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Improving Practice Teaching in Primary Schools for School Internship Programme

Abstract

Today, school education has shifted from being teacher centric to child centric. This has prompted a change in the role of teachers to that of a friend, facilitator and guide. With a change in role of the teacher, the Teacher Education Programmes have also been re-structured. In the light of the NCTE Regulations 2014, the field of Teacher Education is presented with many challenges like quality of teachers, preparing the teachers for inclusive classrooms, implementation of ICT in learning, gender issues etc. The School Internship Programme forms an essential part of the pre-service teacher education. The aim of this paper is to suggest strategies for making teaching practice for school internship more effective and divided in three phases i.e., Pre internship phase, Interactive Phase and Post Internship Phase. These strategies would help in improving practice teaching and developing the professional skills desired by the changed school system.

Keywords: *School Internship programme, practice teaching, Primary Schools*

Introduction

Teacher Education is a programme that is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would enable the prospective teacher to meet current requirements and prepare them to face any challenges of the profession in future. It provides the student teachers with the relevant subject knowledge and skills to make the process of teaching –learning more effective, enjoyable and meaningful.

All teacher education programs are comprised of Teaching Skills, Pedagogical Theory and Professional Skills and a balanced combination of these helps in the holistic development of prospective teachers.

However, from time to time many education commissions in India have reviewed teacher education programmes and expressed their concern regarding the most important component that is the practical aspect of the programme- practice teaching. The University Education Commission (1948-49) founda lot of variation in teaching practice and the number of supervised lessons across universities varied from ten to sixty. Besides, recommending that more time be allotted to teaching practice and selection of appropriate schools for training, it also suggested flexibility of course and adaptability to local circumstances. Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) suggested that methods of teaching should be practised in at least two subjects and the practical part of training should include practice teaching, observation, demonstration and criticism of lessons. Pires Committee (1956) suggested that the practical work should be given a weightage equal to the theory papers whose number must be reduced to four. According to Education Commission (1964-66), investment in teacher education can yield very rich dividends. It further pointed out that "for qualitative improvement of education, a sound programme of professional education of teachers was essential." National Commission on Teachers-I (1983-85) noted that the most crucial part of the programme, the practice teaching, was also the most

neglected one. It suggested that practice teaching should be replaced by internship in teaching instead of delivering prescribed set of isolated lessons in classrooms.

The NPE (1986) and POA (1992) stressed that to bring a qualitative improvement in education, revamping of teacher education programme is of utmost necessity. Report of the Committee for Review of National Policy on Education, 1986 under the chair-personship of Acharya Ramamurti (RCRNPE, 1990, p.270) observed that the linkage between theory and practice is rather weak in the internship model of teacher training (as cited in Srinivas, K. 2015). Bhatnagar (as cited in NCERT, 1991) reviewed 39 studies between 1952 and 1978 in the field of teacher education and concluded that practice teaching was the weakest component in teacher education programme. Justice Verma Commission (2012), also criticized the present of teaching practice. It had observed that Practice teaching was ritualized and mechanical with a fragmented approach having no reflection on content of the lesson during planning. It noted, "Student-teachers spend hours decorating their lesson plans rather than reading and reflecting on what to teach, why and how?" The duration for practice teaching was only 5-6 weeks.

Besides these other curriculum frameworks have also discussed the inadequacies of internship in teaching. National Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education

NCFQTE(1998) observed that Practice teaching cannot be confined to teaching of school subjects only. Rather it requires more time and reflection in preparation and guided supervision. National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education NCFTE (2006) pointed out the need for reform in the existing internship/ teaching practice such that focus is on improvement of school rather than delivering only specified number of isolated lessons. NCFTE (2009) observes that the curriculum is theory dominant and practice teaching suffers from many inadequacies like following a mechanical routine, rigid lesson plan formats, inadequate supervision, lack of context specificity etc. Comprehensiveness and qualitative evaluation for professional attitudes and values is also missing. Besides this, evaluation protocol is also theoretical, too quantitative and lacks comprehensiveness.

Report of the International Seminar on Teacher Education MHRD (2010, pg9) highlighted that School Experience Programme (SEP) has remained more focussed on teacher performance. A lack of coordination between student teachers and school faculty is seen during transaction of syllabus in classrooms and student teachers were rarely provided with free time to interact with school students to help them understand their needs.

