

# **EFFECTIVENESS OF PRACTICUM COMPONENT OF ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN EDUCATION PROGRAMME OFFERED BY TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN KP AND FATA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Practicum is one of the essential components in Associate Degree in Education (ADE) Programme. This programme recently started in the Regional Institute of Teacher Education (RITEs) and Government College for Elementary Teachers (GCETs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) respectively. The present study is to assess the effectiveness of Practicum component of ADE programme offered by Teacher Training Institutions in KP and FATA. The study is Descriptive in nature. A sample 56 Teachers and 141 Prospective teachers were selected from 6 RITEs and 2 GCETs through Stratified random Sampling technique. A questionnaire was developed for data collection. One sample and independent sample *t*-tests were used for data analysis. The Major finding of the study depicts that the practicum component of ADE programme is effective as perceived by the Teachers and Prospective Teachers.*

**Keyword:** *Practicum, Associate Degree in Education*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Teacher education invokes the process of the development of proficiency and competency of prospective teachers which enable and empower the teachers to meet the requirement of the profession and cope with future challenges. It is generally thought that teacher training covers both theoretical and practical needs of teaching in teachers training institutions. Teachers who completed their teaching training enable them to cope with classroom challenges as well as practical phase of child development (Gujjar, Ramzan & Bajwa, 2011). Teacher education programmes in Pakistan always remain under criticize due to production of ineffective teachers. There is no consistency of the teacher education program with School curriculum, insufficient mechanism of teaching practice, insufficient facilities, inadequate admission criteria and little quality control (Levine, 2006). As a result, teachers enter into the teaching profession with insufficient skills and lacking of grip over subject matter knowledge and ineffective teaching methods and strategies.

The quality of education depends upon the quality of teachers and the quality of teachers depends upon the quality of teachers training programmes offered in teachers' training institutions. Therefore, curriculum should be designed according to the international standards for teachers' training institutions (Ahmed, 2009). To bring reforms in Teacher Education Programme, the Government of Pakistan with collaboration of United State Agency for International Development (USAID) launched program for the promotion of teacher education across the country. For this Purpose, the Old certification programme (Primary Teaching Certificate, Diploma in Education and Certificate in Teaching) has been phased out and replaced with Associate Degree in Education program with its unique features. These features include Higher Education Commission approved curriculum, strengthen TTIs, new assessment tools and advancement in practicum. Therefore, Practicum has a core position in any teacher education programme. It enhances the teaching skills practically in prospective teachers. It provides Prospective teachers to start their career as profession (Furlong, Barton, Miles, Whiting & Whitty, 2000).

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Practicum is one of the essential elements in any teacher education programme. But unfortunately, Practicum or teaching practice could not be implemented in its true spirit in Pakistan. Procedure adopted in Pakistan for teaching practice is only time passing. Therefore, effective learning could not take place (Gujjar et al. 2011). In recent, Govt of Pakistan brings reforms in Teacher Education Programme. For this purpose, all certification programmes (PTC and CT) has been phased out and Associated Degree in education programme with its unique features started in 2011 in all Regional Institute for Teacher Education (RITEs) and Government College for Elementary Teachers (GCETs) across the country. Practicum is one of the important components of this programme with unique features. These features include duration increase and linked with credit hours, Seminars, Triad meetings, development of portfolios and not emphasis only on teaching but participation in all activities during School hours. Therefore, the present study was conducted to see the effectiveness of practicum component of Associate Degree in Education (ADE) program being offered in Teacher Training Institutions in KP and FATA.

### **Objectives of Study**

Following were the objectives of the Study

- To investigate the perceptions of Teachers and Prospective Teachers regarding effectiveness of Practicum of ADE.

- To compare the views of Teachers and Prospective Teachers regarding effectiveness of Practicum of ADE.

### **Significance of the Study**

The Associate Degree in Education Programme was introduced in 2011 in all teachers training institution in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA. Through this study, policy makers will know the effectiveness of Practicum component of ADE programme whether this component of ADE programme is effective or not. Through this study the policy makers will know that whether ADE program should be continued in future or not. The findings of the study will highlight the strength and weaknesses of Practicum Component. The study will also highlight the problems faced by Teachers and Prospective Teachers during Practicum.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

Following were the hypotheses of the Study

- H<sub>01</sub>: The Practicum component of ADE is not effective as perceived by Teachers. (In line with objective-1)
- H<sub>02</sub>: The Practicum component of ADE is not effective as perceived by Prospective Teachers. (In line with objective-1)
- H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of Teachers and Prospective Teachers regarding effectiveness of Practicum. (In line with objective-2)

### **Limitation of the Study**

As there is no such standardized tool available for data collection to assess the effectiveness of Practicum. So Researcher made instrument was used for data collection.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

There are some private institutions and Alama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) who also started ADE programme. Therefore, only Regional Institute for Teacher Education (RITE) in Khyber PakhtunKhwa and Government Colleges for Elementary Teachers (GCET) in FATA were included in the study.

