

**Report of the Joint Review Mission on
Teacher Education in Kerala
April 21-27, 2014**

Contents

Abbreviations

1. The JRM Team and Visits
2. Background and Context of Kerala
3. Brief Glimpses of the History of Education in Kerala
4. Issues and Concerns
5. General Observations
6. General Recommendations
7. Inclusion of Children with Special Needs
8. Gender, School and Teacher Education
9. Education of Children of SC, ST Communities: Implications for Teacher Education
10. The Language Issue
11. Administrative and Financial Arrangements for Teacher Education in Kerala
12. Service Rules and Regulations for Teacher Education System Career Advancement
13. Professional Development of Elementary School Teachers (In-service teacher education)
14. Institutions: Observations

Appendices

15. Reflections and Recommendations from the Field
 - 15.1 Suresh Kumar
 - 15.2 C. Ramakrishnan
 - 15.3 K. N. Anandan

Abbreviations

ALM	Activity Learning Method
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BRC	Block Resource Centre
BTI	Basic Training Institute
CCE	Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation
CTE	College of Teacher Education
CTET	Common Teacher Eligibility Test
CRC	Cluster Resource Centre
CWSN	Children with Special Needs
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DISE	District Information System for Education
Ed.CIL	Educational Consultants India Limited
EGS	Education Guarantee Scheme
EDUSAT	Education Satellite
EMIS	Educational Management and Information System
EC	European Commission
EVS	Environmental Science
FM&P	Financial Management and Procurement
GEI	Gender Equity Index
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GoI	Government of India
GoC	Government of Chhattisgarh

HDI	Human Development Index
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IEDSS	Inclusive Education for Disabled Secondary Schools
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IT	Information Technology
IT@School	Information Technology at School
JRM	Joint Review Mission
KCF	Kerala Curriculum Framework
KGBV	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
LEP	Learning Enhancement Program
MCS	Model Cluster School
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MI	Monitoring Institutions
MS	Mahila Samakhya
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research & Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NCFTE	National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education
NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIAR	National Institute of Administrative Research
NPE	National Policy of Education
NUEPA	National University of Educational Planning & Administration

OBC	Other Backward Caste
OOSC	Out of School Children
PAB	Project Approval Board
PAC	Program Advisory Committee
PMIS	Project Management Information System
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
QMT	Quality Monitoring Tool
RBC	Residential Bridge Course
REMS	Research, Evaluation, Monitoring and Supervision
RMSA	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
RMG	Repair and Maintenance Grant
RT	Resource Teacher
RTE	Right to Education
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCERT	State Council for Educational Research and Training
SIE	State Institute of English
SIEMAT	State Institute of Education Management and Training
SMC	School Management Committee
SFD	Special Focus Districts
SFG	Special Focus Groups
SMC	School Management Committee

SNDP	Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam
SPD	State Project Director
SPO	State Project Office
SRG	State Resource Group
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TLE	Teacher Learning Equipment
TLM	Teaching Learning Material
TOR	Terms of Reference
TSG	Technical Support Group
TTI	Teacher Training Institute
UEE	Universal Elementary Education
UPS	Upper Primary School

**Report of the Joint Review Mission on Teacher Education to Kerala
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1. The JRM Team and Visits

The Joint Review Mission of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Teacher Education was conducted in the state of Kerala during April 21-27, 2014. The team had its first meeting with the senior officials of the state on April 22 and its final meeting with them on 27 April, 2014 at Thiruvananthapuram.

The team consisted of the following members:

Prof Rama Kant Agnihotri, former Head, Department of Linguistics, Delhi University

Prof Janaki Rajan, IASE, Jamia Millia Islamia

Prof Minati Panda, School of Educational Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Prof Shreesh Chaudhary, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT, Chennai

Prof Nandini Manjrekar, Tata Institute of Social Science, Mumbai

Dr Amrit Lal Khanna, former Associate Professor, Rajdhani College, Delhi University

Dr K N Anandan, Consultant, Andhra Pradesh Residential Educational Institutions Society, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh

Dr Suranjana Barua, Research Associate, Centre for Assamese Studies, Tezpur University, Assam

Ms Suneeta Mishra, Institute of Home Economics, Delhi University

Mr Ramchandra Rao Begur, Education Specialist, UNICEF

Ms Tara Naorem, Ed. Cil representative of MHRD

The teams visited different parts of the state. Team A (Prof Rama Kant Agnihotri, Prof Janaki Rajan and Prof Shreesh Chaudhary accompanied by Dr P K Jayaraj and Ms S Sangeetha) held meetings with a large number of people at different institutions: SCERT, SIEMAT, State Resource Group (SRG), and officials (Secretary, Higher Education; Secretary, General Education; DPI, Directors of DHSE and VHSE, Directors of SSA, RMSA, SCERT, SIEMAT, SIE, IT@School, SIIC and the Head, Department of Education, Kerala University) in Thiruvananthapuram and also visited DIETs, SSA, BRCs, CRCs, SMCs etc. at Kottarakkara, Kollam and Attingal. Team B (Prof Nandini Manjrekar, Dr Suranjana Barua, Ms Tara Naorem,

Dr R R Begur accompanied by K M Unnikrishnan and M Balan) visited various institutions and schools in the Idduki, Kottayam and Alappuzha area holding discussions at Peerumedu, Idduki, Alleppey, Chengannur, Pampady and Kottayam. Prof Minati Panda could not join the team because of a sudden spinal injury though she did contribute to some sections of the report. Team C (Dr A L Khanna, Dr K N Anandan and Ms Suneeta Mishra accompanied by Mr C M Balakrishna and Mr Abdulla Parappurath) covered the Kozhikode, Wayanad and Thrissur area visiting various institutions and schools in Thrissur, Ollukkara, Kozhikode, Nadakkavu, Chelannur, Sulthan Battery, Wayanad and Meenangadi. In addition to this, teams met local leaders, activists, panchayat functionaries and members of SMC. JRM is grateful to the State of Kerala and to all the groups and individuals we interacted with for sharing all possible information on teacher education and for their warmth and hospitality. Not for a moment during our stay did we feel that we were away from our homes.

2. Background and Context of Kerala

Most of the background information is available on the internet on such sites as those of Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org>). The State of Kerala traces its cultural roots from 3rd century CE. It is a synthesis of Aryan and Dravidian cultures, developed over centuries under cultural influences from other parts of India and ancient sea faring nations. *For instance, it comes as a surprise to many that Kerala's engagement with Christianity pre-dates its emergence in the western world.*

Kerala has an enviable record of socio-economic achievements especially in providing access to education for all children. The state has the highest Human Development Index (HDI) (0.790) in the country according to the Human Development Report 2011. It also has the highest literacy rate, 92% for women and 95.5% for men according to the Census 2011, and the highest sex ratio -1,084 women per 1000 men among all Indian states. The net attendance ratio for classes I to VIII is 93% for girls and 96% for boys. The Gender Equality Index (GEI) stands at 0.83 and Gender Parity has been achieved in primary stage of schooling. Kerala is the state with the lowest population growth rate in India, 3.44 per 1000. Kerala has over time witnessed significant emigration of its people, especially to the Gulf States during the Gulf Boom in the 1970s and early 1980s, and its economy depends significantly on remittances from a large Malayali

expatriate community (Source: Wikipedia). *It can be said that Kerala resembles middle income economies - low population growth, aging population, universal education, without however, the comparable welfare measures.*

3. Brief Glimpse of History of Education in Kerala

In the pre-British period, there was no general education system in place in Kerala and education was available only to the Brahmins, Nairs and the aristocrats (Nair 1983). Ramakrishnan (2013) provides a comprehensive account of the educational endeavours undertaken in Kerala in the 19th and 20th centuries. According to him, the advances that Kerala has made in the education sector may be attributed to the farsighted policies adopted by the rulers of the two princely states which later became parts of the State – Travancore and Cochin - and their Dewans, who had clear perceptions that modern Western education could play a major role in the regeneration of the traditional societies. The timeline of these efforts are as follows (cf. Ramakrishnan 2013):

-Around 1800 CE, the Western missionaries were encouraged and funded to start a number of English schools in the State.

-1817: Royal Proclamation and establishment of the Department of Public Instruction and Education Code for looking at quality aspects.

-1834: Local Boards Act of 1834 helped in establishing several grant-in-aid schools.

-1903: The Ezhava community formed Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP) in 1903 with the prime objective of promoting education, health and industry, providing financial assistance for general and technical education in and outside the country and for starting schools and colleges.

-1863-1941: Ayyankali (1863-1941), founded the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sabha (SJPS) (Society for the Protection of the Poor People) in 1907 for children of Pulaya community. Ayyankali started a school in his own village at Vengannoor in 1905.

-1912: The Government decided to open the doors of schools to all castes and also to encourage the education of these communities.

-1916: Nair Service Society was formed with a view to promoting social, educational and cultural development of the Nair community. Its founder leader, Mannathu Padmanabhan started an English middle school at Karukachal near Changanacherry.

-1911-1919: The traditional oppositions to secular education amongst the Mapillas had “blocked their progress, retarded the community economically and created a public image and private mentality of backwardness” Miller (1976: 206)

-1891: Himayat Muslim Sabha initiated for starting Arabic School in Calicut.

-1911: The Malabar Muslim Educational Association was formed at Cochin in 1911.

-1921: Khilafat movement, Mappila Rebellion, realisation of the need for English education for children of the peasantry.

-1935: Formation of Congress socialist Party, formation of peasant unions, study classes and jathas.

-1945: The Compulsory Free Primary Education Policy of 1945 framed by the Dewan of Travancore

-1959. Kerala Education Act and allied rules set the norms for educational administration in the state.

Movements like the Literacy movement, Grandhasala movement, teachers’ movement and other progressive movements, Mahila Samakhya and organisations like Kerala Sastra Sahithya Parishad (KSSP) also had a crucial role to play in creating an environment for mobilizing the community for active participation in the educational process either in formal or in non formal education.

4. Issues and Concerns

1. The school system of present day Kerala inherits the historical establishment of community-based, privately managed, government funded, aided schools which often viewed English medium as the pathway to better opportunities. In the primary stage, 61.07% of schools are private aided while 35.95% are government run. Of late there has been a slow but steady increase in private unaided schools, though currently they stand at 2.98%.

There is need to re-visit these systems and ideas in the light of recent researches on children's learning

2. The enviable record of human development indices in Kerala often tend to mask the very grim reality of increasing gender based violence against girls and women across all communities

in Kerala (Lakshmy Devi 2007). It seems that gender oppression goes widely unchallenged by co-opting women into silence by invoking family dignity and honour, and through systematic campaigns against the few who dare to speak out (see the section on gender below).

Education has to empower both boys and girls so that gender discrimination is eliminated from society. How else can the significant educational advances made in the education of girls and women become an instrument of directed social change in the family, social, cultural, economic and political domains?

3. Kerala is one of the few states with distinct units for education of children with special needs; with clear policies for opening of special schools and for integration of children with special needs into mainstream schools; with provision for special teachers under the SSA and a designated resource room and equipment. The number of children with special needs in mainstream schooling has more than tripled in the last 10 years.

There is no reason why children with impairments that are not related to cognitive impairments – children with orthopaedic, visual or auditory difficulties – cannot do all that the so called able children are able to achieve in the scholastic domain. Yet, our interactions in the field lead us to believe that participation of children with special needs is informed more by the rehabilitative or medical approach rather than full participation in classrooms. What needs to be done to enable the children to realise their full potential in any field of their choice? What needs to be done to improve the status of special teachers who are highly qualified, but are not paid for two months of vacation?

4. Inclusion of children of marginalised communities – the Muslim, Dalit and tribal communities – in education has had a long history in Kerala.

Are there still children of specific communities such as the Scheduled Tribes who do not fully participate in education? What are the issues that need to be addressed? (See the relevant section below).

5. The teacher education system of Kerala is multi-layered and situated at multiple levels in the administrative system. Yet, when viewed as a whole, the system appears to be fractured and fragments located in different departments – higher education, Department of Public Instruction, SSA, RMSA etc.

How can a unified integrated teacher education system be envisaged? How can capacity building of teacher educators at the IASE, CTE, SCERT be envisaged to orient them towards the

academic support that district, block and cluster level teacher educators require to support the schools and to prepare conceptually sound teaching learning materials informed by the best of research? What can be done to ensure that a sufficient number of qualified teacher educators are in place at each level?

6. ICT has assumed great importance at school and teacher education levels in Kerala.

How can teachers and teacher educators be supported to develop in them a discerning perspective on ICT, its selection and use? How to situate relevant ICT materials in the overall teaching-learning experiences of children?

7. English in Kerala is introduced in Class 1 like many other states. Even though Kerala is far ahead of most states in experimenting with the teaching of English, it still needs to strengthen its plans for training English language teachers who are particularly sensitive to the diversity of languages children bring to school.

Is there a blueprint in place for the teaching of English language, training English language teachers and producing materials that would address the concerns of a multilingual classroom?

What are the plans of the Kerala ELTI i.e. the State Institute of English (SIE), Thrissur?

8. Kerala has had long and rich experience of interventions in school and teacher education over the last 25 years.

What are the localised, systematic, collective reflections on these experiences? How can these be documented? How can these reflections inform the evolution of interventions for the present and for the future? How can teacher education move from being episodic to becoming iterative and cumulative?

9. The location of teacher education in the domain of disciplinary knowledge is fuzzy on two counts. One, teacher education cannot be conceptualised as distinct from disciplinary knowledge, for example, *Science Education, Math Education, Philosophy of Education, Language Education, Sociology of Education* and so on. Secondly, no other domain has a separate space for 'educators' that is distinct from practitioners. In Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), for instance, research and teaching go hand in hand, though emphasis on either may vary. This separation in space that comprises teacher education has rendered its isolation from institutions that produce disciplinary knowledge (HEIs) on the one hand and school practitioners on the other. Even Departments of Education in universities though operating within the same intellectual space of the university, is cut off from other departments of the university. While the

demands for teacher support both at disciplinary and transactional levels have increased manifold, the teacher education system continues to remain in isolation, losing relevance and credibility.

How can HEI-TE-SE be re-linked systemically, how can teacher educators re-visit disciplinary domains, generate reflective practice as on-going, continuous process throughout the professional life of teacher educators?

10. Kerala has a large number of documents related to curriculum, syllabi, teacher education reconstruction at pre-service levels.

How can these be cohered to form an integrated vision for education and teacher education? Contradictions discussed and reconciled? How closely are human, global and national values and policies examined before being translated into state languages/ levels?

11. Teacher Education Curriculum of different colleges and universities suffers from lack of clarity and objectivity. Four universities of Kerala reportedly follow four different kinds of curricula. However, a revision of these curricula is under process to produce teachers who are professionally competent, socially committed and flexible and adaptable. It was claimed that the curriculum was “PCTK” Oriented, meaning “Pedagogical, Content and Technological Knowledge” oriented. But there was no clarity about what all these terms mean.

