



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FOR B.ED TRAINEES: A HANDBOOK TO ‘SCHOOL OBSERVATION’

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Abstract

Present paper intends to act as a guide to B.Ed trainees (prospective teachers) for ‘School Internship Part I’ of B.Ed two year programme. Its main purpose is to develop and enhance the power of vigilance among prospective teachers and to make them realize the significance of keen observation. The paper proposes various dimensions and techniques of recording school observation outside the class as well as within the classroom. It also highlights the significant role of school climate in school observance and its impact on learning outcomes of students. Present paper also attempts to highlight the significance of ‘school observation’ to prospective teachers.

Keywords: Internship, B.Ed trainees and school observation

Introduction

The aim of teacher education is to prepare efficient teachers. In this regard the syllabus of teacher education tends to be more practical based than the theory. Minimum theory is included and the content is based on practical oriented pragmatic philosophy and psychology. More weightage is given to the content-cum-methodology aspect of the theory.

The concept of internship in teacher education has been adopted from the medical profession. Both of the profession are skill based professions; and require practical knowledge of the field.

As per the NCFTE, 2009 sustained engagement with schools as a partnership model in the form of school internship provides immense opportunities for pre-service teachers to teach and participate in school activities record and observe the actual learners’ behaviour in the classroom and within the campus etc. It also provides a platform to analyse and reflect the pedagogical practices in use by regular and experienced teachers, develop and maintaining the teaching-learning resources, developing unit plans and maintain the reflective journals etc.

Realizing the significance of engaging pre-service trainers in school real environment, the school internship programme in 2 year B.Ed course has been divided in the following pattern.

