

The Curriculum of Assam's Elementary Teacher Education Program: An Examination in the Context of the National Curriculum Framework for 2005

Nizara Devi Adhikary

Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Education, Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva, Vishwavidyalaya, Nagaon, Assam, India

Abstract: Primary educators focus on teaching a specific grade level of students, including a variety of core disciplines such as language arts, math, science, social studies, music, and physical education. In a program of study, the curriculum outlines the expected knowledge and skills that students will learn. National and state standards are included, along with resources created by teachers and textbooks. The material that has been compiled and deemed pertinent to a certain subject is called the curriculum. Elementary Education in Assam is overseen by the Directorate of Elementary Education, which is also in charge of its growth, expansion, inspection, supervision, tracking, and assessment.

The D.El.Ed Course is an in-service and prospective elementary teacher education program offered in India. The primary objective of this study was the examination of the D.El.Ed. course curriculum and curriculum transactions at the elementary education level in relation to the National Curriculum Framework (NCF)-2005. The NCF-2005 on curriculum transaction at the elementary level and curriculum in the D.El.Ed course with regard to the objectives, contents of curriculum, teaching methods, and evaluation serves as the context for the content analysis in this study.

Keywords: Curriculum, Assam, Elementary, Teacher Education, Program, National Curriculum Framework for 2005, D.El.Ed Course.

Introduction:

By teaching language skills and encouraging pupils to think and act for themselves in positive, meaningful, and developing ways, teachers play a vital role in helping to shape the personality of the child. "Of all the numerous variables which determine the quality of education and its contribution to national development, the quality, competence, and character of teachers are without a question the most significant" was highlighted by the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) in this outlook. According to the NCF-2005, which recognizes the value of educators, the degree and caliber of student achievement are determined by the skill, compassion, and drive of their teachers. Instructors' professional and academic standards establish sound learning environments that help students achieve their learning goals (NCF-2005).

A framework for choosing and creating experiences that educators feel children should have is intended to be provided by the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), a document that schools and teachers can use. The four subjects it addresses are learner assessment, experience organization, learning outcomes, and learning experiences. All it does is provide recommendations and counsel on a variety of educational topics. 1975 saw its release, and it was reprinted in 1988, 2000, and 2005. On contrast to previous NCFs that were grounded on behaviorist psychology, the NCF-2005 was informed by constructivist psychology. With the help of NCF, a national education system in India can be created that upholds a fundamental set of moral values despite its many geographic and

cultural settings. Furthermore, maintaining national integration without compromising the country's pluralistic character requires raising the bar for all schooling standards to the same level.

A "primary teacher education program" is a type of teacher preparation course that aids in the professional development of elementary school teachers. The curriculum includes the D.El.Ed. program in Assam, which is intended to prepare future educators for the foundational years of schooling and establish a foundation for the teaching profession. SCERT, Assam has been working to control and monitor the D.El.Ed course administration in the institutions that train elementary teachers since its founding in 1985. NCERT's state equivalent is called SCERT.

The elementary school curriculum, textbooks, and teacher training program in Assam are all being established in compliance with the National Curriculum Frameworks. It also periodically develops pre-service and in-service teacher training in compliance with NCTE standards. At the moment, SCERT, Assam is in charge of elementary schools and establishments that train future elementary teachers, including normal schools, BTCs, DIETs, etc. The diagram below shows the number of institutions that fall under the administration of SCERT, Assam.

Statement of the Research Problem:

There is a very high rate of school dropout, particularly among girls. Children drop out of school for a variety of reasons, including cultural influences, poverty, a patriarchal mentality, a shortage of restrooms in schools, and travel time. The absence of proper laboratory equipment, teaching learning materials, and qualified staff is one of the main issues Assam's teacher education schools are now confronting. Gender inequities, the dropout rate among girls, and obstacles to access and retention are challenges to the goal of universalizing elementary education that call for ongoing efforts by the government and communities to address. For research purposes, the 2005 National Curriculum Framework in conjunction with the Elementary Teacher Education Program Curriculum in Assam is quite valuable.

