

Teaching Internship Programme: A Reflective Practice And The Preparation of Competent Teachers

Key words :

Reflection, Teaching Internship, Reflective Practice, Competency, Competent teacher

Teaching like other profession is not immune to quick fixes or fads. An important and ongoing challenge for Education is to find new and appropriate ways to deal effectively with the ever changing nature of culture and society. A part of this challenge is to consider the needs, interest, beliefs, traditions and values of individuals and of group of people. As an integral component of culture and society, education must always strive for relevancy and meaningfulness to the wider community. Teachers play an important part in this search for meaning. It is our belief that teacher should be productive and transformative in their practice. They need to have developed a critical pedagogy. Such pedagogy stems from a social and cultural consciousness that encourages self- knowledge, social knowledge, political awareness and productivity. In building a reflective internship program the teacher education seems a potential site for the nurturing of individuals who are conscious and active participants in their society and in ongoing production of their culture. Reflective teaching from its inception has been no exception. Reflective teaching has now become an accepted way of thinking and practicing teacher education. The researcher wants to throw the light upon teaching internship as reflective practice of competent teachers through this research paper.

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The internship agenda is not new for teacher education institutions. Many universities have incorporated field experiences into their teachers' training programme. The internship programme is designed to integrate theory and practice in a working situation, consist of intensive classroom experiences over one semester. It is intended to help the students to develop their individual teaching style, enable them to recognize the complexity of classroom teaching and provide prospective teachers the opportunity to study how students learn and develop. In recent years the literature on reflective educators and reflective teaching practices has grown by leaps and bounds. The reflective teaching practice has four varieties viz. the academic version, the social efficacy version, the social reconstruction version and developmental version. The assumption underlying this movement is that teachers can be taught to reflect their own experiences so that they might enhance their own as well as their students' personal and professional growth. Reflective teaching has now become an accepted way of teaching and practice in teacher education. It has become a professionally sound and integral part of many teacher education programmes. The objectives of this research paper is to establish teaching experiences as a medium for reflective practice, to give a framework for assessing reflective thinking, to empower interns by helping them create their own pedagogical principles, examine their own beliefs about schools and teaching, to describe and analyze their own efforts to become reflective.

One of the most important facets of teacher preparation has to do with the development of both personal and professional knowledge. This includes awareness of how individual interns' excellent opportunity to nurture the process of critical reflection in teacher preparation exists within the internship programme. The internship experience represents a crucial and transitional

time to interns because they are juggling many pieces of a complex whole. They ask questions and seek for answers, test the theory, discover rules, traditions and beliefs, develop new values and meanings, search for roles and identity and attempt to build a practice that is relevant and meaningful for them and their students. The internship programme is really a collaborative work. It includes prospective teachers, cooperating teachers and supervisors, administrators located in the faculty of education and in schools.

Definition of Key Terms:

Reflection: Reflection is a social process not purely an individual effort. It is an attribute critical pedagogy and also has several implications for teaching interns. It is effected by the factors like prospective teachers, cooperating teachers and supervisors, administrators located in the faculty of education and in schools. The reflection can be shown through the actions during teaching and in their behaviour.

Reflective Practice: Interns' whatever learn through teaching styles, strategies and skills during internship are reflected in their behaviour. It turns to a habit and becomes a practice which is shown in the behaviour of interns throughout life while teaching their students.

Teaching Internship: It is a process which involves fixation of objectives, identification of strategies to attain the objectives and assessment. This programme attaches more importance to the field work and skills which are important from the point of view of actual teaching.

Competency: It means the right way conveying units of knowledge, application and skills to the students. The right way includes knowledge of contents as well as the processes, methods and means of conveying them in an interesting way by involving the activities of students.

Competent Teacher: A teacher who makes the teaching-learning processes a joyous

experience for students and also to himself or herself.

