

School Internship Including Practice Teaching Programme Perceived by D.El.Ed. Pupil Teachers in West Bengal

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Abstract: According to the NCTE-2014 Curriculum framework, the school internship, along with the practice teaching program of the D.El.Ed. course, has been provided with adequate exposure. Numerous studies and committees have suggested modifications in the structure and duration of the internship program in the D.El.Ed. course to ensure the production of quality professionals in Primary and Upper Primary Teacher Education. In this paper, the researchers endeavored to examine the D.El.Ed. course school Internship program based on the guidelines and objectives outlined in the NCTE Guidelines 2014. The research was carried out at the H.S., U.G., and P.G. levels. Data was gathered through close-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews of pupil-teachers from the districts of Birbhum, Dakshin Dinajpur, Malda, Murshidabad, and Uttar Dinajpur in West Bengal. The D.El.Ed. pupil teachers indicated that they actively engaged in all aspects of the D.El.Ed. internship program and gained diverse experiences during the school internship phase. Most pupil-teachers perceived challenges as 'classroom management', 'lack of time for innovative teaching methods', and 'the long distance from the Primary Teacher Education Institution to the practicing primary and upper primary school'.

Keywords: D.El.Ed. course, Internship Programme, Perceived, Pupil Teachers.

1 | INTRODUCTION:

Elementary Teacher Education serves as the foundation of the educational system. It readies educators for primary and secondary education while aspiring teachers are nurtured, trained, and educated through the Elementary Teacher Education Programme. Therefore, it exhibits a filtration effect and is mutually dependent.

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According to the NCTE-Guidelines 2014, the objective of the Two year D.El.Ed. course school internship programme is: i) to involve students in practical field situations and work within elementary and various other educational levels. ii) to offer a chance for reflection and writing about the experiences.

The School Internship program is a crucial element of a two-year D.El.Ed. course. The internship program is essential for students to gain insight into teacher education colleges, allowing them to comprehend the routines and practices happening within educational institutions. Pupil teachers oversee and engage in the curriculum activities at the colleges. Student teachers effectively arrange extracurricular activities for school students. They oversee and engage in the administrative activities of the colleges throughout the internship programme. The overarching goal of primary teacher education programs is to cultivate competencies, skills, interests, and expectations in readiness for a career in elementary teacher education, while also blending practical experience with classroom teaching for a more comprehensive learning experience.

2 | DEFINITION OF IMPORTANT TERMS/ VARIABLES:

- **D.El.Ed.course:** The Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) is a 2-year program centered on training teachers for primary and upper primary education.
- **Perceived:** In this study, perceived denotes the D.El.Ed. pupil teachers' viewpoint regarding the internship phase.
- **Pupil Teachers:** Pupil teachers are individuals who undergo primary teacher training at colleges for elementary teacher education to qualify for teaching positions.
- **Internship program:** It signifies that student teachers take on certain duties and gain practical experiences in primary and upper primary schools. Student teachers are involved in all the activities of the school and college.

3 | THE PROBLEM:

The problem of the present study is "SCHOOL INTERNSHIP INCLUDING PRACTICE TEACHING PROGRAMME PERCEIVED BY D.EL.ED. PUPIL TEACHERS IN WEST BENGAL"

4 | OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To assess the Two year D.El.Ed. curriculum concerning the Internship program.
2. To examine the school internship program as understood by the D.El.Ed. student teachers.
3. To determine the difficulties encountered by the trainee teachers throughout the D.El.Ed. course.