Related Works:

1. Devi Krishna Bonia & Dr. Vivek Singh (2022), in their paper titled "Teacher Education in Assam: as it Stands" highlights since independence, teacher education has logically expanded and developed in Assam as well as the rest of India. In the six decades since independence, teacher education has changed from its initial dreary framework to a complex web of institutions and initiatives.
2. Rod Hemsell (2012) in his paper titled "National Curriculum Framework and Integral Education" emphasized the 2005 government of India's adoption of the new National Curriculum Framework and discusses education reform.
3. Prashant Borkar (2021) in the paper titled "National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005) - A Complete Guide" emphasizes that a curriculum framework is a uniform structure, planned strategy, or learning objective that serves as the basis for a course's curriculum. It seeks to specify precisely what the students should know or be able to do during the course.
4. Dr. Deepa Sikand Kauts & Malkeet Kaur (2019), in their paper titled "A Study of Awareness of National Curriculum Framework (2005) Among Secondary School Teachers of Ludhiana District, Punjab" emphasizes that the school is a place where students' talents are developed. And curriculum is an integral component of education. As a result, it is crucial to update and modify the curriculum frequently and implement the changes in actual procedures.

Objective of the Study:

The major objectives of the study are-

1. To examine an NCF-2005 content analysis about the goals, content, instructional techniques, and assessment of curriculum transactions at the elementary school level.
2. To look at an NCF-2005 content analysis pertaining to the goals, topics, methods of instruction, and curriculum assessment of the D.El.Ed course as established by SCERT, Assam.

Research Questions:

1. Does the curriculum transaction at the elementary school level include goals, content, instructional strategies, and assessment data available in an NCF-2005 content analysis?
2. How do the objectives, subjects, teaching strategies, and curriculum evaluation of the D.El.Ed course, as defined by SCERT, Assam, fit into the NCF-2005 content analysis?

Research Methodology:

The secondary sources form the basis of the research work. Research papers, articles, books, magazines, newspapers, journals, and other online material are the foundation of secondary sources. The methodology suggests the data gathering and authentication strategies employed in this study, which aids in the paper's accomplishment of its objectives.

Results and Discussion:

To conduct a content analysis of NCF-2005 concerning curriculum transaction at the elementary school level, taking into account the objectives, contents, teaching strategies, and assessment techniques.

In order to achieve the goal of this work, the researcher examined NCF-2005. The NCF-2005 provides information about curriculum transactions at the elementary school level, their goals, the curriculum's contents, instructional strategies, and evaluation. This information forms the background of the content analysis for this study. Therefore, the investigator had carried out the following content analysis of NCF-2005 with reference to the primary curriculum transactions:

Goals of the Curriculum Transactions: The NCF-2005 outlined the following goals for the Curriculum Transactions at the Elementary School Level:

1. To ensure that learning shifts away from memorization methods.
2. To promote a classroom atmosphere that emphasizes active learning.
3. To approach the fresh situation from a variety of flexible angles.
4. To keep combining knowledge and experience.
5. To develop cognitive skills, such as reasoning, cognition, and social skills with attitude.
6. To promote empathy for the needs and feelings of others, as well as independence of thought and behavior.
7. A readiness to engage in democratic processes as well as the capacity to support and impact social and economic transformation.
8. To enhance students' ability to generate knowledge and connect it to real-world uses.
9. To accept a variety of selections and to provide a multitude of information sources.
10. To develop a sense of self and the ability to evaluate social reality critically.

Curriculum Contents: The NCF-2005 provided the following recommendations for the Elementary Curriculum.

1. The curriculum for teaching languages at the elementary school level should incorporate the three-language formula and the kids' native tongue.
2. In addition to English, the Indian language must be given importance in the curriculum of English-medium schools.
3. Along with traditional crafts, art, peace education, and environmental awareness.
4. Math, science, and social science courses ought to be included.
5. A variety of opportunities in music, dance, visual arts, crafts, and theater should be offered, and the visual and performing arts should be made mandatory.

6. Health and physical education should be required courses, but so should medical treatment, a clean school environment, school lunches, and yoga.
7. The curriculum ought to cover civics and history.

According to NCF-2005, classroom instruction in the elementary stage needs to be interactive and flexible so that it can develop sound and easy interaction among children and with the teacher. Regarding methods of teaching at the elementary level, the framework suggested the following:

1. Key subjects pertaining to national issues should be taught using interdisciplinary teaching techniques.
2. Make effective use of interaction as a teaching-learning method.
3. Incorporate critical pedagogy into the classroom by having students critically evaluate one another, drawing connections between what they learn in class and their experiences outside of it, fostering student self-expression, and motivating active participation.
4. Establish links between school and local knowledge and student knowledge and regional expertise.
5. Give conceptual thinking, or intellectual learning, greater weight than rote memorization of information for exams.