The findings and suggestions of various commissions on education help us in understanding the grave situation of Practice Teaching and School Internship as a whole. The next section on review of literature analyses various studies to create a holistic picture and a deeper understanding of the same.

Review of Literature

The review of literature of various studies both from Indian and global contexts point out towards certain common themes that were found across all studies. The review of literature section is therefore organised according to various themes highlighted in different studies.

Problems of Student Teachers

Panda and Nayak (2014) conducted a cross sectional study for three years to find out problems that student teachers faced in internship during three academic sessions. It was found that designing activities, management of school students and disciplinary problems gained highest votes in terms of problems faced during internship in academic sessions 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 respectively. Language barriers were also a major concern that emerged in

the study. Aniruddhan (2005) investigated into problems faced by natural science student teachers during practice teaching programme. The major problems revealed in the study were (i) Natural science student teachers were not satisfied with the existing system of practice teaching programme. (ii) Student teachers were not allowed to use resources at the cooperating school (iii) Overcrowded classrooms did not allow student teachers to use activity method effectively. Tok (2010) in his study found that planning, subject matter knowledge, using instructional material, motivation, communication and time management skills were reported as the major problems. Exploitation by the cooperating school staff, split between theory and practice, the feeling among students that student teachers do not hold responsibility for actual teaching, assessment processes crippled by school regulations were some problems brought to light by Alkhwaldeh (2011). Azeem(2011) investigated the problems of 100 B.Ed student teachers of Lahore during teaching practice. Major findings indicate that no timetable was prepared for student teachers and they were not informed about rules and regulations of co-operating schools. Mapfumo, Chitsiko and Chireshe (2012) found finances, workload, shortage of resources and shortage of teaching learning material as the stressors in their study on student teachers in Zimbabwe.

Inadequate Time Period for Teaching Practice

Report of the Committee for Review of National Policy on Education 1986 under the chair-personship of Acharya Ramamurti (RCRNPE, 1990, pp.266-67) had observed that practice teaching period allotted is not adequate in terms of duration and experience gained. (as cited in Srinivas, K. 2015). Yadav (2011) in a comparative study of pre service teacher education programme at secondary stage in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka found that teacher educators reported that duration for practice teaching was less.

Aniruddhan (2005) investigated into problems faced by natural science student teachers during practice teaching programme. He found that duration for practice teaching was not adequate and suggested three months duration with a gap of one month. Arya (2004) compared the two year B.Ed Degree of Regional Institute of Education, Ajmer with one year B.Ed. programme of Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati University, Ajmer and reported that a larger number of students from the one year programme preferred the two years programme when compared with students of two years course preferring the one year program. Ekundayo et al (2014) in their study on Nigerian students were of the view that time period for teaching practice should be increased.

Co-operating school-Training College/University Partnership

Report of the National Commission on Teachers – I (NCT, 1983-85, p.89) noted, 'the preparation of a teacher must be regarded as a joint responsibility of the co-operating school and the College of Education. This recommendation was first made by the Education Commission (1964-66) nearly twenty years-ago but no attention has been paid to it'. It also noted that most schools resent co-operating. Yadav (2003) reported the weak link between teachers of co-operating school and teacher educators, minimum facilities in the co-operating school and use of only lecture methods by method teachers as the major constraint in teaching programme. Yadav (2011) in a comparative study of pre service teacher education programme at secondary stage in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka reported that school authorities didn't fully cooperate in organising practice teaching in their schools. Yan and He(2010) stated that a lack of support from the practice schools highlights the importance of School- University Partnership in enhancing internship programme. Mtika (2011) also suggested focusing on school-college partnership for improving teaching

practice. Menlah (2013) in his study in South Africa found that School Principals feel that University does not recognize them as important participants contributing to the success of the programme. Mohanty (as cited in Fourth Survey NCERT,1991,p 964) found that school-college collaboration was poor in almost all the institutions included in the study. Rai (1995) in his study stated that Headmasters / Headmistresses of Uttar Pradesh reported that they faced problem of 'dealing with student teachers who are more interested in practicing their methods and not covering the courses.' 40% of Headmasters / Headmistress of Gujarat pointed towards the problem of establishing good relationship with training colleges.