The need for an informed and coordinated discourse was consistently felt. What kind of academic support, human and material, does school education and teacher education need? How can these be drawn as an ongoing support system across a wide range of disciplines in size and composition commensurate with the needs of the state?

We provide in the next few sections below some general and specific observations and recommendations in the context of the issues and concerns outlined above.

5. General Observations

The three teams constituted under the JRM interacted with the personnel from the SSA, DIETs and BRCs at Kotatakra, Kollam, Attingal, Peerumedu, Alleppey, Chengannur, Kottayam, Trichur, Ollukkara, Kozhikode, Chelannur and Wayanad. As should be clear from the introductory remarks, we have had fairly extended discussions with almost all functionaries from teachers and CRC coordinators across the districts of Kerala to Secretary, General Education and

Secretary, Higher Education at Thiruvananthapuram. We make our suggestions in the context of what we observed across Kerala during the 6 days of our visit. We have the following major observations to make:

1. Across Kerala, we noted with great satisfaction that community's interest in the education of children is intense and the schools in which the community participates on a regular basis are functioning better. Here is a lesson that all states can learn from Kerala.
2. Various grass root level activists suggested that education in Kerala was deeply influenced by politics. There were, they said, two schools of thought: One that advocated feudal values and traditional pedagogy and the other that values democracy and modern pedagogy respecting the potential of the child. They felt every effort should be made to create spaces for the latter. We did not have time to examine this issue in any detail.
3. SCERT has a reasonably good infrastructure and a professionally run library. It is doing enormous amount of work in terms of producing materials and training teachers though the quality of these efforts remains to be carefully analyzed. Teachers and members of public at large can also avail themselves of the library resources, which is indeed a commendable thing. Libraries perish only for want of users, and not through "excess" of them. It also has reasonable computer and audio-video facility. And what it may not have directly is more than compensated for by the resources of VICTER channel of Television directly under it physically. Administratively, both VICTER channel and SCERT function from the same building under the same department of the state government. Yet there appeared to be little collaboration between them.
4. Though never fully satisfactory, we did feel that a minimal infrastructure was in place at most institutions we visited. Schools, DIETs, SCERT, IASE, SIET etc. all seemed to have rooms and minimal facilities in place. However, a lot more needs to be done in terms of clean toilets, safe drinking water and disabled friendly access and libraries and research facilities.
5. The degree of academic engagement and conceptual clarity appeared to increase as we went down the administrative hierarchy in the Teacher Education structures of Kerala i.e. the level of academic engagement and the desire to learn and analyze was greater in the DIETs and BRCs as compared to what we could witness, in spite of our sustained efforts over a day and a half, at the SCERT, SSA or CTE levels. It was clear that scholars

working in DIETs and BRCs wanted and deserved better academic inputs. In fact, given adequate opportunities, support, time and guidance, they may actually produce outstanding research work. As we will show below, several DIETs are engaged in producing journals and materials useful for teachers in spite of a variety of constraints.

6. The presentations made by the DIETs revealed that these institutions have been carrying out a number of studies and action researches. They have also been publishing journals and producing materials for Head Masters, teachers and children. Teachers are also sent abroad for training and exposure. Five teachers are sent every year for higher studies to the U S A under Fulbright Scheme. However, it was not clear how these materials were feeding into the total educational system. How have the teachers who went abroad contributed on return? Where have they been posted on return? Have they led a group/shared their experience and work with colleagues in a formal and structured manner?
7. VICTER CHANNEL on TV is a good idea. But what is the kind of effort required to sustain it with quality material for 17 hours a day? We watched it for an hour from 8 to 9 in the morning of Wednesday, 23rd April, and we saw only an extended mime and caricature by a school girl of some sounds produced by some animals and people in different moods. For about half an hour it had some local dance show. Neither of the two items had any elaborate explanation or direction about how students and/or teachers could use or learn them. This may be too small a sample for a huge programme but the general impression about the channel was not very positive.
8. We noticed a certain amount of sensitivity regarding issues of minorities, disability and gender; needless to say, there was a lot still left to be done. Though no institution appeared to be fully disabled friendly, some of the schools were doing remarkable work. The School Help Desk system in Kerala has been a positive and fairly successful school-based intervention in addressing psycho-social needs of children, especially with respect to gender based violence. However, this system, supported by the Mahila Samakhya, has been seeing a decline in investment on the part of the school system since 2011.
9. As in the rest of the country, English language teaching from Class I has been a major challenge in Kerala also. However, Kerala did make some linguistically motivated

experiments in the teaching of English language during 1998- 2005. It was the only State which experimented with the learner-based Discourse Oriented Pedagogy (DOP) and developed several models such as RACE (Rapid Acquisition of Competence in English), a multimedia programme for teenagers, REAP (Rapid English Acquisition Programme) for children at the primary level and FACE (Facilitating Acquisition of Competence in English) for the beginners. Two powerful pedagogic tools were used in these programmes: One, narratives as a major input and code-switching for the beginners. All these programmes were tried out in hundreds of schools across the state and all of them were able to bring about tangible changes in the performance of the learners. We noticed a rather disturbing lack of coordination between institutions of higher learning such as Universities, IASE, CTEs and SCERT on the one hand and DIETs, BRCs, CRCs etc. on the other. This absence of a holistic approach and accountability was further seen in the activities that were being separately taken up under the SSA, RMSA and other schemes. The functionaries of these agencies / programmes showed a clear inclination for treating their own 'turfs' as autonomous and exclusive. This gave one the feeling of a fractured map leading to immense state and national level wastage of resources and a great loss to teachers and children. In fact, the fractured status of Teacher Education in Kerala was rather painfully brought out by the Secretary, General Education himself when he said that the 'pre-primary teachers are trained by TTIs, primary and elementary teachers by SCERT; D Ed teachers are trained in Malayalam; secondary and senior secondary i.e. B Ed being done by the University...and there is no coordination among these agencies.'

10. There is a strong feeling among the DIETs that they have far too many masters without having anybody to coordinate those functions and they look for academic, administrative and functional autonomy. They are the major links between the state level agencies on the one hand and the BRCs, CRCs, teachers and children on the other.
11. No DIET recruitment has perhaps taken place in the past 5 years creating an acute shortage of faculty. DIET faculty is often asked to participate in the activities of state level of institutions like SCERT, SIEMAT, SSA etc. resulting in a serious shortage of staff at DIET itself. Most DIETs work with 50 % faculty and have four times the work they can effectively do. This only leads to poor quality of delivery and dilution of content at various levels. On the other hand, many DIETs have only half the students in their D Ed

programme than they could have had suggesting that they are not able to carry out their primary task.

12. There is also a strong feeling that people at SCERT, CTE etc are far removed from the local realities of the area covered by any specific DIET. Although the DIET Guidelines *do* have sufficient flexibility to enable the DIETs to address local issues, this flexibility is NOT being imaginatively utilized at present. SCERT, CTE, IASE and the Universities should provide academic support in this context.
13. We also noticed a strong urge among teachers and teacher educators, particularly at the DIET and BRC levels for greater exposure in terms of being sent to institutions of higher learning and inviting state and national level experts to their institutions.
14. Almost all people from teachers to SCERT experts appeared happy with the 5-7 day trainings provided in ICT and Management. However, it could never become clear to us what were the real academic or conceptual gains of such work or how did these additional interventions help in a child's learning. Most teachers felt that more time should have been given to content areas. Even in the case of the use of ICT by each child, no school had enough smart classrooms so that each class could be held in an ICT enabled room.
15. DIET lecturers also felt that the CDs and DVDs should be locally produced by the teachers and children. This would automatically lead to greater learning of technology and inspire teachers to contextualize new concepts as far as possible.
16. The need was expressed for professionalizing teacher education in the State at all levels seeking help from the state, national and international level experts.

In view of these observations and concerns, the JRM team would like to make the following recommendations.

6. General Recommendations

1. We strongly feel that the teacher education programme in Kerala needs comprehensive restructuring in terms of the roles and functions of different institutions. There is perhaps a need for a 'Think Tank' consisting of state (including DIETs and BRCs) and national

level experts in different domains of knowledge in general and teacher education in particular. This committee could consist of 25 people, 20 from the state and 5 national level experts. If the Government of Kerala so desires, the JRM would try to reflect on the possible structure of this Think Tank and even suggest possible names of institutions and individuals who should be approached. We also suggest that this Think Tank be asked to think of Education in Kerala as a whole and not just about Teacher Education.

2. This Think Tank would provide the conceptual framework and the goals of Teacher Education in Kerala in the context of NCF 2005, NCFTE 2009, RtE 2009 and Justice Verma Committee report. It could work with the local authorities for a blueprint that would then be implemented by the state.

3. The first task of this Think Tank would be to prepare a Vision Document for Education in Kerala; this could then be used by the State for making policies for Curriculum, Syllabi, Materials and Teacher Education and pedagogical practices. A High Level Co-ordination and Steering Committee (HLSC) under MOE should be constituted. A core team of linguists, ELT experts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science Education researchers with long experience in developing and testing teaching-learning approaches must be involved in vision building as well as in professional development of teacher educators.

4. SCERT Kerala needs to be strengthened in all possible ways, academically, administratively and financially. It should become a part of the higher education system in the state hiring some of the best academics in different areas of expertise. The primary focus of the SCERT should be to strive to achieve conceptual clarity in different domains of knowledge such as nature, structure and acquisition of language, mathematics, science, social science and aesthetics and find ways of sharing that understanding with DIETs and BRCs and build their future inputs on the basis of feedback they receive from DIETs and BRCs.

5. The Draft Service Rules and Regulation 2013 prepared by the SCERT need immediate and careful attention. The best people in the country must be hired giving them UGC scales at least. The design of the SCERT needs comprehensive revamping. It needs to hire content area experts from a national level, first on a contractual basis, and if they perform well, on a permanent basis with respectable salaries and service benefits.

6. There is an urgent need to create adequate posts for qualified teacher educators at IASE, CTEs, SCERT, SIE, DIETs, BRCs, CRCs and all these should be brought under one umbrella.
7. Senior secondary/secondary teachers must undergo an M.Ed. programme and spend at least three months teaching, observing, experimenting at primary schools before being placed in CRCs.
8. All teacher educators should be encouraged to do their M.Ed., M. Phil. and Ph.D. and one increment for M. Phil., and 2 increments for Ph.D. holders could be given. All institutions involved in Teacher Education must also encourage inputs from various domains of knowledge irrespective of whether the faculty involved holds a B. Ed. or an M. Ed. etc.
9. In-service Teacher training must focus on Language and its pedagogy, Mathematics and its pedagogy, Science and its pedagogy, Social Science and its pedagogy, English and its pedagogy; sound theoretical understanding of social justice, equity, plurality, diversity, inclusion, equality; roles, goals and aims of education, understanding language, mind and society, how children learn, among others.
10. The issue of medium of instruction must be carefully reviewed based on sound principles and best of research. It needs to be emphasized that all classrooms are by default multilingual with children using different languages and varieties. We need to find theoretical models and pedagogical practices that respect the language of each child. A child's cognitive growth and conceptual clarity are closely tied to her languages.
11. Every school must have one or two English teachers who will teach English through English or by using the languages of children in a way that the learning of English is assured; help children to read and write English fluently and confidently from Class I onwards. The State Institute of English will have a special role to play here. It should be provided with all financial and academic support to build a programme of English language teaching that may be rooted in multilinguality, treating the languages of learners as a resource rather than as an obstacle. Every possible effort should be made to revive the Discourse Oriented Pedagogy which has already demonstrated its success in the State.
12. Children of migrants must be taught in their mother tongue till class V along with Malayalam and English. As far as possible, efforts to sustain their languages in and outside the school must continue.

13. Kerala has not fully moved away from the earlier approach of considering in-service teacher-training as a one-shot 'treatment'. Teachers at the Lower Primary, Upper Primary and High School level require *different* sets of attitudes, understanding and skills for handling different subject/s in different grades. These need to be identified through adequate and participative exploration of the curriculum and textbooks and *separate* packages for teachers' professional development have to be designed and implemented for different categories of teachers. These 'packages' could include in-service teacher training, on-the-job-support, cluster-level experience-sharing exercises, training videos, newsletters and so on.
14. The impact on the class-room situation needs to be closely monitored and appropriate further interventions such as 'booster' training etc developed and implemented. All interventions for teachers' professional development need to be closely followed up after setting up appropriate structures and systems. Also, the 'growth' of individual teachers needs to be adequately monitored and documented. Such follow up and documentation is necessary not only for the teachers BUT also for the people who are planning and implementing new interventions.
15. There is an urgent need for strengthening institutional mechanisms to deal with cases of harassment and abuse, especially within schools. There is a need to revive and strengthen the help desks and make available ongoing training support in counselling skills to teachers in association with Mahila Samakhya to make them an effective mechanism. Such issues must become a part of teacher education.
16. Wider issues impacting education and questions of gender arising out of Kerala's particular social history of development were constantly referred to in the team's interactions. A detailed situational analysis of these issues in the state with a specific focus on gender, caste and region may be beneficial to conceptualising gender-sensitive interventions in curriculum and in specific areas highlighted by teachers and communities such as counselling and sensitisation.
17. The issues concerning disability, minorities, discrimination based on caste etc also demand immediate attention of the State. All institutions must be made accessible to all without any further delay; a professionally done access audit is a must for making all institutions accessible to all. Arrangements should also be made for children with visual,

hearing and orthopaedic impairments. Special care needs to be arranged for those who have any kind of cognitive problems.

18. One thing positive about the DIETs in general is that these institutions are involved in a number of activities such as several trainings, projects and other initiatives such as training school teachers, on-site support, action research, surveys, studies, curriculum development, etc. However, the other side of the story is that the faculty in general gets very little time for their own D. Ed students.
19. It appeared that the some of the DIET faculty themselves did not have much awareness about the philosophical standpoints and the pedagogical suggestions detailed in documents like NCF (2005), KCF (2007) and NCFTE (2007). It is also doubtful whether any serious discussions had taken place in DIETs on the recently revised D. Ed curriculum. There is a need to fill all DIET faculty positions and ensure that the enrolment is as required.