## **LITRATURE REVIEW**

### **Practicum**

Numerous terminologies used for practicum such as Teaching Practice, Field experience, students teaching, School based field training, internship and school cantered training

(Haigh and Tuck, 1999). Practicum is a course in specific field in which students involve not only teaching but also participate in all activities which are performed in the school. Prospective teachers during practicum period teach students as well performed other school based activities such as maintain registers (Admission, withdrawal and Log Register etc). Prospective teachers impart knowledge to the students and participated every task which is assigned by the cooperating teachers in the school (Mohan & Ghosh, 2011).

Teaching practice is termed as educating by a student under the supervision of an expert teacher. The purpose is to offer hands on practices with students of different ages, settings students to empower a forward and backward movements amongst theory and practice (Schechter & Parkhurst, 1993). This period of training contributes to the improvement of word related standards as well as to lessening uneasiness regarding classroom learning strategies. It additionally appears to contribute the vast majority of effective behaviour, where "effective" turns out to be distinctively characterized as classroom management, taking after reformed time tables of instructions, improving lesson planning, traversing the material and limiting the broadness and productivity of the material displayed (Dreeben, 1970).

Practice teaching offers the learner a chance to obtain functional abilities through uninterrupted experience (Mohan & Ghosh, 2011). Seminars are arranged for prospective teachers before starting the practicum in which basic information is providing to the prospective teachers. At least three seminars are arranged for Prospective teachers. One is arranged before starting the practicum and second seminar is arranged in the middle of the practicum in which Prospective teachers, College Supervisor and cooperating teachers participate in the seminar. Prospective teachers highlight their problems which they faced during practicum and Faculty Supervisor and Cooperating teachers give solution for those problems. Last seminar is arranged at the end of the practicum in which prospective teachers share their experiences regarding practicum (George, Worrell, Rampersad, & Rampaul, 2000).

Every one of the Prospective Teacher continuing his practice ought to go to teacher training programs (Macharia & Wario, 1994). During the practicum the supervisors observe teaching of every prospective teacher in the classroom (Stimpson, 2000). Practicum course gives a vehicle to talking about objectives and targets (Newsome & Lederman, 1999). Prospective teachers design their daily activities with help of cooperating teachers, develop lesson plan to make sure for effective teaching. They observe routine task which are performed in the schools and then actively participated in those task with help of their cooperating teachers (Andrew & Telmberg, 2010).

**Stakeholders in teaching practicum**

There are three main stakeholders in practicum that is College Supervisor, Prospective Teacher and Cooperating Teacher. Every member in the practicum has their own role and responsibilities. If these roles and responsibilities are clear to everyone, then desired objectives can be achieved. Prospective Teachers participate actively in daily activities performed in the Schools which are assigned by the cooperating teachers or college supervisors. While College supervisor monitor Prospective Teachers on daily basis and gives constructive feedback. College Supervisor observed students' activities during practicum using observational tools and rubrics. Cooperating teachers assign task which are performed in the Schools and observe them daily. Cooperating Teachers also give constructive feedback to Student Teacher orally and in written form and place it in the Portfolio of Prospective Teachers. Portfolio is one of the most important documented evidence which include Prospective Teachers Lesson planning, charts of seating arrangement, written feedback of cooperating teachers/ College Supervisor, copies observational tools observed by the Cooperating teachers/College Supervisors (USAID, 2013).

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study is descriptive in nature. The present study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of Practicum component of Associate Degree in Education programme offered by Teachers Training Institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Federally Administered Tribal Areas. For this purpose, data was collected from Teachers and Prospective teachers of ADE regarding effectiveness of practicum of ADE Programme.

**Population**

The main stakeholders in ADE programme are Teachers and Prospective teachers. There are 20 RITE colleges (10 male and 10 female) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while 4 GCET colleges (3 male and 1 female) which are offering ADE Programme in FATA (DTEIP, 2009). All teachers and Prospective Teacher of ADE in RITEs and GCETs of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA respectively constitute the population of the study.

**Sample**

The overall sample was divided into two strata. The stratum one was selected from KP and Stratum two from FATA. Six RITEs (3 male and 3 Female) and 2 GCET (1 male and 1 female) were selected randomly from 24 colleges. A sample of 56 Teachers (42 from KP and 14 from FATA) and 141 (103 from KP and 38 from FATA) Prospective Teachers were randomly selected. Teachers and Prospective Teachers were selected in equal proportion from each stratum.