Role of Co-operating Schools

Ranjan (2013) conducted a qualitative study on experiences of the student teachers of B.Ed. programme of Sardar Patel University. Lack of cooperation from cooperating schools, lack of resources and class management issues were also reported. It was suggested that student teachers should not be alienated from activities conducted in cooperating schools. Bodula (2011) noted that student teachers hardly got opportunities to learn from staff meetings, helping in conduct of exam, preparation of results etc. They hardly know how to deal with children with special needs. They also rarely get a chance to know and improve upon the assignments or their follow up or how to check student assignments and plan remedial teaching. Shahid and Hussain(2011) also reported that student teachers had high expectations and passion but there was a lack of cooperation from school teachers. Jumani (2013) states that data indicates that student teachers were not allowed by schools to implement their learnt teaching strategies. Ntsaluba and Chireshe (2013) reported in his study that the key players from University and school were not involved in planning teaching practice or collaborative planning and better communication was suggested. Ekundayo et al (2014) in their study on Nigerian students

reported that the instructional material wasn't readily available in schools. Damodar (1976) reported that the schools offer their cooperation unwillingly as they think that the trainees disrupt their normal working and made no positive contribution. Dekhtawala et al (1991) in their study reported that the student teachers couldn't get cooperation from the principals as they considered that the practice teaching was not at time convenient for the school while the subject teachers lent them good help. Khirwadkar et al (2012) in their study found that majority of the school principals opined that attaching a teacher with the student teacher helped the institutions in organising various curricular and co curricular activities and also got support in other administrative works like proxy classes, register maintenance, taking attendance etc.

Supervision and Feedback

Yadav (2011) in a comparative study of pre service teacher education programme at secondary stage in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka found that practice teaching was not supervised properly. Sukhiya (as cited in SERD, 1979, pp 450-451) highlighted that supervisors devoted about eight minutes to observe an actual period of about forty minutes. Shahid and Hussain (2011) also reported in their study that student teachers expressed that University teachers were more interested in supervision than cooperation and guidance. Mohanty(as cited in NCERT,1991,p 964) also reported that supervisors did not observe lessons completely and rarely discussed their observations in lesson plan journals of student teachers. White (2007) observed that specific spoken feedback was that most consistently given and useful mode of feedback. However, Percara (2013)found that all student teachers interviewed for the study preferred verbal feedback over written feedback as the role of assessment gets minimized in the former while the latter may lead to miscommunication. The study also revealed that student teachers suggested

that feedback should be given immediately after the lesson is delivered. Akkan and Tatar (2010) found that University supervisors encouraged reflection during post lesson conference and evaluated their lessons critically. Khirwadkar et al (2012) stated 'written directly in text feedback sessions conducted towards the end of the day were very useful for bringing positive change in the teaching'. Kothari et al(2010) in their study highlighted that 87% of student teachers were of the opinion that supervisors observe very few lessons and grade without observing other things, while 82% agreed that feedback by peers was rational. 84.02% also agreed that feedback helps in improving lessons.

Peer Observation

Sivan and Chan (2009) reported a lack of school support for conducting onsite peer observation. Shahid and Hussain (2011) observed that student teachers had written very 'inventive and versatile paragraphs' during peer observation sessions. It was evident from the Interview data that they learnt from each other's experiences and observation.

Classroom Management

Tokmak and Karakus (2011) reported difficulty in classroom management of the student teachers. Kirbulut, Boz and Kutucu (2012) in their study on pre service teacher's expectations and experiences in School Experience course showed that the student teachers were anxious about classroom management and using teaching method. Mapfumo, Chitsiko and Chireshe (2012) found discipline issues as one of the stressors in their study on student teachers in Zimbabwe.

Theory and Practice Mismatch

Shahid and Hussain(2011) reported theory – practice mismatch in their study. Tokmak and Karakus (2011) in their study revealed that the student teachers reported that they could not apply different teaching strategies in different contexts. Ramaligela (2012), in a case study on how student teachers of mathematics prepare and present lesson plans, found that student teachers failed to ideate the plan and lacked action oriented knowledge that could help them translate the prepared lesson plan into real classroom situation. Ntsaluba and Chireshe (2013) pointed out that student teachers were confused because the school teachers got a ready-made plan from the district and that maybe different from the one the University required them to prepare.

An interesting observation that can be made from the above studies is that despite differences in national and global contexts with the respect to policies and curriculum of teacher education, the issues of concern have had very common grounds as reflected in the above section. Also some studies older than twenty years are also relevant till today as the problems they focused on have shown little improvement with time.

