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## To Study Student Assessment: Explore Issues and Challenges of Practicum Course of B.Ed (Hons) program in Karachi, Pakistan

Muhammad

University of Karachi

### ABSTRACT

Practicum is a tool for teacher's prospective teacher's development and it is 15 credit hours course in B.Ed (Hons) program. Numerous studies consider practicum as backbone for effective teacher's development. The study was designed to explore issues and challenges of student's assessment in practicum course of B.Ed (Hons). Objectives of study were to explore issues and challenges of student's assessment in practicum course. Secondly developed applicable mechanism of assessment for practicum course and This study contributed valuable information regarding the implementation of practicum program with assessable assessment criteria. Qualitative method was employed, because it will give more comprehensive result for study. It helped researcher to analyze problem in multiple ways. Qualitative data collected through interview and focus group discussion. Qualitative data coded, categorized and finally analyzed. The following findings were concluded: Lesson planning and role of supervisor were found strong and effective areas of practicum. Students were using different teaching methods successfully. The university has no lab schools for practicum. Schools were found to be less cooperative. No significant difference was found in the effectiveness level of practicum in different schools.

**Keywords:** Student Assessment, Explore Issues, Challenges, B.Ed (Hons) program

#### \*Correspondence to Author:

Muhammad  
University of Karachi

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## Background of Study

Education reforms movement rose more greatly in world now a day as compare to past. International and local agencies tried to improve quality of teaching in the global perspective. Teacher quality one of the most important motive in socioeconomic development to progress quality of life (OECD, 2005). A necessary factor for quality teaching to induct well qualified, skilled competent and dedicated teachers in schools in order to gain aims and goal of education. (ACER, 2014) Policy maker belief that quality of teaching in public schools were poor and not up to the mark and demand of society (NEP, 2009). In order to get excellence in teaching learning process many steps had taken since 1947 to 2006. But unfortunately Pakistan had not implemented each policy properly and not achieved millennium development goal in education sector. Since in 2012 by the support of USAID Pakistan brought reforms in teacher education and started four-year (B.Ed) Bachelor of education degree in teacher education institutes and elementary colleges. This new program remarkable changed from past programs like (B.Ed ) one year ,CT and PTC which were organized to attain objectives of education. This pre-step program carried positive changes in curriculum of (B.Ed) bachelor of education degree. New courses were added in four year (B.Ed) program in order to made it more effective and according to the need and demand of 21th century era. In this program a great importance given to practicum. It was placed as single course of fifteen credit hours in new four-year program. Azeem (2011) indicated in his study that teaching practice provided a chance to student teachers to put theory into practice and also enriched their subject matter knowledge for a specific subject in different dimension means pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge. It carried opportunity for student teachers to explore real life experience of class and children. Teaching practice facilitated them to practice teaching strategies which they had learnt in their own classes. In order to achieve these all opportunities. University/College and school required proper mechanism to arranged

operative and productive practicum otherwise the essence of a practicum were demolished severely When racticum was implemented policy makers were not well informed from contextual problems and issues of public sector universities, colleges and schools. Numerous studies indicated that practicum was not properly implemented and organized in teacher education institutes. As it is regarded as backbone of bachelor of education (B.Ed) four year degree program, because an excessive weightage given to this course. When researcher thoroughly taken overview of literature. It was found that little bit attention had given to assessment criteria of practicum. The researcher interested to explore assessment mechanism of practicum course.

## Purpose of the study

In any professional program field experience aligned with the program to make students more expert and confident in filed area. Practicum considered as a key component in teacher development. Practicum in teacher education played vital role to produce effective teacher in filed and it helped preservice teachers to see theory into practice. It assisted prospective teachers to make an effective linkage between theory and practice. Teacher education institute should have pre-defined criteria of assessment for prospective teacher's to clearly mark what they expected from student teachers. It facilitated prospective teachers in filed and helped them to focus on task (Brown, 2008). As many studies proposed that teacher education institutes should have assessable and measureable criteria for assessment of prospective teacher's. In order to makes program more effective and to achieve objective of practicum course.

## Problem of statement:

Practicum become essential part of B.Ed (Hons) program and all teacher education institutes. It is an opportunity for prospective teachers to deliver lesson in real classroom scenario and see a positive linkage between theory and practice. The major component of practicum is to plan lesson with suitable teaching aids and deliver in class. It also helps student teachers to enhance their classroom management skills.

the students of B.Ed (Hons) program of semester 3,4,6,7 and 8 in teacher education institutes perform their practicum in public/private sector schools. Prospective teacher's face many challenges in their practicum course, but the most concern issue is related to their assessment and evaluation process. Most of the prospective teachers not satisfy with assessment practices of institute and demotivating from their studies (Wu and Kao ;2003). Researcher concern to explore issues and challenges of student assessment in practicum course of B.Ed (Hons) program.

### **Significance of study:**

Assessment of students in Practicum course is complex, problematic and challenging activity in teacher education institutes. This issues and problems arose when practicum course was implemented in filed. Policy makers were not well informed about the challenges and consequences of new implemented program of B.Ed (Hons) especially course of practicum. A multifaceted challenges ascended in the field. This study helped policy makers to revisit assessment criteria of practicum course and make it more accurate, appropriate, assessable and measureable for course. It assessed teacher educators to conduct assessment of prospective teachers in measurable way and satisfied student teacher's during in their assessment. Researcher also proposed applicable mechanism for prospective teacher's assessment.

Key terms: Teaching practice, practicum, prospective teacher, mentor and co-operative teacher

### **Objective of study:**

The objectives of study were as follow To explore issues and challenges of student's assessment in practicum course of B.Ed (Hons) program Study had contributed valuable information regarding the implementation of practicum program with assessable assessment criteria To developed tangible and applicable mechanism for student's assessment in practicum course To disseminate knowledge in the field and present the suggestions for further studies.

