

Quality Issues in Practice Teaching

Abstract

It is generally believed that the conventional teachers training colleges in India organize programmes, which by and large are ill suited to the needs of a developing society like ours. The teacher training institutions in India, as indeed in all other developing countries, have now to seek to move over rapidly to the preparation of teachers in accordance with their own needs and requirements. Practice teaching makes the trainee and educational technician. The very purpose of teacher education is to make the teacher training a skillful practitioner, adequately equipped with educational practices along with abilities to tackle the demands of social environment. The supervision of practice teaching as organized at present is very superficial with only a few lessons being supervised systematically. It is therefore necessary to think of plans to remove such defects so as to provide to the teachers the professional experience they need. It is also very important to devise the roles that the schools and the teachers can play in the practice teaching programme. The most important aspect to be stressed upon is the achievement of active cooperation between schools and the training colleges. The current teaching practice is limited to measure only the cognitive domain and not the psychomotor and affective domain of the students, the present paper focuses on the need for a continuous effort to match the testing and learning styles of students and their and evaluation to make the teachers accountable for the students performance.

Keywords: Practice Teaching, Pre-Service, Competencies, Pedagogy.

Introduction

Pre-Service Teacher Education

In the 1850s teacher training existed as an undifferentiated course of study meant for school teachers. During the twentieth century greater differentiation was sought and practiced with respect to the stages at which teachers were expected to teach. Different training modes were introduced such as regular campus-cum- practicing school experience, correspondence-cum-contact programs and distance learning programs of teacher education. Teacher education has attracted severe criticism from different sources as documented in policy documents and commission reports on education. The professional preparation of teachers has been recognized to be crucial for the qualitative improvement of education. Since the 1960s (education commission 1964-66), The commission in particular notes the need for teacher education to be brought into the main stream of the academic life of the universities on the one hand and of school life and educational developments on the other.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is that the practice of teaching must constitute the hub of the multiple and varied activities that comprised the total program of teacher education.

According to NCFTE (2009), the pre-service teacher education specific objectives are:

1. To enable the prospective teachers to understand the nature, purpose and philosophy of secondary education.
2. To develop among teachers an understanding of psychology of their pupils
3. To acquaint them with research in education including action research
4. To develop aesthetic sensibilities.
5. To enable them to utilize community resources as educational inputs.
6. To acquaint them with educational need of special groups of pupils.
7. To enable them to make pedagogical analysis of the subjects they are to teach at the second stage.
8. To equip them acquire competencies relevant to stage specific pedagogy curriculum development, its transaction and evaluation.

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9. To acquaint them with factors and forces affecting educational system and classroom situation
10. To develop skills for guidance and counseling

Practice-Teaching

Practice-Teaching Is Known as a student teacher, who goes through professional preparation course where theory and practice are combined together are combined together under the supervision of experienced teachers in a real school situation. According to NCTE (2009), the major drawbacks of the current model of practice-teaching are:

1. Current practice in teacher education take the school curriculum and textbooks as 'given' and train teachers to adjust to the needs of the existing school system through fastidious planning of lessons in standardized formats, fulfilling theoretical or delivering the required number of lessons.
2. Repeated 'practice' in the teaching of a specified number of isolated lessons is considered a sufficient condition for professional development.
3. There is no opportunity for teachers to examine their own biases and beliefs and reflect on their own experiences as part of classroom discussion and enquiry
4. Theory courses have no clear articulation with practical work and ground realities.
5. The evaluation protocol is too theoretical, excessively quantitative and lacks comprehensiveness.

According to NCTE (2009), it is obvious that in imparting professional rigor to the preparation of a teacher, the practice of teaching and associated rigorous theoretical study play a crucial part .it is the effectiveness with which the multiple components of field learning- getting to know the school, observing teaching and learning in real classroom contexts, practicing teaching, developing capacities to think with educational theories and applying concepts in concrete teaching-learning situations, managing classroom learning, evaluating learners and providing feedback, learning to work with colleagues, reflecting on one's own professional practice are drawn upon to provide appropriate learning experiences for the student-teacher that is critical to the education of teachers. At the outset, it can be seen that any attempt towards reform of current practices and design of innovative approaches in practice-teaching should begin with an understanding of the place of practice-teaching in the overall scheme of things. The first thing to be noted is that the practice of teaching constitutes the hub of the multiple and varied activities comprising the total program of teacher education. It is interconnected with theoretical study, fieldwork and wide range of institutional experiences involving school student teachers, mentor teacher educators. In this way, it acts both as the evaluation tool for effective teacher education as well as its critical quality indicator.

Crow and Crow in their book 'Student Teachers in Secondary Schools'(1964) have laid down four essential ingredients for getting the maximum out of the supervised experience:

1. Interest in young people
2. Knowledge of subject matter
3. Personal qualities needed for successful teaching.
4. Constructive attitude towards criticism.

The NCERT has proposed to add a fifth requirement to the above, i.e some basic knowledge of pedagogy as well as techniques and methods of teaching.