7. Inclusion of Children with Special Needs

Inclusive agenda figures as a major priority in the domain of Kerala school and teacher education. There were discussions about it at each level. However, we felt that most people have not carefully examined different aspects of inclusion; nor it seems they have thought about even simple issues like access, facilitation and assistive devices. There was hardly any awareness about how children with disability can perform as well as any other child if we have social sensitivity, electronic Braille printers, Sign Language interpreters and simple facilities like properly built ramps and disabled friendly toilets (one indeed wonders why we should at all have any other kind of toilets; the so-called 'abled' can use them anyway) for orthopedically disabled. First of all, the DISE 2013 figures for children with disability demand an explanation. As we move from Class I to Class VIII, the total number of children with disability multiplies almost threefold from 14,660 to 41,343; given the 95% retention rate, it is a bit mysterious. Some additions are possible as more and more children with disability are identified. However, the certificate from the Medical Board certifying more than 40 % disability brings with it certain benefits too. In any case, the following needs to be done on an urgent basis:

1. We did not come across a single building which could satisfactorily be classified as disabled friendly in terms of designated parking, proper ramps, disabled friendly toilets, Braille signage, computers with software such as Jaws, assistive devices for the hearing impaired, awareness about Sign Language or an electronic Braille printer, comprehensive plans for the mentally challenged or autistic children. In fact, there was a general lack of awareness that most visually, hearing and orthopedically 'impaired' children can become as successful learners as anybody else. Sign Language was often confused with a set of gestures. The Government of Kerala in collaboration with the central government needs to seek professional help to make all its institutions disabled friendly. The D Ed and B Ed curriculum for pre-service and in-service teacher training must include components that make teachers aware of what we call 'disability' from a socio-historical perspective rather than just a medical perspective. It needs to be appreciated that it is *we* who have constructed a world from the point of view of a 'normal' person who may not even exist in real life; all persons have problems of one kind or another in life and the society needs to be sensitive to this perspective.
2. We did visit one TTI and a school attached to it in Thiruvananthapuram which deeply impressed us by its aesthetic and clean arrangement, enthusiasm of the teaching faculty one rarely witnesses these days, community participation, special arrangements for autistic children, mid-day meal management etc and we did feel that if all the suggestions made in (1) above could also be implemented, this TTI and the school had the potential to become a model school for Kerala. We recommend that this school be provided all financial, academic and professional help.
3. Resource Teachers (RTs) for CWSN need special training in a variety of areas; they may also need to visit places in India or abroad where a campus has been made fully disabled friendly and all possible help is available to children with different kinds and degrees of disability. Team B met the teachers from Kottayam who work with CWSN.
4. In Kottayam, around 5-6% of children belong to CWSN category; 12 categories of CWSN are there: the district has a total of 688 CWSN. There is a total of 52 RTs for CSWN in 100 general schools for secondary level Inclusive Education for Disabled-Schools (IEDSS, Kottayam). There are 100 RTs for elementary section of whom most are trained in MR (Mentally Retarded). In the case of girl CWSN with more

than 40% disability, it is difficult for the RTs to get Medical Board Certification (partly attributed to parents' reservations on the matter and partly to non-availability of clinical psychologists). The RTs in IED under SSA also provide home based education and each RT caters to 10-12 schools at the CRC level. RTs in IED-SS work in two schools (3+3 days of the week). Individual Educational Plan (IEP) cannot be done properly due to the higher ratio of students (on an average 20 out of 50 students are 'borderline' cases who would benefit from continuous support on all six days). RTs for HI CWSN do not use Sign Language (due to parents' reservation regarding SL) and rely exclusively on speech therapy (in special schools for HI, both speech therapy and SL are used). The RTs (even those with over 10 years of service) are on annual contract that leads to anxiety over job security.

5. It is indeed difficult to see how a handful of RTs in CWSN can facilitate the education of over 1, 75, 149 (DISE 2013) children in the elementary classes who are either physically or mentally or multiply challenged. Of these children, 1,10, 129 children are only visually (78, 563), hearing (21, 130) or orthopedically (10, 436) challenged; there is absolutely no reason that given suitable facilities which are legally due to them, they should not complete the highest levels of education. This field requires a major and carefully monitored investment on the part of the state and central governments. We need to invest money in computers, Braille printers, disabled friendly toilets, Sign Language experts and various other assistive devices available at relatively cheap prices now.
6. It is interesting to note that whereas the number of physically challenged increase dramatically as we move from Class I to Class VIII, the number of mentally challenged and autistic children fall equally dramatically. There are over 500 autistic children in Class I but only 96 in Class 8 even though this is a rather symbolic indicator. The same is true of children with cerebral palsy, learning difficulties, and mental retardation. But it is enough indication that for some children we do need special schools.

Autism Centre, Chelanur

We met about 6-7 Autistic children with different disabilities, in session with their caretakers.

Parents heard that the centre may be closed down and they were disturbed and concerned as they felt that their children have shown improvement in general and at school as well. There is no funding for the centre and the caretakers/ specialists working with the Autistic children are doing this work with very meagre salaries coming from contributions.

8. Gender, School and Teacher Education

Discussions with teachers, DIET faculty and members of Mahila Samakhya (MS) revealed that although the present school education system in Kerala seeks to adopt a child-centric approach (as envisaged in and influenced by the NCF 2005, KCF 2007 and NCFTE 2009), it has a long way to go in terms of addressing issues of gender in schools as well as in teacher training. High education indicators for girls and women at all levels and gender parity in terms of school participation, which have been stable for several decades in Kerala, do not appear to have translated into gender-sensitive practices in school teaching or in teacher education on a scale that would have been expected in such a situation. On the other hand, it appears that wider social factors impacting the lives of the poor, who are over-represented in government schools, are raising several newer issues relating to gender. Gender issues in education, particularly those relating to girls, are situated within these contradictions in the Kerala context.

Gender Issues in School

Interactions with teachers and MS members (including in-depth interview with the State Program Director) revealed that the impact of social, economic and political shifts in Kerala society over the past few decades have had a widespread impact on children and youth in the state. Domestic violence, abandonment and broken families were widely reported by those interacting with children in schools. There appeared to be a consensus among all those we interacted with that widespread alcoholism – a much debated social and political issue in the state – was largely responsible for family based violence that is proving severely detrimental to children and especially the girl child and impacting her meaningful participation in school. Teachers reported an ever-growing number of cases of sexual/ alcohol abuse and many students are ill-equipped to

deal with the socio-psychological problems that emanate from such abuse. Many of the teachers also voiced their concerns about increasing social problems like cases of elopement of girls before completing basic formal education, alcoholism in families, sexual abuse of girl students and even those with special needs.

In such a situation, active interventions on the part of the school system and those working for a gender-just society in which education plays a critical role are widely felt to be necessary. Since 2008, the Kerala Mahila Samakhya (MS) has been interacting with schools on issues of gender based violence. From 2008, MS was actively involved in gender sensitisation training of school teachers. School Help Desks, initiated to help students with all kinds of problems (academic, social etc) have become less active since 2011. Active support to these Help Desks is necessary since the problems associated with identifying and intervening in cases are many, including i) *lack of trained teachers* who can deal with the socio-psychological nature of the problems ii) *apathy of parents* and sometimes teachers to cases of abuse that children face and iii) *fear of social sanction and concern about the child's future* (re-assimilation of the child in school and rehabilitation in society/ marriage prospects of girls etc) all of which work against reporting of abuse. In spite of such hurdles in reporting abuse, the extent of gender based violence faced by girls can be gauged by the fact that the Mahila Samakhya has received over 700 cases of sexual abuse in the last three years alone.

MS has played a critical role in highlighting issues of sexual harassment and violence in schools and in providing gender-sensitive counselling for children who have faced abuse in the home or sexual harassment by adults in the school like teachers and principals. In the most adverse situations, where re-entry into schools and also families is not possible, girl children have been shifted to Nirbhaya shelter homes and re-admitted to other schools. 42 girls are now staying in Nirbhaya homes and continuing with their studies.

While MS' work has directly benefitted children facing the trauma of school/family based abuse, there was a sense that the schooling system itself needs to be more responsive to the issue. The SPD was of the opinion that what works against any consolidated step for redressing of grievances is a *reluctance* to talk about cases of abuse etc. Her analysis was that education being a core social value embedded in the Kerala society, the positive attitude towards schooling is sometimes detrimental in the sense in that parents fail to acknowledge that schools too may have abusers. There have been reported cases of sexual assault of girl students by teachers and

instances reported of teachers asking for sexual favours from girl cadets of NSS. In many cases, schools were reluctant to keep a child when a case of abuse had been reported. In one case reported in Chembur, a teacher accused of sexual misconduct was suspended only for two months following which he was reinstated. Such actions have adverse affect on the psychological and emotional health of children.

Recommendations relating to gender issues

On the basis of discussions, the following emerge as key areas for reflection and intervention:

1. *An urgent need to address issues of gender in all dimensions of teacher education.* Teachers felt that they must be adequately equipped to deal with social problems that a child may face, for which there needs to be a distinct focus on gender sensitization as well as some training in counselling skills. When Team B visited the Alapuzha DIET, teachers voiced their concerns about their inability to help students even if they do come up with their problems mainly because i) teachers were themselves not equipped to help the child in distress and ii) they had no clear cut way of reporting the incident/ issue to the higher authorities.
2. *Strengthening institutional mechanisms to deal with cases of harassment and abuse, especially within schools.* The School Help Desk system in Kerala has been a positive and fairly successful school-based intervention in addressing psycho-social needs of children, especially with respect to gender based violence. This system has been seeing a decline in investment on the part of the school system since 2011. *There is a need to strengthen the Help Desks* and make available ongoing training support to teachers to make them an effective mechanism.
3. *MS' interventions in providing physical and emotional security to girls who have faced sexual abuse must be lauded, and they must be supported more substantially in material and monetary terms to carry on their work.* Currently they are managing with only 9 shelter homes, with a skeletal staff and other resources necessary to make the children's stay comfortable. They also feel the need for adequate training in child counselling. Support to them in their school-based work is absolutely necessary. While

emphasising support to MS however, we need to stress that *the entire schooling system must take responsibility for the wellbeing of children, and sexual violence against children must be approached as much as a problem for schools as for women's organisations*. There must be greater role of the Department of Education in providing relief and rehabilitation to girl students who are victims of sexual or domestic violence. An active and greater role of the Department in this regard would facilitate smoother functioning of stake-holders like Mahila Samakhya and they would be able to provide their service in a more streamlined manner.

4. *There is a need to appreciate the care children with special needs who are victims of child abuse may require.* Although a few such cases have been reported, at present there are not many ways in which such children are provided support. In one case an abused child with special need was placed in a special school where she faced more abuse as she was the only girl there. She had to be relocated to a Nirbahaya centre nearby where the staff, although helpful, was not trained to cater to a child with special needs. Such children deserve a secure future and the Department of Education, schools, NGOs and civil society must work in tandem to ensure the relief and rehabilitation of such children with special needs.
5. *Rather than avoiding the issue for fear of tarnishing the image of the school, the HM, teachers and staff of schools should be encouraged to support the rehabilitation and re-assimilation of such children in their own schools* (unless of course there are other social, psychological or legal issues that dictate otherwise). All teachers accused of sexual abuse must be debarred from service and there should be strict legal action against them at all costs. The team noted that the amendment to the new service rules for teachers banning any form of sexual harassment is a welcome step, and must be enforced.
6. *Counselling services for students, particularly at the higher levels, is widely perceived as an urgent need.* At all points of intervention, however, care must be taken to provide inputs that are sensitive and supportive of young girls' aspirations and not merely disciplining. Sexuality education materials must be designed, along with women's studies scholars and organisations like MS in Kerala to open up debates with students on issues of gender, education and society sensitively and creatively.

7. *There appears to be a clear need for social awareness regarding the impact of social factors like alcoholism, insecurity of girls in public and private spaces, etc. on education.* It was felt that greater mobilization of the neighbourhood of every school would not only facilitate this awareness but also help sustain this. The District Panchayat officials who met Team B members in Alapuzzha were of the opinion that social and gender sensitization would go a long way in ensuring the better relations amongst students. These efforts need to be aided and supplemented with socially sensitive and contextualised materials such as those suggested above (6).
8. *The team noted that in Kerala there seems to be increasing feminization of teaching as a profession.* In most DIETs the number of male trainees has been steadily falling. The situation in the TTIs is also the same. Some faculty related this trend to the decrease in enrolments at the pre-service training level. In Alapuzzha they had only 55 trainees (although the intake capacity was 80) and in that batch of 55 (30 and 25 students in second and first semester respectively) there was *only one male trainee*. In DIET Kottayam, out of 20 trainees, 18 were women. Increasing feminisation of teaching on this scale is likely have several implications for issues of gender and curriculum in teacher training, as well as the future work conditions of teachers and the children they will be teaching. In terms of curriculum, the team did note that faculty in one DIET often gave gendered examples focussing on women's domestic roles only. Teacher education system will have to be cognisant of this issue and take measures to ensure that teacher trainees receive inputs into thinking about gender critically and not in stereotyped ways.
9. Wider issues impacting education and questions of gender arising out of Kerala's particular social history of development were constantly referred to in the team's interactions. *A detailed situational analysis of these issues in the state with a specific focus on gender, caste and region may be beneficial to conceptualising gender-sensitive interventions in curriculum and in specific areas* highlighted by teachers and communities such as counselling and sensitisation.

9. Education of Children from SC, ST Communities: Implications for Teacher Education

Although the tribal literacy rate went up from 57.22 per cent to 80.71 per cent in 2001 (Ramakrishnan, p. 49), there is still a lot to be done in terms of educating students belonging to tribal communities where the rate of attrition is quite high. The 19th Joint Review Mission SSA, Kerala (January, 2014) made note of the poor attendance of tribal students while stating that apart from seasonal poor attendance, their attendance tends to be very irregular and poor “especially in schools where tribal and non-tribal children are together, whereas in schools that have only tribal children it tends to be close to the state average. This indicates that tribal children possibly face discriminatory environments and points to the need to initiate renewed and innovative remedial efforts in this regard” (19th SSA JRM Report, Jan, 2014, p. 11-12.)

Tribal Areas and Their Problems

Wayanad is one district which has peculiar problems due to a substantial percentage of tribal population. This is quoted as a reason by school teachers, BRC-CRC coordinators and DIET faculty as a problem because they think that tribal children lag behind in all subject areas. *Levels of achievement among tribal children are lower* according to them and they attribute this to their mother tongue being different from the rest. While putting up this issue, it seemed that the teachers, coordinators and DIET faculty tend to locate the performance failure in the tribal children themselves. They also feel that they have been supporting these children in all possible ways including trying to teach them the mainstream language. There was no awareness that tribal languages are as rule-governed and as complex as any other language of the world and that they could actually become a resource in the pedagogical process rather than an obstacle.

Another reason quoted for their poor performance is the *distance from school*. Most tribal children come from far and hence are much more irregular than other children. The schools have started transport facilities and on-campus accommodation for these children and they feel this has improved the performance a bit.

The teachers and DIET faculty also felt that a bigger fraction of these children, as compared to the rest of the population, comes from *fragmented and backward families* which do not pay much attention to children’s studies. Moreover, tribal students are reluctant to go to schools

(especially, high school classes), because if they go for work outside they will be able to earn Rs. 500 per day.

