

A Study of the B.Ed Internship Programme as Perceived by Teacher Educators and Student Teachers

Dr. Nisha Rani, Principal,
Pestle Weed College of Information and Technology,
Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

ABSTRACT

School internship programme in teacher education in India is witnessing a change in the earlier specified practice-teaching involving teaching of a pre-specified number of lessons in the subjects opted by a student-teacher as teaching or methods subjects. The NCTE Regulations, 2009 made an attempt to broaden the scope of practice-teaching by emphasizing the importance of providing experience of all activities and programmes of the school to the student-teachers. The NCTE Regulations, 2014 have specified further strengthening of the component of 'Field Engagement' by prescribing a longer duration of 20 weeks for it in the B.Ed. In the present paper researchers has made an attempt to study the perception of teacher educators and student teachers about the engagement of 18 weeks (16+2 weeks) with the field in B.Ed. 3rd semester Internship Programme as per the curriculum of H.N.B Garhwal University, Srinagar, Uttarakhand. For the study responses from 50 teacher educators and 50 student teachers selected from 10 different B.Ed. colleges of Dehradun District were collected. To collect the data, open ended questionnaire for teacher educators and student teachers were developed, based on various guidelines for internship mentioned in the curriculum of H.N.B Garhwal University, Srinagar, Uttarakhand. It was found that pupil-teachers faced many problems during their internship in B.Ed. 3rd semester. Not only the pupil-teachers but the teacher educators also realized the problems faced by the inters.

Key Words: Internship, Teacher Educators, Student Teacher.

INTRODUCTION

NCTE has recognized the field engagement as an essential component of any teacher education programme, which involves engagement over a period of time with the students and teachers in schools, known as 'school internship'. The purpose of school internship is to equips the prospective teachers to build a repertoire of professional understandings, competencies and skills, and positive attitude to schooling and teaching. In fact, it is this component of the teacher education curriculum which facilitates transformation of a student-teachers from being learners in the art and science of teaching to adequately-equipped teachers to perform the responsibilities of a teacher in actual school settings.

School internship programme in teacher education in India is witnessing a change in the earlier specified practice-teaching involving teaching of a pre-specified number of lessons in the subjects opted by a student-teacher as teaching or methods subjects. The NCTE Regulations, 2009 made an attempt to broaden the scope of practice-teaching by emphasizing the importance of providing experience of all activities and programmes of the school to the student-teachers. The NCTE Regulations, 2014 have specified further strengthening of the component of 'Field Engagement' by prescribing a longer duration of 20 weeks for it in the B.Ed., further split into two parts consisting of 2 weeks and 18 weeks. But as per the curriculum of H.N.B Garhwal University, Srinagar, Uttarakhand, student teachers need to engage for 18 weeks with the field in B.Ed. 3rd semester Internship Programme. The engagement of 18 weeks' duration is further split into 16 weeks of school internship and 2 weeks of engagement with the field other than the school (i.e. community engagement). The internship programme provides an opportunity to the prospective teachers to link the educational theory and pedagogical

concepts with their practice on the one hand, and on the other to test the validity of theoretical propositions in actual school settings.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem is entitled as 'A Study of the B.Ed. Internship Programme as Perceived by Teacher Educators and Student Teachers'.

DEFINITIONS OF OPERATIONAL TERMS:

Internship

In the present study internship is a period of work experience offered by Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University, for the 16 weeks full time school and 2 weeks community work. Internship is put in by student-teachers in designated schools, in 3rd semesters and involve all school-based activities.

Teacher Educator

A teacher educator is someone who teaches at a teacher education institution and supports students' field work in schools, and contributes substantially to the development of students towards becoming competent teachers.

Student Teacher

Student teacher is a young person who plans to be a teacher. Apart from spending of his or her time in preliminary education in teacher education institution, undertakes teaching duties in schools under the supervision of the mentor teacher.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1.To study the B.Ed. internship programme as perceived by the teacher educators.
- 2.To study the B.Ed. internship programme as perceived by the student teacher.
- 3.To identify the challenges of proper implementation of internship programme in B.Ed. course.

METHODOLOGY

Survey method of descriptive research was used for the present study.

POPULATION

Population of the study comprised of all the teacher educators and student teachers of all the B.Ed. colleges of Dehradun District.

