



RESEARCH PAPER

Attitude of Prospective Teachers towards the Practicum in Teachers' Training Institutes of Sukkur and Khairpur Districts

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ABSTRACT

Practicum is one of the key components for the teachers in Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Elementary Program. This paper reports the findings of a research that was aimed to analyze the attitude of prospective teachers (PTs) towards practicum. This research was quantitative in design. Means, Standard Deviation, t-test and ANOVA statistics were used to interpret the data. The study analyzed that there is positive attitude of PTs towards Practicum Course. It was found that female PTs has more statistically significant attitude than male PT towards the implementation of practicum activities in classroom. The study recommends for principals of TTIs to take necessary measures to improve the implementation of teaching practice course. Cooperative teachers should be orientated about the effective implementation of practicum component. This will raise the morale of PTs and will improve their attitude towards teaching profession.

KEYWORDS Attitude, B.Ed. Hons, Elementary Program, PRA (Practicum Related Attitude), Practicum, Prospective Teacher (PT)

Introduction

It has been perceived that the professional development of teachers must ensure for improvement of the overall quality of education in Pakistan (Pakistan 2009). Policy of the (Pakistan, 2009) required reforms pre-service trainings, in-service and proficient trainings for improvement. The programs for ADE and B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary launched for development of PTs, resemble the needs of policy on National Education in 2009. In 2009 education policy "B. Ed. means Bachelor degree, it is very essential for being a teacher at the level of elementary .secondary and higher secondary education requires a Masters qualification, with a B.Ed., in new policy of education B.Ed (Hons) four years program is initiated. More facilitation shall be provided to the remote teachers who they are less in educational skills, they should be prepared for better education departing". (Pakistan National Education Policy 2009, P.42).

Two policy papers, the National Education Policy (Govt. of Pakistan, 2009) and the National Plan of Action 2013-16: Achieving Universal Primary Education in Pakistan (Govt. of Pakistan, 2013), specifically state the government's contribution to strengthening education quality in Pakistan. Both documents recognize skilled and competent teachers, improved infrastructure and resources up-to-date curriculum, and frequent student evaluations as resources for enhancing quality education.

The 2009 policy action on teacher education, known as the "National Education Policy," is important to notice. The following are some recommendations for teacher education: A) B.Ed. degree is the minimum requirement for teaching at the elementary level. By 2018, the current qualification will be phased out and replaced with B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary, followed by B.Ed. (Hons) Secondary.

There are two component of teacher education; first is theory and second is practice teaching. Teacher learn the concepts and theories in first component and implement or practice the concepts and theories in teaching practice. Practicum course (teaching-practice) for B. Ed. (Hons) Elementary was 15 credit hours and conducted in four phases. There are three Short Term Teaching Practice sessions of 03 credit hours and one Long Term Teaching Practice containing 6 credit hours (Higher Education Commission, Pakistan, 2012).

Teaching practice activity is referred to by a variety of terms, (Taneja, 2000) including practice teaching, student teaching, teaching practice, field studies, infield experience, school-based experience, and internship. All the learning experiences of student teachers in classrooms are referred to as "practice teaching" (Ashraf, 1999).

Attitude is important to understand human behaviour and it has been explained in a different ways (Gourneau, 2005). According to Ustuner (2009), attitude may be an inclination credited to the person and shaping his considerations, sentiments, and practices around an object. The attitude of PTs affects their results. Researchers discovered that PTs with an optimistic attitude outperformed those with a pessimistic attitude. This may be due to the positive mindset of PTs with a positive attitude, such as positive thought, beliefs in service, self-regulation, commitment, and empowerment which may have led to their self-confidence. According to Ahmed, Said, Zeb, Shihatullah, and Rehman (2013) PTs with a positive attitude influence their capacity, which leads to a positive style of teaching and improved PT performance.

Literature Review

Ylitapio-Mäntylä, Puroila, and Matengu (2021) have emphasized the significance of practicum in teacher education through multiple research. According to La Paro et al. (2018) and Mena et al. (2017), the primary goal of practicum is to advance the professional development of teacher students. Students can experience the reality of their future profession and relate their theoretical knowledge to educational praxis through practicum, which are offered in addition to the mostly theoretically focused campus-based studies (Mena et al., 2017; Vartuli, Snider, & Holley, 2016). According to Vartuli et al. (2016), practicum provide students with the opportunity to apply and enhance their skills in practical settings while being supervised by experienced practitioners.

