

SCHOOL INTERNSHIP: AN OUTLINE MODEL & EVALUATION PARAMETERS

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Abstract : *Internship programme occupies a major concern of all the professional courses. After a detailed theoretical orientation, the trainees are undergoing internship programme to have better experiment in the practical field. The knowledge acquired in the course during a specified period of time, have to practice in the field concern. In this context, Teacher Education Courses emphasised a lot on school internship, but it seems to be one of the less concern area of activities in most of the Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs). It is highly desirable that the novice teacher should go through carefully planned and monitored internship program during the course of training. The present paper is an attempt to look in to the broader perspective of school internship & to familiarize its place in teacher preparation as per NCFTE-2009, to deal with the genesis and an overview of the present scenario of school internship practice in our country, to develop an outline model of internship activities to be practice at different phases and to develop the evaluation indicators for the whole internship activities etc. It is hoped that, the article will be a great help to the stakeholders in broadening their understanding on the need and significance of internship in teacher preparation; guide the student teachers in carrying out the internship program with confidence and motivation; articulate a deepened knowledge of transferable skills and their applicability in both academic and workplace settings.*

Key Words: *School Internship; Teacher Education; Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs).*

When we are weighting, measuring, demanding quality in all spheres of life, that too in education, how can we ignore the quality concern of the teachers, who are the prime reservoir of quality education. Training generally focussed on the practical handling of the task in order to have a direct hand on the field. It plays a very demanding role in all the professions such as-medicine, engineering, law, business etc. Teaching, which is considered as the noblest of all profession, a profession dealing with the total development of an individual i.e. to development of an individual in its totality such as intellectual, social, moral, spiritual, aesthetic, economic, political, cultural etc. If we compare teaching with other professions like medicine/ doctor who is mainly concern about the physical well being of an individual, a lawyer is mainly deal with the legal aspects of the individual, an engineer mainly deals with infrastructural well being of the individual, the defence personnel works for safety and security of the life of the individual, but education or to be precisely a teachers concern is not confined to any particular areas of individuals life, rather it aims the fullest and comprehensive development of an individual in all aspects of life.

For example after completion of the MBBS Course in 4 years, the novice doctors undergone one (1) year internship programme with the seniors in the form of helping, observing, experimenting, diagnosing, testing etc.; after completion of the Law Degree, the new Law Graduate requires to practice under a senior/ experienced Lawyer to gather pros and cons in the field concern; likewise an Engineer after completion of the Theoretical Course have to undergone internship in different organizations, fields concerning their areas of study; the defence personnel too after their initial recruitment have been subjected to rigorous training in learning the art of weaponry and the relevant tactics.

So, a teacher, in fact, the real architect of the human life, requires more rigorous and conscious internship programme to be undergone. The theoretical knowledge concerning the basics of education, psychology, history, sociology, philosophy etc.; the methodological areas concerning different school subjects, the modes of transaction, selection of teaching methods, use of Information and Communication Technologies, planning, execution, management, administration etc. concerning teaching demands a lot of practices which can be fulfilled through a comprehensive school internship.

Genesis of School Internship:

Since, education is considered a common commodity, a fundamental human rights in almost all the countries of the world, the conscious call of the day is to universalise education, inclusive education, education for all etc. where education is no more confined or specific to any group or community but a common right for one and all. It has been realised well that education is the base for all sorts of development, the development of an individual, locality, society, state, nation and above all the globe, is depends on the educational development of each and every individual. It is education which functions to bring in to the light the strength and weaknesses, the potentials, capabilities, interests, aptitudes, likings etc. of an individual which in succession make the individual well known about his self, who he is? Why he is being created? Who has created him? What is right, just, lawful, desirable actions and vice versa?

The Kothari Commission 1964-66, suggests Comprehensive internship of student teachers with systematic collaboration between Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) and schools. Opportunities should be provided to the new teachers to learn from their experiences and through consultations and discussions with experienced teachers in the school.

The National Commissions on Teachers 1983-85, suggests providing on-site, continuous, need-based opportunities to the teacher through courses/seminars to enable teachers to experiment and to share their experience with colleagues to achieve self-learning and independent thinking emphasise Internship Programme.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 recommended echoing the earlier Commissions and Committees resulting which the launch of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Teacher Education, the establishment of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), College of Teacher Education (CTE) and Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE).

The NPE Review Committee (1990) & the National Advisory Committee on Learning Without Burden (1993) also recommended for qualitative reforms of Teacher Education which includes adoption of Internship Model for Teacher Education involving a brief theoretical orientation followed by a specific period of supervised teaching in a school under mentor teachers, the involvement of teachers in curriculum and text book preparation, training teachers in fostering learning through activity, discovery, observation and understanding.

