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Perceptions of Prospective Teachers about Effectiveness & Professional Development of Practicum

Wahaj Muhammad Khan¹, Safia Urooj², Aijaz Ahmed³

¹Ph.D (Research Scholar), Department of Education, University of Karachi, Karachi

²Assistant Professor, Department of Teacher Education, University of Karachi, Karachi

³DEA, Institute of Education and Research, Karachi

ABSTRACT

Teaching is an art and teaching practice is the key element of teachers training, but presently in the 4 years Professional Development Program, Practicum replaced teaching practice. A prominent feature of the B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary Program upcoming is practice teaching also known as the Practicum. Practicum is a university course intended to give a prospective teacher skilled oriented education of a subject earlier studied in theory. The basic purpose of it is to produce professional development, abilities, and skills of the prospective teachers. But those consequences are not obtained from this as being expected. How it occurs that quality teachers are not produced? In this research, the effects of the practicum will be discussed and try to understand that what role practicum is playing on the professional development of prospective teachers. In the light of the recommendation of this research, the objectives of Practicum will be obtained and develop the professionalism in prospective teachers. The study is conducted through quantitative approach, passed out prospective teachers of the University of Karachi and affiliated colleges B.Ed. (4 years program) are selected as population and 100 prospective teachers is selected as a sample through random and convenient sampling. and opinionnaire is used as a research tool for authentic data collection and the collected data analyzed by Chi-square and in the light of results, recommendations are placed.

KEYWORDS: Prospective Teachers, Effectiveness, Professional Development Program, Practicum.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is the dedicated profession and use of expertise, skills, and attributes planned to offer unique facility and service to meet up the educational desires of the

Address of Correspondence

Safia Urooj
safiaurooj786@gmail.com

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person and society. Effective teaching always been recognized by authentic experience hands and has importance in the society. The Society arranges activities to train the teachers for the purpose. In this sub-continent of Asia, these type training programmes had been arranged in the past and teaching practices remain parts of these programmes. About 40 lessons had been taught in teaching practices. Such type of teaching practice semester is being arranged in Teacher Education Department of Universities under the name “PRACTICUM”

“Practicum refers to experiences that teacher trainees have in the classroom before they take on the full range of responsibilities required for student teaching. Practicum teachers partner with a professional teacher who directs their activities and gives them feedback on any work they do.”

Barry and King (2002)ⁱ note that “Teaching practice (Practicum) provides the opportunity to apply the principles of teaching and learning that have been studied, during coursework” (p.35). In this B .Ed. (Hons) 04 years programme of practicum, the theory will be taught practically and coordination between the supervisor, cooperating teacher and the prospective teacher took place more effectively and effectiveness of Practicum increased.

Teaching practicum exercises are generally part of a university class. Usually, a college course on teaching strategies will incorporate university course lectures, reading materials, homework assignments, and visits to laboratory schools for practicum. The practicum needs for a teaching strategies course will be genuinely concrete. A particular number of hours will be required, as a rule in a particular sort of classroom different parts of practicum skills vary a lot. Some courses have distinctive requirements. Also, university teacher education training programs adopt many strategies to organizing practicum too. A practicum could be as short as a couple of hours in a semester, or as tedious as 15-20 hours every week. Practicum can include one cooperating teacher or various collaborating instructors. They can occur at one school or more than one school.

In most practicum practices, training strategies and skills will complete a blend of observation and classroom assistance. Now and again, Supervisors will just observe the class, record students’ observations, and make inquiries to their cooperating teacher

outside of class time. At different circumstances, practicum supervisors will effectively help their cooperating teacher, working specifically with the prospective teachers. They may even teach a couple of lessons themselves, with a cooperating teacher– and maybe also a supervisor from their university–appear in the classroom to direct them and give them comment.

The head teachers of teacher education programs know this. So they make practicum skills to enable prospective teachers to find the actual situation for themselves. Once a prospective teacher has sufficiently finished practicum, they'll be prepared to plunge with the command of knowledge and teaching skills, first as a prospective teacher and finally as a licensed and professional teacher.