Farauta and Amuche (2013) conducted studies on the topic of "Assessment of Attitude of Education Students toward Teaching-Practice in Nasarawa State University Keffi, Nigeria.", the aim of this research is to evaluate the attitudes of prospective teachers at Nasarawa State University Keffi's Faculty of Education regarding teaching practice. The conclusion was reached that if all the ways to enhance students' attitudes regarding teaching practice were implemented, students' attitudes favoring teaching practice would undoubtedly improve.

Mahato and Behera (2018) in their study intended to learn about the attitudes of B.Ed. students and teachers toward practicum in the Purulia district of West Bengal, India. The study discovered that attitudes toward Practicum vary significantly between male and female B.Ed College B.Ed. student-teachers, as well as rural and urban, government-sponsored and private B.Ed College B.Ed. student-teachers. Pre-service and in-service, 2nd Semester and 4th Semester, Less than 5 years and Above 5 years teaching experience, Arts and Science, less than 5 years, above 5 years, and Fresher teaching experience, as well as General, SC, ST, and OBC B.Ed. student-teachers' attitudes toward Practicum were not markedly different.

Material and Methods

This study was descriptive in nature. The research was designed in quantitative paradigm.

Population and Sample

All the male and female PTs enrolled in 2016-2018 at Teacher Training Institutes, Government of Sindh. This study selected multistage convenience sampling; in the first segment of sampling, Sukkur and Khairpur districts picked by the accessibility to data and sample and appropriateness of the sample for the purpose of research out of 23 districts of Sindh province, And in the second segment, selection of semesters was from TTIs (3rd, 4th, 7th and 8th) were selected. In this phase, selection of male and female students was done, in which 178 PTs were selected (as per lists) from the four (04) TTIs enrolled in 2016-2018. There were 84 male and 94 female participants.

Instruments and Procedure of Data Collection

For data collection from PTs a (Likert Scale) survey questionnaire adapted. For this purpose, TOSRA (Test of Science Related Attitudes) were adapted (Fraser & Lee 2015, p.293). Adapted Survey instrument named as PRA (Practicum Related Attitude) for semester 3rd, 4th 7th and 8th; about practicum.

PRA each statement with five choices on the Likert Scale, i.e., Surely Agree, Agree, Not Decided, Disagree, and Surely Disagree, and the value as SA=5, A=4, ND=3, D=2 and SD=1. The reliability of PRA is Cronbach`s Alpha is 0.813.

The data was analyzed through the “SPSS 23.0 V and “www.graphpad.com”. The descriptive data analyzed through statistic Means and Standard Deviation, t-test and ANOVA; Inferential statistics were used to interpret the data for PTs` attitude toward learning of practicum/teaching practice.

Results and Discussion

Table 01
Mean and SD PRA

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	84	3.53	0.43
Female	94	3.75	0.35
Total	178	3.64	0.41

The mean scores in male and female are different. The mean scores (3.75 out of 3.64) female were higher when compared with the mean scores of the male (3.53 out of 3.64) on the overall mean score (3.64).

Table 02
Mean and SD of PRA

Semester	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
3rd Semester	50	3.61	0.35
4th Semester	50	3.49	0.39
7th Semester	39	3.73	0.43
8th Semester	39	3.80	0.41
Total	178	3.64	0.41

The mean scores in 3rd, 4th, 7th and 8th semesters are different, but there is different between the higher mean score of 8th Semester (3.80 out of 3.64) is higher than the lower mean score of 3rd Semester (3.61 out of 3.64) on the overall mean score (3.64).

Table 03
Attitudes of PTs Institute wise Mean and SD

Institute	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
GECE (Men) Sukkur	42	3.49	0.42
GECE (Women) Sukkur	42	3.79	0.30
GECE (Men) Khairpur	50	3.61	0.43
GECE (Women) Khairpur	44	3.69	0.40

The mean scores in GECE (Men) Sukkur, GECE (Women) Sukkur, GECE (Men) Khairpur and GECE (Women) Khairpur are different, but there is different between the higher mean score of GECE (Women) Sukkur (3.79) is higher than the lower mean score of GECE (Men) Sukkur (3.49).