Members of the JRM who visited the Pallikummu Panchayati LP School (Peermede/ Idduki) also noted the problems that the Tamil speaking tribal population faces. The linguistic profile of the area is said to comprise 60% Tamil migrants (mostly working in the tea plantations) and the rest 40% local population. Even though the school has dual medium (Tamil and Malayalam), there has been a declining enrolment – a trend in all schools in general and specially in Tamil medium schools – which is attributable to growing stature of English as status symbol. *The tribal population in this area prefers to send children to private schools even though they are costly on account of this social preference for English.* Compounding this problem is the fact that *Tamil medium teachers have inadequate resource materials for teaching/ learning and less onsite support.*

10. The Language Issue

It came to us as a surprise that the Kerala teachers and teacher educators were not aware of the nature and structure of language in general and of the linguistic complexity of Kerala in particular. For example, there was no awareness of the diversity of languages that may be present in the class except saying that mostly it is Malayalam medium and in some cases Kannada, Tamil and English medium. That is obviously the state policy ignoring the fact that close to 40 different languages are spoken in Kerala including for example Tulu, Betta Kurumba, Mala, Malasar, Paniya etc. Contemporary research has shown how multilinguality available in the classroom can be used as a resource and as a teaching strategy. For the implementation of such an approach in which the language of every child would find a voice, we need to plan for long term rigorous teacher education programs. This we recommend should be a major issue before the proposed Think Tank since language is constitutive not only of education but also of being human. When teachers were pushed to reflect on the reality of their classrooms they agreed that a multiplicity of linguistic and cultural practices were present in their classes. There were, however, some saving graces. In an SRG workshop in Thiruvananthapuram, there were over 60 participants preparing modules for training for the new textbooks for classes 1, 3, 5 and 7. We asked them whether they would like English to become the medium of education from Class 1 for all subjects. Only 5 persons supported that proposal. Others strongly believed that Malayalam

should be the medium of instruction and English should only be taught as a subject from Class 1 though we must ensure high levels of proficiency in English when the child finishes school. We would like to make the following recommendations regarding languages in Kerala:

1. It should be appreciated that all children arrive at school with their languages in place; some perceive it as 'one language', some notice the enormous variability that a child can handle without any discomfort. Let's then say that the child is equipped with a 'Language Faculty' that may be conceptualized as 'multilinguality' where what we choose to call 'languages' know no boundaries.
2. This 'Language Faculty' needs to be recognised in all interventions in language. Unfortunately, we did not see any evidence of it except an odd teacher (saving grace) at a BRC saying that we focus on discourse irrespective of the language in which it is conducted.
3. Voice of every child is important and MUST find a space in the classroom transactions and there are now models available which show how to evolve pedagogy rooted in multilinguality. Many children leave school because their authentic voice is not heard.
4. Many people we met including officials voiced a desire to have English as the sole medium of education. Nothing could be more unfortunate than this. Conceptual clarity can be gained only through a child's languages of the neighbourhood as described in NCF 2005.
5. There is enormous research evidence to show that proficiency in one's own language correlates positively with proficiency in other languages and with scholastic achievement and cognitive growth.
6. We'd therefore recommend that Kerala adopts a pedagogy that is rooted in multilinguality where the voice of every child receives equal importance This does not in any way contradict gaining proficiency in Malayalam, Tamil or Kannada and English; on the contrary respecting the languages of children will go a long way in achieving all these goals.
7. Multilinguality can indeed be a resource, a teaching strategy and a goal; it in addition to cognitive growth leads to social tolerance.
8. At the secondary Level, the following languages are taught in schools in Kerala: Malayalam, Hindi, English, Tamil, Kannada, Urdu and Sanskrit. At the Higher Secondary

Level, the following languages are taught: Arabic, Latin, Syriac, German and French. We suggest that children be encouraged to learn as many languages as they wish in addition to their home languages (read and write), Malayalam and English; the language education program should be rooted in multilinguality and children should be taken through a process where they learn to respect all languages and their speakers.

11. Administrative and Financial Arrangements for Teacher Education in Kerala

The teacher education system is multi-layered. The Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) is envisaged as a centre of excellence and lead resource support agency for school and teacher education in the state and the site for producing teacher educators and research. The Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) are expected to provide academic support for secondary and senior secondary schools and teacher education. The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) is the lead agency for providing academic and curricular support for preparation of curricula, syllabi, textbooks for teacher education and school education; provide academic support for pre-service and in-service teacher education in the state. The 14 District Institutes of Education and Training are expected to provide academic support for school and teacher education at the district level, organise pre- and in-service teacher education; research and material development in the district provide academic support to Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs).

The IASEs, CTEs, SCERT, DIETS come under MHRD's Scheme for Re-structuring and Re-organising Teacher Education; BRCs and CRCS come under the MHRD's SSA. The Government of Kerala has placed IASEs and CTEs under the Department of Higher Education. SCERT comes under the Secretary, General Education; DIETs are under the Directorate of Public Instruction (DPI); BRCs, CRCs are under the State Project Director, SSA. The planning, budgets and programs are thus under different departments. *The isolation of various teacher education institutions from each other is so complete that the budget for SCERT and DIETs under the Teacher Education Scheme has been sanctioned by MHRD, whereas the budgets of IASE and CTEs were not even submitted to MHRD.* It is expected that SCERT co-ordinates the budgets of all TEIs and works pro-actively for sanctions. They appear to limit their efforts only to SCERT and DIETs. The Five year Perspective Plan for the 12th Plan period also did not reach MHRD on time.

The budgets of BRCs, CRCs under SSA follow a completely different process that is not informed by the planning of SCERTs, DIETs. IASE and CTES appear to be insular to school and teacher education in the state and are content with pre-service training of secondary teachers, M.Ed., M. Phil and Ph.D. These are important in themselves, but *IASEs and CTES, while located with higher education, are expected to engage in school and teacher education development – a role that is distinct and in addition to providing courses.*

The teacher education system in the state is fractured. *An over-arching state level co-ordinating mechanism is required to provide coherence and vision for school and teacher education, to ensure careful, integral planning in a manner that ensures that programs of each teacher education agency dovetails towards well defined common goals.* Despite sizeable expenditure, the relevance and quality of teacher education remains in question.

A review of proportional allocation of resources must be undertaken. Over 50 % of entire resources available for TE are currently spent on civil works. Following traditional and different construction practices, much money can be saved. This can be utilized teacher enrichment and curriculum modernization, etc. The MHRD provides central assistance on 75: 25 basis for all the teacher education institutions including salaries. Despite this *2/3rd of posts at SCERT, around 30% posts in CTES and 50% posts in DIETs are vacant.*

12. Service Rules and Regulations for Teacher Education System in Kerala – Career Advancement

The State government is in the process of formulating Rules and regulations for DIETs and SCERT. This is a timely initiative in the 25th year of the Scheme for Teacher Education. As per the MHRD guidelines SCERT Faculty needs to be linked with higher education (UGC) norms. Kerala is in an enviable position of having several highly qualified teacher educators in the system. However *the apex body SCERT has 70% Faculty who are not professionally qualified under current MHRD norms. Many teacher educators at various levels felt there were no career advancement opportunities.* As is international practice we propose the following:

Teachers at LP and UP who show aptitude for reading, experimentation and mentoring after 5 years as teachers may be recruited as resource persons for CRC trainings on rotation basis. They may be paid honoraria as per norms. After 5 years of such experience, they may be made CRC co-ordinators by rotation. They may be encouraged to acquire higher qualifications through

open and blended modes to become graduates, then B.Ed., M.Ed. After 5 years as CRC Co-ordinators, they may be resource persons at BRC, and BRC co-ordinators. At this level, they may be encouraged through paid, study leave if required to acquire Master's Degree in Education/Sociology/Mathematics/Science etc. Once they acquire requisite qualifications, they may be eligible to become teacher educators in DIETs. Those with Ph D in Education or allied subjects in DIETs must have an avenue to work at SCERT, CTE and IASE. In this way, the experience and expertise from LP and UP schools will have systemic pathways to higher level institutions that will greatly inform the understanding of grass root experience in state level planning. *All teacher educators with qualifications higher than prescribed in relevant areas must be rewarded with an additional increment.* In this way, the professional capabilities of teachers and teacher educators will be continually and systemically enhanced.

13. Professional Development of Elementary Teachers in Kerala (In-service teacher education)

Unlike most states in India, every teacher in Kerala is academically and professionally qualified in government, aided and unaided schools. This is a strong base upon which continuing professional development needs to be built. The professional development of teachers appears to be built on state based needs, such as the need to orient teachers when a fresh set of textbooks are prepared. The purpose of the teacher development program and its contents appear to be designed by the SCERT working under the guidance of a steering committee constituted by the state government in collaboration with representatives from DIETs, BRCs, secondary school teachers and selected experts. Teacher support materials, duration of training are prepared and decided at the level of SCERT. The training materials and orientation of these are then provided to around 800 State level Master trainers, drawn from DIETs, secondary and senior secondary teachers, BRCs and CRCs. At the next stage, orientation takes place at each of the 14 districts, where BRC and CRC are oriented. They in turn roll out the teacher development programs for teachers at block and cluster levels. Known as the 'cascade model', this design has been much in vogue for training large number of teachers. *Recent research has shown that the cascade model results in huge transmission loss* – so much so that what is received at the cluster level can be greatly at variance with what was envisaged at the state level, which itself may qualitatively

different from what some of National/ State Level experts may have visualized. There is need to review this model and see how it can be made effective, or, look for alternative models. It is widely accepted that meaningful, thoughtful teacher development involves intensive work *of at least two weeks duration* at a time conducted by a team of both academic experts as well as practitioners working closely together, followed by classroom try-out, discussion, reflection, re-designing as an iterative process.

The current practice of teacher development programs in Kerala raises several issues that require careful consideration. They are:

1. *Careful needs assessment in the field is required* before designing any professional development program. Although SCERT does conduct certain studies, our impression is they need to be carefully rigorously designed in collaboration with researchers, carefully implemented and scientifically analysed rather than be impelled by post-facto considerations. At the district, block and cluster levels, we got the impression that teachers and teacher educators felt their voices were not heard, or their concerns and needs did not find place in the teacher development programs. Many of them provided cogent, well-reasoned critiques of great conceptual clarity on some of the past efforts, but we did not see these views reflected in the SCERT presentations of the programs and studies.
2. *The fractures within the teacher education system and the administrative and financial constraints that results, has a huge bearing on the quality of teacher development programs.* A program envisaged as a 10 day workshop gets reduced to 5 days, of which two days are devoted to other matters which means great erosion of intent and practice.
3. *We found a great deal of conceptual clarity at the district and cluster levels, which we did not at the SCERT level.* Two third of the SCERT faculty appears to be from senior secondary schools with no direct experience of elementary classroom teaching or research. They appeared to believe that their interaction with teachers (at workshops) provides them sufficient experience and expertise. Some of them did not even have an M.Ed. degree; nor was there much evidence of their having done rigorous research in their own academic disciplines. This lack of experience and expertise is telling hugely on the quality of the curriculum and textbook materials.

4. The DIET teacher educators strongly felt that there needs to be clear-cut criteria for the selection of master trainers and *greater transparency in selection*. They were frank with their views that considerations other than academic ones, operate.
5. In most states, DIETs are often the parking space for teachers who are reluctant to be posted in far-off places. We were glad to note that the Kerala DIET system has clear cut policies for transfer such as posting in the home district prior to retirement and that the post of Principal is filled on seniority basis. However, these policies also appear to mean that a DIET could have Principal for 8-12 months before they retire. *It is desirable for any institution for its Head to have a minimum three-five years in office*. We also learnt that while it may not be the practice in DIETs, SCERT Faculty deputed/appointed by DPI could be placed in SCERT to avoid far off posting. Needless to say, such considerations can only gravely harm teacher education. We also heard that several highly qualified and talented teacher educators who were in SCERT, went back to DIETs. It is vital for SCERT to have the best of professionals in teacher education.
6. Teacher educators at SCERT and DIETs appear to have participated in study tours, some have even acquired certification from UK, Sweden, etc. It was however not clear how they have contributed to the state teacher education after their return. *Carefully planned teacher educator orientations are required*, drawing upon leading agencies in India and abroad.
7. *Teacher educators in SCERT and DIETS did not appear to have closely studied the NCF 2005 position papers or the NCFTE 2009*. It is important for them to collectively examine these documents, critique them and contextualise these for Kerala. The teacher educators we interacted with were also not conceptually clear regarding the KCF 2007 and whether it had any points of departure from NCF. For example, the NCF recommends constructivist approach as a general principle and has copious references to Vygotsky. At the SCERT and DIETs, however, educators appear to think that social constructivism referred to in KCF is in opposition to NCF 2005 which is factually not the case. The dichotomy between 'processes'/'issues' based KCF and 'content'/'theme' based 2014 curriculum need more careful critical reflection. The current articulations in the field are needlessly polarising. The overarching single consideration for curricular and

pedagogic choices need to be based on careful study of the best of research. Articulations by educators do not reflect this.

14. Institutions: Observations and Visits

14.1 Institute of Advanced Studies in Education

Kerala has one Institute of Advanced studies in Education (IASE) under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for re-structuring and re-organising Teacher Education. The initial Govt. Institute of Advanced Study in Education in Kerala was established long back in 1945 as Government Training College. Initially the college was affiliated to the University of Madras and was wound up as a measure of retrenchment with the integration of Travancore and Cochin in 1949. It was restarted in 1951 by affiliating it to Travancore University and in 1968 to the University of Calicut. It was elevated to the status of Institute of Advanced Study in Education in 1993 with a view to conducting advanced courses in education, research programs and organizing in-service training to the secondary and higher secondary school teachers. At present it has 120 B. Ed students and 18 M. Ed students on its rolls.

Apart from conducting B. Ed and M. Ed courses regularly, IASE is expected to extend its academic support and guidance to 14 districts, 14 DIETs, 4 CTEs, 4 University Education Departments and the 196 training colleges in the State. The Annual Work Plan (AWP) 2013-14 refers to certain process and performance indicators of the institution. *It shows that the institution has failed to cope with vital processes – performance indicators such as conducting training needs analysis for teacher educators, creating special courses for teacher educators in the identified areas of need, holding regular meetings with SSA/ RMSA/ DIETs/ CTEs/ SCERT and using training management system.* As per the AWP 2013-14, the institution offers in-service courses to High School teachers and administrators and administrative staff with the funds available from MHRD. A number of research proposals have been included in the AWP in the areas of curriculum development and total quality management in education but none has been conducted so far due to non-availability of funds. The AWP claims that the institution has conducted research studies related to teacher educators and that there are 30 titles (including conference/ seminar presentations, reports, newspaper/ journal articles, books etc.) authored by IASE faculty.