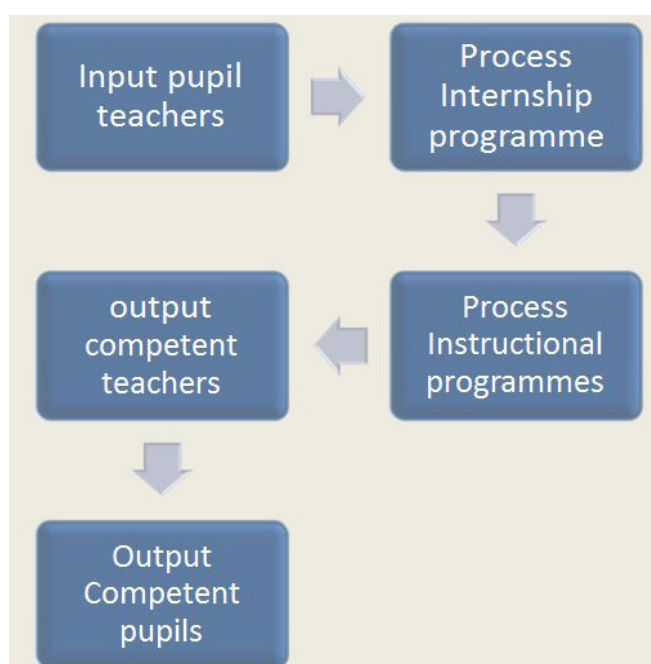
Objectives Of Teaching Internship Programme:

- To prepare skilled teachers for classroom teaching.
- To prepare competent teachers for classroom teaching.
- To provide competency based teacher education to interns'.
- To identify and use the appropriate strategies for attaining set objectives of content to be taught in the classroom.
- To assess the competency of interns'.

Assumptions Of Teaching Internship Programme:

- The interns' who are participating in the internship do not possess the skills, knowledge and attitude that symbolize the objectives of the programme.
- The training activities are potent and effective in turning the prospective teachers into competent teachers.

Figure 1: Structure of a Teaching Internship



Programme

- After completion of programme an intern would

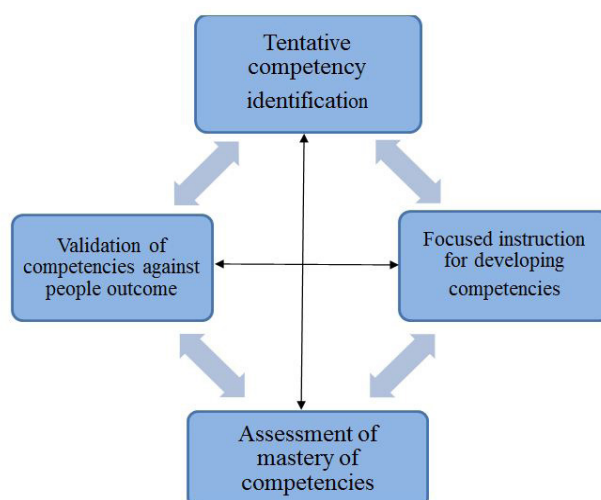
be able to attain the objectives of the internship programme.

- The interns would surely apply their learnt skills in the classroom as reflective practice in order to bring about desirable improvement in the learning of students.

Basics Of Teaching Internship Programme:

- The internship programme should be based upon those skills which are essential for effective teaching.
- Teaching competencies to be realized should be stated in behavioural terms and presented in public domain.
- The design of instructional activities should be prepared to realize the set objectives.
- The progress of students depends upon intern's competency of teaching in the classroom.
- Each internship programme must have self-evaluation techniques and follow-up procedures.
- Methods of assessment should be specified because assessment is fundamentally concerned with performance.
- The learners should be encouraged to give personal impressions about the adequacy and relevance of the programme through feedback Performa etc

Fig. 2: Basic Structural Model of Competency



Based Teacher Education Used in Teaching Internship Programme
Areas Of Competence Measured During

Classroom Teaching:

An intern plays different roles while practice teaching. There are following areas of competence which should be considered for development and evaluation.