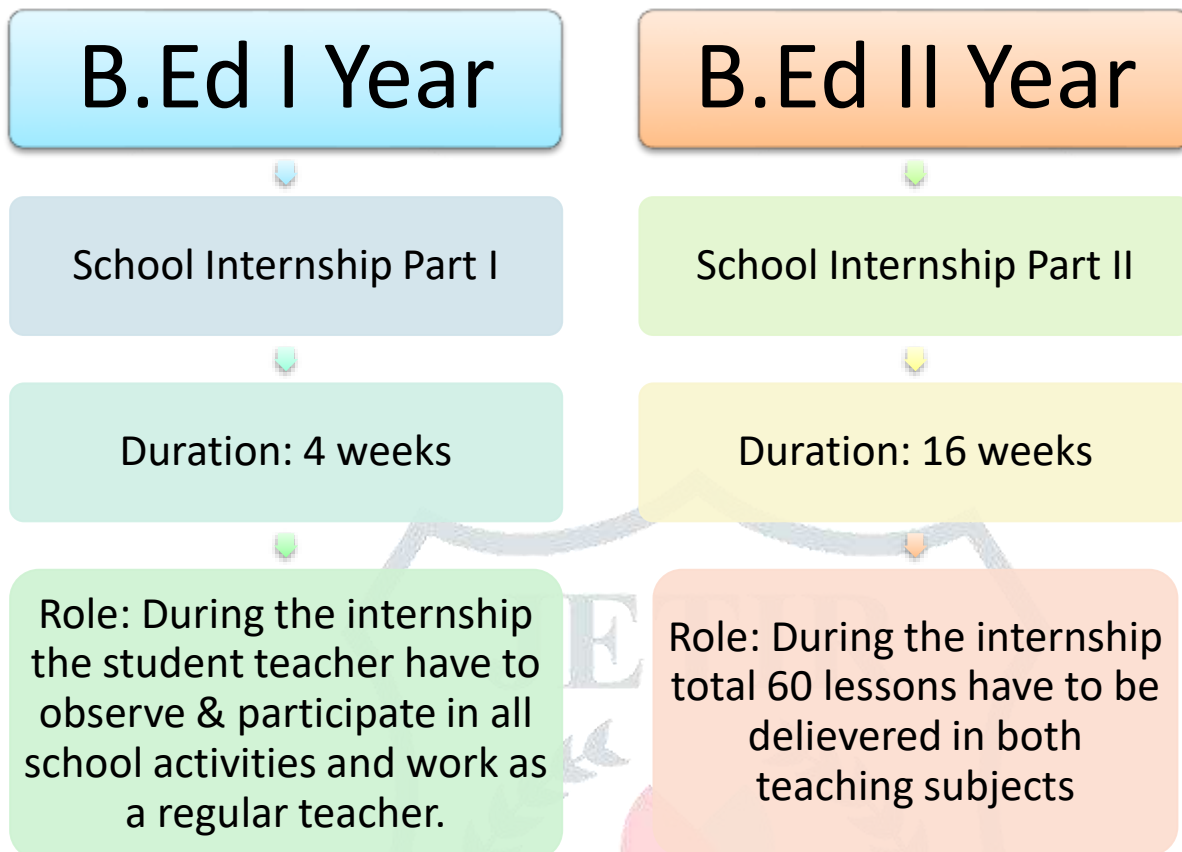


Fig. 1 showing the details of 'School Internship Program' under 2 Year B.Ed programme

The main idea behind school internship program is while functioning as a regular teacher, the intern would get the opportunity to learn to set realistic goals in terms of learners' learning, curricula content and pedagogic practice. A sustained contact through internship would help teachers to choose, design, organize and conduct meaningful classroom activities, critically reflect upon their own practices through observations, record keeping and analysis and develop strategies for evaluating students' learning for feedback into curriculum and pedagogic practice.

Observation etymologically means the ability to notice things especially significant details. It consists of receiving knowledge of the outside world through our senses, or recording information using scientific tools and instruments. Any data recorded during an experiment can be called a scientific observation.

A scientific observation to study school climate and processes is known as school observation. The below fig. 2 indicates the classification of 'School Internship Part I' i.e. 'School Observation' as a practical part of B.Ed I year programme.