5 | RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

- **Research Design :** To meet the objectives of the current study, both qualitative and quantitative methods were utilized. Qualitative content analysis of the two-year D.El.Ed. curriculum. Quantitative- Questionnaire.
- **Variable:** Perceptions of pupil teachers following the internship program.
- **Population:** Every pupil teacher enrolled in the D.El.Ed program in West Bengal.
- **Sample area:** The research area includes multiple D.El.Ed. Colleges in the districts of Birbhum, Dakshin Dinajpur, Malda, Murshidabad, and Uttar Dinajpur in West Bengal. It represents the blend of urban and rural culture.
- **Sample Size:** Sixteen (16) pupil-teachers from the 2021-2023 session. Of these, eight (8) are male student teachers and eight (8) are female student teachers.
- **Sampling Technique:** *Stratified random sampling technique* .

- **Tool: Teaching Competency Scale** is developed by the researcher and standardized after consultation with Six experts of different esteemed universities. The scale is made up of 30 statements presented as items. It is a Likert Type scale with five points. After taking permission from the administration level of D.El.Ed. Teacher Education colleges, the data are collected through the use of the tool and interview schedule of Pupil teachers. The developed questionnaires are tried out on 16 D.El.Ed. Pupil Teachers .
- **Scoring Method:** The instrument utilizes a Likert Scale with five alternative response options. The respondent has five options to express their opinions, varying from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The possible score range spans from a minimum of 30 to a maximum of 150. The combined score of all thirty items reflects the overall attitude of primary pupil teachers towards teaching after their internship program. A high score reflects a more positive attitude, while a low score denotes a less positive attitude.
- **Validity:** The questionnaire's validity was assessed by six experts, and content validity has been effectively upheld in the research.
- **Reliability:** The researcher has confirmed the scale's reliability using the Split-Half Method using Spearman Brown Prophecy formula and is found to be 0.89.
- **Statistical Technique:** The data collected through questionnaires was analyzed by using statistical evaluation, such as percentage. Qualitative analysis involved coding the data.

6 | CONCLUSION BASED ON OBJECTIVES:

Objective No. 1. To evaluate the Two year D.El.Ed. curriculum concerning the school Internship programme.

Table No. 1.
To evaluate the Two year D.El.Ed. curriculum concerning the school Internship programme.

Part	Elements of the D.El.Ed. Internship programme	Duration	Total percentage of Internship in whole curriculum
Part I	Pre-internship :Process based skill enhancement 1. Conducting Lectures in D. El .Ed. colleges	16 Hours	Theory 1284 Hours +Practical 204 Hours 1488 Hours Total=204 Hours 7.29%
	2. Observation of Pupil-Teacher/ Teacher Educator Engagement in the Activities carried out in the D. El. Ed. Colleges	16 Hours	
	3. Direction, Supervision, and Evaluation for Practicum Instruction	17 Hours	
	4. Management, evaluation, and analysis of psychological assessments.	16 Hours	
	5. Arrangement of any single task in D. El .Ed. College	16 Hours	
	6. Look up to pre-service Teacher Education Centre	16 Hours	
	7. Evaluation of the Pre-service Teacher Education Program	90 Hours	
	8.The trainee teacher must create distinct reports for each of the sub-components of Internship- Elementary Teacher Education as outlined above	17 Hours	
		Total=204 Hours	
Part II	School internship including practice teaching		

1. The internship lasting six weeks will take place in the designated School for observing school practices and interviewing Head Masters and Experienced Teachers.	150 Hours
II) 1) Examination of various kinds of school documentation.	8 Hours
2) Delivering a Lesson Utilizing Creative Teaching Methods	8 Hours
3) Development and Implementation of two novel assessment methods at the school level.	8 Hours
4) Involvement in any Art Education / Physical Education / Work experience program at the primary school stage.	8 Hours
5) Implementing one constructivist lesson at the school level.	7 Hours
6) Development and utilization of curricular material resources for fostering values and attitudes.	8 Hours
7) Preparation of remedial programme for low scorers	7 hours
	Total=204 Hours

Observation and Analysis:

The aforementioned Table No.1 indicates that the West Bengal Board of Primary Education offers a Two Year D.El.Ed. The Internship Program consists of two sections. For Part I, 204 hours are designated for the Teacher Education Pre-Internship phase, with 90 hours specifically assigned for the observation of school-based activities. Part-II includes the Specialization Internship program for Elementary and Secondary schools and allocates a 150-hour period for effective practice teaching. This school internship program has allocated 7.29% of the total duration in the entire two-year D.El.Ed. curriculum.

