines, specially their implementations in education is of vital importance. The major functions of these courses are to enable the prospective teachers, to develop insight into priorities and problems of teaching-learning processes. It is presumed that concepts incorporated in these courses will equip you to organize teaching learning processes in the classrooms in right perspective.

These latest initiatives taken for making D.El.Ed. course are more meaningful, relevant and excellence oriented. This will indeed go a long way in improving the quality of school education.

8.5.3 Need for New Models

Since elementary education became a fundamental human right, initial primary teacher education has a special significance. Many of the students may leave the education system afterwards for various reasons but they have to contribute to the national development as productive and conscientious citizens and therefore it has a crucial significance to individual as well as national development.

The +2 entry level does not even equip prospective teachers with the basic knowledge of subjects to teach at the elementary level, particularly classes 3 to 8. Neither does the short duration of the course equip them with the necessary pedagogic knowledge for facilitating the learning of children, understanding their psycho-social and learning needs.

The earlier curriculum frameworks provide guidelines that are too general and do not address the stage-specific training needs of elementary teachers. The Curriculum Framework (1998) was indeed a welcome exception. It may be the first to have provided stage-specific guidelines. The establishment of DIETs has been the most important development in bringing the issue of elementary teacher education to the national stage.

You have already studied about *The Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education* (1998) and *Approach Paper for Elementary Teacher Education*



Curriculum Renewal in 2003 by the NCTE that address these issues in greater detail.

The need for specially qualified teacher educators in elementary education is not recognized till recently. It has been taken for granted that the existing arrangements for teacher preparation at different stages would do as well for teacher educators too, B. Ed. for elementary teacher educator and M. Ed. for secondary teacher educator. At present, elementary teacher educators upgrade their professional qualifications by pursuing M. Ed. The training of elementary teacher educators is also done by the M. Ed. faculty. In most of the states the present M. Ed. cannot meet the requirements of elementary teacher training as it is based on only secondary education requirements. Other than the activity of teaching children in elementary school, all other functions are performed by people who are trained for secondary level due to lack of appropriately trained personnel in elementary education.

Thus you know that there is a grave need to upgrade initial teacher education by enhancing the entry qualification and duration of training.

8.5.4 The New Initiatives

- **Innovative Courses to suit to Changing Needs**

Many of the educationists think that the initial teacher education programme should be made equivalent to a degree programme and there is a need to allocate the management and control of elementary teacher education to a professional body of university faculty status.

- Jamia Millia Islamia have started a few innovative courses; particularly M. Ed. in Elementary Education.
- TISS also is also conducting M.Ed. program in Elementary Education at Mumbai.

- **One Year B. Ed. Courses for Elementary School Teaching for Graduates**

A one year B. Ed. (Elementary) course can be made equivalent to two year Diploma course for elementary school teaching to encourage upgrading of elementary school teacher training to higher education level.

- **The Bachelor of Elementary Education (B. El. Ed.) program of the University of Delhi - a 4 year integrated professional degree programme**

The Bachelor of Elementary Education (B. El. Ed.) programme is a four-year integrated professional degree programme of Elementary Teacher Education offered after the senior secondary (class XII) stage of school.



Notes

This is a bilingual programme, conceptualized by the Maulana Azad Centre for Elementary and Social Education (MACESE) of the Department of Education, University of Delhi. Launched in the academic year 1994-95, the programme is an attempt towards fulfilling the need for professionally qualified elementary school teachers. B. El. Ed. is designed to integrate the study of subject knowledge; human development; pedagogical knowledge and communication skills.

Through the B. El. Ed. programme, concerns of elementary education have been integrated into the University system with Delhi University taking the lead. It has also upgraded the professional status of the elementary school teacher by providing for a University degree for elementary education.

At present, the programme is being offered in eight women colleges of the University of Delhi. Over 3000 students have already graduated from these colleges since 1998. A good number of them have been placed in government and private schools as professionally qualified elementary school teachers. Others are pursuing post-graduate studies and research in disciplines like education, linguistics, psychology, languages, history, social work, sociology, mathematics and political science. Many graduates of this course are pursuing research in educational studies in Central Universities; Some of them are working as teacher educators.