The AWP also states that there are regular faculty development programs for IASE faculty and that 10 faculty members at the IASE were either deputed for conferences/ seminars, went on study leave or undertook exposure visits. The AWP claims that there are regular faculty meetings (twice in a month) for which records are kept. According to the AWP, the most 'talked - about' process improvement in the year within the IASE is 100% B .Ed and & M. Ed and 100% First class for M.Ed. success for both

The JRM team visited the centre and interacted with 4 faculty members. It appeared from the interaction that they were not informed about the JRM visit on 21 April, 2014. They claimed to be understaffed (15 instead of 22). Moreover, *contradicting what the AWP has stated, they said that they were not getting any training or up-gradation.* The faculty reported that they were not able to conduct any workshops, trainings, etc. that they are supposed to conduct due to lack of funds. According to them, MHRD has released the fund but State govt. has not given the sanctioned fund yet.

Contradictions were found in the faculty's opinions regarding quality of the courses they were teaching. The faculty did not find much gap in the curriculum, course duration (1 year) etc. in the first go. When probed further, they said that the teaching practice period of 30 days was not enough. Also, according to them they are only able to touch upon the theory part, not to go deep into it. On the other hand, they also said that if students get an exposure to life skills, they will be able to deal with the teaching part. The IASE faculty members also said that they were never consulted in the development of the curriculum. One faculty reported that the University told them to take classes in both behaviourist and Constructivist model (it was not clarified what they meant by that).

IASE which is supposed to be functioning as a higher level academic body which can provide academic input to the DIETs, CTEs and Training colleges is at present functioning just like a training college running B. Ed and M. Ed courses. Though the institution claimed that they had submitted the AWP to MHRD, the faculty was not able to explain to the JRM whether there was any persistent follow-up of the proposals for getting the funds released.

14.2 College of Teacher Education (CTE), Thiruvananthapuram

There are 4 Colleges of Teacher Education in Kerala. Each CTE has been located in a university, however, since each is under a different university and therefore they *do not have systemic*

linkages with each other. The relationship between SCERT and CTE does not appear to be one of deep academic engagement. The team interacted with the Principal of the Government College of Teacher Education, Thiruvananthapuram (CTE). He reported that the CTE was first established as a Normal school (teacher training school) in 1911. In 1994, it was upgraded as CTE. Further, in 2006, it was elevated to the status of Research Centre in Education by University of Kerala. They have 74 Faculty (36 full time and 48 part time). They presently conduct B.Ed. course for 200 students and M.Ed. for 35 students and Ph.D. program. The CTE has obtained NAAC accreditation. As per their report they have a campus and buildings (40,000 sq ft. built up area) and residential accommodation for Faculty and students. The CTE brings out a bi-annual research journal 'GCTE Journal of Research and Extension Education' since 2006. The team could look at their recent issue and it could be seen that it is well produced with contributions from serious scholars. However, the faculty we interacted with at SCERT did not seem to be aware of the articles available in this journal though many of them were related to the issues they were dealing with in their day today work.

They had undertaken in-service programs for 15 years but have discontinued as funds were not available under the Scheme. This may be so partly also because there is little coordination among various departments of government involved in TE. They are unable to submit consolidated budget proposals to the MHRD in time, and get the necessary financial support from there besides that available from the state government.

They had recently revised the B.Ed. curriculum with the aim to produce teachers who are (a) Professionally Competent (b) Socially Committed and (c) Flexible and Adaptable. The design of curriculum, it was claimed, was “PCTK” Oriented, meaning “Pedagogical, Content and Technological Knowledge” oriented. A brief look at the curriculum prepared raises several questions. It suffers from lack of clarity. *The NCFTE 2009 clearly has not been looked at before preparing the B.Ed. curriculum, nor was the significance of NCFTE 2009, as the guiding document for all teacher education curricula in the country understood.* The Principal, CTE appeared to believe that the curriculum is the domain of the Board of Studies of the university. *The four universities of Kerala reportedly follow four different kinds of curricula.*

The MHRD appraisal note points out that CTE has not provided utilization certificate since 2009 and this is the reason they have not been provided funds. CTE Principal was of the view that it was SCERT which did not forward their budget to the MHRD.

The interaction with CTE showed the huge distance between institution of higher education and the SCERT, let alone DIET, BRC, CRC. CTE appears to look at its role as pre-service teacher education provider, and produce teacher educators through its PhD programs. The SCERT was not even aware of the CTE journal, nor do they subscribe to this. While both these are important roles, their role in providing academic support to school and teacher education is not being seen as a priority.

14.3 State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT)

SCERT, Kerala has widely been viewed as one of the better SCERTs in the country. The campus, buildings, equipment are all impressive. Recently a large residential training facility has also been built. All this augurs well for a state level teacher education institution.

SCERT has a reasonably good and professionally run library. Teachers and members of public at large can also avail themselves of its resources, which is indeed a commendable thing. Libraries perish only for want of users, and not through “excess” of them. A large number of journals and books are available both in book and e-format. They have also initiated an archive of textbooks. The team was able to look at textbooks as early as 1920s in this collection.

It also has reasonable computer and audio-video facility. And what it may not have directly is more than compensated for by the resources of VICTER channel of Television directly under it physically. Administratively, both VICTER channel and SCERT function from the same building under the same department of the state government. Yet there appeared to be little collaboration between them. This must change.

The SCERT comes under the administrative control of the Secretary, General Education and the Steering Committee comprising of 44 members and chaired by the Minister of Education. The Members include teacher unions, representatives from institutions of higher education such as State Institute of English, private and government teacher education colleges, Kerala State Advisory Board, State Planning Board, Teacher Union representatives, DIET, CBSE, NCERT and SSA.

The SCERT Faculty comprises three types: One third are permanent faculty mostly with M.Ed. and Ph. Ds; nominated faculty, and deputed faculty-the last two categories are drawn from the secondary and senior secondary school teachers who may or may not have an M.Ed. degree, and who typically do not have experience of teaching at primary stage.

The recent initiatives of SCERT have been: Developing the KCF 2007, Curriculum for Pre-service D. Ed. program being conducted by DIETs, textbooks in all subjects for all classes up to class X. The state uses the NCERT textbooks for classes XI and XII. They also design the in-service teacher education modules and programs, orient around 1000 Master trainers drawn from DIETs, BRCs, CRCs; provide support to a TV channel on education VICTER.

Interactions with the SCERT indicated that a great deal of work is being done by SCERT and the faculty were pleased with their initiatives. They presented a huge amount of books, modules, newsletters, research reports etc. to the JRM team.

As we interacted with the Faculty for two days, the team came to the conclusion that:

- *There is need for far greater academic preparation, conceptual clarity in the work being done by SCERT than was in evidence.* Even preliminary probing into the assumptions that Faculty had in relation to their work drew a blank.
- There was satisfaction in *numbers*. The number (not necessarily quality), of textbooks, modules; of teachers trained.
- *The D. Ed curriculum in particular appeared to be a randomly selected assortment of phrases*, all titled ostensibly in accordance ostensibly with the NCFTE 2009, but closer inspection shows that only some titles of the courses set out in NCFTE 2009 have been used.
- While 2-3 faculty members have had opportunity to undergo courses abroad, for instance on leadership, five teachers are also sent every year for higher studies to the U S A under Fulbright Scheme. *How have they contributed on return? Where have they been posted on return? Have they led a group/shared their experience and work with colleagues in a formal and structured manner?*
- The SCERT Faculty were also not able to elaborate on what they perceived as a major difference between NCF 2005 and KCF 2007 which they reported was based on social constructivism. However, *they were not conceptually clear on even the broad principles of NCF 2005, and their understanding of social constructivism equally so.* It was saddening to note that some of the Faculty members, who had been part of the earlier in-service programs or curricular framework, were now unable to point out what their own reflections of these experiences have been.

- There is *immediate* and *urgent* need to fill *all* Faculty posts at SCERT with persons with the requisite academic qualifications and then organise long term, sustained capacity building of *all* SCERT Faculty. *SCERT Faculty must have academic autonomy, informed by sustained scholarship.* Unless this is undertaken at the earliest, the team is of the view that SCERT will simply perform the role of spreading the conceptual confusion they themselves are in, to the DIETs, BRCs, CRCs, schools – a grave danger to quality of education at all levels. The team was particularly struck by the greater conceptual clarity that field level teacher educators at DIETs, BRCs, CRCs displayed in our visits.
- *There is no widely discussed and accepted policy about the selection of faculty for SCERT.* Only some of them are there by appointment, a good number of them are there on deputation. If SCERT has to deliver what it has been created for, then a review and redesign of its personnel policy is urgently in order.
- *As per the guidelines of the MHRD for SCERT, the Faculty are to be of higher education level and to be paid UGC scales.* Once implemented, the state will be able to attract bright personnel into SCERT. The deputed/nominated faculty from secondary and senior secondary may be reduced to a small core who should then work on what they know best – secondary school teacher education and textbook preparations in collaboration with RMSA.
- *It was reported that there are 10,000 surplus teachers in the system.* They must be drawn into teacher education after intensive orientation *at the stages in which they have school level experience.*
- *Clear guidelines or stated principles for the design and creation of instruction and study material is desired;* there was no stated criteria for selection of any material in the curriculum
- *Research Officers (RO) can be useful for the functioning of SCERT.* They can help in the design and creation of high quality instructional and study material. Their skills and experience in research can help them conceptualize and find or collaborate and create material. There are over a dozen ROs there currently. Nearly all of them have a master's degree in the subject and another master's in education. In other words, nearly all of them have an MA or M Sc and B. Ed. But they seem to have limited research experience and more limited output. Materials that have been created by SCERT so far seem to be more a

product of government orders than research into needs, design and relevance. On being asked why this book had or did not have grammar lessons, the JRM team was told that the research officers were told that explicit teaching of grammar was unnecessary. They appeared to be unable to defend the design and contents of the material, and the weakness, thus, also shows in the output.

- *VICTER CHANNEL on TV is a good idea. But what is the kind of effort required to sustain it with quality material for 17 hours a day?*

One of the JRM members watched the Victor Channel for an hour from 8 to 9 on the morning of 23rd April (Wednesday), and saw only an extended mime and caricature by a school girl of some sounds produced by some animals and people in different moods. For about half an hour it had some local dance show. Neither of the two items had any elaborate explanation or direction about how students and/or teachers could use or learn them. There, however, was a little explanation in Malayalam.

- *TE Curriculum underwent major revision in 2013 without a comprehensive review of SWOT analysis of the earlier and the new curricula. Learning outcomes were reportedly unstated in the old curriculum. In the new, it was claimed to have been done.*
- *For the revision of Pre-Service Teacher Education curriculum random data were claimed to be collected before the task of redesign was undertaken.*
- *Introduction of the mentoring system is indeed a welcome step where an experienced teacher mentors a new recruit. But principles and guidelines followed in mentoring was unavailable.*
- *Four semesters of the new pre-service curriculum offers the usual mix of theory and practical courses, envisaging 400 days of teacher-trainee contact during the entire program. It is good that in the remaining time the trainees can work on their own and supplement their learning in the class room.*
- *But rationale for the new test patterns envisaged in this curriculum was not available. It has been proposed that methodology for teaching Malayalam will have 40 marks, teaching of Mathematics will have 40 marks, but methodology of teaching English will have only 30 marks, and teaching of Art will have only 10 marks. It was unclear why weightage differed, even if it is assumed that this is the consequence of variation in the*

numbers of hours allotted for different subjects in the curriculum. Community Living and study tour have 10 marks each, performance and product testing, without a clear definition of the terms, has 20 marks, as has Continuous and Comprehensive Testing (CCE). But the descriptors of the test, i.e. what will be found in the performance that will lead to full marks and what may not be there that will lead to less, have not been designed objectively in a manner where they will mean the same to all.

- *Textbook and material preparation must not be done at breakneck, breathless speed. Professionals must be involved in all aspects of this process.* The same is true for teacher resource materials.
- Careful, close reading of classics and contemporary readings in education by a collective of teacher educators who will also translate these materials under the guidance of mentors experienced in critical reading and writing is extremely necessary.
- *Pre-service curriculum of 2014 needs critical review and major re-structuring with the help of professional curriculum developers.*

14.4 District Institutions of Education and Training (DIET)

There are 14 DIETs, for each of the 14 districts of Kerala. The three teams of the JRM were able to visit and interact with DIET Kollam at Kottarakara, DIET, Pathanathitta, DIET, Attingal, DIET Allepey at Chengannur, DIET Kottayam, DIET, Trichur, DIET Sultan Battery DIET Wayanad and DIET, Thrissur. The following observations/ inferences/ recommendations are based on these visits. The general feeling of the JRM was that DIETs have a lot of potential and need to be supported in all possible ways including academic, financial, infrastructure and financial. DIETs produce several publications such as journals, process documents, modules for teachers and source materials for the Head Masters and teachers and students. Some of the publications (e.g. “*sahajam*” a book on the bio-diversity published by DIET, Kozhikode; “*njattuvellajjay kurunnikaikal*”, an activity-based book for science projects on the theme “water” by DIET Kozhikode; “*jenu*” and “*nayam*” sourcebooks on the language and culture of the tribal communities, by DIET, Wayanad) are of very good quality and can be used as a rich reference material for both students and teachers. Both Kozhikode DIET and Wayanad DIET have a good number of titles they had published during the previous years which have enriched their libraries. Similar work is done at other DIETs too. But the DIETs need substantial autonomy. The top-down approach prevailing at the moment needs to be replaced by a bottoms-up approach where

each DIET has the space to evolve local approaches and materials for curricular transactions. SCERT, CTE, IASE and the Universities should provide academic support in this context.

Observations on Specific DIETs:

DIET, Chengannur: It has 13 Academic Faculty – 6 male and 7 female. There are 30% vacancies of academic posts. The infrastructure of DIET needs to be improved – there were not sufficient toilet facilities. Hostel facilities are not adequate. No maintenance has been done in the last two years. The pre-service teacher trainee intake capacity is 80 (40 in each year). This year, there were 30 in second year (all female) and 25 in first year (24 female and one male). *Only 50% of the teacher trainees B.Ed. seats are filled (559 filled against 1020 capacity).* This declining trend in the enrolment of teacher trainees has been evident in the last 10 years. There are 12 TTIs in the district – 2 Government, 2 Unaided, 8 Government- Aided. The four semester two year D. Ed. Course developed by SCERT in 2013 is being offered. There are 25 days of internship in each year (second and fourth semester). *Teachers who had trained in Malayalam medium are teaching in English medium in the dual medium Government schools which form about 50% of the schools.* We learnt that there are 729 schools in the district out of which 36% are uneconomical.