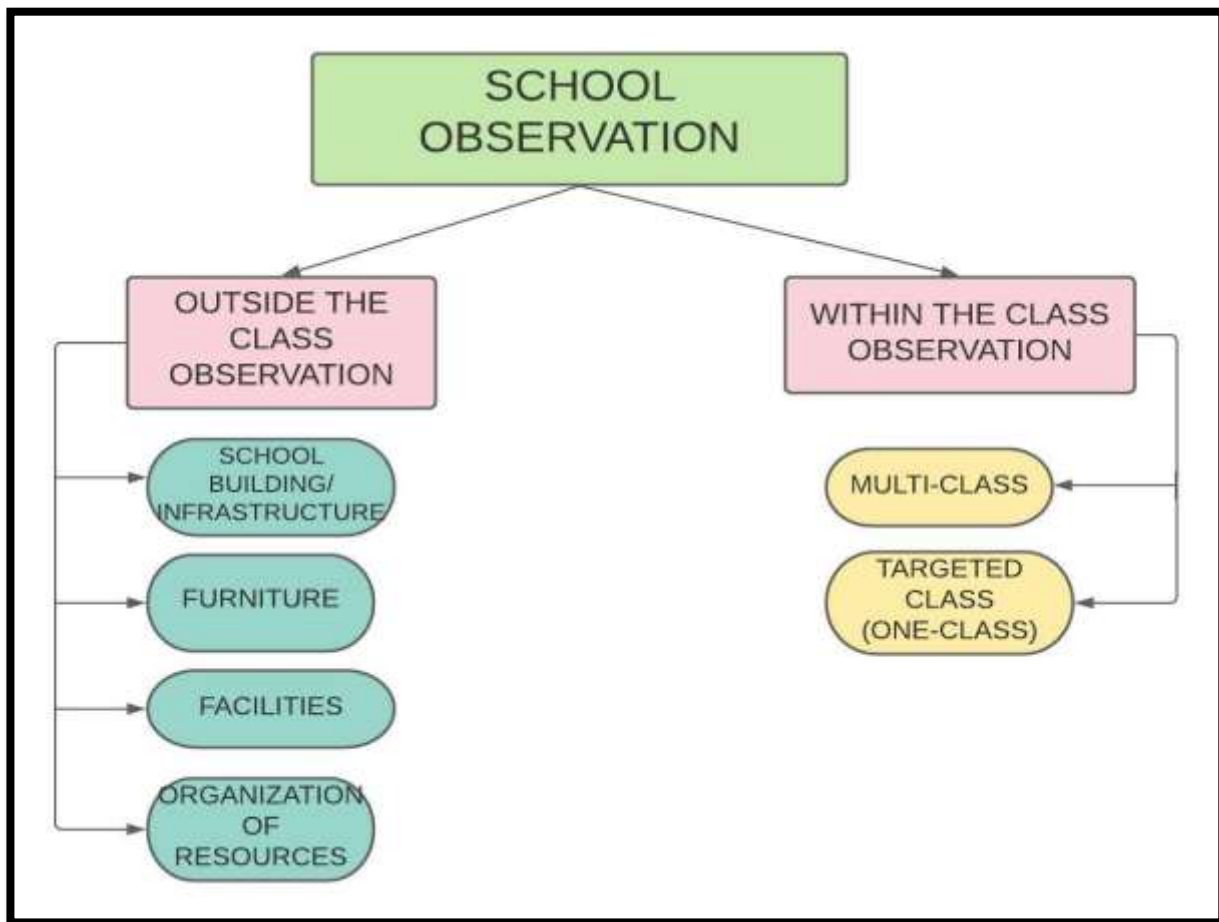


Fig. 2 showing the classification of 'School Internship Part I' i.e. 'School Observation' as a practical part of B.Ed I year

SCHOOL OBSERVATION OUTSIDE THE CLASS ROOM

The main objective of this aspect of school observation is to make the prospective teachers able to discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate infrastructure/facilities/organization of resources and realize the role of appropriate infrastructure/facilities/organization in constructing positive teaching-learning environment in schools.

Dimensions for 'school observation' outside the classroom

There are several dimensions for observation while school internship which the perspective teachers need to observe minutely and record the details. It is basically the time when the theoretical aspect of a school gets constructed practically in the minds of the pre-service trainers. For this, school infrastructure comprising the type of building architect and structure, the types of furniture available in the classrooms for students, construction and implementation of various time-table, organization of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities in the school, provisions or facilities for enabling support to CWSN (Children with Special Needs) & proper and timely maintenance of school records etc. need to be observed in detail. Each dimension is discussed in detail below:

1. **School Building:** It includes site location, site selection, labs, laboratories, library, playground, dining, reading room, classroom size, class strength, recreational rooms, separate loo facility for girls and boys, ramps for disabled persons, proper drinking water etc. Fig. 3 & 4 shows the E type and V type of school building respectively.