The B. El. Ed. programme aims to produce graduates of high caliber in the field of teacher education. A lot of effort is spent in the training of students and giving them a supportive and stimulating environment. Both professional and academic options are available to the students who graduate with a B. El. Ed. Degree as follows:

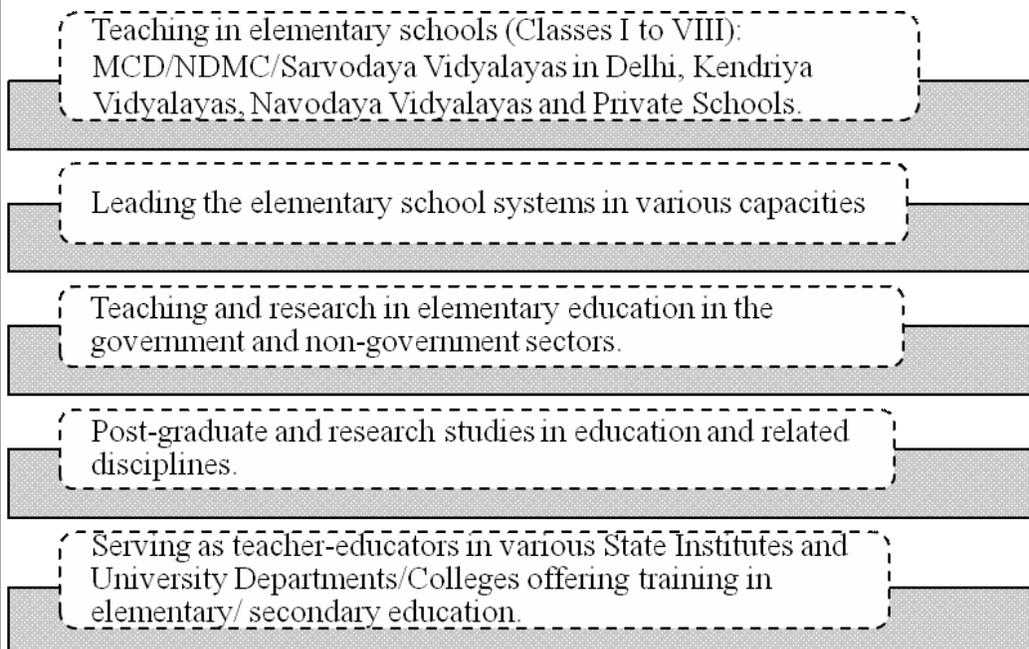


Figure 8.6



Bridge courses to switch over from one stage to another

- A programme is being provided by the government of Uttar Pradesh to make B. Ed. passed candidates eligible for primary school teaching job through their participation in special BTC programme of 6 month duration.

A transition to the new models will need to be completed within a definite time frame – say five years – keeping in mind the time required for preparation of teacher educators as well.

However, the present two year D.Ed. model after twelve years of schooling may continue making it as meaningful and relevant as possible.

8.6 TEACHER AS A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

There come many times in a teacher’s career when, s/he arrives at a point which is not anticipated. S/he has to select the best path, but how can s/he make such a decision? You also must have come to such dilemma of decision making. How have you selected the right approach? Think for some time.

Just now you were involved in reflective thinking. Yes, Reflection allows you to assess the situation effectively and select the best path according to the students’ needs. Reflective practice helps you to think critically about your own teaching, and use that knowledge to improve future practice.

We believe that teachers are decision-makers. They ask hard questions about conventional practice. They use continuous reflection on their beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning, making the process of becoming a teacher, a conscious effort.

8.6.1. Meaning of Reflective Practice

The following definition of reflection helps us to understand the meaning of reflection.

- “Reflection is a generic term for those intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to a new understanding and appreciation” Boud, and Walker, (1985).

Reflective Practice:

- It refers to taking action to improve on what one has learned.
- It is linking objectively thought and action to make changes.
- It involves thinking about and critically analyzing one’s actions with the goal of improving one’s professional practice.