Our interactions with DIET Principal and faculty, DDE, DEOs, Selected AEOs, Principal of a B.Ed. college and Principal of a TTI reveals the following:

- *Preference for Teaching as a profession is on the decline and has become almost a last resort.* (This is the perception of the teacher educators.)
- *There seems to be an imbalance in the demand and supply of teachers in the district – there is an excess of available trained teachers than the actual requirement.*
- Although the curriculum has been revised, still there is general perception among teacher educators that *there is not much inter-linkages between the theory and practice.*
- There is an *urgent need for a systematized and organized onsite monitoring support system.*
- *B.Ed. Curriculum has not been revised by the University Departments (except for Kerala University).*
- *Largely the B.Ed. Faculty was not involved in the preparation of School Education Curriculum.*

- *B.Ed. largely deals with Secondary level and the Higher Secondary gets ignored.*
- Continuous orientation program provided for Headmasters regularly.
- The 5/10 day in-service training program on Management Skills could be better implemented in coordination with the DIETs.
- *The in-service training should be outcome oriented with specific performance indicators.*
- *Mechanism should be established to assess the impact of training programs.*

DIET, Thrissur: The JRM team interacted with different participants – DIET faculty, BRC and CRC coordinators, Practicing teachers, AEOs and DEOs, SSA and RMSA program officers and IEDC resource teachers.

Inferences/ Issues

- *DIET faculty are involved in numerous trainings, projects, initiatives all round the year (training school teachers, on-site support, action research, surveys, studies, curriculum development etc) leaving very little time for their own D.Ed. students.*
- *The DIET has very few specialized faculty.* There is no provision for English faculty officially.
- A CTP (Comprehensive Teacher Transformation Program) training of 10 days is conducted for school teachers, with no component of academic development. It is more or less a managerial training.
- *TTI faculty are usually high-school assistants, with only a graduation and B. Ed.*
- *Interaction with D.Ed. students reveals that they are not adequately equipped to handle classroom transaction.*
- *Vacancies of DIET faculty remain unfilled.* (DIET, Thrissur has 3 faculty members instead of 7).

DIET, Kozhikode: Discussion of JRM members with DIET faculty reveals that:

- DIET faculty feels dissatisfied with the D.Ed. curriculum, not compatible with NCF and NCFTE.
- Many faculty members felt they are not able to focus much on D.Ed. students
- Compared to Thrissur, DIET faculty, Kozhikode faculty seemed to be more informed and involved with curriculum as well as teaching e.g. getting students involved in small

projects during internship. They have shown films on diversity (implying and discussing on linguistic diversity) and also carried out a detailed study on library use.

DIETs at Kottarakkara and Attingal: The JRM team had a very rewarding interaction with the Faculty of these two DIETs. Many Faculty members had been part of several earlier initiatives under DPEP and SSA. They showed great ability to reflect critically and had sound constructive ideas for teacher education of their district. They also provided critical feedback on the just held training programs on management, and the D.Ed. curriculum. The understanding of the Faculty on the nature and pedagogy of Mathematics, Science, Geography and Language was comparable to the best of understanding at any teacher education institution. The JRM team wishes to convey its deep appreciation to all those concerned with education in Kerala for making it possible for the faculty of these DIETs to arrive at substantial levels of conceptual clarity. It was also obvious that many faculty members had worked hard for years and were very conscious of the autonomy which must be granted to them as soon as possible.

The following suggestions are in keeping with the discussions held with DIET Faculty:

- *The DIETs are, as per scheme, to plan their programs with a Program Advisory Committee (PAC). This needs to be reconstituted ensuring linkage with District Panchayat.* DIET should be made accountable to PAC and should strengthen its planning process based on its updated database. The district plan needs to be responsive to the subtle needs of the district. This plan may be prepared in collaboration with DDE, SSA, RMSA under the leadership of District Panchayat. DIETs may be attached to SCERT (only if it is elevated as University). The positions of DIET Principal may be that of Professor, Senior Lecturer that of Associate Professor and Lecturer that of Assistant Professor. The faculty positions may be exchanged with CTE, IASE and SCERT.
- *The new D. Ed. Curriculum is not in tune with NCF, NCFTE and RTE and hence may be withdrawn and a fresh curriculum be developed professionally based on the above documents.* Four year B. El. Ed program as envisaged in NCFTE may be introduced in DIETs and can be spread to other TTEs. The qualification of all Teacher Educators of Teacher Training Institutions (Government, Aided & Private) may be made uniform. Presently, the qualification of teacher educators other than in DIETs private is BA/BSc and B. Ed.

- *There was a general feeling that DIET Faculty who are well qualified (with several holding Ph.D. degrees) are not being involved in the decision making of curriculum, material production for their DIETs and textbooks for schools. There was a strong view that district based planning are needed rather than top down program flows from SCERT. DIET Faculty also felt that there needs to be a transparent process of selection master trainers that SCERT selects. Feedback from the field must inform the next round of trainings.*

Overall, the teams were of the view that the conceptual clarity evident at DIETs was not reflected at the state level.

14.5 Block/ Cluster Resource Centres

The three JRM teams visited several Block and Cluster Resource Centres and SSA block level offices. They include BRCs at Peerumedu, Idukki, Chengannur, Kottayam, Ollukkara, Chelannur and SSA Kozhikode. They interacted with several SSA functionaries – BPO, trainers, Block and Cluster Coordinators, Teachers of IEDC, DRG members, Selected Head masters and teachers. A few observations and inferences are given below. For example, at the BRC, Ollukkara and Chellanur, the team interacted intensely with practicing teachers, HMs, BRC and CRC coordinators, BPO in-charge, BRC trainers. There was in-depth discussion of classroom practices in various subjects with practicing teachers.

Inferences/ Issues

- There seems to be a lack of pedagogical understanding which also has ramifications for the teaching-learning process as envisaged in documents like the NCF and KCF. Teachers were also not updated about recent developments in the field.
- Mathematics, for example, seemed to be one of the weak areas. The teacher we talked to was himself not clear about the difference between proper and improper fractions. In another example for fractions, the teacher showed very conventional and stereotyped teaching aids that he used to teach fractions. This lack of pedagogical and conceptual clarity is compounded by the fact that almost no resource material was found anywhere for Mathematics teaching and learning (not even JODO GYAN which is so popular across the country).

- Generally classroom processes are not thought about in depth but some English teachers were aware of ‘discourse process’ in language teaching.
- There was a divided opinion on the concept of Remedial teaching. Some take normal errors to be requiring ‘remedial teaching’, others see it for special cases.
- Cluster trainings, which provide platform for sharing, had been stopped for the last two years.
- Training given to the teachers was not found to be helping them deal with their problems.

Taking our experiences together, the JRM team arrived at the following:

Inferences and Recommendations:

- Subject specific support is required especially in terms of teaching of Maths and Science.
- There is a need for integrating ICT in classroom processes.
- Mapping and rationalization of IED resource persons is required.
- Mapping of resources available in SSA, RMSA, TE and Panchayat Plans to be done and a strategy could be evolved for a better convergence.
- Linkages to be established between SCERT, SSA, RMSA, TE and Panchayat so as to synergize the resources and implementation of the program. A think tank could be established to support this.
- There were major concerns about the need for counselling (especially for older children) in the wake of increasing social problems such as alcoholism, broken families etc.)
- There is a two-fold problem regarding IT@ School: smart classrooms are inadequate and computer labs are insufficient.
- Since 2012 there have been no funds for hardware maintenance in IT
- There seems to be no clear authority/ administrative autonomy of Principals of Higher Secondary who have to depend on High School HM for all kinds of administrative support which in turn leads to all types of organizational problems and personal misgivings. This should be resolved at all costs so as to facilitate smooth functioning of the Higher Secondary schools that are currently under High School HMs.
- There is no academic support to Higher Secondary

- There is no administrative staff for HMs in secondary which should be addressed immediately
- CTE and IASE are responsible for academic support to HSS teachers; however the latter are sometimes located too far off and hence there is no academic input in this situation for the HSS teachers
- There was a suggestion that RMSA should extend to HSS
- There is no monetary incentive for teachers to acquire higher degrees
- There used to be Subject Councils at the school level which are presently not functional.

Conclusion

We must say that visiting Kerala was a very rewarding experience for the JRM. We learnt a great deal from our interactions with different cross sections of the teaching community, officials, administrators and social activists. So far education in general and teacher education in particular are concerned, Kerala has a great potential, perhaps unparalleled in the country and is perhaps poised for a quantum jump. One needs to keep in mind the socio-political and historical context in mind; over a period of time every possible attempt to provide comparable education to all through the State has met with severe resistance and the number of private educational institutions has only multiplied. In spite of such radical interventions as the Travancore Education Reorganization Committee of 1945, Kerala Education Bill 1957 and Kerala Education Rules of 1959, the privatization of education often at the cost of quality and equity have gone on. There is also an urgent need to upgrade infrastructure, fill vacant positions and focus on gender and disability issues as well as the education of the marginalized sections of society. There is an equally urgent need to have a Think Tank as suggested by us so that Kerala develops a holistic perspective and stops having a fractured system without any linkages and an overall perspective. More than anything else, what it needs is further enhancement of the academic capacity of its teacher educators and teachers. This requires educators, mentors and teachers to collectively reflect at institutional level, the varied interventions in teacher preparation, classroom teaching-learning, curricula and teaching learning materials including textbooks, and forge fresh pathways that can take Kerala education to its highest potential.

Appendices

15. Reflections and Recommendations from the Field

15.1 Reflections on Interventions on School and Teacher Education in Kerala

Part-1: Implementation of New School Curriculum / Textbooks in 6 DPEP districts, 1996-97 to 1997-98.

The following comments are based on our discussions with Mr Suresh Kumar who was the SPD during the DPEP days in Kerala. In 1994, the National Institute for Educational Planning and Management (NIEPA) conducted a Baseline Assessment Study on the achievement level of primary school children in Kerala. The findings of the study were shocking: the achievement level of Kerala's primary school children was one of the lowest in the country, lower than even low-literacy states such as Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh. The report went on to identify the reasons behind the poor achievement levels: absence of a sound school curriculum, textbooks designed for rote-learning, 'primitive' teaching practices, absence of teacher training etc.

It was in this context that the Government of Kerala directed the State Project Office of the District Primary Education Program (DPEP) to develop a new school curriculum and textbooks for primary schools in the six DPEP districts in Kerala – Kasaragod, Malappuram, Wayanad, Palakkad, Idukki and Trivandrum – replacing the MLL-based textbooks. Through a series of workshops involving practicing school teachers, DIET and SCERT faculty under the guidance of national-level experts, DPEP-Kerala developed a new school curriculum and textbooks for grades I to IV. Along with the school curriculum and textbooks, DPEP also simultaneously developed Teachers' Handbooks (containing detailed suggestions for designing and implementing classroom activities) and a training module for a five-day initial in-service training for all primary school teachers in the DPEP districts. The in-service training program was designed to familiarize teachers with the new textbooks and the child-centred, activity based approaches envisaged in the new school curriculum. Training was delivered through 65 BRCs spread over the six DPEP districts during the summer vacation April-May 1996.

The BRC Trainers were from among school teachers in the same educational sub-district who were selected through a rigorous two-day selection workshop involving DIET faculty. The

Trainers were directly trained by the SRG, which was made up of BRC trainers, DIET faculty and teachers who had been involved in the curriculum/ textbook development process. This helped in reducing 'transmission-loss' down the three-level training cascade. The five-day training program taken up simultaneously in 65 BRCs was rigorously monitored and evaluated by as many as three separate agencies.

Immediately after the schools reopened in June 1996, the BRC trainers started providing on-site support to teachers through school visits while 'capturing' the classroom situation through carefully designed class-room observation tools. Teachers met once a month at the CRCs and shared experiences. The one-day CRC programs were facilitated by BRC trainers, who meticulously documented the proceedings. Based on feedback from the teachers, the DPEP-SPO quickly introduced (again, with help from National-level experts) a new system for assessing children's learning, replacing marks with grades. All teachers were provided a 4-day 'booster' training on the new approach to assessment of learning half way through the school year.

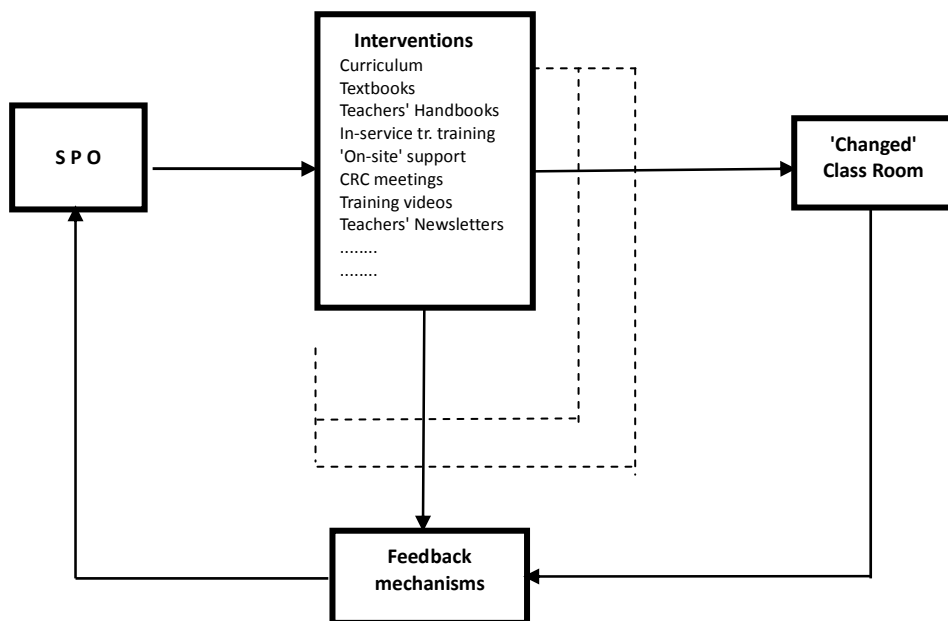
During the summer vacation April-May 1997, teachers in the DPEP districts were provided 5 days of further training. The content and methodology of the training program was substantially different from that of the previous summer training: instead of 'mock classrooms', school children were directly involved in the teacher-training sessions. In order to facilitate this, a children's summer camp called *Kinginikkootam* was organized at each of the training centres simultaneously.

A variety of teacher-support interventions were implemented, in addition to the above, including teachers' newsletters, training videos, children's camps, field visits, exhibitions, competitions, 'internship' program for BRC trainers (*Kalari*) and internal Academic Missions. Each of these interventions was monitored and evaluated rigorously through intricate feedback mechanisms including external agencies. The State Project Office, with the help of the SRG, continuously processed the incoming information from the feedback systems and quickly responded with mid-course corrections and further academic interventions.