Various studies reveal that the experiences of student teachers during teaching practice have an effect on shaping their outlook towards the profession. Kirbulut, Boz and Kutucu (2012) concluded that the harmony between pre service teachers' expectations of and experiences in the school experience course had an influence on their opinions relating to the teaching profession. A similar conclusion was drawn by the study of Mushoriwa and Mavuso(2014). They opined that student teachers' experiences in the school experience programme mediate their beliefs, opinions, views and convictions about the teaching profession making them like or dislike the profession.

It is evident from the above discussion that there is a need for improving teaching practice in schools to make internship run smoothly and also to help cooperating schools benefit from the programme. Strategies for the same are therefore suggested in the next section.

Phases of Effective School Internship Programme for Improving Teaching Practice.

The steps for improvement of School Internship Programme are divided into 3 phases. These are as follows:

1. **Pre Internship phase:** In this phase the student teachers are taught various teaching skills which helps them to plan and impart instruction combined with pedagogical knowledge. This includes various strategies like orientation program, workshops, simulated teaching practice etc.

2. **Interactive phase**: In this phase the student teachers are assigned a school where they carry out responsibilities in the capacity of a teacher. They learn through direct experience and are guided and supervised by faculty members of the school and also by their teacher educators. This includes transaction of curriculum and its assessment, reflection on teaching practice, self and peer assessment etc.

3. **Post Internship phase:** This is the last phase where student teachers discuss and try to seek solutions to problems faced during school internship.

Strategies for Effective School Internship Programme

In order to make practice teaching more effective, the following strategies are suggested under different phases:

Pre-internship Phase:

i. **Orientation Program**: Orientation of student teachers wassuggested in studies on problems of student teachers faced during internship (Panda and Nayak, 2014, Shahid and Hussain, 2011 and Ekundayo et al, 2014). The student teachers should be given proper orientation regarding School Internship Programme to make them understand its need, objectives, preparation of lesson plans, assignments, duration of programme etc. This will help them to form a more comprehensive picture of the teacher education programme.

ii. **Knowledge of Aims of teaching a subject with reference to NCF 2005:** Gafoor and Farooque (2010) found that one out of five of the student teachers included in their study had difficulty in identifying instructional objectives. The student teachers should therefore be taught about the aims of teaching different subjects in the light of NCF 2005.Emphasis should also be laid on the shift in focus in approach of classroom learning. This will help them develop a holistic understanding about the general aims of teaching a particular subject. Based on this understanding the student teachers can plan their lessons for effective classroom teaching and evaluation.

iii. **Workshops on preparation of teaching learning material**: Studies indicate that some schools lack facilities in terms of teaching learning material (Ranjan, 2013, Mapfumo, Chitsikoand Chireshe, 2012, Gafoor and Farooque, 2010, Kiggundu and Nayimulli, 2009, Dekhtawala et al, 1991).Workshops should be organized by subject experts for student teachers. Through this they will not only learn how to prepare teaching learning materials in an innovative manner, but also how to make them cost effective and also how to use it in an inclusive classroom settings.

iv. **Appropriate use of teaching learning material with a teaching strategy**: Student teachers were not equipped with practical training of different methods of teaching before starting practice teaching (Azeem, 2011). Gafoor and Farooque (2010) found that one out of five of the student teachers included in their study had difficulty in using appropriate teaching method and choosing life experiences and illustrations to motivate students regarding the lesson.

Besides different methods that are taught

in theory of subject pedagogy, student teachers should also be guided to choose teaching learning material appropriately and how to use it judiciously in a teaching strategy. Over or under use of materials makes learning less effective and uninteresting.

v. Preparation of Lesson Plan: The way student teachers prepare their lessons has an effect on classroom presentation (Ramaligela, 2012). Lack of reflection in lesson planning was highlighted in Justice Verma Commission (JVC) Report (MHRD 2012). Field observations showed that student teachers were very keento know various models of lesson plan (Shahid and Hussain, 2011).The student teachers should be guided to make effective lesson plans under the guidance of subject experts and should be encouraged to work with peers. This will be beneficial and help them to socialize with their peers and use this experience to organize group activities during classroom teaching.

vi. Effective classroom management techniques: Management of students and disciplinary problems were voted the highest among problems faced during internship in academic sessions 2012-13 and 2013-14 respectively (Panda and Nayak, 2014). Ranjan (2013), Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009), Alkhawaldeh(2011) also reported similar findings. Effective classroom management techniques should be discussed with the student teachers to deal with the problems of indiscipline and simultaneously help them engage and motivate their students ensuring maximum participation of the students leading to meaningful learning.