The Elementary Level Examination and Assessment Method was modified in accordance with NCF-2005 guidelines. In relation to the assessment procedure, NCF-2005 provided the subsequent Recommendations:

1. Children's curiosity in learning and their sense of being heard and respected are two significant topics discussed in NCF 2005.
2. Students need to feel safe and valued in the classroom, which can only be achieved by the school and curriculum.
3. Ensuring the physical, mental, and social growth of students is imperative.
4. It is necessary to employ evaluation to pinpoint strengths as opposed to flaws.
5. Evaluation should be used to assess the competencies of learning experiences rather than qualities.
6. Comprehensive and ongoing evaluation (CCE).
7. In many settings, assessments of children's activities can only be qualitative assessments derived from observations made during routine interactions.
8. In the later primary grades, assessments should be conducted orally, in writing, and through observations.
9. Exams that are given on a term basis may begin in Class VII.
10. It is recommended to employ ongoing and qualitative assessments when assessing a skill-based element, subject matter, or curriculum (like yoga, music, or the arts).
11. The assessment questions that are given have to be different from the book's questions.
12. Tough, open-ended questions could also be used.
13. When grading and revising the work in front of the class, feedback on the right and wrong answers students receive, together with the explanations for each, should be provided.
14. The focus of language evaluation needs to shift from measuring "performance" in regard to specific syllabi to measuring language proficiency itself.

Based on the aforementioned analysis, the investigator can draw broad conclusions about how NCF-2005 has influenced elementary curriculum transactions in order to make connections between knowledge and life outside of the classroom, ensure that learning has shifted away from memorization, enrich the curriculum beyond textbooks, make examinations more flexible and integrate them with classroom life, and foster at the elementary level a dominant identity informed by compassionate concerns within the nation's democratic polity.

The investigator examined NCF-2005 and SCERT resource materials and instructions in order to achieve this goal. The NCF-2005, which is about the D.El.Ed course curriculum and its objectives, contents, teaching strategies, and evaluation, provides the framework for the content analysis of this aim. In light of NCF-2005, the investigator examined the D.El.Ed curriculum recommended by SCERT, Assam, as follows:

Curriculum Goals:

1. Objectives of curriculum are some statements that will describe what the learners will be able to do after completing the instruction or course.
2. SCERT, Assam prescribed some objectives of the D.El.Ed curriculum in consonance with the suggestions given by NCF-2005.
3. The investigator has highlighted the objectives of the D.El.Ed course given by SCERT and NCF-2005 in the following table.

SCERT Assam Claims that-

- a) To familiarize pre-service and in-service instructors with the new teaching methodology.
- b) To gain knowledge of the significance of learning outcomes for various academic disciplines and to recognize the contribution of ICT to improving learning outcomes.
- c) To familiarize the trainees with various academic subject learning methodologies in order to guarantee learning outcomes.
- d) The purpose of the D.El.Ed curriculum ought to be to prepare teachers and practitioners to be Reflective Practitioners, enabling them to think critically about the "why" and "how" of educational policies, programs, and practices.
- e) Based on their personal interactions with children, aspiring teachers might get the ability to provide fresh knowledge and insights into the growth and learning of children. Assam's SCERT and UNICEF, 2018.

As Stated in NCF-2005

- a. To introduce the new pedagogy of learning to aspiring teachers.
- b. To create learning objectives and experiences that will help student-teachers build the self-control necessary for "learning to learn."
- c. To foster comprehension of the curriculum's theoretical and practical components as a cohesive paradigm.
- d. To give student teachers the necessary counseling skills and abilities so they can serve as the kids' "helpers" and "facilitators".
- e. To grow moral fiber and virtuous human and social ideals in order to be accountable citizens.
- f. To help student-teachers, who are trainee teachers, acquire the capacity for autonomous thought and self-learning.
- g. To improve the student teachers' language skills and knowledge.

Curriculum Contents for D.El.Ed. Course

The curriculum's contents represent the entirety of the material that should be taught and the experiences that should be offered while the curriculum is being implemented. NCERT, in accordance with NCF-2005, has created national model curricula for the D.El.Ed course. State governments and State Boards of Teacher Education (SCERT) may adopt or modify these curricula, and they should be periodically reviewed.

