

A Study of Development of Insight and Knowledge in Pre-Service Teachers through School Experience Program

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims to identify factors held responsible for developing insight and knowledge in pre-service teachers and loopholes in the present system of teacher education that needs to be catered for to develop better teachers.

A qualitative method was used in the present study. Sample comprised of young-aged pre-service teachers (18–22 years) and middle-aged adult (25–29 years) of Delhi-NCR region pursuing only B.Ed. or B.El.Ed., from a public university and private university, respectively. The random sampling process was carried out, wherein 40 students, including 20 boys and 20 girls of both age groups, were selected randomly from universities situated in NCR-Delhi.

The teacher aptitude test carried 18 items with four options for each item. The self-developed questionnaire carried 20 items in the open-ended form administered on the randomly selected sample.

The finding reveals various factors and parameters laid under the school experience program of different universities responsible for developing pre-service teachers' insight and knowledge. The better practice of other institutions could be modified or adopted for better results by other institutions.

Keywords: Development of insight, Development of knowledge, Pre-service teachers, School experience program.

Journal of Teacher Education and Research (2020). DOI: 10.36268/JTER/15201

INTRODUCTION

The teacher training program has struggled for years to identify what makes them great teachers, making them reliable, objective, and discreet. College education classes spend too much time on education theories and not much on actually how to teach. Sheridan (2016) stated that pre-service teachers carry the belief and ideas regarding pedagogical approaches in the classroom; hence, it becomes our prior concern to assess these pre-service teachers' beliefs and ideas. Most of the teacher graduates from college with little or no real practical experience are put in the school scenario for managing the classroom environment as they lack proper skills, insight, and knowledge. This is the reason why a school experience program is required.

Teacher education courses act as a significant platform for enhancing the quality of education in India. Hence, it is the teacher education program's responsibility and the institutions to realize the future goals and perspective and make the system's relevant changes on a timely basis (Nautiyal & Sinha, 2015). Such a program provides facilitation to pre-service teachers trainees to get well trained and developed with all skills, mindset, knowledge, insight, etc. No such research or survey has yet been done to actually look over the benefits of this program on prospective teachers. As already mentioned above, that insight and knowledge go hand in hand. Both talks about explicit and implicit learning, and the school experience program help maintain this balance as the pedagogical and core curriculum can provide theoretical knowledge. Still, practical knowledge is gained and produced by a school experience program, wherein such teacher educators are put in a real-life classroom, and their practical learning is put to the test. Thus, this research's need and significance is to analyse, assess, and study the process and level of influence of school experience program in developing intelligence and insight of future teachers.

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How to cite this article: Tyagi, H. & Tyagi, H.K. (2020). A Study of Development of Insight and Knowledge in Pre-Service Teachers through School Experience Program. *Journal of Teacher Education and Research*, 15(2):1-3.

Source of support: Nil

Conflict of interest: None

There has been considerable discussion and research on all this. There is much criticism of the "contribution and influence of this educational program on insight, as well as, knowledge of pre-service teachers." The process essentially before certification with no opportunity after that period leaves the teacher with no reflective opportunity after experience the teaching. Experience has shown that such current programs do not stand on their own and fail to reflect purpose. School experience program can be referred to as preparedness of future teachers for the teaching profession. It acts as a model for pre-service teachers to experience real classroom scenarios and, thus, train themselves, enhance skills to make themselves future ready, and contribute to the future students (Rawat, 2016). It has been argued that without adequate classroom experience and teaching, the lectures or the reading materials do not make sense to pupil-teachers.

Education means the reorganization of one's own experience through one can develop their insight and perspective. Along with this, it enhances individual personality and stands on societal expectations by developing every domain, which will help bring about the change (Selvaraj *et al.*, 2015). In contrast, others argue that it is the quality and nature of content that is at fault. It is also said that school experience is not the way it should be and its linkage with the lectures is not proper. Everyone agrees that teachers need

to share and reflect on their experiences and buffer their reflection with reading or engaging with theoretical ideas. The need for refreshing periodic interaction is also recognized; thus, the need for comprehensive teacher preparation, assessment, certification, continued learning, and orientations.

Another way for dealing with teacher preparation programs may be on balancing classroom experience and conceptual thinking and engaging in questions often described as theoretical. Now, there is an important need to look upon the various elements that directly influence a pre-service teacher's insights and knowledge.

Firstly, comes up the institution offering a teacher education program. Its curriculum practice, rules followed, method of teaching adopted, and point of emphasis count as an utmost important point in the contribution of development.

Secondly, the influencing factor is that of age. Getting yourself enrolled in any type of teacher education program does not uphold any age until 18 years. Hence, on psychological study reaches up to the fact that student-teacher upholding more age generally have better insight and knowledge due to the experience they have gained that has a generalized lot of studies regarding the same and no solid proofs and research on such topic has reflected the effect of age on learning of pre-service teachers.

Thirdly, the factor that is significant to study is the factor of gender. Earlier days had always categorized teaching as a women-centric profession that led to the fact that men cannot uphold better skills and knowledge like female teachers. But recent education also displays the immense and good portrayal of male teachers in the field of education. Hence, to counteract this, the notion need is there to research this topic.