The NCF 2000 focussed on continuing education of in-service teachers' needs attention because, all their initial education and training may not remain relevant and effective because of the present rate of change in content and pedagogy in the national and world scenario. Offering in-service education in a sustained manner, for which a cascade model of training is recommended

The NCF 2005 observed that the Focus Group on Teacher Education not only sees Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as the most prominent measure for bridging the gap between pre-service and in-service education of teachers through well designed pre-service programmes and on-site support to teachers, but also the School-Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) collaboration in this enterprise as crucial.

The National Knowledge Commission 2008 reflects that, a context that fosters an attitude of life-long learning and greater freedom for teachers, to increase their personal initiative and absorption of training, the incentivise short term courses with regular attendance and peer feedback could act as a good Teacher Development.

The NCFTE 2009, defines the aims of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), that the teacher is to 'break out of intellectual isolation and share experiences and insights with others in the field, both teachers and academics ...', and the Principles to be followed in designing these programmes is to 'creating spaces for sharing of experiences of communities of teachers among themselves' is stressed. It recommends establishing Teacher Learning Centres (TLCs) for teachers, teacher educators and trainees to come together within Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) and share experiences, access resources and discuss and plan classroom-based action research, also establishing stronger links between schools and the various institutions and bodies responsible for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and in-service and pre-service teacher training.

The NCTE Regulation, 2014, states that school internship would be a part of the broad curricular areas of 'Engagement with the Field' and shall be designed to lead to development of a broad repertoire of perspectives, professional capacities, teacher sensibilities and skills. The curriculum of B.Ed. shall provide for sustained engagement with learners and the school (including engaging in continuous and comprehensive assessment for learning), thereby creating a synergy with schools in the neighbourhood throughout the year. Student teachers shall be equipped to cater to diverse needs of learners in schools.

The internship activities in the first year should be organized for four weeks and in the second year the students should be actively engaged in 16 weeks rigorous internship. They should be provided opportunities to teach in schools with systematic supervisory support and feedback from faculty. Altogether, the internship should be of at least 20 weeks in two years duration. This should also include, besides practice teaching an initial phase of one week for observing a regular classroom with a regular teacher and would also include peer observations, teacher observations and faculty observations of practice lessons.

An overview of the present scenario of School Internship in the light of NCFTE-2009:

The internship practice, which constitutes the most functional parts of teacher preparation, has suffered severe neglect and dilution in quality. This programme is taken loosely by some institutes and some other follows stringent procedures during internship. Even it has been seen that, within a university system the internship practice is differently followed by the Teacher Education Institutes. There is no uniformity in duration, number of classes/ number of days to be practiced etc. Some institutions make attendance mandatory from starting to the end of the school hours, others emphasises only on completion of the required number of practice teaching classes.

It is also noticed that, lack of practice teaching schools at the training institutes also creates an un-favourable teaching climate for the trainees. As a result, the student teachers' were sent to the nearby schools for their practice. The monitoring / supervision of the classes by the teacher educators from the concern TEIs are found very rare and irregular, for which the student teachers get very less opportunities to share their experiences which they have acquired through practicing and the rectification needed for to cope up with the practical field.

Also, the trainees in some instances were not look down well by the regular teachers; they do not practice with full confidence as they have to teach in consultation with the regular teachers, where the classes, content areas etc. are allotted by the regular teachers. The trainees in such an environment do not feel very energetic and affiliated with the school which of course hampers their flow of teaching. It generates a type of insecurity, helplessness, support less, part time mentality among the trainee teachers. The teacher training colleges/ institutes cannot do anything better, as they are dependent on the will of the school authorities for carrying out internship of their trainee teachers due to the absence of practice teaching / demonstration schools of their own. It exhibits no original thinking, lacks variety and context specificity in teaching. The evaluation protocol is too theoretical, excessively quantitative and lacks comprehensiveness.

In view of ensuring uniformity in practices, the researcher is proposing an internship model as follows:

The phases/ stages of School Internship:

The whole internship practices can be carried out under three phases as identified bellow:

- I. Pre-internship phase:** This is the preparation stage in which an intern should acquire familiarity and a deeper understanding about his/her role and responsibilities that he/she is suppose to look after during internship.
- II. Inter / during- internship phase:** This is the main phase of internship in which the intern is require to perform the activities concerning the field.
- III. Post-internship phase:** This is the last phase of internship in which the whole activities is reflected in the form of submission of reports on the assigned projects, sharing of experiences, commitment towards profession etc.

