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Perceptions of Teacher Educators Regarding Course Guides for B.ED (Hons) and ADE (Associate Degree in Education) Program & Provision of Resources for Effective Implementation of the Program

Shazia Abdul Malik* Umbreen Ishfaq† M. Saeed Khan‡

Abstract *The study analyzes curriculum document (teacher course guides) of ADE and B.Ed. (Hons) programs in terms of Assessment Tasks, Teaching Learning Approaches, Course Outcomes and Course Description. Study also focuses on prospective teachers and teacher educator's perceptions about these teacher course guides and their execution in class room at selected Teachers' Training Institutes. The sample comprises three universities and four Regional Institutions of Teacher Education offering B.Ed. (Hons) and ADE programs. Researcher congregated data from 21 teacher educators teaching to prospective teachers enrolled in ADE and B.Ed. (Hons) in the chosen institutions. Mixed methods (approach) were used to collect quantitative as well as qualitative data for extensive analysis of the research problem. The qualitative data was collected through a check list and quantitative data was collected through questionnaire. The manuscripts (Draft guide for teaching instructor) for B.Ed. (Hons). Experts developed curriculum meets the requirement of the society of Pakistan with the purpose to create more competent, proficient and well-informed teaching instructors. Effective implementation of teacher guides need improvement in terms of availability of resources like well-equipped class rooms, computer lab, library, learning materials and Information and Communication Technology.*

Key Words:

Teaching Approaches, Teacher Educators, Assessment, Course-guide

Introduction

To overcome the teachers 'weaknesses of teaching programs of education in Pakistan, the Pre – Services Teachers education Project (Funded by USAID) was.

*M.Phil Scholar (Education), Department of Education, Hazara University, Mansehra, KP, Pakistan.
†Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Haripur, KP, Pakistan.
Email: umbreenishfaq@hotmail.com
‡Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Haripur, Haripur, KP, Pakistan.

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Its purpose was to nurture better capable, proficient and high-performing teachers (Ramzan, Iqbal & Khan, 2013).

A Bachelor Degree, with B.Ed. (Hons), shall be the lowest prerequisite for teaching at the elementary level according to recently launched program. By 2018 for higher secondary and secondary level, a Master's degree with B.Ed. (Hons), shall be ensured all over Pakistan. B.Ed. (Hons) program will replace courses like PTC and CT (Govt. of Pakistan, 2009).

Consequently in August, 2008 a four years B. Ed. (Hons) Elementary program and two years Associate Degree in Education (ADE) was launched by USAID funded Pre-STEP (Pre Service Teacher Education Program) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Higher Education Commission (HEC). To set a latest standard for teacher education was its key purpose. It emphasized to produce better proficient teachers who must be prepared in using student-centered pedagogies (USAID Teacher Education Program, 2011).

Professional training of instructors of the teacher training institutes, preparation of new curricula, endowment of additional materials of teaching in the shape of teacher's guides and other resources etc. were extremely accentuated for achieving this aim (Jamil, Tariq &Jamil, 2013). Primarily, a total of seventy five (75) government colleges of education and five (5) Public sector Higher Educational Institutions were selected for initiating the USAID Pre-STEP and offered the two main programs to their potential instructors (Ramzan, Iqbal & Khan, 2013). The innovative curriculum has been premeditated keeping in view of the contemporary philosophy of education but making them relevant to the current perspective (Ali, 2012).

Pre-Step, Pakistan (2010) offered a new format, according to these format eligibility criteria for admission in B.Ed. (Hons) program is students having with a minimum of 12years of education (Higher secondary Level or other equivalent education) with at least second division/ sixty five percent obtained marks and those candidates meeting the above criteria can easily enroll in B.Ed. (Hons) program. Latest scheme of studies planned for the Four year degree programme shall comprised an uniform/standardized format including i.e. Courses' contents, Basic initial courses in Education, Professional Training courses, and a set of General Education Core courses to extend/develop proficiency in subject matter in at least two disciplines of knowledge a sequence of supervised field teaching experiences in school i.e. Practicum. B.Ed. (Hons) degree is being offered at RITES (Regional Institutes of Teacher Education and Government Colleges of Teachers Education) and Universities (Rationalization Study, 2010).

