

Perception of In-Service Teachers Towards Their Professional Development Through Practicum in Teacher Education Programme

Ms.Ritika Dabas, Prof(Dr.)Sangeeta Chauhan

*Ms.Ritika Dabas(Research scholar) USE,GGSIPU,Delhi,India
Prof(Dr.)Sangeeta Chauhan, USE,GGSIPU,Delhi,India*

ABSTRACT

In this era of globalization, preparing inspiring teachers is a challenge. Teachers lay the foundation of a country so it becomes important that the teacher preparation programme must enrich them with basic proficiencies required to be reflective practitioner. The teachers must be well-versed with the ground realities of the profession they will join. They must be offered a variety of practical experiences during the teacher preparation.

B.El.Ed ,a four year graduate teacher preparation programmes offered at university level has a variety of practicum with 9 practicum papers in the four years. The present paper studies the perception of in-service teachers towards their professional development through practicum in teacher education programme. B.el.ed graduates who are working as primary teachers in government schools of delhi were undertaken for the study the perception of teacher towards professional development

The study revealed that the professional development through the practicum of performing arts and fine arts helps the teachers in using theatre and craft as effective pedagogical tool. The practicum on observing children gives opportunities to the teachers to undertake systematic observation of children in naturalistic and semi structured settings.

Keywords: *Teacher Education, Elementary School Teachers, Perception, Professional Development, Teacher preparation programme*

Introduction

“Teachers should be the best minds in the country”-Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

“The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.”-William Arthur Ward. In this era of globalization, preparing inspiring teachers is a challenge. The teacher can just provide learning environment to his/her students. According to Albert Einstein “I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn”. Teachers must be equipped with the knowledge, competencies and skills to create learning opportunities in the classroom. According to Pianta and colleagues (2012) teachers should concentrate on emotional support, classroom organization and instructional support aspects of classroom interaction among teacher and students.

According to Vermunt (2014), high quality teacher learning influences student-learning outcome as result. Kothari commission remarks “The destiny of India is being shaped in its classrooms” Quality of education of any country depends on the quality of its teachers so efforts should be made to improve the quality of teacher education. As per National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993, teacher education refers to programmes of education, research or training for equipping them to teach at pre-primary to higher education level. RTE(2009), NCFTE(2009) and draft

education policy(2019)lay special emphasis on elementary education as these are foundation years in the students' learning.

There are two types of elementary teacher education programmes currently in Delhi. One is diploma in Elementary education(B.El.Ed) which is a four year graduate level programme.The other one is D.El.Ed .It is offered by DIETs/SCERT while B.El.Ed is offered at university level. In both the programmes the entry qualification is 10+2.

NCFTE(2009) and draft education policy 2019 emphasizes that elementary teacher preparation programmest must be a university level programme with duration of at least 4 years. The programme must equip teachers with theoretical knowledge and field experiences so that they can develop themselves professionally. The programme must enrich them with basic proficiencies required to be reflective practitioner.

B.El.Ed programme has 16 theory papers and 9 Practicum papers. The practicum in B.El.Ed is distributed in all the four years.

Table:1

Year	Practicum
1 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing and Fine Arts • Craft and Participatory work
2 nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observing children • Self Development workshops • Physical Education
3 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Management • Material Development and evaluation
4 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Internship • Projects

Rationale:

As number of practicum papers have been added in the teacher preparation programme with the objective to expose trainee teachers with ground realities in the field. It becomes pertinent to study the perception of elementary school teachers who have done B.El.Ed towards their professional development through practicum in Bachelor of Elementary Education programmes.

Objective of the study:

To study the perception of in-service teachers towards their professional development through practicum in teacher education programme

Methodology

The descriptive survey method was used to study the perception of teacher towards professional development .The sample consisted of 10 teachers selected purposefully from government schools of Delhi. The teachers are teaching in primary schools and are B.El.Ed. graduates .Self developed questionnaire consisting of 11 items based on the usefulness of the practicum courses of B.El.Ed.programme for professional development of elementary school teachers. The content validity of the tool was ensured by incorporating comments and suggestions of experts and cronbach reliability of the tool was .75.The collected data was processed using excel and item wise analysis was done using percentage.

Analysis

Practicum-Performing Arts and fine Arts-

In the Practicum Performing Arts and fine Arts 68% of the elementary school teachers opined that this practicum helps in using theatre and craft as effective pedagogical tool.22% of the teachers expressed that the practicum paper of performing arts and fine arts helps them in understanding child's emotions and feelings while only18% of the teachers were of the view that the paper on performing arts and fine arts helps them in using techniques of drama and orientations of performer for enhancing teaching and learning.

Practicum-Craft and participatory workshop

53% of the teachers expressed that the practicum of craft and participatory workshop equipped the teachers with skills to nurture creativity among students. While only 18% opined that it helped in creating an emotional outlet for teachers .48% of the teachers were of the view that it helped in experiential learning by participating in making craft objects.

Practicum - Observing children

89% teachers supported that the practicum of observing children helped in developing their observational skills. They got opportunities for undertaking systematic observation of children in naturalistic and semi-structured setting.Only 12% of teachers opined that practicum helped in gaining knowledge regarding universal developmental concepts.However,28% of teachers were of the view that this paper helped in developing skill of scientific enquiry.

Practicum- Self Development Workshops

The self development workshops helped 83% of the teachers in understanding their emotions, they got aware of their own strengths and limitations. The practicum also helped these teachers in developing open mindedness and positive attitude.35% teachers opined that the practicum has enhanced their communication skills. They were able to communicate, relate with children and adults in a more effective manner.While only 18% of the teachers reiterated that the practicum has helped them in developing their own personal aim and vision as a teacher and as a person.

Practicum-Physical Education

53% of the teachers were of the view that that practicum on physical education enhanced their knowledge regarding sports activities to be taken with students.The practicum helped 28% of the teachers to develop in their students an attitude for leading a healthy lifestyle.While 16% of the teachers expressed that the practicum has helped them in developing spirit of participation rather than competition.11% of the teachers opined that the practicum has helped them in enhancing their knowledge regarding usage of first aid.

Practicum-Material development and evaluation

The practicum on material development and evaluation has supported 92% of the teachers for buibng resources for the children. It has also helped them in exploring curricular ,pedagogic and classroom organization issues.13% of the teachers opined that by experiencing the activities conducted during the practicum on material development and evaluation they were able to conceptualize alternatives in pedagogy and evaluation within real classroom contexts.

School experience programme

93% of the teachers asserted that during school experience programmes, they got the opportunity to translate knowledge base, pedagogic theory, understanding of children and her repertoire of skills into reflective classroom practice.The school internship programme has also helped 22% of the teachers to evolve alternative strategies and practice them.

Projects

Taking up projects during their B.El.Ed. programme has helped 95% of teachers in acquiring basic research skills of systematic observation, documentation and analysis.8% of teachers expressed that they are able to conduct action

researches in their classroom set up because of the skills learnt during the projects they undertook in B.El.Ed.programme.

Educational implications:

The present study has its implications for teachers, principals, education administrators and planners of teacher education.

The study revealed that the professional development through the practicum of performing arts and fine arts helps the teachers in using theatre and craft as effective pedagogical tool. So, curriculum planners may incorporate this practicum in teacher preparation programmes.

The practicum on observing children gives opportunities to the teachers to undertake systematic observation of children in naturalistic and semi structured settings. The practicum of observing children and self development workshops may be made the compulsory component of the teacher preparation programme.

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