In the pre internship phase, the following activities should be carried out by the Teacher Education Institutes:

Activities to be conducted at the Teacher Education Institutes during pre-internship phase:

- Conducting workshops on the Preparation of Lesson Plan (subject specific).
- Conducting workshops on the preparation of Teaching Learning Materials / Aids (low cost, subject wise).
- Conducting workshops on the Preparation of Micro Lesson Plan (at least on 5 skills)

- Conducting Micro-Teaching Sessions where each trainee teacher should practice at least 5 skills of teaching under mentor's supervision (e.g. introducing a lesson, questioning, explanation, analysis, blackboard writing, stimulus variation etc.)
- Demonstration classes by the concern subject teacher educator in front of the real school students where the trainee teachers will act as an observer which should be followed by post demonstration discussion based on trainee teachers observation.
- Conducting orientation by the experts on carrying out Action Research Project, School Management Project, School Community Relationship Project etc. to the trainee teachers
- Conducting orientation on organizing Co-curricular activities at school on certain occasions.
- Conducting orientation on the common classroom issues which the trainee teachers are expected to be handled during internship.
- Allowing trainee teachers to observe regular classroom with a regular teacher for at least one week before sending them to the practice teaching school for internship.

Activities to be conducted at the Training Schools during the pre-internship phase:

- To familiarise the student teachers on the rules, regulations and procedures of the classroom.
- To familiarise the student teachers with physical features of the buildings and other infrastructure facilities available e.g. Library, Laboratories, playground etc.
- To familiarise the student teachers with the contents / syllabus to be covered/ taught during internship.
- To familiarise the student teachers with the evaluation techniques, grading system etc. followed by the school in assessing learning of the learners.
- To familiarise the student teachers with the Academic Calendar of the School.
- To familiarise the student teachers with the Academic and Co-Academic staff members of the school preferably on an ongoing basis.
- To familiarise the student teachers with the co-curricular activities scheduled to be practiced during the session and his/her responsibilities if any.

During the inter-internship phase, the following activities are expected to be carried out by the Trainee Teachers:

- The trainee teachers should teach at least 40 lessons in each method subjects. (Total no. of classes = 80)
- The trainee teachers should prepare at least 40 lesson plans in their concerned method subjects (Total no. lesson plans = 80)
- The trainee teachers should prepare & use appropriately some teaching learning materials/ low cost teaching aids concerning both the method subjects.
- The trainee teachers should observe the classes of their peers using an observation format followed by constructive discussion with the peer on the strength and weaknesses of the class (if supportive, otherwise only record the observation).
- The trainee teachers should carry out / conduct at least one (1) Action Research Project on the common classroom issues.
- The trainee teachers should carry out/ conduct at least one (1) School Management Project to have deepen his/her understanding on school functioning.
- The trainee teachers should carry out/ conduct at least one (1) School Community Relationship Project to understand the significance of involving community people in school functioning.
- The trainee teachers should organize co-curricular activities at least two (2) during internship.
- The trainee teachers should undertake the responsibility of question paper setting, examining the answer scripts, grading, invigilation etc. (at least as a supportive role under the guidance of the expert/senior teacher)
- The trainee teachers should participate in weekly meeting by the peers under mentors' supervision and discuss the common issues, progress, threads (if any), concerning teaching.
- The trainee teachers should participate in fortnightly meeting with the school heads/ senior teachers in the presence of mentor on the progress of internship programme and relevant issues.
- The trainee teachers should participate in monthly meeting at the concern Teacher Education Institute on the progress of internship programme where all the trainee teachers who were deputed to different schools will share their gathered experiences with the principal / faculty of the Institute.
- The trainee teachers should maintain records of their regular activities during internship in the form of Reflective Journal (handbook/ diary) on daily basis objectively.
- The trainee teachers should visit at least one (1) Innovative Centres of Pedagogy and Learning (e.g. IASE, University Dept. Of Education, Institutions of National Importance, SCERT, RIE-NCERT etc.) followed by the submission of report.