vii. Simulated Teaching Practice: Simulation means role playing or rehearsal in which the process of teaching is carried out artificially. Simulated teaching before internship should be implemented (Panda and Nayak, 2014). The main aspect of simulated teaching is introduction of student teacher to non stressful teaching conditions. Therefore through simulated teaching student teachers will be able to know their mistakes and overcome fears of facing classroom situations for the first time.

viii. Orientation of Principals and teachers regarding School Internship: School principals do not include school based teacher education as a part of their professional responsibility (Smith and Ari, 2005). Schools and colleges lacked any form of collaborative partnership for promotion of teaching practice (Mtika, 2008, Yan and He, 2010). A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the cooperating school and the teacher training institute could be made and delineate specific aspects allowing both institutions to benefit from the collaboration was a recommendation made by Poonam Batra Committee Report on Implementation of JVC recommendations(NCTE, 2014).

The Principals and teachers of concerned schools should be oriented regarding the School Internship Programme in terms of the assignments and activities that need to be carried out during the School Internship Programme tenure in the school and how the student teachers and faculty members of the school can work collaboratively to chalk out plans so that the objectives of these activities and assignments can be fulfilled and the benefits can be shared by the co-operating schools too.

ix. Timing for School Internship in the academic calendar of the training school: Practice teaching should not be conducted before and after examinations in schools as learners don't cooperate with the student teachers thereby defeating the purpose of practice teaching (Ranjan, 2013). For hassle free internship of student teachers there should be an appropriate place in the annual academic calendar of the co-operating school. This could be previously chalked out by mutual consent of the faculty and

administrative staff of both the school and teacher training institute at the beginning of the academic session.

x. **Pre-decided curriculum to be transacted during Teaching Practice:** The student teachers reported that practice teaching stared too late in the year when most teachers had almost completed their syllabus and were busy doing revision in preparation for annual exams (Kiggundu and Nayimuli, 2009). As there will be a place in the school academic calendar for school internship programme, the curriculum to be transacted during the internship can also be mutually decided by student teachers and faculty members of the school.

Interactive Phase

i. **Observation of regular classroom with a regular teacher**: According to the NCTE Regulations 2014, it is mandatory for each student teacher to spend the initial one week observing a regular classroom with a regular teacher. Khirwadkar (2012) reported that student teachers found observing teacher's lesson in the classroom before teaching practice to be very useful. This activity may act as an ice breaking session for both the student teacher and the students of the class.

ii. **Supervised Teaching Practice**: Incomplete supervision and feedback is a major challenge in teacher education. (Kumar and Azad, 2016, Yan and He, 2010). Practice teaching was not supervised properly and it was difficult to observe the natural behaviours of student teachers during the internship programme (Yadav, 2011). Supervision by teacher educators should be done at least four times to evaluate and suggest remedial steps for improving teaching practice (Aniruddhan, 2005). Cooperating teacher's feedback was found to be more situation specific in relation to the classroom while teacher educator's feedback allowed the student teachers to reflect and evaluate their lessons

critically (Akkan and Tatar, 2010). All student teachers should be supervised either by their Teacher Educator or by the class teacher. Under no circumstances the student teacher should be left unsupervised as they may also make conceptual mistakes while delivering the lesson plan either due to lack of confidence or inexperience. The supervisor should also ensure that all lesson plans are checked by subject experts before being delivered them in the class.

iii. **Cooperative or collaborative learning:** This is a teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a topic/concept. Each member of the team is responsible not only for learning what is instructed but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement.

iv. **Use of material available in school as a resource:** Student teachers were not allowed to use resources at the cooperating school (Aniruddhan, 2005). In most schools kits are available for teaching science, mathematics to primary classes. Student teachers should be allowed to teach with the help of items in these kits. For teaching concepts of environmental studies gardens, playgrounds, helpers of school can be used as resources. For developing basic skills in language conversations in daily life can be used as a resource.

v. **Use of Community Resources:** Schools may not have the resources to facilitate teaching learning process (Kiggundu and Nayimuli, 2009),therefore, student teachers should be allowed to use community as a resource. For example a parent of some student could be a doctor who could demonstrate to the students maintenance of personal hygiene or prevention from communicable diseases. Similarly an interactive session with a farmer can help the students learn about

various tools, agricultural practices and challenges of this field.