SAMPLE

Random sampling technique was used for the present study. The sample consists of total 100 respondents. For sample 50 teacher educators and 50 student teachers were selected from 10 different B.Ed. colleges of Dehradun District.

TOOL

For the present study self-made open-ended questionnaire for teacher educators and student teachers were used to know the perception of teacher educators and student teachers about the B.Ed. Internship Programme.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUE

Data collected from sample was analysed by using the percentage analysis technique.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Table 1: Showing the percentage of the respondents giving different responses to questions about effectiveness of B.Ed Internship Programme

Responses	Teacher Educators		Student Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Period of 16 weeks for teaching 45 lesson in each pedagogy is more than required	Yes	76%	Yes	83.2%
	No	34%	No	16.8%
Assigning more weightage to two final lessons than 90 lessons is justified	Yes	64%	Yes	53%
	No	36%	No	47%
Provision of internship in the third semester is justified.	Yes	6%	Yes	8.8%
	No	94%	No	91.2%
Action research done during internship develops the logical reasoning	Yes	93%	Yes	89.2%
	No	7%	No	10.8%
Internship develops the professional skills and competences	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
	No	—	No	—
Community work provides insight into the problems of the community and their solutions	Yes	91%	Yes	94%
	No	9%	No	6%

Table 2: Showing the percentage of the respondents giving different responses to questions about the challenges of implementation of internship programme in B.Ed. course

Responses	Teacher Educators		Student Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Getting permission from school authorities is a challenging task	Yes	94%	Yes	91%
	No	6%	No	9%
Finding a school for internship is a challenging task for Hindi medium student teachers	Yes	93%	Yes	89%
	No	07%	No	11%
Student teachers were overburdened by the school staff	Yes	56%	Yes	74%
	No	44%	No	26%
	Yes	04%	Yes	11%

Student teachers were not allowed to involve in school activities other than teaching periods	No	96%	No	89%
Schools expresses unwillingness to accommodate school interns due to various reasons	Yes	82%	Yes	70%
	No	18%	No	30%
Student teachers were given only substitution classes	Yes	0%	Yes	06%
	No	100%	No	94%

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Most of the teacher educators and student teachers believed that the period of 16 weeks allotted for the teaching of 45 lesson in each pedagogy subjects was more than required therefore number of lessons should be increased. 1/3rd teacher educators and very small percent of student teachers opined that period of 16 weeks was sufficient therefore there was no need to increase the number of lessons for teaching.
2. At the same time more than half of the teacher educators and half of the student teachers opined that assigning more weightage (250 marks) to two final lessons in comparison to weightage (40 marks) specified for field teaching of 90 lessons (45 lesson in each pedagogy) was justified but rest of the teacher educators and student teachers were in favour of giving more weightage to teaching of 90 lessons.
3. Almost all the teacher educators and student teachers opined that the provision of internship in the third semester was not justified. *According to them internship should be in the fourth semester of the course instead of third semester as many of the students who got job offers because of their good performance during their internship could join there as teachers.* In this way internship will help as placement service for aspiring teachers. Because of the system of provision of internship in third semester students had to miss the opportunity just to attend the classes of fourth semester back in their training college. Negligible number of teacher educators and student teachers were of the opinion that present system of provision of internship in the third semester is justified.