The implementation model for the new primary school curriculum in the six DPEP districts envisaged (i) the continuous on-line refinement of individual interventions based on close monitoring and evaluation (ii) prompt assessment of results and impact on the classroom situation leading to further refinements and introduction of innovative interventions continuously. The 'Intervention Box' (see Fig A below) was designed as one that keeps growing

horizontally (to the right), over time, through refinements, improvements, modifications. As newer and newer interventions get introduced there would also be a vertical growth (downwards). Some interventions could get scrapped mid-way, reducing the depth of the 'box'. In short, the 'Intervention Box' was designed as a dynamic, pulsating organism....pulsating in sync with the situation in the classroom.

FIG A



Implementation model in the six DPEP districts, 1995-96 and 1996-97

The model was implemented in the six DPEP districts through the DPEP project mechanism, which in turn, was continuously supported by the SRG including dedicated groups of SCERT/ DIET faculty. Cost of implementation was almost entirely met from DPEP funds. DIET and SCERT programs/ funds were also carefully dove-tailed into the model. The new curriculum and textbooks were generally well-received in the six DPEP districts.

In 1997, an NCERT-team headed by Dr. Vinita Kaul took up a study to evaluate Kerala's new primary school curriculum / textbooks, the processes adopted for developing them, the implementation of the new curriculum and the response of teachers and children. The NCERT-team was all praise for the new curriculum and text books. "...the new curriculum is clearly based on the Social Constructivist theoretical framework...teachers are enthusiastic and children

appear to be thrilled with the new books, especially the math books.....the curriculum/ textbooks have been developed adopting a participative process involving a cross section of all stakeholders....both the product and the processes are replicable in other states....". .

Part-2: Introduction of new school curriculum/ textbooks in remaining districts and the Upper Primary and High School grades, 1998-99 to 2004

Ignoring DPEP's words of caution – that it would be disastrous to introduce the new textbooks in the remaining 8 non-DPEP districts without setting up adequate systems for teacher-support – the State Government decided to introduce the new textbooks in the 8 non-DPEP districts during the school year 1998-99. DPEP-SPO had written several times to the Secretary to Government in this regard and had even suggested that the introduction of the new textbooks in the non-DPEP districts be deferred for a year, while structures similar to the BRCs and CRCs are set up utilizing SCERT, DIET and State Government funds. It was obvious that Government had not appreciated the fact that the textbooks were actually an insignificant component of the pedagogical renewal process.

In the summer of 1998, the primary school teachers in the non-DPEP districts were provided a five

-day training by the SCERT using the same training module used in the DPEP districts. However, the 'temporary' trainers who had taken up this task had not been adequately oriented in the nuances of the new curriculum and the 'temporary' trainers, in fact, were mostly KSSP volunteers. *[It is worth mentioning that the KSSP had made several earlier attempts to get the entire academic component of DPEP entrusted to them. The state Government had, however, taken a stand that the KSSP's actual exposure to school education was limited to efforts to make classrooms 'joyful'. The KSSP's suggestion that textbooks developed for the Total Literacy could be used in the regular primary schools had NOT been accepted.]*

The new textbooks reached the schools in the non-DPEP districts only in December, whereas the school year had, in fact, commenced in June. Agencies like the SUCI, who had earlier attacked DPEP alleging that it was a 'World bank conspiracy' now renewed their attack with new-found energy. The inadequately trained teachers struggled to cope up with pressure from the public, particularly from the parents. There was a chaotic situation, particularly in the non-DPEP

districts but NO effort was made either to rectify the mistakes or to at least defend the new curriculum.

Instead, the Government chose to dilute the essence of the new Constructivist school curriculum through a series of curriculum / textbook "revisions". For instance, the Guptan Nair Committee recommended that all the alphabets be introduced in the grade- I textbooks and made several other suggestions that negated the 'whole-language approach' adopted under the new curriculum. Lessons were replaced randomly without making any effort to understand the logic behind the original lessons.

In the meantime, the SCERT (with the involvement of the KSSP) quickly wrote up the textbooks for Std V. These textbooks while physically resembling the grade I - IV DPEP-textbooks were designed blatantly contradicting the 'Social Constructivist' approaches and had 'boxes' in each lesson containing 'information' to be memorized by children. *NO* Teachers' Handbooks were developed for the grade-V textbooks and *NO* training was provided for grade- V teachers. In fact, the SCERT had even forgotten the need for framing a School Curriculum Document for the Upper Primary classes. But when this was pointed out by the media, the SCERT quickly listed out a set of 'curriculum outcomes' based on the lessons that had already been included in the textbooks.

No effort was made to set up sturdy teacher-support structures at the Block and Cluster-level in the non-DPEP districts. On the other hand, the structures in the DPEP-districts themselves were deliberately weakened, apparently to 'reduce contrast'. Another critical dilution that took place, which directly affected the quality of implementation, was in the area of selection of BRC-trainers. As indicated earlier, the BRC trainers in the DPEP districts used to be selected *only* from the same educational sub-districts, and that too based only on merit. This was quickly watered down. The position of BRC trainers came to be filled up by teachers from other districts who had been trying for years to get a transfer back to their home districts! There were even allegations of corruption connected with the deployment of BRC trainers. The State Resource Group, SRG, (which had originally included carefully identified SCERT-DIET-BRC faculty and the school teachers who had been involved in curriculum development), was quickly dismantled. In its place a new SRG emerged, made up of teachers and 'experts' suggested by teachers' Unions.

In 2001, the new UDF Government set up yet another Curriculum Revision Committee, the Sukumaran Nair Committee, to take up further revisions of the school curriculum. Sri. Sukumaran Nair, former Vice Chancellor of the Mahatma Gandhi University, had been involved in *all* the textbook development processes *prior to* DPEP, in his earlier role as Director of the erstwhile State Institute of Education(SIE), and therefore it was not surprising that his recommendations practically suggested a complete reversal of the new approaches. The Committee recommended a 'multi-methodology' approach to 'instruction' : "...ranging from conventional teacher-centred expository teaching at one end to the teacher-directed semi-discovery and learner-centred self discovery strategies at the other...". Following serious media and public criticism, the recommendations of the Sukumaran Nair Committee were reversed and revised thrice...and eventually ignored.

The introduction of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program (SSA) in March 2000 – as a successor to DPEP – had raised hopes that many of the problems hindering the smooth implementation of the new school curriculum would be addressed. However, right from the word go, SSA implementation in Kerala seemed to be jinxed. There was a deliberate attempt to keep the Project under a 'tight-grip' treating it as just another Government program, denying it the flexibility for functioning as a vibrant, dynamic 'mission-mode' program.

SSA norms insisted on 20 days of in-service training for all teachers, every year. By August 2003, only less than 10% of the total number of teachers had undergone a four-day course under SSA *over the previous three years*. More than Rs 150 Crores specifically set apart for in-service teacher-training simply lapsed.

The School Education Commission, chaired by Prof. U.R.Ananthamurthy in its Report submitted in May 2004 found, "*...in view of inefficient handling of the Project (SSA Project), even after three years, the project is in a stand-still position and in fact it is a non-starter...the main reasons for the delay in implementing the teacher training program arose from the confusion over the deployment of teachers. SSA norms allow deputation of teachers to BRCs as trainers. But even after three years, the BRCs are not fully functional. SSA norms insist that the trainers should be identified through a rigorous selection process. But the government, instead of acting according to the norms suggested by SSA in the selection of trainers, "Protected" teachers were re-deployed on working arrangement. This is a clear violation of the norms suggested by SSA. This was objected to by the teachers' Unions alleging that re-deployment of Protected teachers in*

violation of established norms involved large scale corruption. In fact, the work-arrangement program is being misused for effecting inter-district transfers violating norms laid by the Government. Since the teachers will have to get their salaries from the original schools, those schools are unable to find replacements through Employment Exchanges. This kind of re-deployment of Protected teachers has badly affected the quality of teaching. Since much of the funds have been allowed to lapse, the actual expenditure so far is less than 15% of the total funds allotted for three years....It is a pity that the SSA had also failed to implement a variety of teacher support measures and follow up measures resulting in the lapse of huge amount provided by the central government....."(p. 74).

15.2 Teacher Education

We refer here to the report of the School Education Commission chaired by Prof. U.R. Ananthamurthy. This Report was presented to the then Education Minister, Shri. Nalakathu Soopy formally on 30th April, 2004. Pages 12 -21 of the Report deal with 'Improving the Quality of Education'. There is a separate Annexure titled 'SSA: A non-starter Project' at pages 73-75. The findings and recommendations of the Commission are as relevant *TODAY* as they were ten years ago! The problems, of course, remain un-addressed! The curriculum reformation process which started in the year 1997 in Kerala is in a critical juncture where the SCERT (which is the responsible academic institution for curricular matters within the state) is leading a backward march setting aside all modern understanding regarding learning that too envisioned by NCF 2005. Most of what follows is based on the notes provided by C Ramakrishnan.

In Kerala there exists two schools of thoughts regarding academic issues: 1) the first stands for modern pedagogic practices and for exploring the possibilities of democratizing the classroom and learning environment; have full faith in child's ability in constructing knowledge and critical pedagogy as envisioned in NCF 2005. 2) the second still has faith in the feudal values and its educational philosophy 'behaviorism'. They prefer autocracy and have no faith in enquiry method or problem solving method. For them, the Text book is 'the bible' and is the last word. They are making use of the middle class mind set of a considerable number of Keralite and the market lobby which has a strong influence in the political structure.

For the next academic year SCERT prepared and recommended revised text books which have already printed and is in the process of distribution. Through this process SCERT pulled the

whole process to pre 1970s situation. All books are “closed” ones. No scope for any kind of enquiry as a part of learning process. The word ‘project work’ is forbidden. They are very particular about ‘learning outcomes’ and least bothered about the process of learning. These changes have their implications in the teacher training process. If things are like this, there is no need of any kind of teacher training. If there is a guide book and if the child has the ability to memorize, the purpose – ‘achieving’ learning outcome – is ‘satisfied’.

We have faced this kind of a situation in 2001. The government formed after general elections within the state tried to undo the curriculum reformation process, the people of Kerala resisted with the support of academicians all over the country and the ‘then’ government was forced to withdraw its decision to go back to the conventional pedagogic practices. This time also we are expecting the people’s intervention and pressure with the support of academics, who have faith in democracy and modern pedagogic practices. With that hope I (i.e. C Ramakrishnan) am putting some stray thoughts regarding the teacher training.

The Need for Teacher Transformation

In recent years, Kerala has reformed its school curriculum to make it more vibrant and suited to the emerging needs of the world order. Yet there is room to improve all aspects related to learning process and the vertical and horizontal integration of academic aspects related to content within the curriculum. Further, many teachers are not yet fully confident in the new approach and there are shortcomings for providing pedagogical support system (such as teacher’s handbooks and teaching-learning materials) to support them. Some aspects of the system of evaluation remains anchored in old rote-oriented approaches, do not promote learning, and intimidates even small children. *There is therefore a need to develop or enrich and enhance teacher capacities to understand and practice the new curriculum and try out innovative learning methods.* Here is the relevance of a thorough and comprehensive teacher training by making use of the scope of modern technology. The need of today is not mere teacher empowerment but teacher transformation. We need transformed teachers who have faith in democratic practices and faith in children’s abilities and potential. The teachers must realise that their role is providing equal opportunity for all for equitable education.

Kerala has almost achieved universalization of primary education. Enrollment of children in class one is near cent percent and almost all of them complete their class ten examination. *But this is not true in the case of SC/ST students.* This is evident from the table given below.

Table 1: Cohort

Year	Class	Total number of students		Number of SC students		Number of ST students	
2002-03	1	456517	100	53165	100	8152	100
2011-12	10	470119	102.98	50089	94.21	5579	68.43

Source: DPI Statistics

One has to look some other trends also while planning any kind of activities in connection with education. The enrollment in class one is sharply decreasing.

Table 2: Enrollment Pattern to Class One

Sl no	Year	No of students enrolled in class 1
1	1956-57	551896
2	1960-61	595276
3	1970-71	800470
4	1971-72	841163
5	1980-81	631479
6	1990-91	601030
7	1995-96	519048
8	2000-01	450653
9	2005-06	425353
10	2010-11	337511
11	2013-14	292699

Source: DPI Statistics (Compiled)

Table 3: Demographic Transition

State	Proportion of child population (age group 0-6) to that of total population	
	2001	2011
Kerala	11.9	10.4

Source: Census data

It is very clear that the enrollment is steadily declining over the years. And due to the decline in birth rate the child population is also coming down. These all have direct implication in school education.

Apart from these, with the ‘middle-classisation’ of the community, the parents prefer private schools to that of common schools (both Govt. schools and private aided schools are considered as common schools in Kerala). Hence there is only a little chance for newly trained persons to become teachers in regular schools. All are aware of these realities even then people are getting admission in teacher training institutes, running mainly with profit motive. *Hence reforming the pre service curriculum and training methodology is important but in service training is more important in the Kerala context.* Thus I am giving more importance for the transformation of the existing teachers through in service programs.

The Education department is governed based on Kerala Education Rules(KER) framed on 1959. KER ensured one teacher in each class without considering the number of students in the class. There are certain norms based on which additional divisions shall be created based on the number of students in each class division and teachers’ posts are created accordingly. As per Table 1, the cohort clearly shows all students enrolled in class one are completing class 10. And 90% of the students who reach class 10 are continuing their studies in higher secondary or equivalent courses. The major concern of other Indian states is to ensure access for secondary education. Thus they are envisaging programs for enrolling students in secondary classes. But the picture is different in Kerala. Of course we have to address the issues of SC and ST students where retention is an issue. 18-22% of learners who complete higher secondary or equivalent courses pursue their higher education and the rest turn to the mainstream of life and livelihood. So the secondary education sector of Kerala has also the great responsibility of equipping majority of the learners to face real life confidently.

KCF 2007, which was formulated based on the broader principles put forward in NCF 2005, could conceptualize the changes to be reflected in curriculum, teaching-learning process, school structure, its atmosphere etc. after analyzing them deeply. KCF 2007 has envisioned how to go forward with the changed perception: the crucial step in this direction is making the teacher to realize the world around us where knowledge determines the power structure. Hence, equipping the teacher to assimilate new knowledge that is emerging and expanding constantly is important. It is equally important to make the teacher capable for better accumulation and transaction of knowledge to the learner in a suitable manner. To actualize such kind of an empowerment program for teachers it is obligatory to critically analyze the existing practice of teaching and learning and the contexts in which they are embedded. It will naturally lead to indispensable changes in the system.

It is true that in continuation with the curriculum reform initiated in 1997 in Kerala, teacher empowerment programs are being organized on a regular basis and it has been systematized now. *But the empowerment programs conducted once in a month for a day is not sufficient to achieve the larger aims of the curriculum.* As a result there arises criticism that teacher empowerment programs become almost mechanical and ritualistic. In the cascading structure of teacher training heavy transmission loses is a reality. *Teachers need more time and support to unlearn what they have already learned in a behaviorist paradigm. And they want direct experience to understand the notion that knowledge can be constructed through experiential learning* and also the significance of problem solving method, and the learning strategies like project work, assignments, debates, seminars etc.