A reflective practitioner is a person who-

- learns from the experiences by critically reviewing the actions, considering the impact of those actions and planning what s/he would do in similar situations in the future
- practices a particular profession characterized by deep careful thought; in our case, a teacher who uses inquiry based approach to improve instruction

8.6.2. What Educationists Say About Reflection

“In reflective practice, practitioners engage in a continuous cycle of self-observation and self-evaluation in order to understand their own actions and the reactions they prompt in themselves and in learners (Brookfield, 1995; Thiel, 1999).”

The goal of reflective practice is not necessarily to address a specific problem or question defined at the outset, as in practitioner research, but to observe and refine practice in general on an ongoing basis.”(Cunningham 2001).

“Engaging in reflective practice requires individuals to assume the perspective of an external observer in order to identify the assumptions and feelings underlying their practice and then to speculate about how these assumptions and feelings affect practice.”(Imel 1992).

8.6.3. The Origin of Reflective Practice

John Dewey can be considered as the first educational theorist to suggest that teachers can improve their practices through reflection. Dewey (1933, p. 118) defined reflective thought as “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends.”

In every case of reflective activity, a person finds himself confronted with a given, present situation from which he has to arrive at, or conclude to, something that is not present. This process of arriving at an idea of what is absent on the basis of what is at hand is inference.

Dewey viewed reflection as a holistic approach to teaching and a way for teachers to solve problems that occur in the classroom. He advocated three key components of the reflective process: open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness.

According to Dewey:

- **Open mindedness** refers to a teacher’s ability to look at every aspect of her/his teaching critically, to seek out information, and to be willing to accept and incorporate new ideas.



- **Responsibility** entails understanding the effect that one's teaching can have on students, and understanding what can be derived from a lesson aside from the intended learning of information.
- **Whole-heartedness** is approaching the work with enthusiasm. Curiosity and enthusiasm are essential for good teaching. If we don't put all our efforts into our work the result won't be as good as we are capable to and we won't achieve the best possible outcome. Whole-heartedness also means that the previous two attitudes of open mindedness and responsibility must be part of our life while regularly reassessing teaching and its effects on students.

8.6.4 Reflection : Experience with Feelings

Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) address reflection as an activity in which people 'recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it'.

They presented the following three aspects of reflection adding feelings to the thinking process.

- **Returning to experience:** recalling or detailing salient events.
- **Attending to/connecting with feelings:** using helpful feelings and removing or containing obstructive ones.
- **Evaluating experience:** re-examining experience in the light of one's intent and existing knowledge and integrating this new knowledge into one's conceptual framework.

8.6.5 Modern Concept of Reflective Practice

Donald Schon (1983) introduced the term **Knowledge-in-action** which refers to the kind of knowledge that is revealed in the way we carry out tasks and approach problems. This knowing is *in* the action. It is seen in the performance but we have not made it verbally explicit. This tacit knowledge is derived from research, and also from our own reflections and experience. This professional knowledge increases with each reflective teaching experience, and allows teachers to continually take action based on this knowledge. He suggested that the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning was one of the defining characteristics of professional practice.

He defined the reflective process as consisting of three key aspects: reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action and reflection-for-action.

- **Reflection-in-action** refers to the reflection that happens while the action occurs. It is the ability to think about what we are doing while we are doing it. He regards this as a key skill. This ability to think and apply



previous experiences to current situations helps in increasing the teacher awareness of the learning needs. It suggests you have the ability to reflect while you are teaching.

- **Reflection-on-action** encompasses reflecting upon the experience before it begins and after it is finished. It suggests that you analyze the successes and failures of your actions.
- **Reflection-for-action** happens when knowledge gained from reflection influences future action. It suggests you are proactive about your teaching.

 **ACTIVITY -6**

Column A is showing the key aspects of Reflection and Column B is showing the description/example of them. For every aspect in column A match the description /example from column B.

Column A	Column B
Reflection-in-action	Designing lessons based on best practice and research.
Reflection-on-action	Checking answer papers of students in the exam.
Reflection-for-action	Checking on comprehension through questions and accordingly adjusting pace of lesson Altering or modifying a lesson before the next class or for future reference.