- Instructional planning: Lesson planning is the most important requirement for effective teaching. So the objectives should be set concerned with all the three domains-cognitive, affective and psychomotor as well in the lesson plan.
- Instructional execution: For getting success in this area of competence the interns' should be made aware of the latest trends and techniques of instruction. The interns' should also be given information about classroom administration and management in detail.
- Instructional evaluation: The interns' should be properly trained to evaluate and record the learning outcomes of students with objectivity and in scientific manner.
- Instructional follow up: The interns' should be made competent to make diagnosis through feedback Performa and find out remedy for ills concerned with teaching learning process.

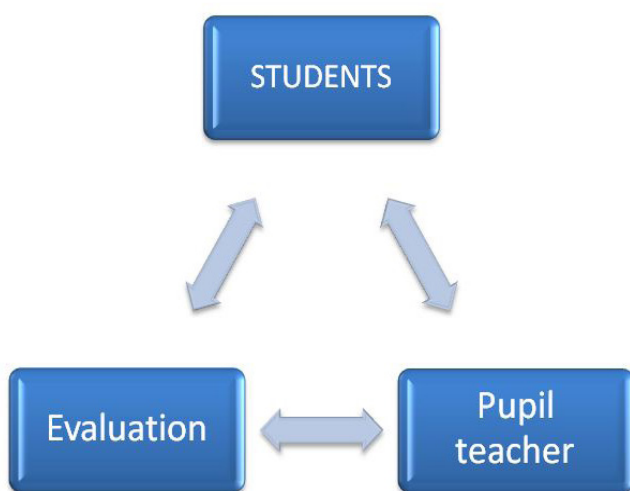


Fig: 3 Taxonomic approach of evaluation of teaching internship programme

Current Approaches To Teaching Internship Programme:

There are various approaches to teaching practice the following are important among them:

- Model the master teacher: In 1965 Stulurow proposed the concept of craft apprenticeships
- Master the teaching model:
- Teaching as caught not taught:
- Teaching as a Science:

Approach To Interns' Evaluation In Internship Programme:

The approach to be used for evaluation of interns' should be behavioural in nature. So in this area taxonomic approach can be used for the evaluation of the same. Taxonomic approach makes analysis of interns' competencies and measures the changes that take place in the behaviour of interns' as a result of internship programme. As we know that assessment is a process and not an end in itself. Thus it is an only source of information about the progress of interns' through which results are drawn. The evaluation of interns' gives answers of following questions:

- Does the prospective teacher possess the required ability to learn a particular skill?
- Has the intern demonstrated the skill in required situations?
- What are feelings and attitudes of interns' towards the programme itself?

Salient Features of Teaching Internship Programme:

- The criteria of success of such programme are demonstration by the interns'.
- Provides opportunities to acquire competencies in practical field.
- Competencies are developed in the field of small learning units.
- A good instructor can provide help in acquiring competencies sought by the interns'.

Conclusion:

The internship programme can serve as an important step towards the bridging of theory

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and practice, the formation of teacher identity and development of social and cultural consciousness. The internship programme can also be used as an opportunity when the prospective teacher teaches those students who have some learning problems. The diagnosis, prognosis and remedial measures are presented through such programmes.

Importance For Further Researches:

- The objectives of the programme should be clear to all the participants of the programme.
- The gaps between orientation programmes and initiation of training of prospective teachers are filled up.
- The prospective teachers should be provided with adequate co-operation with supervisors and students.
- The assessment of prospective teachers should be continuous so that they might be able to carry the seeds of further progress.
- The training programme should be studied and re-oriented in all aspects.
- The trainees get practice in teaching continuous units so that they might have scope to develop dynamism, initiative and resourcefulness as

competent teachers.

- The teaching internship programme should be organised in proper way.

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