JUSTIFICATION:

The main purpose of this research paper is to reveal the effectiveness and professional development of practicum and supervisor and cooperating teacher is providing benefits and guidance and enhancing teaching skills, strategies and qualities during practicum because the main objective is to produce quality teachers. Therefore, HEC and USAID design three practicum manuals for supervisor, cooperating teacher, and prospective teachers so that everyone may justify their participation, tasks, activities, and responsibilities effectively.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The research study basically aims to explore the effectiveness and professional development of Practicum B.Ed. (Hons) 4 years teacher education programme. Hence, the core objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To explore the effectiveness and professional development of practicum.
2. To get views of prospective teachers in respect of effectiveness and professional development of practicum.
3. To list out the main problems that are faced by the prospective teachers during the practicum.
4. To find out the impact of practicum in improving the quality of teachers.
5. To formulate some recommendations that can help to improve the effectiveness of practicum.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The study based taking into consideration the following questions:

1. Is Practicum only the other name of teaching practice?
2. Is present B.Ed. (Hons) 04 years programme of Practicum effective?
3. Is present B.Ed. (Hons) 04 years programme of Practicum creating professional skills and interest in prospective teachers?

HYPOTHESIS:

- There is no significant difference between male and female prospective teachers about the perception of the effectiveness of practicum.
- There is no significant difference in perception between male and female prospective teachers and effectiveness of practicum on professional development in respect of supervision.
- There is no significant difference between male and female prospective teachers about the difficulties faced during the practicum.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Various terms, for example, the showing rehearse, practicum, understudy educating, field considers, infield encounter, school-based understanding or entry-level position are utilized to allude to the action of work on instructing (Haigh and Tuck, 1999)ⁱⁱ. Practicum or showing practice is a course or program in which the understudies or learners are ported to schools ordinarily lower than their foundation of learning, to instruct the understudy branches of knowledge of their specialization for a particular period. Amid the period understudy instructors as they are called, take on the position of ordinary subject instructors and in the meantime take part in every legitimate task given by the helpful school experts (Mohan and Ghosh, 2011)ⁱⁱⁱ.

Work on instructing is characterized as educating by an understudy under the supervision of an accomplished educator. The point is to give hands-on encounters offspring of various ages, settings what's more, understudies to empower forward and backward development amongst hypothesis and practice (Schechter and Parkhurst, 1993)^{iv}. This period of preparing contributes not exclusively to the advancement of word related standards additionally to diminishing nervousness about instructing and to learning

classroom procedures. It further appears to contribute the vast majority to explore workable direct, where "workable" turns out to be typically characterized as classroom administration, taking after settled timetables of directions, rearranging lesson arranges, overcoming the material and reducing the expansiveness and lavishness of the material exhibited (Dreeben, 1970)^v.

The rehearsing educators work in an assortment of courses in light of the requirements of learners and schools. They work with individual understudies, little gatherings with uncommon needs or with entirety class (Ezenne, 2010)^{vi}. Taking part in an extensive variety of expert exercises like utilizing accessible instructional media, organizing release board, classroom and administration, keeping participation enlist, making everyday arrangements and unit arranges and so on (Johnson and Deprin, 1971)^{vii}. Work on preparing gives: a chance to pick up certainty; opportunity to place hypotheses into rehearse; a chance to take in the abilities and states of mind of a skilled and full of feeling instructor; the opportunity to find out about youngsters, all things considered; a chance to enhance the information of topic; the probability to pick out up from the advantages of productive feedback; an open door for self-assessment and to discover qualities and shortcomings; an open door for the educating establishments to examine it (Brown and Brown, 1990).

Showing rehearse gives the learner a chance to procure functional aptitudes through direct encounter (Mohan and Ghosh, 2011)^{viii}. Gatherings are held to give the understudies the vital data about their educating hone. Showing rehearse sorted out together with the chiefs gives out the fundamental data of such matters as a method for perception days, on appraisal, on the fitting dress, on learning helps and so on. Understudies can make inquiries about any part of instructing practice that worries them (George, Worrell, Rampersad, Rampaul, 2000)^{ix}. The understudies ought to be enlightened concerning their vehicle and about the circumstances they should board the transports to and from the school. Every one of the understudies continuing educating practice ought to go to showing hone programs (Macharia and Wario, 1994)^x.