Also, the university examinations for these courses, like all other courses, are not designed to assess the examinee's actual learning and understanding. The questions themselves are often pre-determined, and the answers devoid of any skillful requirement of thinking. The assessment is also to ensure that most can pass the paper. It is noticeable in many educational institutions that a lot of emphasis is given to the score in their degree programme than the skills, knowledge, and attitude that had created a variety of loopholes in the evaluation process. Many candidates get through with both firsts (for the theory and the so-called classroom teaching) in the examinations. But even if they did not, it carries for little in the actual selection process. There is almost a certainty that if you were passing the examination with a minimum score requirement, you would be awarded a legal degree despite the performance you do.

Hence, in conclusion, we can say that this study's need and importance are to focus on the parameter, process, and methodologies followed by an educational institution to shape future teachers with appropriate skills, attitudes, and knowledge. An hour's need is to build more of an educational institution and look over and conduct the study on the methodologies, the process being followed by them to develop insight, and knowledge of pre-service teachers.

This research focuses on studying and finding out various factors responsible for developing insight and knowledge and also withholds work on comparing pre-service teachers' insight and knowledge based on educational institutions, age, and gender. This would help to find out the prevalent shortcoming that is needed to be countered to enhance better learning of the future teachers and to imitate or adopt the teaching practices that are beneficial for pre-service teachers of their respective institution as teachers are the support system that helps to shape up the future generation. If such scholars would have lacked in their insight and knowledge, it would directly impact the child's performance as well. Therefore,

in almost every educational sectors and universities, there is the introduction of "school experience program" that helps to cater the need of prospective teachers and try to develop almost every skill in the scholars during their teacher training program, so that they are well trained with all the necessary skills and ideas.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative method was used in the present study. Sample comprised of young-aged pre-service teachers (18–22 years) and middle-aged adult (25–29 years) of Delhi-NCR region pursuing only B.Ed. or B.El.Ed., from a public university and private university, respectively. The random sampling process was carried out, wherein 40 students, including 20 boys and 20 girls of both age groups, were selected randomly from universities situated in Delhi-NCR. The teacher aptitude test carried 18 items with 4 options for each item, and a self-developed questionnaire carried 20 items in an open-ended form, which were administered on the randomly selected sample.

OBJECTIVES

- To study the teaching aptitude of pre-service teachers.
- To study the factors responsible for developing insight among pre-service teachers.

It may be observed in Table 1 that knowledge of pre-service teachers is more if the tenure of the program is more. It can be stated by the difference in the percentage of the average score of pre-service teachers pursuing B.Ed. is 25% and that of B.El.Ed. is 75% (B.El.Ed. > B.Ed.). The more the year of graduation, the more is the knowledge. The more the pre-service teachers' age, the more the acquisition of knowledge as they have more experience and more learning than the young trainees.

It can again be stated and proved by the data represented in the same table that depicts that the average score of pre-service teachers falling under the high age group is 65%, and the low age group is 35%, respectively. Hence, we can say (high age group > low age group). Analyzing the data based on gender, we see the average scores of female samples being more than that of male pre-service teachers. The prolonged intuition of females being more prone to this institution and being more vulnerable to this profession stands true here as the score of female pre-service teachers is 70%, and that of male pre-service teachers is 30% (female > male). Drawing the comparison based on the university provision, the average score of the pre-service teacher from a private university is 52.5%, and from a public university is 47.5% (private university > public university) because of the better facility and more focus and emphasis on hands-on learning experiences and real-life classroom setting or including more domains of teaching to enhance knowledge.

Table 1: Score achieved by pre-service teachers on teacher aptitude scale based on different criteria

<i>Basis of knowledge testing</i>	<i>Average scores (%)</i>
High age group	65
Low age group	35
Male	30
Female	70
Private university	52.5
Public university	47.5
B.Ed. program students	25
B.El.Ed. program students	75



Table 2: List of various factors responsible for development of insight in pre-service teachers

<i>Factors influencing insight of pre-service teachers</i>	<i>Percentage scored (%)</i>
Orientation program	10
Organization of school internship	12
Use of various teaching methods	56
Microteaching	5
Making lesson plans	5
Practical examination	12

It can be seen from Table 2 that different teaching methods helped in developing insight into pre-service teachers (56%). Whereas, systematic conduction of practice teaching in the schools also enhances their insight into teaching and practice the same (12%). Table 2 also reveals that microteaching has also helped develop insight among pre-service teachers (5%). The influence of lesson planning skills is 5%, and practical examination of the teaching has contributed 12% in developing insight. The orientation program has contributed only 10% in developing insight into the pre-service teachers.

CONCLUSION

Learning and acquiring knowledge is a long process; thus, professional development cannot occur in a short time. Teachers

should constantly make an effort to improve their teaching skills. Teachers occupy themselves with teaching and always look for new teaching methods that will contribute to student learning. When looking for new teaching methods, teachers participate in conferences, organize meetings to discuss some issues concerning teaching and learning, exchange ideas with other colleagues, and participate in in-service courses. As long as teachers develop their teaching is concerned, they can always keep the students motivated, get their attention easily in the classroom, establish good relationships with them, and direct them easily. Teacher educators and pre-service teachers need to practice and bring onto action to overcome the shortcomings in their teaching profession. Hence, the study suggests various roles and duties that every sector starts with policy makers in educational institutions.

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