The following recommendations for the structure of the D.El.Ed course's curricular topics were made by SCERT, Assam, and NCF-2005. These recommendations are:

As Stated by SCERT Assam

1. Educational and contemporary studies, curriculum and pedagogic studies, child studies, and other value-added courses for holistic development should be the four curriculum areas included in the D.El.Ed curriculum.
2. For the D.El.Ed curriculum, SCERT, Assam recommended two courses on children's growth, development, and learning: "Childhood and the Development of Children" and "Cognition Learning and the Socio-cultural Context."
3. To encourage reflection and the development of practical experiences for student teachers, SCERT incorporated practicum and field-based activities into the D.El.Ed curriculum every semester.
4. SCERT mandated a 15–20 day school internship program each semester to help student teachers make the connection between their academic knowledge and the real world.
5. In the D.El.Ed course, it also gave instructional concepts and the social, cultural, political, and professional environment more weight.

As Stated in NCF-2005

1. The D.El.Ed course material should focus on understanding the steps involved in a child's growth, development, and learning.
2. The D.El.Ed course curriculum should take the student-teachers' individual experiences, expectations, and preferences into consideration.
3. The information should make a connection between the theoretical understanding and the student teachers' real-world experiences.
4. The curriculum should address the concerns of the relationship between education and society as well as the evolving concepts of social, cultural, political, professional context, and pedagogy.
5. The language paper should be given special consideration, and the student teachers' language skills and knowledge should be improved.
6. The elementary and secondary pre-service teacher education courses must appropriately integrate this subject area, which consists of health education, physical education, and yoga.

The current D.El.Ed. Course Curriculum Complies with-

- It was discovered that the D.El.Ed course's current curriculum adheres to every recommendation made by the NCF-2005 and that it fosters student teachers' curiosity and helps them find their voice in order to help them become self-learners, think independently, and conduct research.
- Even the course material was provided in accordance with the framework's model curriculum. The course covers child studies, educational studies, and modern studies.
- In contrast to the frequently utilized question-answer approaches and inductive-deductive ways of teaching, NCF suggests that constructive teaching is rather latent.

- The elementary teacher education schools use both theoretical and practical tests in addition to ongoing and comprehensive evaluation tools for evaluation during or after curriculum transaction.
- In addition, the SCERT, Assam created guidelines for school internships and resource materials for teachers in accordance with NCF-2005 for the state.
- In accordance with the guiding principles of NCF-2005, the SCERT, Assam has been attempting to create a D.El.Ed course curriculum that is reality-based, that is, based on the actual lives of the students both within and outside of the classroom. curricular reorientation to foster critical thinking, curiosity, exploration, and experience integration with academic knowledge and real-world situations. (SCERT, 2012).

Major Finding of the Study:

The major findings of the study are-

1. The National Curriculum for Elementary Education (NCF-2005) attempts to make sure that tests become more flexible and integrated with classroom life, and that learning moves away from rote approaches.
2. By fostering cooperation with society, the curriculum fosters a vibrant environment and is built with multilingual nature in mind.
3. SCERT, Assam has changed the school curriculum and created a curriculum framework for education in light of NCF 2005.
4. The SCERT, Assam is continuing to work together to design and revise school textbooks for pre-primary to class VIII, based on the NCF-2005 perspective. According to NCF-2005, a total of 49 books covering language, social science, and environmental science topics in ten teaching mediums have been created.
5. Research indicates that the SCERT Assam-regulated D.El.Ed course fosters student teachers' curiosity and helps them find their voice, enabling them to conduct inquiries and build autonomous thinking and self-learning skills.
6. In addition, the SCERT, Assam created guidelines for school internships and resource materials for teachers in accordance with NCF-2005.
7. As recommended by the NCF-2005 guiding principles, the SCERT, Assam has been working to create a D.El.Ed course curriculum that is reality-based, i.e., based on the actual lives of the students both within and outside of the classroom.

Conclusion:

We can state that SCERT Assam has taken into account the NCF-2005 criteria when designing and implementing the elementary and D.El.Ed. curricula, guaranteeing the long-term sustainability of the curriculum's relevance, adaptability, and excellence. The NCF-2005 has played an appreciable influence in curriculum design and transaction because many modifications to the elementary education and D.El.Ed program have been made possible by its recommendations. NIEPA claimed that the D.El.Ed course had not been sufficiently focused or professionally enhanced from an NCF perspective in the Joint Review Mission-II on Teacher Education, Assam. In order to improve teacher educators and the quality of education, it is necessary to introduce the faculty to the fundamental ideas of NCF-2005. The classroom transaction process is still following a traditional route even with a revised D.El.Ed curriculum.

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