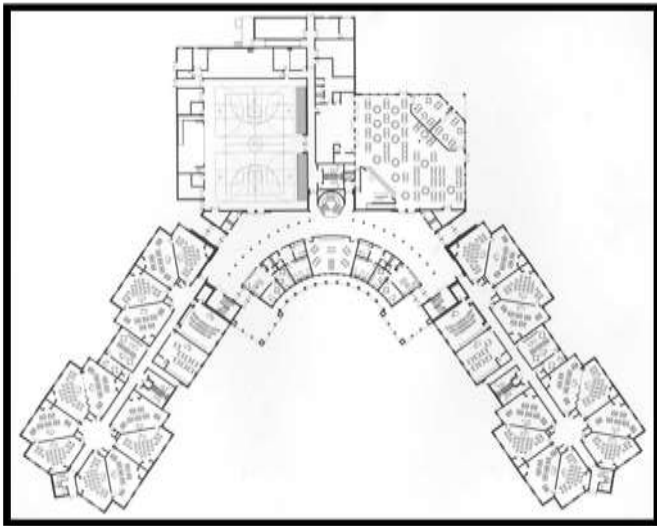


Fig. 3 showing E type of school building

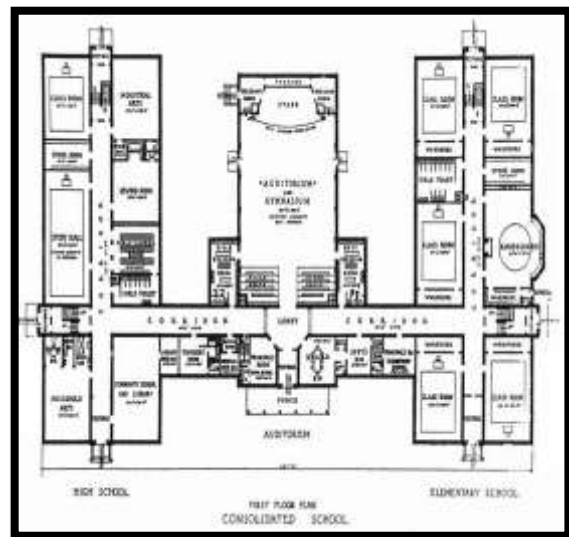


Fig. 4 showing V type of school building

2. **Furniture:** It includes size and shape of desks and chairs, position of the seats and desks and arrangements of seats in the classrooms. Desks should be height appropriate so that the shoulders of students should not be raised or bend, height should be such that students may be able to shift his elbows 3" to 4" outside the desk, width of desk should be of around 18", slope of top of desk should be bent on 15 degree towards child, arrangements in the legs of chair and desk.

The different types of seats should also be observed. The best type of seats is supposed to be separate desks and chairs. In higher classes, chair with arms is provided separately to each student. Other than this, arrangements of seats in the classrooms i.e. horizontal way, vertical way or semi-circular way should also be observed and while report writing should give due attention that it was in accordance to the natural light, strength and size of the class or not. Fig. 5 shows the different positions of seats and desks.

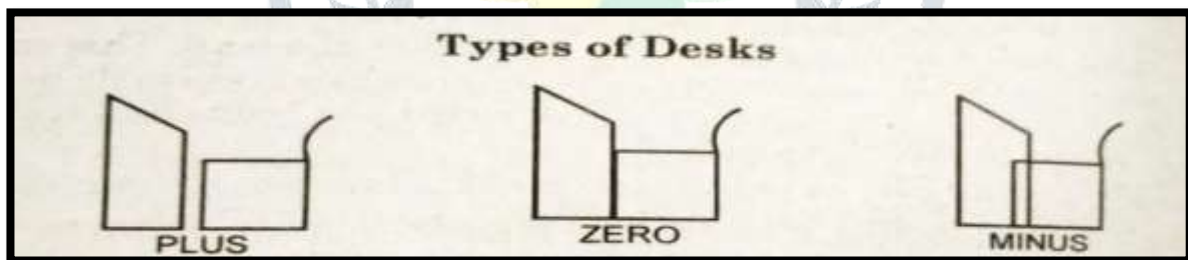


Fig. 5 showing different positions of seat and desk

In plus type there is space between desk and chair. In zero type the desk and chair touch each other. While in minus type, the chair extends to the on-side of the desk.

Out of the above all, the minus type of desks is considered the most appropriate.

3. **Time-table:** The pre-service trainers must also look deeply and learn about the different types of school time-table prepared in schools which include a **general time-table**- meant for entire school system as a whole or a common time-table; a **class time table**- meant for each class and section; a **special subject time-table**- prepared to allot subject wise periods; **teachers' time-table**- to know the weekly workload of each teacher; **vacant period time-table** – to allot some vacant periods to students for recreational activities; **games time-table** – to allot games periods to respective classes; and finally **co-curricular time-table** which is prepared to allocate appropriate periods to co-curricular activities.

The pupil-teacher must also ensure that whether different principles required for time-table construction like element of fatigue, relative importance and difficulty of subjects, amount of time available, staff equipment and building, variety, free periods of teachers, justice, rest and recreation, elasticity have been given due consideration or not.