8.6.6. Zeichner and Liston’s Model of Reflective Teaching

Zeichner and Liston (1996:6) model of reflective teaching emphasizes five key features of a teacher as reflective practitioner. These are:

1. examines, frames, and attempts to solve the dilemmas of classroom practice,
2. is aware of the questions, assumptions and values s/he brings to teaching,
3. is attentive to the institutional and cultural context in which s/he teaches,
4. takes part in curriculum development.
5. takes responsibility for his/her own professional development.

Zeichner and Liston (1996) examined and highlighted the main features of reflective teaching traditions. Five traditions of reflective practice that have guided reform efforts in teaching and teacher education were identified. These are the academic, social efficiency, developmentalist, social reconstructionist, and generic traditions. They stated that: “Each of these traditions (with the exception of the



generic approach) identifies a particular emphasis in the content of teachers' thinking.

- The **academic tradition** focuses on reflecting on course content and how it is taught; the representation and translation of that subject matter to promote student understanding.
- The **social efficiency** tradition refers to using methodology rooted in scientific research as the basis for instruction and the standard by which teachers reflect upon their work.
- The **developmentalist** tradition emphasizes reflecting on one's approach based on students' backgrounds, interests, thinking and developmental and academic level.
- The **social reconstructionist** tradition stresses reflection about the social and political context of schooling and the assessment of classroom actions to enhance equality, justice, and more humane conditions in schools and society. Teachers need to be aware of the cultural, political and institutional influences present in their work and in the lives of their students.
- The **generic tradition** represents what the general reflecting teachers do in their work without attention to the quality or substance of that thinking.

Good teaching needs to attend to all of the elements that are highlighted by various traditions: the representation of subject matter, student thinking and understanding, research-based teaching strategies, and the social contexts of teaching.

They also emphasized that:

- If teachers did not question the goals, values, and assumptions that guided their work and did not examine the context in which they taught, then they were not engaged in good reflective teaching,
- Reflective teaching entailed critical questions about the ends, means and contexts of teaching,
- Good reflective teaching also needed to be democratic in the sense that teachers must be committed to teaching all of the students to the same high academic standards, and
- It must be democratic and self-critical.

8.6.7. Methods of Reflection

You would like to record a particular event or incident because you think it is critical or significant for you. You should record the situation, your role, result of your action and a reflection on the situation or event. It can be recorded in the following ways:

- **A Narrative**-is a story of an experience or event written in the first person, which enables links to be made between personal and professional development



Notes

- **A Reflective Journal-** is a reaction to the event or experience looked upon in different ways linking the experience with other experiences and the learning from the situation. It also has record of what you need to learn and how you might achieve your identified learning goals.

 **ACTIVITY -7**

Write an essay on the topic “On becoming a reflective practitioner.....”
(15 to 20 sentences)

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8.7 LET US SUM UP

Thus, in this unit, we have studied the pedagogical issues and concerns of the primary and upper primary sub-stage of elementary education which led to the thrust areas in the National Curricular Framework-2005 for school education. The main focus we studied here was particularly related to the training of teachers; both at pre-service, and in-service levels; the required institutional infrastructure for training and the recruitment of teachers at elementary level.

The national curriculum framework for teacher education (NCFTE), 2009-10 took cognizance of these areas and highlighted specifically the salient aspects for elementary teacher education with respect to teacher education for primary stage (class I to V) and for elementary stage (class I to VIII) such as the rationale, course content, training, transacting curriculum, evaluation and tools for evaluation.

We also discussed different models of elementary teacher education including upgrading existing models and the new initiatives in the form of degree level and integrated models. But all these efforts will go in vain if the teachers do not adopt the innovative ideas in practice. This needs reflective teachers and therefore we studied the meaning of reflective practice and methods of reflection for continuous improvement.

The teacher eligibility test (TET) has become a pre-requisite for teaching at elementary level and hence we should know the way it is conducted.

8.8 GLOSSARY/ABBREVIATIONS

- **Praxis:** the practical side and application of something such as a professional skill, as opposed to its theory.



8.9 SUGGESTED READINGS & REFERENCES

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8.10 UNIT-END EXERCISES

What changes you envisage in your role as an elementary teacher in the light of the NCF 2005 and NCFTE 2009-10? Describe in 300 words.