### **Delimitation of study:**

This is related to the issues and challenges of student assessment in practicum course in teacher education institutes in academic year of 2017/2018.Reseracher delimited the scope of study to Students of third year and fourth year, consider that students of third year and fourth have sufficient experience of practicum course. Therefore, students of third year and fourth year give relent information about problem of practicum course. This study only bound to teacher education institute of university of Karachi, Pakistan due time and financial limit.

### **Limitation of study:**

There is some limitation of study related to data collection. Some students may be not participating in he interview and focus grouped discussion. Beside, since the sample of study scatter geographically in different institutes. Researcher will face challenges while administrating and collection of data. With this limitation researcher will insure possible effort to overcome limitation and to complete study properly

### **Review of Literature**

Hansford et al. (2006) concluded that practicum assessment very challenging and not easy task for teachers as well as for students. Practicum was developmental process and how to communicate students about their overall performance. So, mentor teachers needed an accurate criterion for assessment. They suggested that furthers study needed in this area to make teaching practice more operative Sarçobana (2010) carried out that audio visual aid very necessary for teaching any subject and pupil teachers to teach the particular concept with confidence in expert way. But unfortunately most the schools were lack of audio visual aids which effect the overall spirit of teaching practice. This study reported that students in class from poor background and their lack of interest made practicum was more challenging. It suggested that school should be provided technical and non-technical material for optimal teaching and learning process in the classroom Bajwa et al. (2011) uncovered many issues of practicum in their study, but one issue which was dominant in

overall challenges was evaluation process and considered as more complicated and problematic. Prospective teacher's opinions were extremely opposite to each which indicated that appropriate criteria of assessment available Azeem (2011) indicated in his study that teaching practice provided a chance to student teachers to put theory into practice and also enriched their subject matter knowledge for a specific subject in different dimension means pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge. It carried opportunity for student teachers to explore real life experience of class and children. Teaching practice facilitated them to practice teaching strategies which they had learnt in their own classes. In order to achieve these all opportunities. University/College and school required proper mechanism to arranged operative and productive practicum otherwise the essence of a practicum spirit demolished severely. Araya (2012) proposed that prospective teachers had positive attitude toward practicum. This study revealed that prospective teachers well informed about positive impact of teaching practice on their professional career. This hands on experience provided them a chance to enhance their abilities for leading a class with smooth transition and with appropriate way. It supported to build competency in prospective teachers to plan their lesson in proficient way to overcome the challenges of classroom. But pupil had unsatisfied with assessment of practicum. It decreased their level of motivation toward teaching. This study also highlighted that strong co-ordination needed among practicum institution for effective practicum development. Majzub (2012) concluded that Self-evaluation played vital role in teacher development. It improved teacher's pedagogy skills and make them more critical to enhance their professional skills. The study found that the most important aspect of self-reflection and self-evaluation developed in trainee's teacher's problem solving and management skills to easily handled the crucial situation. Self-evaluation helped student's teachers identified their strength and weakness gradually improved their weakness in particular area of professional development. It facilitated teachers in better planning and

supported them to take reasonable decision for effective teaching. Researcher found that self-evaluation practice improved cognitive and teacher's engagement skills on task behavior. each mentor's needed proper training for prospective teacher's assessment and supervisor also believed that they had did not properly assessed student's in practicum. This study suggested that cooperative teacher's separately assessed prospective teacher's for more positive result from practicum. Researchers concluded that practicum needed guiding principle for student's assessment. (Oluwatayo, Adebule 2012). Matsuno also reflected that self-reflection is an effective tool for student teachers' initial development. Self-assessment very significant for prospective teacher's improvement in teaching, but on the other hand it was not properly practiced in practicum. Although self-assessment compulsory element in practicum. This study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of B.Ed. practicum in different campuses of University of Education (UE), Lahore. Seven components of practicum were identified by reviewing related literature. Questionnaire was prepared for data collection and analyzed through SPSS. Major findings showed that training and orientation of teaching practice was weak in all campuses of UE.

### **Research Methodology:**

This section is related to the draft of research methodology. How researcher will collect data, sample selection, use of instrument, and method of data analysis.

### **Research Design**

Qualitative approach was employed for the study. Primary source of data The primary source of data included teacher educator's, cooperative teacher's and prospective teachers of third and fourth year of teacher education institutes, because they will have enough experience of practicum.

### **Sample**

Reacher selected two mentor teacher from each teacher education institutes, two cooperative teachers from each school and five prospective teachers from each institutes.

## Data collection

Data collected by interview and FGD (focus group discussion).

## Interview:

practicum is a triangular process so, interview conducted with teacher educator's and prospective teacher's as well as co-operative teacher

## Data analysis:

Quantitative and qualitative data will analyze with appropriate method. Quantitative data will analyze by percentile formula and qualitative data will coded, categorize and finally analyzed qualitatively

## Findings of research:

The following finding were drawn

- The preservice teachers of practicum aware about the purpose of practicum
- Lessoning planning and role of supervisor were found strong and effective areas of practicum. Students were using different teaching methods successfully.
- The university has no lab schools for practicum.
- Schools were found to be less cooperative.
- No significant difference was found in the effectiveness level of practicum in different schools.
- there was no proper coordination between university and practicum schools.

## Recommendation:

- University and schools need proper mechanism to conduct practicum in effective way
- University need to provide stipend to co-operative of university for motivation
- Proper and accurate assessment criteria should develop for students' assessment
- University should build practicum schools in university campus
- Provide enough supervisor to main coordinator of practicum
- Allocate 5 to 8 students to each supervisor

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