4. **School Activities:** Though teaching-learning process is the main composite of entire school actions. There are some other activities which are the part of hidden curriculum and significantly contribute to the holistic development of students. Activities like daily school assembly, special assembly, Extra-curricular activities, Notice board – theme based display, Inter-house competitions, Community awareness programs, Educational tours, National days celebration, Seminar/workshops/symposium organization and other events shall be conducted by schools and pupil teachers must take part in them with great enthusiasm.
5. **Enabling support:** It include the availability of *proper ramps, resource rooms* for visually challenged and hearing impaired students, *special educator* for CWSN, *training of regular teachers* to deal with CWSN, *a regular as well as special counsellor*, availability of *appropriate equipment like tape recorder, talking pdf reader, canes, talking maps, hearing aids, hearing enhancing machines, books in large prints, calibres* etc. for learning assistance. The pupil-teacher must keenly observe all the above aspects of enabling unit necessary for inclusive school environment.
6. **Maintenance of School Records:** Maintenance of regular student's records acts as the testimony to analyse students' growth and development in different aspects. Records like *students' attendance register* shows the regularity and punctuality of learner, *teachers' attendance register* indicates the regularity and punctuality of the teachers, *students' cumulative records* keeps the academic, curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular performances etc. of the student over the years; *inventory record of each school resource* tells about the learning and teaching resources availed and consume by the learners each year; *school fees records* maintains the student wise, class wise and year wise record of fee payment; *treasury records* specifies the cash inflows and outflows of school organization; and *salary records* which depicts the yearly and monthly salary statements of various teachers.

Overall performance of teachers and students highly depend on the quantum of maintenance of above records. Hence, it is an important facet of overall school observation.

Techniques of recording the observation outside the classroom

- Day and date wise record of each school visit
- Time of daily reporting and leaving the school
- Note taking with minute details received from each person visited in the school
- Informal noting the behaviour of all stakeholders visited in the school
- Minute observation of infrastructure/resources/facilities etc. and noting each piece of information in code words
- Taking few photographs and videos (if allowed from school administrative) for keeping anecdotes

SCHOOL OBSERVATION WITHIN THE CLASSROOM

The main aim of class observation is to prepare the prospective teachers to observe the method of teaching adopted by teacher for specific lesson to be covered, the TLM used by teacher for specific lesson and its

appropriateness, teaching strategies adopted by teacher in the classroom, co-curricular activities organized by teacher related to the topic, the micro teaching skills applied by teacher while actual classroom transaction, the identification of CWSN done by the teacher in the classroom, the remedial measures taken by the teacher for CWSN and the assessment done by the teacher to measure the learning outcomes of students.

There are two types of direct classroom observation: multi-class (whole school, grade, or program) and targeted (single-class).

- **Multi-class-** Multi-class observations are used to capture routine classroom practices that typically occur on a regular basis in a whole school, one or more grades, or program.
- **Targeted (Single-class)-** Even though the multi-class observations provide a comprehensive sample of classroom practices, a specific intervention strategy such as use of technology, higher-order questioning, or partner reading may be “missed” due to the random nature of whole school visits.

Targeted observations may also be used if the goal is to better understand. Targeted observations capture classroom practices throughout a lesson by observing one entire class period during a prescheduled or random visit.

Dimensions for observation within the classroom

Teaching Pedagogy-Points of observation

1. **Approach:** Teacher-centered/subject-centered/Learner centered
2. **Method of teaching:** Text-book/lecture/discussion/demonstration/project etc.
3. **Teaching Learning Material used:** 2D, 3D, Multi-media, e-resources, chart, graphs, flashcards etc
4. **Involvement of the students:** Probing questions from students, allowing them to share their experiences/thoughts etc, asking questions from each part of the class, providing an opportunity and encouraging more students to participate in class discussion, connecting the topic with the previous experiences of the students etc.
5. **Applying the micro skills in the classroom:** It includes proper introduction (based on the previous experience of students) of topic to be taught in the class, providing appropriate re-inforcement to students for correct responses, adequate use of black board for developing the lesson, drawing the summary and noting the keypoints of the discussion, probing short and clear questions to the students with class room transaction, providing an appropriate explanation of new knowledge introduced to the students along with the relevant teaching aid.
6. **In-class activities as well as out class activities:** It includes the curricular activities and co-curricular activities related to the topic/subject.
7. **Identification of CWSN (Children with special needs) in the class:** How far the teacher is attentive and responsive to the special needs of the students?
8. **Remedial Measures adopted by teacher:** It includes the remedial teaching programs provided by the teacher to cater the diverse needs of the students
9. **The assessment method adopted by the teacher:** It includes the CCE method adopted by the school, the unit test, term exams, individual or group projects allotted to students etc. The weightage given to each assessment, the type of questions the test contains, the scoring technique adopted by teacher, the standardization of the achievement test done by the teacher etc.
10. **Planning:** It includes the yearly plan, academic plan, unit plan, activity planning and daily lesson planning done by the teacher.