Objective No. 2. To examine the internship program as understood by the D.El.Ed. student teachers.

Table No. 2
Part-I (Pre-internship stage)

Pre-internship :Process based skill enhancement components	Reactions of trainee teachers regarding the internship elements	Percentage (%)
Delivering Lectures in D. El .Ed. institutions	Enhancement of pedagogical content understanding	96%
	Enhancement in stage confidence during classroom instruction	80%
Observation of the Engagement of Pupil-Teacher/ Teacher Educator in Activities held in the D. El. Higher Education Institutions	Beneficial for obtaining feedback regarding the classroom conduct of the pupil teacher.	96%
	Had the chance to witness new teaching methods, strategies, concepts, and materials.	80%

	Possesses knowledge to comprehend the education, abilities, qualifications, and effectiveness of the teacher educators	64%
Support, Monitoring, and Evaluation for Practicing Instruction	Possess experience to provide direction, observation, and feedback regarding all microteaching skills to the student teacher.	96%
Management, Evaluation, and analysis of Psychological Assessments	Acquire in-depth understanding of the psychological testing process.	80%
Coordination of a single event in D. El .Ed. College	Gained experience and understanding regarding the arrangement of exhibitions in school.	100%
Trip to Pre-service Teacher Training Center	Acquire information regarding the management and operations of the teacher education institution.	96%
Monitoring of In-service Teacher Training Program	Obtain chances for observing the In-service Teacher Education Program.	96%
The trainee teacher must create distinct reports for each subcomponent of the Internship-Elementary Teacher Education outlined above	Compiled reports on all the activities undertaken during the internship Familiarized myself with documentation formats and various tasks.	100%

Observation & Analysis:

1. Delivering lectures at D.El.Ed colleges:

The majority (96%) and (80%) of the D.El.Ed. Pupil teachers indicated that leading lectures in D.El.Ed colleges is beneficial for enhancing pedagogical content knowledge and confidence during classroom instruction for D.El.Ed. pupil teachers.

2. Observation of the Engagement of Pupil-Teacher/ Teacher Educator in Activities held in the D. El. Higher Education Institutions:

The majority (96% & 80%) of the pupil teachers indicated that observing teacher educators during activities at the D.El.Ed college was beneficial for obtaining feedback on classroom conduct and provided them the chance to see new teaching methods, strategies, ideas, and resources. Most (64%) of them indicated that this internship activity provided them with experience in understanding the teaching abilities, skills, and effectiveness of the pupil teachers.

3. Support, Supervision, and Review for Teaching Practice:

The majority (96%) of the pupil teachers indicated that they had gained experience in providing guidance, observation, and feedback regarding all micro teaching skills to their peers.

4. Management, evaluation, and analysis of psychological assessments:

A majority (80%) of the pupil teachers indicated that they had acquired knowledge of innovative evaluation methods such as story completion, puzzles, and concept mapping, among others.

5. Coordination of a single event in D. El .Ed. college:

Every pupil teacher (100%) indicated that they had arranged the Exhibition activity at school, noting that it improved their organizational skills and would benefit them in the future.

6. Trip to pre-service training facility:

A majority (96%) of pupil teachers reported gaining insights into the administration and work culture of the Primary Teacher Education Institute.

7. Observation of In-service Teacher Training Program:

A majority (96%) of pupil teachers indicated that they had opportunities to observe in-service teacher education programs.

8. The trainee teacher must create distinct reports for each subcomponent of the Internship-Teacher Education outlined above

Every pupil teacher (100%) indicated that they had created reports on all the activities carried out during the internship program, and through the report writing task, they learned the documentation format and the various activities.