Almost all teachers in Kerala are trained teachers. In secondary level teachers are appointed subject-wise. This is a real strength of the educational sector of the state. *But the pre-service teacher education programs conducted by the Universities are not in tune with the emerging curricular visions the state follow.* They are based on the old behaviourist approach to learning. This becomes a major handicap for teachers who are working in the field and trying to practice the latest methods of pedagogical insights. Latest studies conducted by different agencies reveal that the teachers of the state are to be exposed to modern educational psychology and pedagogic practices to become meaningful practitioners of the new approach. All these suggest that a systematic teacher empowerment program is the need of the hour.

Our major concern is addressing quality issues. *Preparing teachers to address the new situation is the real challenge.* Without enhancing the capabilities of the teachers both ideologically and realistically, the state could not address the quality issues. Transforming the existing teachers is the crucial and critical task. Hence any training – without enabling the teachers to unlearn the old behaviourist practices that they inherited or imbibed from their teachers and reinforced through the old pattern of pre service training – will be meaningless.

Secondary education is the weakest link in the educational structure of Kerala. Almost all individuals of the age group of Secondary education i.e. up to the age of 18 are in schools. And after that 20-23% are going for higher education and the majority become part of the work force. Hence secondary education becomes crucial. It must enable the youth to address confidently the future task of life. Helping to identify one's own abilities and upgrading the skills have to be made part of secondary education. The present system of schooling is not capable for taking these challenges. Empowering teachers to take up new mission is possible only by equipping them to address the emerging scenario. Short-term teacher empowerment programs are not adequate in this regard. It needs multiple strategies to motivate teachers and develop professional approach in them. Attaching teachers to professional institutions or professionals who could guide them to understand the new horizons of the world of knowledge and overcome the personal and professional limitations need to be envisaged.

The multiple strategies for teacher training shall include:

1. Comprehensive Teacher Development Program
2. Interactive Teacher Empowerment Portal
3. School Research Project
4. Teachers Congress

1. Comprehensive Teacher Development Program

Radical changes are taking place in the field of education in Kerala. Curricula and syllabi for school education are being restructured, new pedagogic practices are being introduced, and a restructuring of the evaluation system is underway. The curriculum that has been introduced in the school education is based on modern educational theories and pedagogic practices. The approach is child-centred in that concepts are introduced so as to arouse the natural curiosity in the child, to encourage the child's initiative in learning, and to develop different skills that enable

the child to become a powerful learner. Teaching focuses on providing the child with experiences that foster and convey the different skills and concepts the child must master. To the extent possible, the experiences are derived from the child's life and local environment, and serve to increase the child's understanding of these.

One can see the evolution of democratisation within the class room. The focus of instruction has broadened from the teaching of discrete grammatical structures to the fostering of communicative and creative ability in a language class room. Creative self-expression has come to be valued over recitation of memorized dialogues. Negotiation of meaning has come to take precedence over structural drill practice. Comprehension has taken on new meaning, and providing comprehensible input has become a common pedagogical imperative. Culture has received renewed interest and emphasis, even if many teachers remain unsure how best to teach it.

The teacher-development system has to be visualised in a new perspective so as to ensure all teachers capable to transact according to the emerging need. Short term teacher trainings may help the teachers for their mid term corrections. The impact of this may not be sustained for long period. It has an adverse effect in that it creates dependance on teachers. Long term teacher developing program will help the teachers for developing vision on education and it promotes innovative practices. *A 15 or 20 day comprehensive teacher development program which will enhance the teachers competence. This will be a combined effort of SCERT, Universities, research institutions.*

The objectives of this program shall be as listed below

- To equip teachers for ensuring learning environment which may cater equal opportunity for equitable education to all learners
- To familiarise with modern techniques and methods of learning in a democratic backdrop
- To assimilate new ideas emerging in the horizon of knowledge and to enrich one's own acquired knowledge
- To understand the new trends emerging in the field of pedagogy
- To share experience
- To make the teacher aware of the concept that learning is a continuous process and teacher is a learner who has to meaningfully carry forward learning techniques which may help the child to construct knowledge

- To make the teacher understand how to use the resource pool available around their vicinities for the benefit of the learner.
- To initiate teachers to the field of information communication technology in the process of teaching and learning.
- To help the teachers become researchers in their respective subjects as well as pedagogic practices.

2. Interactive Teacher Empowerment Portal

This is the era of technology. We have to develop strategies for making use of modern technology for empowering teachers. Apart from face to face teacher training, alternative methods are to be explored for effective teacher empowerment. Teacher absenteeism from schools during working days affects the proper functioning of schools. If we can provide a platform for teachers to interact with educational experts and resource persons they can imbibe knowledge without any transmission loss. Sharing of classroom experiences and thoughts is also possible. There is adequate infrastructure in schools especially in secondary schools to initiate this program, we need to develop a system of this kind by mobilizing academic support.

Through such a portal, the following objectives can be achieved.

1. To expand knowledge base of teachers by providing support to access knowledge from genuine resources.
2. To develop an attitude among teachers for adopting new methods suitable to their classroom.
3. To develop attitude among teachers in sharing their experience for mutual benefit.
4. To mobilize a pool of experts to extend support for strengthening school education.

3. School Research Project

Research and dissemination is inevitable in any field of development. School education is considered as a developmental process in the field of national building as well as knowledge building. It is believed, that the authority for all kind of research is universities and institutes entitled for research in a particular area. School teachers are entitled to conduct research in the name of action research which is a part of their class room practice with a view to promote learning. Universities and other institutes can cooperate in this venture.

Through this we can achieve the following objectives

1. Promoting local based research activities.
2. Promoting innovative practices in teaching-learning process.
3. Mobilising local effort for strengthening knowledge base
4. Enabling the teacher researchers to identify the actual class room issues to be addressed more scientifically.
5. Establishing rapport with experts and research and other institutes of excellence.

4. Teachers' Congress

There are very few avenues for teachers to come together and share the possibilities and concerns on the base of their experiences. Teachers' Congress is envisaged to bridge this gap. This can also be considered as a strategy for teacher training. It is envisaged as a common platform to assemble and discuss various issues relating to education. State level Teachers' Congress ought to be organised once in two years. Formal paper presentations, open discussions and deliberations will be part of the congress. Pedagogic issues, social issues with common interest, personal experience, innovations etc can be shared in the congress. Any teacher can register as a participant.

The following objectives may be addressed with this initiative:

1. Providing a forum to teachers to pursue their curiosity by experimenting on open ended learning situations.
2. Making teachers feel that they can solve many issues relating to learning process connected with intrinsic as well as extrinsic factors.
3. Appraising the status of education in schools.
4. Exploring the appropriateness of syllabi, text books and pedagogy.
5. Exploring the scope of collaborating with experts from both inside and outside Kerala.
6. Identifying new methodologies on quality assurance and school improvements.

Structure of the Teachers Congress

As mentioned above the main thrust of the teacher's congress will be to work out details regarding quality school education for all. This needs a qualitative change in the perspective and attitude of the stakeholders. The teacher's congress will be the beginning of a series of events,

which will enable them to play a key role in the process and to develop the capability of teachers and the community to be part of developing a better educational environment, which ultimately results in providing quality education. Hence the participants of the teachers' congress have the responsibility of the follow up activity also.

In service training - Target Group

In our state there are broadly three categories of teachers:

1. Primary teachers – around 110000 teachers
2. Secondary teachers- around 56000 teachers
3. Higher secondary & vocational higher secondary teachers- around 22000 teachers

We must focus on the following:

- to provide in depth hands on experiences to teachers by professionals so as to enhance the *confidence* level and *competence* of the teachers thus promoting their creative ability in the teaching learning process.
- to help the teachers to understand the modern trends and development in content area and pedagogy.
- to help the teachers to establish linkages with the professional institutions and experts.

Time span

Each teacher has to undergo a fifteen to twenty days comprehensive empowerment program periodically (once in ten years). A teacher has to undergo at least 2 such empowerment programs in his/her total service. Certificates shall be issued to those teachers who successfully complete this program. The cluster monthly meeting or training shall be planned as a booster to this training.

Training Responsibility

For Primary teachers: DIETs must take the responsibility of training. They can make use of Block Resource Centers as training centers. The lab facilities and resources which include human resource also of Higher Secondary sections shall be utilised.

For Secondary teachers: Coordination shall be done by an academic team attached to each district educational officer. We can make use of the facilities of good college departments and other research institutions as venues of training. After pre degree delinking, in almost all colleges there

are unutilised physical space. In an year a total of 10,000 (approximate) teachers can be brought into the development program. One round will complete within 5 years.

The development program is envisioned as a collaborative venture by establishing connectivity with research institutes, universities, colleges etc. A pool of experts including the faculty members of these institutes and retired personnels having scholarly achievements will lead the academic activities of the program. The laboratories and libraries of the above institutions will also be made use of as a part of the program.

The existing pattern of High School system in the state consists of classes from 8 to 10. Teachers at this level have to handle their respective subjects in all the three classes. Hence the teacher empowerment programs at secondary level have to bring together all the teachers handling lessons in these three classes.

Table 4 - Total Number of Secondary Teachers – Subject Wise

Sl.No	Subject	Total Teachers
1	Malayalam	7263
2	English	5994
3	Hindi	4937
4	Sanskrit	981
5	Other Languages including Arabic, Urdu etc	1622
6	Physical Science	7333
7	Biological sciences	4698
8	Social Sciences	7446
9	Mathematics	8448
10	Computer education	995
11	Physical Education	2625
12	Work Experience	1088
13	Art	1235
14	Music	996
15	Dance	163
16	others (not covered above)	758
	Grand Total	56582

Source: DPI statistics (three years before)

For Higher secondary teachers: *Cordination shall be done by an accademic team attached to each regional deputy director.*

Defining the role of SCERT and DIETs

Clarity is needed regarding the role and function of SCERT and DIETs. Ideally SCERT must be entrusted to take lead of the accademic activites of Pre service and Inservice teacher training. I am afraid to suggest this at this jucture because SCERT does not have any clarity regarding its accademic role and there is no consistency in accademic understanding. DIETs have very qualified personnels whose abilities are underutilised or not properly utilised. There is no accademic structure to guide the DIETs. They do not have any formal likage with SCERT. Hence strengthening SCERT, DIETs and BRCs should be given top priority.

15.3 Teacher Education in Kerala – What is at Stake?

1. B. Ed

The following is based on a note from K N Anandan.

1. The B. Ed courses in the state are conducted by three universities. The B. Ed syllabus does not reflect NCF assumptions
2. There is no monitoring of the teaching process taking place in the autonomous B. Ed colleges.
3. Students are enrolled very late in the academic year; there are only limited number of working days.
4. The course should be for two years; now B. Ed is a one-year course.
5. There is no in-service training for the teachers of B. Ed centres.
6. Teachers handle classes without proper conceptual understanding; there is no mechanism to identify and solve their problems.

2. TTC, D. Ed

1. DIETs and TTIs follow different staff patterns.

2. There are no permanent teachers in several of the TTI's (i.e., corporate and Govt TTIs). Classes are taken by teachers who join the staff through transfers taking place every year.
3. The number of teaching hands is also less in TTI's. In DIETs there will be at least 10 members as the teaching staff.
4. There are TTIs where the Mathematics teacher has to teach Malayalam.
5. With regard to the salary there is no parity between the TTI teachers and DIET faculty.
6. The qualification of the TTI Principal has not been specified.
7. In several DIETs there are a number of vacant posts.

The Qualification of Teacher Students

Plus 2 (i.e., 12th) in Humanities, Science and Commerce. The course offered does not cater to the different needs of the students

D. Ed Curriculum

1. It is not process-based. The insights available from NCF are grossly neglected; institutions focus on the percentage of pass in the examination (K. TET).
2. Objective type questions are used for KTET. D. Ed course is also content-based.
3. The approach envisaged in KCF is side-lined and there is a tendency to go back to the behaviourist approach; this is very conspicuous in the approach to languages as is evident in the Psychology material developed by SCERT.
4. There are two levels of courses for D. Ed: One level of D. Ed is meant for the students who hold Plus 2 who are entitled to teach at the LP level (i.e., classes 1 to 4). The other level of D. Ed is meant for graduate students who are entitled to teach at the UP level (classes 5 to 7). This complicates the conduct of the courses.
5. Those who have only plus 2 are forced to learn the whole contents meant for UP classes; Graduate D. Ed holders are eligible for teaching up to class 8. B. Ed holders can also teach in class 8. This issue is to be resolved.
6. CCE is conducted mechanically and also undemocratically. There is no portfolio assessment, feedback, etc.

7. Practice teaching is done just for the sake of doing it. There is no one to monitor how students do this. There is no zeal to produce the best teachers as the output of the institution.
8. There are several teacher-centred D. Ed classes.
9. Recently semester system has been introduced. Consequently there is no time to do justice to anything. Examinations are conducted systematically but time is not sufficient for the students to learn anything. If classes commence from June, this issue can be resolved.
10. We have to insist on Continuous Assessment (as envisioned in RTE Act), learning achievement for all students, and the sharing of this with the parents.
11. The TET examination is to be revamped.
12. IT is to be integrated with D. Ed course.
13. There should be proper monitoring for improving the quality of the teaching-learning process in the institutions that achieve very low percentage of pass.
14. There is no scope for the professional development of the teachers.
15. Teacher-students do not get experience in inclusive education.
16. None of the activities such as preparing question papers, analyzing evaluation, planning for follow up activities and developing locally-specific curriculum are effective.
17. There is conceptual understanding about the performance standards of the teachers.
18. Considering the special situation prevailing in Kerala, separate D. Ed course in English can be conducted. Subject-specific D. Ed courses can be considered as they can bring about qualitative changes. However, the feasibility of conducting such courses is to be taken care of.

3. Pre-Primary Courses

1. The Dept. of Education conducts Pre-Primary courses but it is not mandatory that all pre-primary teachers should undergo this course.
2. In most of the un-aided institutions classes are conducted as a ritual; there may be less than 10 students and four teachers. The fee collected from ten students will not suffice to meet the salary of the teachers. Therefore there will not be regular classes; name-sake teaching takes place.

3. The Head of the Govt. pre-primary school has no experience in pre-primary education. He is just a person who has become the head of the pre-primary school by virtue of promotion. The qualification of the head of the pre-primary school is to be stipulated.
4. There are pre-primary schools without lab schools.
5. There is some monitoring mechanism.
6. The pre-primary curriculum is fairly good; the students may achieve all the learning outcomes within two years. But where will they teach after the completion of the course? Pay-scale is yet to be fixed for the pre-primary teachers.
7. Pre-primary classes can be attached to all Government and Aided schools. DIETs can also offer Pre-Primary courses.
8. There is no in-service training for the pre-primary teachers.

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