Techniques of recording the observation within the classroom

Below are brief descriptions of information to be completed

- **School-** Record the name of the school.
- **Grade-** Please record the grade level(s) of the students in the class you are observing.
- **Subject-** Record the subject name you are observing and a brief of the topic taught
- **Teachers' Name-** For confidential purpose do not record the name of the teacher.
- **Time In/Time Out-** For multi-class observations, the actual time you enter and leave the room should be recorded. For targeted observations, record each 15-minute timeframe of the observation. If the observation time is abbreviated, indicate how many minutes were actually spent in the classroom and provide the reason.
- **Observation Date** - Please record the date of observation it indicates total visits in the school during internship.
- **Key points of observation:** Take notes of the process and practices adopted by teacher while classroom transaction (as stated under dimensions for observation within the classroom point 1 to 10)

OBSERVANCE OF SCHOOL CLIMATE

The purpose of school internship to bestow an insight to pre-service teachers of peer relationship of students in classroom, play grounds, library etc. and recognize the star children and friendship patterns among them. It also aims to observing the student-teacher relationship in class and out of the class. School climate also is being influenced with the teacher-teacher relationship and coordination in school and ultimately the principal's relationship with students, teachers and other office staff members. Various forms of relationships affecting the school climate are:

- Student to student relationships
- Student-teacher relationship
- Teacher to teacher relationship
- Relationship of principal with teacher, students and other office staff

1. Student to student relationship: It includes the following four aspects to be observed:

- i. Peer relationship- means relationship of the student with other fellow mates of the same class or section.
- ii. Relationship of the student with the students of seniors classes
- iii. Relationship of the student with the students of junior classes
- iv. Relationship of the students with the students of other school group-whether with other school house students, with other building students, with other team students and sometimes with other mind set/gang students.

2. Student-teacher relationship: This relationship should be friendly, co-operative, facilitator, philosopher, guide, counselor, mentor etc.

3. Teacher to Teacher relationship: It could be observed via:

- i. The programs organized in groups by teachers
- ii. Their spirit to work as a team
- iii. The place of sitting at staff room

- iv. The co-ordination among the work of various teachers
- v. The personnel bonding between teachers

4. Relationship of Principal with students, teachers and other staff members: It can be observed through:

- i. The manner in which the principal addresses the students, teachers and other staff members
- ii. The way in which each grievance or complaint of school is listen, addressed and responded by principal
- iii. Lack of prejudices and favourism on the part of principal.
- iv. Fair and well communicated leave policies, salary increment as well as rules and regulations of the school
- v. Smooth functioning of school operations
- vi. Fair and equal distribution and assignment of work and responsibilities to teachers and students

SIGNIFICANCE OF 'SCHOOL OBSERVATION' FOR PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

1. To develop and enhance the observational skills
2. To sensitize and make the prospective teachers more vigilant for classroom and social issues
3. To get the prospective teachers familiar with school environment and issues faced in actual school setting
4. To train the prospective teachers in effective dealing of classroom situations
5. To prepare the prospective teachers for actual classroom teaching-learning process
6. To demonstrate various pedagogical and innovative practices as well TLM adopted/used by school teachers while class room transactions
7. To develop inferential ability and critical analysis ability among the prospective teachers to improve themselves for future endeavors.
8. To realize the significance behind each and every school process and product
9. To make them realize the worth and role of teacher in modifying the behavioural patterns of students
10. To develop respect and dignity for teaching profession

Conclusions

Internship experiences need to be organized in a way that is useful in evaluating teacher's ability, supports socialization within the profession, stimulates development of teaching-learning concepts, provides a protected field of experimentation, allows insight into new perspectives and enhances motivation to continue learning and reflecting.

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