Table No. 3
Part-II School internship including practice teaching

Internship component	Pupil Teachers Experiences/ What they Learned	Percentage (%)
A six-week internship will take place in the respective school to observe educational practices and conduct interviews with headmasters and experienced teachers	witnessed the true responsibilities of the educator	96%
	became aware of the actual circumstances at school and genuine difficulties faced by educators	80%
Examination of various kinds of school documentation	Gained awareness of school records by examining various kinds of school records.	96%
Delivering a single lesson through innovative methods.	Gained valuable knowledge and experience. concerning an inventive instructional method such as brainstorming, activity-oriented education, idea mapping, etc.	96%
Preparation and Implementation of any two creative assessment methods at the school level.	Possess understanding of creative assessment method such as narrative, challenges, idea mapping and so on.	80%
Involvement in any Art Educación/ Physical Education /Experiencia laboral curriculum at educational institutions	Acquired understanding regarding the Social Useful Preparation of Productive Work-Envelop	80%
Delivering a constructivist lesson in a primary school setting.	Gain enhancement through the experience of preparation for constructivist lesson strategy & genuine constructivist lesson centered on a specific topic	96%
Preparation and utilization of educational resources resources for cultivating values, attitudes /advanced cognitive thinking	Enhanced with understanding regarding the development and practical application of instructional material resources for education.	100%

Development of support program for underperforming students	Acquired skills in the preparation and assessment of diagnostic tests and the creation and execution of a remedial program.	100%
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Observation & Analysis:

1. A six-week internship will take place in the respective school to observe educational practices and conduct interviews with headmasters and experienced teachers

A majority (96% & 80%) of the student teachers indicated that they have encountered the authentic responsibilities of a teacher. Moreover, many of the teacher educators became aware of the actual circumstances in schools and the genuine difficulties faced by teachers.

2. Examination of various kinds of school documentation.

The majority (96%) of them indicated that they became aware of school records by noticing the different types of school records.

3. Implementing a single lesson utilizing a Creative Teaching Method

A large majority (96%) indicated that they gained knowledge and experience regarding innovative teaching methods such as brainstorming, activity-based learning, and concept mapping, among others.

4. Preparation and Implementation of any two creative assessment methods at the school level.

The majority (80%) indicated that they possess knowledge regarding the social work experience program (SUPW), specifically envelope preparation.

5. Participation in any Art Education / Physical Education / Work experience programme at school level.

Most (80%) of them responded that they have got the knowledge about the social work experience programme (SUPW) i.e. envelope preparation.

6. Carrying out a constructivist lesson in a school setting.

A majority (96%) of the pupil teachers indicated that they had gained valuable experience in developing constructivist lesson plans and teaching lessons based on constructivist principles.

7. Preparation and utilization of educational materials for the cultivation of values and mindset / advanced cognitive processing.

Every pupil teacher (100%) indicated that they had gained knowledge regarding the preparation and practical application of curricular material resources for teaching.

8. Development of a corrective plan for underperforming students:

Every pupil teacher (100%) indicated that they learned how to prepare the diagnostic test, analyze the diagnostic test, and create the remedial programme from the development of the activity for low-scoring students.

Objective No. 3. Obstacles encountered by student teachers during the Internship program

Table No. 4
Obstacles encountered by student teachers during the Internship program

Challenges	Percentage
Classroom Administration	100%
Distance Learning for School Practice	100%
Lack of Time for Instruction Using Innovative Methods	96%
Students' inattentiveness in class	100%

Observation & Analysis:

All (100%) pupil teachers considered 'classroom management' a challenge during their lectures in the classroom. 2) Every pupil teacher (100%) identified the 'long distance to the practice school' as a challenge during their internship. 3) A majority (96%) of the trainee teachers identified 'limited time for teaching with innovative methods' as a challenge during their internship. All (100%) of the student teachers identified 'students' lack of attention in the classroom' as a challenge when delivering lessons in primary classrooms.