The accomplishment of the utilization of measures for creating and getting to imminent instructors' accomplishments depends on the delicate bolster given to the

forthcoming educators in the school by the guide and in the foundation of advanced education by the proper coach (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2004)^{xi}. Chiefs visit the internees in their own classrooms. The errand of the chief as an eyewitness is to help understudy understand his or her involvement in the outline work of the aggregate educational programs. The administrator is additionally anticipated that would help each understudy find the example in his or her prosperity or disappointments so that the development in five ranges is kept up.

Now and again when an understudy is struck or having problems certain measure of pushing and pulling by chief is essential. Amid alteration, the boss concentrates on inquiries and remarks which help the understudy start to make the essential aptitudes required in arranging, overseeing, and evaluating (Andrew and Telmberg, 2010)^{xii}. Amid showing rehearse the bosses watch various lessons instructed by person understudy instructor (Stimpson, 2000)^{xiii}. Practicum course gives a vehicle to talk about objectives, what're more, targets (Newsome and Lederman, 1999)^{xiv}. The workshop may focus on an exchange of different sorts of information which the assistant has been gotten some information about their classroom, understudies, and school. These assignments help the assistant to compose and discover designs in the tips of interest of their day to day encounters (Andrew and Telmberg, 2010)^{xv}. A coach is named educator in the school who has duty regarding: exhorting understudies instructors how to educate their specific subjects; creating understudies educators understanding; exhorting planned instructor on class administration and arranging of educational modules and appraisal (Stratemeyer and Lindsey, 1969)^{xvi}.

The understudy educators watch lessons in the coach instructor's class including lab lessons (Lassonde, 2008)^{xvii}. Imminent instructors set exclusive standards for student conduct and build up an unmistakable structure for classroom teaching to expect and deal with students' conduct valuable (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2004)^{xviii}. The small scale showing practicum has brought about change in educating and supervisory aptitudes. The videotape, input, self-analysis, thought of option conduct and practice are a compelling blend of learning (Lipsit, 1973)^{xix}. Various phrasings utilized for practicum, for example, Teaching Practice, Field involvement, understudies educating, School based field

preparing, entry level position and school based preparing (Haigh and Tuck, 1999)^{xx}. Practicum is a course in a particular field in which understudies include teaching as well as partake in all exercises which are performed in the school.

Imminent educators amid practicum period show understudies too performed other school based enacts, for example, look after registers (Admission, withdrawal and Log Enlist and so on). Planned instructors confer learning to the understudies and partook each errand which is allowed by the coordinating instructors in the school (Mohan and Ghosh, 2011)^{xxi}. Showing practice is named as teaching by an understudy under the supervision of a specialist educator. The design is to offer hands on practices with understudies of various ages, settings understudies to engage a forward and in reverse developments among hypothesis and hone (Schechter and Parkhurst, 1993)^{xxii}. This time of preparing adds to the change of word related benchmarks and in addition to reducing uneasiness in regards to classroom learning procedures. It furthermore seems to contribute most by far of successful conduct, where "compelling" ends up being unmistakably described as classroom administration, taking after changed timetables of directions, moving forward lesson arranging, navigating the material and restricting the broadness and profitability of the material showed (Dreeben, 1970)^{xxiii}.

Work on showing offers the learner an opportunity to acquire practical capacities through continuous experience (Mohan and Ghosh, 2011)^{xxiv}. Classes are orchestrated planned instructors before beginning the practicum in which fundamental data is giving to the forthcoming educators. No less than three classes are organized, Prospective educators. One is organized before beginning the practicum and second class is masterminded amidst the practicum in which Prospective educators, College Supervisor and coordinating educators take an interest in the course. Imminent instructors highlight their issues which they confronted amid practicum and Faculty Supervisor and Cooperating educators give an answer for those issues. The last course is orchestrated toward the finish of the practicum in which imminent instructors share their encounters in regards to practicum (George, Worrell, Rampersad, and Rampaul, 2000)^{xxv}.