Some Other Causes for the In-Effectiveness of Teaching Practice

1. Length and duration of teaching practice is too short to provide sufficient experience and opportunity to the student teachers to come in contact with all aspects of the school program. Teaching practice is arranged most hurriedly and the student teacher does not get experience of all types of work that a teacher is required to perform. Are 30 periods in a school sufficient to acquire skills in all these branches?
2. Discussion lessons are organized as a routine program just to complete a formality Discussions are sometimes devoid of serious discussions and remarks given and written on the student teachers lesson plan notebooks of general nature. One discussion lesson is not sufficient to consider the student teachers ready for facing the classroom situations.
3. Demonstration lessons given by subject expert are held under simulation in the colleges of education, which is artificial. Student teachers do not get the chance to see the delivery of lessons by subject experts in real classroom situation.
4. Lack of integration in theory and practice makes the teacher education artificial and almost diverged school practices. Overcrowded classes, inadequate teaching staff, heavily loaded syllabi with emphasis on written examination and limited time at the disposal of student teacher makes it difficult to implement the method and techniques that are taught in the colleges of education.
5. Attitude of most of the schools is discouraging .Teaching practice is considered as a disruption in their normal teaching. School teachers instead of observing and guiding the student teachers prefer to sit idle.They sometimes make the student teacher to take their entire teaching work on their own conditions.
6. Lesson plan notebooks are signed hurriedly. Typical stereotyped remarks like "satisfactory work, excellent lesson" are given.

In order to bring about improvement in the program of teaching practice under the teacher education at secondary level, certain suggestions as presented below may be taken into consideration:

1. Length and duration of teaching practice should be increased from 1 month to 2 months. It also helps to overcome the problems faced by schools such as shortage of staff, too much workload on teachers, teachers on leave. Student teachers should work full time in schools and should participate in activities of the school.
2. Success of the teaching practice depends to a great extent on the competence and enthusiasm

of the college supervisor. He should be in very close contact with his student teachers during this period. They need to visit the student teacher regularly in the class, sit there for a good time and should give and write realistic remarks.

- Suitable evaluating rating scale should be used for evaluating teaching skills. The internal assessment should cover the entire range of activities. Systematic record of growth of student teacher in all areas of work during teaching practice should be maintained.
- Colleges of education should have a practicing school attached to them ; this should be within the college campus ;otherwise teacher education would remain isolated from school practices.

Some More Suggestions:

- The term practice –teaching be replaced by 'internship' has a more broader meaning and scope.
- The headmaster should be requested to treat the trainee as a whole-time teacher of the school for period of internship and allot different activities of the school under his guidance.
- Teacher educators from the training institutions must be asked to visit the practicing schools to supervise the lessons .They may stay in the school campus for one week each so as to make intensive supervision of classes.
- If possible, Demonstration lessons should be held in the respective practicing schools.
- Specialized teacher educator must be required to supervise at least two lessons of a trainee for full period.
- Each trainee must be required to devise and prepare some teaching aid for their lesson which may be donated to the school for further use.
- One supervisor need be required to supervise not more than three lessons in a period of 40 minutes.
- The trainee must be assessed for his performance the school teacher ,the headmaster and the teacher educator on a gradation system
- The trainee's teaching should be supervised by the subject teacher of the school everyday, who may maintain a record of his observation.
- Supervisors must be asked not to make general and vague comments in the lesson plan record; rather make general and vague comments in the lesson plan record; rather make meaningful suggestions to rectify and improve.

Thus Practice-teaching or student-teaching otherwise called the internship program;is an activity for the teacher trainee to gain first-hand experience of dealing with school students in the classroom situation. It involves the students, the teachers, and the trainee who teaches. The Practice-teaching program is not merely limited to classroom teaching but to prepare the trainee to face all kinds of situations in actual school system.The Teacher Education Program at secondary level has the following objectives as suggested by different education commissions, the U.G.C, the N.C.E.R.T and the NCTE from time to time.

In the Prospective Teacher, Teacher Education Program Should Seek to Develop The

Knowledge and understanding of:

- The process of human development and learning in all its dimensions and implications to education.
- Professional competencies and skills relating to:
- Effective curriculum transaction utilizing learning resource of various kinds and employing interactive teaching-learning strategies to promote all-round growth of learners.
- Comprehensive and continuous evaluation of learner's progress through appropriate tool and techniques.
- Effective management of learning within and outside the classroom, to maximize learner's growth.
- Offering guidance to students in their personal, academic and occupational problems.
- Social Commitment through participation in:
- Developmental activities in the community, extension activities and community services.
- Complementary and parallel educational service systems like non-formal education, adult education, workers' education.
- Compensating educational programs for the disadvantaged classes, i.e: S.C.&S.T.

Positive attitudes towards children, learning, school, professional growth and manual work .Social, cultural and moral values oriented towards the unity and integration of our people .Aesthetic contests and appreciation, literary, cultural and artistic pursuits.

Conclusion

Teaching is viewed as a mission. So there has to be a continuous effort to match the testing and learning style of students their evaluation as the accountability of teaching. The system is limited to measuring only the cognitive domain while the psychomotor and affective domains are left untouched in many subjects. Action research is a tool to meet this challenge.sAll the above- mentioned objectives the development of professional competencies and skills relating to effective communication,effective management of learning, comprehensive and continuous evaluation, learning needs of special group of children appear to be very important and of prime consideration. This is linked with the training of teachers through teaching practice.

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