7 | RESULTS:

- D.El.Ed. The two-year program consists of three parts: Theory, Practicum, and Internship. Regarding the internship, it accounts for 7.29% of the entire two-year course curriculum.
- The majority of the D.El.Ed. Pupil teachers indicated that delivering lectures in D.El.Ed colleges aids in enhancing pedagogical content knowledge and confidence during classroom instruction for D.El.Ed. teacher educators.
- The majority indicated that watching teacher educators engage in activities at the D.El.Ed college is beneficial for obtaining feedback on pupil teachers' classroom conduct and for the chance to see new teaching methods, strategies, ideas, and resources.
- The majority of pupil teachers indicated that this internship program is intended to gain experience in comprehending the teaching skills, competencies, and performance of teacher educators.
- The majority of pupil teachers indicated that they had gained experience in providing guidance, observation, and feedback on all micro teaching skills to their peers.
- The majority indicated that the Administration, scoring, and interpretation of psychological tests provided them with comprehensive insights into Psychological Testing, which will benefit them in future psychological assessments.
- Every pupil teacher indicated that they had coordinated the Exhibition activity in primary school/college, and this knowledge of organizing activities will assist in future employment.
- Every pupil teacher indicated that they had created reports for all the activities carried out during the internship phase, and through this report writing process, they gained insights into documenting the activities.
- The majority indicated that they had encountered the true responsibilities of the teacher. Additionally, the majority of the pupil teachers understood the actual circumstances of elementary schools and the genuine difficulties faced by teachers.
- Most of the pupil teacher educators indicated that they became aware of school records through observing various types of elementary school documentation.
- The majority of the pupil teachers indicated that they gained valuable knowledge and experience regarding innovative teaching methods such as brainstorming, activity-based learning, and concept mapping, etc.
- The majority of the pupil teacher educators indicated that they had acquired knowledge regarding innovative assessment methods such as story completion, puzzles, concept mapping, etc.
- The majority of the pupil teachers indicated that they possess knowledge regarding the work experience program, specifically envelope preparation.
- The majority of pupil teachers indicated they had gained valuable experience in developing constructivist lesson plans and teaching lessons based on constructivist principles.
- Every pupil teacher indicated that they had gained knowledge regarding the preparation and actual application of curricular material resources for instruction.

- Every pupil teacher indicated that they learned how to prepare the diagnostic test and analyze data from creating remedial teaching programs for low scorers. This activity knowledge will be helpful for them for diagnostic and development of remedial programmes for their classroom pupils.
- Every pupil teacher regarded 'Managing the classroom' as a challenge when delivering lessons in an actual classroom.
- Every pupil teacher considered 'long distance of practice school' a challenge during the school internship program.
- The majority of pupil teachers identified 'lack of time for teaching using innovative techniques' as a challenge during the internship phase.
- Every pupil teacher identified that 'students' inattentiveness in the classroom' is a difficulty when delivering lectures in the actual classroom.

8 | CONCLUSION:

Based on the above findings, it can be concluded that the 1) D.El.Ed. Two-year course consists of three components: Theory, Practicum, and Internship. Regarding the internship, its weightage constitutes 7.29% of the overall two-year course curriculum. This internship program has enhanced the confidence of the student teachers. This program provides valuable insight into the classroom conduct of student teachers and allows for the observation of innovative teaching methods, strategies, concepts, and materials. 4) The internship program was beneficial in enhancing pupil teachers' knowledge and experience of creative teaching methods such as brainstorming, activity-based learning, etc., as well as innovative assessment techniques like story completion, puzzles, concept mapping, etc. 5) The obstacles noted by pupil teachers included 'classroom management,' 'the long distance to the practice school,' 'limited time for innovative teaching methods,' and 'students' lack of attention in the classroom.'

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