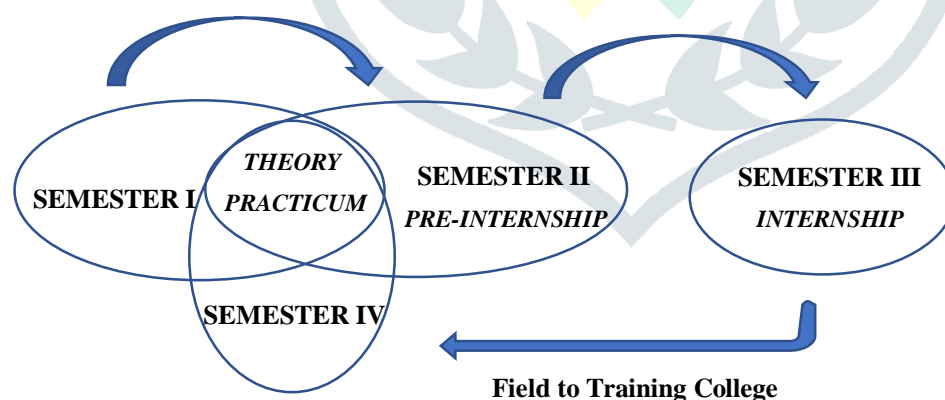


Figure 1: Showing Present Structure of B.Ed. Course

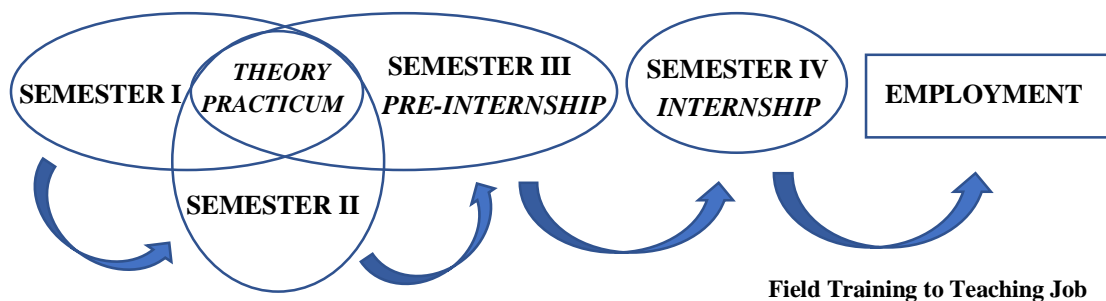


Figure 2: Showing Suggested Structure of B.Ed.

4. Almost all the teacher educators and student teachers agreed that action research done by the student teachers during the internship develops logical reasoning for solving the classroom problems. Negligible number of teacher educators and student teachers opined that it did not develop any logical reasoning for solving the classroom problems as action research report was being prepared for examination formality instead of practical understanding.
5. All the teacher educators and student teachers agreed that all the activities done during the internship plays a pivotal role in developing professional skills and competences among the student teachers. Therefore, internship will be helpful for the student teachers in their future career.
6. Almost all the teacher educators and student teachers agreed that community work done by the student teachers during the internship provided them insight into the problems of the community as well their roles to overcome the problems. Negligible number of teacher educators and student teachers opined that community work done by the student teachers during the internship was just a formality therefore, did not provide any insight into the problems of the community. *They suggested that activities for the community work should be specifically mentioned in the curriculum to make it more productive and useful.*
7. Almost all the teacher educators and student teachers were agreed with the statement that getting permission from school authorities even after taking permission from District Education Department for the conduct of such a prolonged 16 weeks internship in schools had become challenging task for teacher education institutions as well for student teachers.
8. Almost all the teacher educators and student teachers agreed that Hindi medium student teachers faced huge challenges in finding the school for internship as private schools prefer teachers of English medium. Another challenge faced by Hindi medium student teachers in the search of schools for internship as almost all the private schools in cities were English medium. Therefore, they left with no option but to select government schools.
9. Half of teacher educators and a good majority of student teachers opined that during the period of internship student teachers were overburdened by the school staff. As student teachers were assigned random clerical or non-teaching work by the school staff to keep themselves free. On the other hand, some reported that schools didn't overburden the students in fact student teachers got good help and guidance from mentor or subject teachers.
10. Negligible number of teacher educators and few student teachers opined that during internship student teachers were not allowed to involve in school activities other than teaching periods and even they were not allowed to stay at school before and after their periods. Majority of respondents were not of this opinion, according to them student teachers got due opportunity to involve and participate in all the co-curricular or extra-curricular activities of school. Which will help them to be a good teacher in future.
11. Majority of both teacher educators and student teachers opined that generally, for the internship the number of teachers to be accommodated in a school is so high that schools expresses unwillingness to

accommodate interns citing reasons of lack of resources, maintenance of discipline in school, hindrance to completion of syllabus in time and disturb the normal routine of the school etc. Few teacher educators and one third of student teachers opined that schools happily accommodate the interns.

12. Another problem perceived by negligible number of teacher educators and more than one third student teachers was that most of the time student teachers were not given fixed timetable instead they were given only substitution classes leading to unplanned delivery of lessons. Situation became more challenging when students were given classes of subjects other than their own subjects. Almost all the teacher educators and two third student teachers opined that student teachers were assigned proper timetable therefore they could plan their lessons properly.

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