Table 04
Gender Classification of Attitudes through PRA on t-test.

Semester	Gender	N	Mean	SD	T	p
Over All	Male	84	3.53	0.43	3.76	0.00
	Female	94	3.75	0.35		

$p < 0.05$

The above table 04 shows the significant t value (3.76) at $p < 0.00$ for all male and female PTs of both districts. After the analysis of data, the mean scores and standard-deviations suggest that female PTs had statistically significant more positive attitudes towards the practicum when compared with male PTs, their mean scores and standard-deviations were (female $M=3.75$, male $M=3.53$) and (female $SD=0.35$, male $SD=0.43$) for female and male PTs respectively.

Table 05
Semester wise attitude through PRA on ANOVA test.

	Σ of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.529	3	.843	5.504	.001
Within Groups	26.651	174	.153		
Total	29.180	177			

$p < 0.05$

It was observable from the calculation that the f value (5.504) was significant at $p < 0.001$ for PTs of semester 3rd, 4th, 7th and 8th of Sukkur and Khairpur districts. Hence, there was statistically significant difference among the semesters on PRA. Therefore, for detailed analysis the Least Significant Difference (LSD) was used as the Post Hoc Test.

Table 06
Least Significance Difference

Semester	Semester	Mean Difference	p
3rd Semester	4th Semester	0.13	.103
3rd Semester	7th Semester	-0.11	.178
3rd Semester	8th Semester	-.18688*	.027
4th Semester	7th Semester	-.24156	.004
4th Semester	8th Semester	-.31528	.000
7th Semester	8th Semester	-.07372	.407

$p < 0.05$

The attitude of PTs of 3rd and 4th Semester were not statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (0.13) was recorded significant at $p < 0.05$. The attitude of PTs of 3rd and 7th Semester were not statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (-0.11) was recorded significant at $p < 0.05$. The attitude of PTs of 3rd and 8th Semester were statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (-.18688) was recorded significant at $p < 0.05$. The attitude of PTs of 4th and 7th Semester were very statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (-.24156) was recorded significant at $p < 0.05$. The attitude of PTs of 4th and 8th Semester were extremely statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (-.31528) was recorded significant at $p < 0.05$. The attitude of PTs of 7th and 8th Semester were not statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (-.07372) was recorded significant at $p < 0.05$.

Table 07
Institute wise attitude through PRA on ANOVA test.

	Σ of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.034	3	.678	4.345	.006
Within Groups	27.146	174	.156		
Total	29.180	177			

$p < 0.05$

It was observable from the testing that the f value (4.345) was significant at $p < 0.006$ for PTs of semester GECE (Men) Sukkur, GECE (Women) Sukkur, GECE (Men) Khairpur and GECE (Women) Khairpur of Sukkur and Khairpur districts. Hence, there was statistically significant difference among the Institutes on PRA. Therefore, for detailed analysis the Least Significant Difference (LSD) was used as the Post Hoc Test.

Table 8
Least Significance Difference

Institute	Institute	Mean Difference	p
GECE (Men) Sukkur	GECE (Women) Sukkur	-0.29839	0.001
GECE (Men) Sukkur	GECE (Men) Khairpur	-0.11764	0.157
GECE (Men) Sukkur	GECE (Women) Khairpur	-0.20069	0.02
GECE (Women) Sukkur	GECE (Men) Khairpur	0.18075	0.03
GECE (Women) Sukkur	GECE (Women) Khairpur	0.09777	0.253
GECE (Men) Khairpur	GECE (Women) Khairpur	-0.08305	0.31

$p < 0.05$

The attitude of PTs of GECE (Men) Sukkur and GECE (Women) Sukkur were extremely statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (-.29839) was recorded significant at $p < 0.05$. The attitude of PTs of GECE (Men) Sukkur and GECE (Men) Khairpur were not statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (-.11764) was recorded significant at $p < 0.05$. The attitude of PTs of GECE (Men) Sukkur and GECE (Women) Khairpur were statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (-.20069) was recorded significant at $p < 0.05$. The attitude of PTs of GECE (Women) Sukkur and GECE (Men) Khairpur were statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (.18075) was calculated significant at $p < 0.05$. The attitude of PTs of GECE (Women) Sukkur and GECE (Women) Khairpur were not statistically different on their mean scores, therefore, the mean difference (.09770) was calculated significant at $p < 0.05$.

