

Reflective Interaction with the Maharashtra Team on Strengthening Teacher Education System

A Report



05.06.2017

Venue : Conferen Hall DTE & SCERT, Odisha



**Government of Odisha
School and Mass Education Department**



**DIRECTORATE OF TE & SCERT
ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR**

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Background

The proposal for restructuring of SCERT, Odisha (based on MHRD, Guidelines 2017), submitted to the Department of School and Mass Education, Government of Odisha has been under active consideration for quite sometime now. With a view to learning from Maharashtra State, a three-member Team (one official from MSCERT, Pune and two from Leadership for Equity) was invited, on behalf of Think Tank-TE-SCERT and Unicef, Odisha for a presentation on 05.06.2017 at TE and SCERT on Revitalizing SCERT of Maharashtra State. A detailed presentation on Revitalizing Teacher Education system, including MSCERT, was made by the Team, which was discussed and debated in depth. In the afternoon on the same day, the Team had an interaction with the Principal Secretary and State Project Director, SSA at OPEPA, Bhubaneswar. There are a few takeaway from the presentation, which need to be examined for adoption/adaptation.

A comparative picture of the proposed restructuring of SCERT, Odisha and that of MSCERT, Pune has been reflected in the following Table.

Table: Proposed Restructuring of SCERT, Odisha and Revitalizing MSCERT, Pune – A Comparative Analysis

Sl. No.	Areas	Points of,...		Remarks
		Convergence	Divergence	
1	Overall command and control	Both the SCERTs are State Academic Authority under RTE Act 2009.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCERT, Odisha has a network of TELs (DIETs, BITEs, CTEs, IASEs, TCs and ETEIs) under its academic and administrative control MSCERT, Pune has only DIETs under its control 	SCERT, Odisha combines: a Directorate for TE + SCERT, whereas MSCERT is only SCERT.
2	Merger of allied institutions with SCERT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal for restructuring of SCERT, Odisha includes merger of ELTI and SIEMAT with it. In Maharashtra, State Institute of Science Education (SISE), State Institute of English Methods and IVGS have been merged with MSCERT 		Merger of allied institutions with SCERTs appears to be a cost-effective measure, both functionally and financially
3	Structure of Divisions / Departments	Division / sub-division-wise, proposed structures of SCERT, Odisha and MSCERT, Pune are almost similar / identical, but with different permutations and combinations of Departments / Sub-divisions.	MSCERT, Pune provides for an International Merit Section intended to have comparable international standards.	Broadly, both the states conform to the overall structure of Divisions suggested by MHRD, GoI (2017).

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4	Staff Structure (Academic)	<p>SCERT, Odisha : Director (01), Professors (05), Associate Professors (14), and Assistant Professors (25)</p> <p>MSCERT, Pune: Director (01), [Class A (24), Class B (35) and Class C (43) employees] as Academic Staff.</p>	<p>MSCERT, Pune provides for two posts of Joint Director, whereas SCERT, Odisha does not have a post of Joint Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MHRD, GoI Guidelines (2017) provides for one post of Joint Director • MHRD Guidelines (2017) provides for one post of Joint Director in the rank of Professor with UGC Scale of Pay. • Government of Maharashtra puts non-professionals as Director and Joint Directors in MSCERT.
5	Staff Structure (Academic Support Staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCERT , Odisha (21) + Group D (16) • MSCERT, Pune – 85 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSCERT provides for Subject Assistants (45) appointed on deputation basis through school / regional office • Provision for individuals outside government on contractual basis through CSR (15) • TEIs (80) in Odisha are under SCERT, Odisha for which an administrative support structure has been provided for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although SCERT, Odisha Academic Support Staff structure conforms to MHRD (2017), MSCERT, Pune has a different structure
6	Core Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSCERT, Pune provides for a Core Committee (CC) which shall function as a Guiding Body, whereas SCERT, Odisha has a Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) with the same functions • Structure-wise, composition of CC & PAC are almost similar 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MHRD Guidelines (2017) provides for a PAC in SCERT

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7	Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty recruitment to MSCERT, Pune shall be made by a Selection Committee under the Chairmanship of the Principal Secretary, School Education and Sports Department through "Selection Conference" Faculty to be drawn from institutions under Government Sector. Expertise and experience is given preference to over academic qualifications. Faculty are brought on deputation with their own scale of pay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Restructuring of SCERT, Odisha provides for selection Faculty structure (Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor) in SCERT, Odisha is as per MHRD, Guideline 2017. MSCERT faculty shall be recruited on deputation basis for a period of five years, drawing their own scale of pay in the posts, which they are deputed from. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exact selection of faculty for SCERT, Odisha shall be worked out SCERTs shall be under School Education in the event of which faculties to be paid salary in the UGC scale of pay. The MHRD-suggested structure (2017) provides for UGC Scale of Pay State Government has to take a view on the scale of pay.
8	Creation of Posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional posts shall be created only after adjustment / redesignation of existing posts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSCERT proposal provides for creation of additional posts only after cancellation of redundant posts in SCERT and DIETs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructuring of SCERT in Odisha is in the light of MHRD, Guideline (2017) MSCERT-suggested model needs to be examined with its accompanying pros and cons.
9	Learning Outcomes in NAS 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite positioning of right people on right jobs (in DIETs, BRCs and CRCs), performance review of Maharashtra and intensive monitoring, levels of achievement of students in NAS 2017 for both the state for Odisha and Maharashtra are almost the same. Although MSCERT, Pune has a radically different structure distinct from other SCERTs of the country, performance of Maharashtra State in NAS 2017 does not appear to be better in terms of ranking of states. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The working of Regional SCERTs, DIETs, DRCs and CRCs in Maharashtra needs to be studied in greater breath and depth.