In the Post-internship Phase, the following activities are expected to be carried out by the Trainee Teachers:

- The trainee teachers should submit his/her peer observation reports to the concerned Teacher Education Institute (The TEI may fix the number of observation reports to be submitted).
- The trainee teachers should know/ collect the mentors' feedback on his/her teaching practice.
- The trainee teachers should know/ collect his/her students' feedback (collected by the mentor).
- The trainee teachers should know/ collect head teachers' feedback (collected by the mentor).
- The trainee teachers should prepare a comprehensive report on the internship programme and submit the same to the TEI.
- The trainee teachers should submit his/her project reports e.g. Action Research Project, School Management project, School Community Relationship Project etc. conducted and completed during the internship.
- The trainee teachers should discuss/ share his / her Action Research results with cooperating teachers.
- The trainee teachers should share his/ her overall internship experiences with his peers, faculty members, principals of the institution (orally).
- The trainee teachers should know/ collect suggestions and feedback from the teachers and Heads of the practicing school for further improvement of the internship activities.
- The trainee teachers should exhibit / demonstrate his/her innovation and creative work practiced during internship in front of the faculty and other concern of the TEI.

- The trainee teachers should share his/her feedback on the overall organization of internship programme by the institution for future action.

The Proposed Weightage distribution to various activities carried out during internship programme is as under (For Evaluation):

The Weightage distribution to different activities carried out by the trainee teachers during internship Programme for the purpose of evaluating/ grading trainee teachers is shown in the table below: **(The division is made out of 500 marks/ points during a semester of School Internship)**

Sl. No.	Items of activities	% of marks or points allotted to each activities	Marks/ Points allotted to each activities	Remarks
1	Teaching practices	30	150	
2	Lesson Plans/ Unit Plans preparation	10	50	
3	Teaching Aids preparation	5	25	
4	Action Research Project	5	25	
5	School Management Project	5	25	
6	School Community Relationship Project	5	25	
7	Organizing Co-Curricular Activities	5	25	
8	Attendance/ Regularity/ psychological testing (at least one test)	5	25	
9	Innovations (if any)/ Case study	5	25	
10	Participation in (Question Preparation, administering tests, tutoring, meeting with the peers etc.)	5	25	
11	Report of peers observation	2	10	On the Classes of the peers observed by the trainee teacher
12	Students Feedback	2	10	Collected by the Mentor Teacher.
13	Peers Feedback	2	10	Feedback received from peers on the performance of trainee teacher
14	Mentors' Feedback	4	20	
15	Head Teachers' Feedback	4	20	On the overall performance of the trainee teacher
16	Developing & Maintaining Reflective Journal	3	15	
17	Submission of Comprehensive Report on Internship Programme	3	15	
	Total	100	500	

Successful Implementation & Issues Concerning School Internship:

Since, school internship occupies a significant position in teacher preparation of all stages; it is associated with multiple components of field learning e.g. getting to know the school, observing children, observing teaching and learning in a real classroom setting, practicing teaching, developing capacities to think with educational theories and applying concepts in teaching learning situation, managing classroom learning, evaluation learners and providing feedback, learning to work with colleagues, reflecting on one's own professional practice etc. However, considering internship as a hub of the multiple and varied activities of the total program of teacher education course, sincere efforts are needed by the stakeholders to ensure usefulness of the program.

Some issues needed to be addressed well in advance so to ensure fruitfulness of the School Internship program which includes:

- To develop a close bond between the TEI and Practice teaching schools. It should work as a partnership model, rather than use and through approach. The relationship should be continuous and cooperative.
- The student teacher should be properly oriented before sending to the practice teaching schools on the code of conduct and make them convergent with its infrastructure, rules & regulations, human/ material resources etc. and the role they are suppose to handle during internship program
- Proper planning on the activities to be performed by the student teachers during internship should be framed well in advance.

- Orientation on the project works, its modalities etc. should be conducted at the TEIs.
- The modalities for observing peers, role of mentor, weekly/ fortnightly/ monthly meetings schedule should be prepared well in advance.
- Grouping of students should be done covering the varied subject background of the student teacher so that they can deal with different school subject and get maximum classes for their practice etc.

Thus, a sustained and comprehensive School Internship Program surely helps the would be teachers to choose, design, organize and conduct meaningful classroom activities, critically reflect upon their own practices through observations, record keeping, evaluating students learning etc. It provides a platform for the interns to give expression to their learning while planning & reflecting on their own practices. Generally TEIs, use the Internship Schools for meeting their own requirement, but it need to follow a partnership model between the TEIs and Internship Schools. The feedback mechanism, mentoring, regular consultation with the stakeholders, peer observation, maintaining records, conducting the projects etc. has a very heavy imprint on teacher preparation and hence need to be maintained carefully. The proposed model and weightages to different activities will act as a catalyst in evaluating trainee teachers' performance during Internship Program.

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