The result of this study regarding the attitude of male and female PTs showed the both gender has positive attitude toward teaching practice. Further female PTs had more positive attitude toward practice teaching than male PTs overall on PRA. Preceding studies indicated similar or different patterns of attitude at B.Ed. program; e.g Farauta and Amuche (2013) and Subedi (2016) were of opinion that there are different factors which can affect female and male PTs` attitudes of teaching practice study of same scale. Among certain factors students have different attitude level, for example female PTs have significantly higher degree of positive attitude and male PTs have lower degree of positive attitude. However, there are a few studies which explored there was average attitude of PTs towards practice teaching overall and Ikitde and Ado (2015) explored PTs attitude towards teaching practice application was discovered to be negative on the overall. There was support the idea that male PTs has higher degree of positive attitude towards the practice teaching than the female PTs; e.g Mahato, Ankur and Santosh (2018), investigated the PTs and found that male PTs students had positive attitude than the female PTs.

The result of this study regarding the attitude of PTs` 3rd, 4th, 7th and 8th semester has positive attitude towards the teaching practice. 3rd semester and 4th semester has equal degree of positive attitude. Similarly 7th semester and 8th semester has same degree of positive attitude. But 7th and 8th semesters has higher degree positive attitude than 3rd and 4th semester. It shows the semesters has different degree of positive attitude towards practice teaching.

Preceding studies indicated similar or different patterns of attitude at B.Ed. program; e.g Mahato, Ankur and Santosh (2018), explored similar that there is no difference between 2nd and 4th semester attitude towards practice teaching. Ifeoma (2016) investigated similar that there is no difference between 300 and 400 level attitude towards practice teaching.

The results of this study regarding Institutes wise attitude of PTs. Institute wise difference in attitude of PTs was found when PTs belonging to four TTIs were compared. It may happen due to the difference of emphasis on content, assignment, coordination and cooperation of CTs that also help in developing the attitude of PTs. Preceding studies indicated similar patterns of attitude at B.Ed. program; e.g Shaheen, Kashif, Daud, & Tariq (2017), Campus wise difference in attitude of teachers was found when prospective teachers belonging to three campuses were compared. It may happen due to the difference of emphasis on content and assignments that also help in developing the attitude of teachers. The environment, culture and practices across the campuses differ to further contribute towards varying attitudes among prospective teachers. It implies to plan and implement similar practices in the different campuses of universities. At societal level, school teaching needs improvement and respect so to be taken as an encouraging profession.

Conclusion

A key element of the B.Ed. course is the practicum. It is shown that favourable attitudes of PTs towards practicum produce teachers of high caliber for the educational system. The study revealed that PTs PT showed a good attitude towards practicum. It also revealed that, in comparison to female PTs, male PTs require more assistance and collaboration to change their attitudes about practicum which will enhance their potential teaching practices in the future.

Recommendations

In order to develop positive attitude of PTs towards teaching practice in Sindh province., the study recommended as follows:

1. The sample of this study was restricted to the PTs of 3rd, 4th, 7th and 8th semester of TTIs of two district of province Sindh, so, generalizations can be limited up to TTIs of one province; so, it is recommended that a large scale research be conducted under the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and government to evaluate the factors to increase the positive attitude of PTs towards teaching practice course.
2. It is recommended to practicum coordinator; improve the coordination and relationship between institute and practicum schools to overcome the issues and problems faced by PTs in practicum schools with effective communication and problem solving strategies to increase the higher degree of attitude of PTs towards practice teaching and their interest in teaching practice.
3. It is recommended to principals of TTIs to get measure to improve the implementation of teaching practice course. Because it can be effect the attitude of PTs for their future profession.
4. It is recommended to CTs to review and evaluate their practicing during practicum to achieve the objectives of teaching practice. Because CTs attached with PTs full time in school. So, good cooperation and description feedback can improve the learning o PTs as well as their attitudes towards practice teaching.
5. It is recommended to other researchers that they can conduct the study of CT role and their perception about teaching practice.

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