Each one of the Prospective Teacher proceeding with his practice should go to educator preparing programs (Macharia and Wario, 1994)^{xxvi}. Amid the practicum, the

directors watch educating of each forthcoming instructor in the classroom (Stimpson, 2000)^{xxvii}. Practicum course gives a vehicle to discussing destinations and targets (Newsome and Lederman, 1999)^{xxviii}. Imminent educators plan their everyday exercises with help of coordinating instructors, create a lesson plan to ensure successful educating. They watch routine errand which is performed in the schools and afterward effectively took an interest in those errand with help of their coordinating educators (Andrew and Jelmberg, 2010)^{xxix}.

There are three primary partners in a practicum that is College Supervisor, Prospective Educator, and Cooperating Teacher. Each part of the practicum has their own part and duties. In the event that these parts and obligations are clear to everybody, then coveted destinations can be accomplished. Planned Teachers take an interest effectively in day by day exercises performed in the Schools which are allocated by the coordinating instructors or school bosses. While College manager screen Prospective Teachers on everyday schedule and gives useful input. School Supervisor watched understudies' exercises amid practicum utilizing observational instruments and rubrics. Coordinating instructors allot assignment which is performed in the Schools and watches them day by day. Coordinating Teachers additionally give useful input to Student Teacher orally and in the composed frame and place it in the Arrangement of Prospective Teachers. The portfolio is a standout amongst the most vital archived confirm which incorporate Prospective Teachers Lesson arranging, diagrams of seating game plan, composed criticism of collaborating educators/College Supervisor, duplicates observational devices saw by the Cooperating instructors/College Supervisors (USAID, 2013)^{xxx}.

The collection of expert writing proceeds to develop with data recommending approaches to make strides instructive administration readiness programs. One fundamental part of this collection of research is in creating critical temporary position/field encounters/practical. We consider entry level position, field encounters, and practical as compatible. Field encounters in instructive initiative projects give the linkage between classrooms rehearse and proficient practice (Chance, 1990;^{xxxi} Davis, Darling Hammond, LaPointe, and Meyerson, 2005;^{xxxii} White and Crow, 1993^{xxxiii}). Furthermore, exercises in practicum encounters ought to connection hypothesis to rehearse (Cordeiro,

and Smith-Sloan, 1995^{xxxiv}; Daresh, 2002^{xxxv}; Williamson and Hudson, 2001^{xxxvi}). Most projects gap administration coursework and entry level position into two isolated segments (Hackmann and Price, 1995^{xxxvii}; Hess and Kelly, 2005^{xxxviii}; Jackson and Kelley, 2002^{xxxix}; Milstein and Krueger, 1997)^{xl}. Examine demonstrates that first-year principals with an entry level position experience were essentially more sure (Cohen, 2001; Jean and Evans, 1995)^{xli} and performed factually better at the basic errands related to the vital's part (Jean and Evans, 1995)^{xlii} than those without an entry level position understanding. Furthermore, instructive administration applicants considered school based practicum exercises that empowered them to apply new information into practice and got coaching from honing executives as the most profoundly esteemed program encounters (Jiang, Patterson, Chandler, and Chan, 2009^{xliii}; Krueger and Milstein, 1995^{xliv}). In complexity, Williamson and Hudson (2001)^{xlv} forewarned that the nonattendance of a linkage amongst hypothesis and practice could restrain learning results of yearning chairmen. Daresh (2002)^{xlvi} contended that in spite of the fact that some initiative arrangement programs strived to scratch the connection amongst hypothesis and practice in applicants' psyches, many still scammed competitors because of lacking system arranging and field encounter supervision.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is of descriptive and quantitative nature. The pass out prospective teachers of University of Karachi and its affiliated colleges selected as a population. 1000 prospective teachers selected as a sample, out of which 50 male prospective teacher and 50 female prospective teacher from Karachi University and 400 male prospective teacher and 500 female prospective teachers from affiliated colleges through random and convenient sampling design. The questionnaire, used as a research tool, is developed through literature review and interview of prospective teachers and collected data were statistically analyzed using Chi-square test and conclusions about the responses of the sample were drawn after statistical analysis.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Ho: There is no significant difference between male and female prospective teachers about the perception of the effectiveness of practicum.