1.1 Positive Practices from Maharashtra for Adoption / Adaptation

- Obtaining ISO rating for schools.
- Registration of teachers as 'tech-savvy' teachers for self-propelled professional development
- Adoption of schools by officers of state education administration department and DIETs
- Mobilization of funds for school improvement through community participation
- Declaring schools 'developed' on the basis of a set of appropriate parameters.

- Strengthening of DIET on priority basis
- Striving for international standards for school education.
- Bringing in teachers and others of proven expertise and experience to SCERT on deputation basis.
- Bringing in individuals outside Government sector to SCERT, with excellent academic credibility, on contractual basis through CSR



1.2 Restructuring of SCERT, Odisha and MSCERT, Pune : Points of Convergence and Divergence

Convergence:

- Emphasis on positioning right people in right positions, ensuring maximisation quality and effectiveness.
- Recruitment of professionally competent faculty through comprehensive and rigorous selection process.
- Stress on functional autonomy and accountability through a mechanism of indepth monitoring and review.
- Restructuring proposal of SCERT, Odisha was developed by Think Tank-TE whereas it was done by an NGO (Leadership for Equity) for MSCERT, Pune. However, extensive consultations with stakeholders were held in both the cases.
- In both the cases, new posts shall be created only after adjustment / redesignation of existing posts of similar rank.



Divergence:

- Restructuring of MSCERT, Pune is based on MHRD Guidelines 2012, whereas SCERT, Odisha restructuring is in accordance with Strengthening of SCERTs (MHRD 2017), and thus, more updated.
- MSCERT, Pune has only DIETs under its academic and administrative control. On the other hand, SCERT, Odisha has a large institutional network of teacher education institutions – ETEIs, BITEs, DIETs, CTEs, IASEs, Tcs.
- For recruitment of personnel for faculty position in MSCERT, Pune, criterion followed is : qualifications (compromised) + expertise and experience. For SCERT, Odisha proposed recruitment criteria: NCTE / UGC qualifications + relevant expertise, experience and efficiency.
- Recruitment through Selection Conference in Maharashtra is wide-open, drawing human resources from an extensive area, including school teachers. For SCERT, Odisha, selection shall include fresh candidates as well as on deputation adhering to prescribed qualifications and expertise.
- For MSCERT, Pune, faculty brought on deputation shall be reverted back to their parent posts after a five-year tenure, consequent vacant positions are to be filled through fresh recruitment. In order to ensure continuity and change, SCERT, Odisha shall have a mixed group of people that is a fixed percentage of permanent positions with remaining percentage earmarked for people to be brought on deputation.

- Faculty positions in SCERT, Odisha shall be filled up through OPSC after candidates are shortlisted after due selection at the SCERT/S & ME Department. This is not the case for MSCERT, Pune.

1.3 Learning from MSCERT Restructuring

- Adaptation of 'Selection Conference' mechanism for short-listing of appropriately qualified candidates with expertise, experience and commitment for the tasks intended for them. In this case, NCTE / UGC qualification requirements have to be followed for availing MHRD, GoI funds under CSSTE – no compromise with the prescribed qualifications.
- Government Resolution No. DIET-4516 dated 17th October, 2016 of Government of Maharashtra intends to bring about transformational change in the system through radical reforms. The reform move is very nascent, yet to establish its efficacy. Innovative reforms take time to take roots. No evidence exists till date to demonstrate the impact of the restructured / to be structured MSCERT. It would be prudent on our part to wait and watch.



- We have at present a rich wealth of selection devices largely brought from corporate sector. The selection process the State wants to put in place to be rigorous, transparent and unbiased, strictly sticking to qualifications, expertise and experience. We can have informed inputs from the 'Selection Conference' the Government of Maharashtra.
- A 'great' system of education needs to have right people in right positions to deliver the expected outcomes. Following the Maharashtra method, our State can spread its net wider to

identify potential candidates. This notwithstanding, the basic criterion of recruitment to be guided by MHRD, NCTE / UGC stipulated qualifications. The ambit of selection shall be open only to the qualified, competent and professionally committed candidates.

- For this, the State can have an appropriate faculty-mix: a fixed percentage of positions being permanent and the remaining positions being earmark for candidates to be brought on deputation. This would ensure continuity and change in the system unlike the case in MSCERT, Pune. Here also, selection by merit shall be the defining principle.
- Unlike Maharashtra, the Teacher Education system in Odisha has Cadre for Teacher Educators. This is in sync with the MHRD Guideline. Prospects of moving up in the professional ladder for deserving candidates are likely to keep their professional motivation alive.
- The process of performance review to be worked out considering the parameters used in MSCERT, Pune. We can have a close scanning of the performance appraisal mechanism of Maharashtra State to infuse freshness into our existing review system.
- The Maharashtra Team, comprising Deputy Director, MSCERT, Pune and representatives of Leadership for Equity an NGO. Did not have space in their presentation for problems arising out of the proposed flattening of hierarchy in the system, e.g., a primary school teacher being placed as Deputy Director or in the similar rank, leading Assistant Professors / Associate Professors. This radical measure needs to be studied in depth before it is considered for adaption / adaptation.
- Despite such revolutionary move in school education and teacher education in Maharashtra, the performance of the State in NAS 2017 does not fare well with many other Indian states. This remains inexplicable.





1.4 Caution

- The most reasoned policy decision would be to study the working the MSCERT model and its resultant contribution to the system. Wisdom suggests to start small and start solid backed by evidence-based results of the reform move.
- Restructuring of SCERTs in other Indian States is almost in conformity with the MHRD model (2017). It appears that none of the Indian States has been inspired by the MSCERT, Pune model.





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