### Research instrument

A Questionnaire developed for data collection from teachers and perspective teachers was used for data collection. This Questionnaire consists of 6 Portions (Lesson Planning, Method of Teaching, Role of Supervisor, role of cooperating teacher, Practicum Lab Schools and Portfolio) on Five Point Likert Scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. There were 40 items in this Questionnaire which were extracted after in depth survey of the related literature.

### Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was validated by the experts of Social Sciences of Gomal University. For reliability of the questionnaire, pilot testing was conducted. The questionnaire was administered to 40 individuals (10 teachers and 30 students). The responses of the questionnaire were put into SPSS (version 20) for the reliability of the questionnaire.

### Reliability of Questionnaire

Table Cronbach's Alpha Reliability of instrument.

Items value	Co-efficient of Correlation	Alpha
40	0.71	
.081		

### DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data were analyzed by using inferential statistics (one Sample and independent sample t-tests).

### DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

H<sub>0</sub>1: The Practicum component of ADE is not effective as perceived by Teachers.

Variable	One Sample (Test Value-3)			
	N	Mean	SD	T-Value
Practicum Effectiveness	56	3.51	.6950	5.498
P-Value				.000
				P<.05

The above table depicts that Mean = 3.51, SD = .6950,  $t=5.498$ ,  $p = .000 < 0.05$ , which indicates that null hypothesis stating practicum component of ADE is not effective as perceived by teachers is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that practicum is an effective component of ADE programme.

H<sub>02</sub>: The Practicum component of ADE is not effective as perceived by Prospective Teachers.

<b>One Sample (Test Value-3)</b>				
<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>T-Value</b>
<b>P-Value</b>				
<b>Practicum Effectiveness</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>1.154</b>	<b>-2.831</b>
<b>.005</b>				
<b>P&lt;.05</b>				

The above table depicts that Mean = 2.72, SD = 1.154,  $t=-2.831$ ,  $p = .005 < 0.05$ , which indicates that null hypothesis stating practicum component of ADE is not effective as perceived by prospective teachers is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that practicum is an effective component of ADE programme.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no Significant Difference between the perceptions of Teachers and Prospective Teachers regarding effectiveness of Practicum

	<b>Status</b>						<b>95% CI for Mean Difference</b>		
	<b>Teachers</b>			<b>Prospective Teachers</b>			<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	
	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>n</b>			
<b>Practicum Effectiveness.</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>.9987</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>1.41</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>-.53, .28</b>	<b>.553</b>	<b>0.17</b>

The above table shows that  $t=0.553$ ,  $p= 0.17 > 0.05$  which indicates that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of Teachers and Prospective Teachers regarding effectiveness of practicum component of ADE. Therefore, our null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the perception of teachers and prospective teachers regarding Effectiveness of Practicum is accepted.

## **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

- The data analysis shows that P value (.000) is less than alpha value (.05) which rejected the null hypothesis stating that the Practicum component of ADE is not effective as perceived by the Principle.

- The null hypothesis stating that the Practicum Component of ADE is not effective as perceived by the Prospective Teachers is rejected ( $P=.005 < .05$ ). Therefore, the Practicum component of ADE is effective as perceived by the Prospective Teachers.
- There is no significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and Perspective teachers ( $P=.17 > .05$ ).

## CONCLUSIONS

- The null hypothesis was rejecting stating that the practicum component of ADE is not effective as perceived by the teachers. Therefore, it is concluded that the teachers' perception favour that Practicum is an effective component of ADE programme.
- On the basis of findings, it is concluded that Prospective teachers have perceptions that Practicum is one of the effective component of Associate Degree in Education Programme.
- The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and Prospective regarding practicum effectiveness is accepted. Therefore, it is concluded that Teachers and Prospective teachers have same opinion regarding the effectiveness of Practicum.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Following recommendations are suggested for improving practicum effectiveness.

- Most of the colleges did not arrange triad meetings (college Supervisor, Prospective Teachers and Cooperating Teacher). Therefore, it is recommended that at least three triad meeting should be arranging before starting the practicum, middle of the practicum and at the end of the practicum.
- Colleges are failed to arrange the seminars during practicum period. So, it recommended that seminars should be arranges in which prospective teachers present their problems faced in practicum. University supervisor, cooperating teachers, college supervisor and prospective teachers must participate in the seminar and discuss the problems faced by the Prospective teachers in the practicum and give remedial solution.
- University supervisor has a key role during practicum period. Therefore, it is highly recommended that university supervisor must visit to practicum lab schools to supervise the perspective teachers and should give some constructive feedback to enhancing the professional skills of the Perspective teachers.



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