vi. **Incorporation of ICT in classrooms:** The Indian classrooms have gone hi-tech today. Kumar and Azad (2016) have suggested development of competencies in student teachers to carry out educational activities using ICT. The student teachers must learn how to incorporate ICT judiciously in their lesson plans. Incorporation of videos as teaching learning material helps in understanding and retention of the concept for a longer time. Use of educational activities, interactive games, puzzles makes classroom teaching interesting. Such tools can also be used for assessment of learning also.

vii. **Assessment of learning:** Introduction to different evaluative devices, tools and their usage and also to designing of good question papers and tools for internal assessment and using the same with fair objectivity was one of the objectives in 'Student Teaching and Evaluation Handbook for Secondary Colleges of Education' NCERT (as cited in Damodar, 1976, pp.10-11). The curriculum transacted during the internship period should be assessed by the student teachers themselves. The choice of appropriate tools can be made under the guidance of teacher educator and the concerned faculty members of the school. Thus, the student teachers shall also practically learn about responsibilities of assessment and evaluation and precautions to be taken while assessing the level of learning with respect to the learning outcomes for that particular subject and that particular age group.

viii. **Reporting the Results to parents:** Equipping the student teacher for interpreting evaluation results of assessments and reporting pupil's progress was a part of one of theobjectives in 'Student Teaching and Evaluation Handbook for Secondary Colleges of Education' NCERT (as cited in Damodar, 1976, pp.10-11).The results of assessment of learning should be communicated to parents/ guardian. The student teacher should organize parent teacher meeting twice after taking pre and post tests. After the pre-test the student teacher should identify problems in learning individually if they exist. For example some students may not be weak in social science at primary level but might possess poor basic reading skills. This will affect comprehension of the written word in every subject. The student teacher should therefore devise / select appropriate tools for assessment so that the level of learning of individual can be assessed in the light of previous performance of the learner. Interacting with parents / guardians will help them in understanding the need of the learner in a better way and they can choose appropriate strategies for classroom teaching.

ix. **Peer Observation:** Chennat (2014) has also suggested this as a measure for improving internship programme. However, student teachers highlighted a lack of school support for conducting onsite peer observation (Sivan and Chan, 2009). The student teachers should be involved in peer observation for better learning. This helps them to improve their teaching and classroom management skills (Shahid and Hussain, 2011).

x. **Reflection on Theory-Practice Integration:** Teacher education programmes provide little scope for student teachers to reflect on their experiences. (NCF 2005 and NCFTE 2009). Interestingly, student teachers have also reported that they enjoyed practice teaching as they were able to apply what they studied in classroom situations (Ranjan, 2013, Kiggundu and Nayimulli, 2009). The student teachers should maintain reflective journals and reflect on their teaching methods with a special focus on the relationship between educational theories, psychological

principles and their practical implementation.

xi. Self assessment: There is no opportunity for teachers to examine their own biases and beliefs and reflect on their experiences as part of classroom discourse and enquiry (NCF 2005 and NCFTE 2009). The student teachers should maintain a diary where they write about their experiences and the way they see themselves growing as teachers. They should recognize their strengths and weaknesses besides identifying opportunities to hone their professional skills. This will help them in self assessment.

Post internship phase

i. Feedback session: One of the recommendations by SCERT Andhra Pradesh (2011) was that teachers from SEP schools should be involved in student teacher assessment.. A feedback session should be held between the academic staff of the co-operating school and that of teacher training institute for discussing issues and challenges faced during the teaching practice and suggestions for improvement of the same.

ii. Critical reflection of School Internship Programme: A lack of feedback system is pointed out as a major challenge in teacher education regarding changes and planning for that at all stages (Kumar and Azad, 2016). Student teachers were exploited by the cooperating school staff (Alkhawaldeh, 2011).

After the School Internship Programme is over the student teachers with their teacher educators should discuss their experience of School Internship Programme, the problems they faced in the field, measures and suggestions to overcome them. The student teachers should also be encouraged to share their thoughts about their growth and perceptions as teachers. Many student teachers are more confident while facing classes and show an improvement in interpersonal skills by the end of the School Internship Programme.

Conclusion

It can therefore be concluded that teaching practice in schools forms the backbone of pre-service teacher education. In the light of the revamped syllabus of the teacher education programme there are many challenges in the implementation of the school internship programme. The aforementioned strategies may help in making leaning during classroom transactions more successful.

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