Table 1:

Prospective Teachers	Yes	Indeff	No	Total
Male	213	113	148	474
Female	199	134	177	510
Total	412	247	325	984

Chi-Square (Calculated) = 3.5365 with d.f (2, 1) 5.99

Result: Accept Ho

The above analysis shows that the calculated value of Chi-square $\chi^2 = 3.5365$ is smaller than the tabulated value of Chi-square $\chi^2 = 5.99$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

2. There is no significant difference in perception between male and female prospective teachers and effectiveness of practicum on professional development in respect of supervision.

Table 2:

Prospective Teachers	Yes	Indeff	No	Total
Male	96	53	91	240
Female	108	55	82	245
Total	204	108	173	485

Chi-Square (Calculated) = 1.1597 with d.f (2, 1) 5.99

Result: Accept Ho

The above analysis shows that the calculated value of Chi-square $\chi^2 = 1.1597$ is smaller than the tabulated value of Chi-square $\chi^2 = 5.99$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

3. There is no significant difference between male and female prospective teachers about the difficulties faced during the practicum.

Table 3:

Prospective Teachers	Yes	Indeff	No	Total
Male	100	73	75	248
Female	90	65	97	252
Total	190	138	172	500

Chi-Square (Calculated) = 3.7722 with d.f (2,1) 5.99

Result: Accept Ho

The above analysis shows that the calculated value of Chi-square $\chi^2 = 3.7722$ is smaller than the tabulated value of Chi-square $\chi^2 = 5.99$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

5. DISCUSSION CONCLUSION

On the basis of acceptance of hypothesis the researcher concludes that the collected data of male and female prospective teachers of Department of Teacher Education, University of Karachi and its affiliated colleges have unanimous decision that effectiveness and professional development of practicum in the current B, Ed.(Hons.) 4 years Teacher Education Programme. But prospective teachers faced some difficulties during a practicum in the school due to school policies and procedures, for example, curriculum timings, rules, regulations etc. The problems should be resolved during practicum and focused on pedagogical skills that are essential for classroom teaching, practicum sessions or activities.

The practicum played a major role in enhancing pedagogical or teaching skills of the prospective teacher. In its preparation phase, skill developing in them as lesson planning, preparation of subject relevant teaching aid and worksheets and classroom management skills. In the professional development through practicum, the adopted strategies strongly helpful to enhance and integrate prospective teachers skills and attitude. According Berry and King (2002)^{xlvii} “An effective teacher spend a great deal of time on careful and comprehensive planning (p.45) and constructing of a portfolio of student teachers learning is seen as a tool to enhance student teacher reflective practices as well as their professional sustainability (Thomas, 2007)^{xlviii}.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the prospective teachers have again a variety of techniques, modern approaches, and professionalism through practicum B.Ed.(Hons) 4 years programme, introduced by USAID with the collaboration of HEC. This programme will produce quality teachers and promote teacher education in Pakistan. This programme will also get great achievements and our country will be able to get a great name in the world.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

On the basic statistical analysis and discussion, the following recommendations are being provided:

1. To increase the effectiveness of practicum a proper training should be given to supervisors.
2. To maintain the effectiveness of practicum, cooperating teachers may be given proper training and incentives.
3. Practicum coordinator as a mentor should give two years training to supervisors.
4. Not more than 10 prospective teachers allowed with a supervisor.
5. The supervisor will be bound of full time duties and responsibilities.
6. Only permanent teaching faculty members should make supervisor.
7. A senior professor may also supervise the supervisors.
8. Practicum may have a final lesson and there should be three evaluators in the final lesson. One internal and one external will perform their duties and evaluate the lesson and one external should be the senior professor of National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (NACTE).
9. There should be clear indication of marks distribution so that students may take interest in practicum.
10. There should be clear instructions about planning and implementation of tasks and activities.
11. Seminar and other activities should be more interested and effective with the cooperation of prospective teachers.
12. Prospective teachers should prepare subject relevant teaching aids more skilfully before time.

13. There should be identified laboratory schools for practicum

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