Findings of Baseline Survey

The Pre-STEP (Pre-Service Teacher Education Program) intended to improve

classroom teaching in Pakistan's public education system by strengthening pre-service training. For this purpose in the months of April and May 2009, Pre-STEP conducted a survey, called as, baseline survey. The survey was conducted in 12 Faculties of Education and 39 GCETS (Government Colleges of Elementary Training) and a number of education managers at national, provincial and district levels in all over the country. Data was collected about those areas which needed improvement in term of creating a better teaching learning environment.

The data about the perceptions of 578 respondents was collected on policy and systemic change while the data about perception of 1111 respondents was collected on operational and academic quality and efficiency in teacher training institutions. Findings of the survey revealed that improvement is needed largely in four areas, teaching and learning, physical infrastructure and resources management capacities of teacher educators and principals and institutions and programs.

Gaps in Teaching and Learning

On the basis of survey findings it was concluded that these critical gaps will need to be addressed in the ADE/ B.Ed. (Hons) programs. During survey it was revealed that generally teachers concentrate on content knowledge of their subjects and pay very little heed to prepare prospective teacher practically to teach those subjects .It was revealed that there is great need of professional development of principals and other college leaders. Further the shortage of learning resources was also the case in university Faculties of Education. The findings also call for restructuring the practicum program.

Poor Physical Infrastructure

According to baseline survey Physical Infrastructure of teacher training institutes was poor therefore needed significant improvements. According to baseline survey 60% of the classrooms at GCET had inadequate lighting, insufficient furniture, not viable blackboards, scarce teaching and learning materials and therefore overall an unsupportive teaching learning environment. Buildings assessment in university faculties of education was also not encouraging. Many lacked well equipped labs and libraries. Lack of a steady flow of electricity in both the GCETs and faculties of education buildings was a major problem.

Research and Qualification Gap

According to baseline survey the institutional capacity for research was not adequate. It is shown in survey results that in university Faculties of Education

only 25% members of current faculty have a Ph.D. in education or in another subject. It showed that there is a great need to improve this important deficiency in educational institutes.

Teacher Policy Planning and Implementation

Respondents expressed their concern about the five areas policy of education, proposed diploma, including the 4-years B.Ed. program, teacher's certification, grade and pay scales. As there is no assurance of employment after the completion of the proposed academic program Respondents viewed that the longer academic program will delay the earnings. Therefore this could result in rejection of the programs altogether or opt for short period programs.

Opportunities for Interventions

If the following amendments occur by 2013, people's perceptions about teacher education would certainly change positively.

- The improved Diploma (associate degree) program should be developed and implemented in all GCETs.
- A 4-years B.Ed. Program should be introduced in universities.
- Capacity of instructors and professors should be enhanced to deliver quality teacher education.
- To encourage continuous professional development, teaching pay and grade scales should be revised.
- Development of teacher- and subject-based standards (Baseline Survey a Summary Report, 2009).

Objectives

Following objectives of the study were formulated:

1. To explore perceptions of teacher educators' regarding course guides for B.Ed.(Hons) program and ADE in term of Teaching Learning Approaches, Course Description, Assessment Tasks and Course Outcomes.
2. To analyze the provision of resources for effective implementation of course guides.

Methods

Sample

Teacher educators (21 to respond check list + 10 to respond questionnaire) were

randomly selected to constitute the sample of the study from Departments of Education of selected Universities i.e. Hazara University, University of Haripur and University of Peshawar as well as four Regional Institutes of Teacher Education (RITEs) i.e. RITE (Female) Abbottabad, (RITE (Male) Haripur, RITE (Female) Peshawar, RITE (Male) Peshawar at KP (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).

Instruments

A pro forma was designed to collect the data concerning respondent's perceptions about course guides in term of Course Outcomes, Assessment Tasks, Teaching Learning Approaches and Course Description. A close ended questionnaire was also designed comprising seventeen questions to gather information concerning availability of resources and their utilization to achieve objectives of the curriculum effectively.

Procedure

Researcher took prior consent and permission from the respondents of study. To administer the research instruments and to collect the data the researcher personally visited the sample Institutions.

Results

A pro forma was constructed by researcher herself with the purpose to explore the effectiveness of the course guides, to be filled by the randomly selected teachers teaching B.Ed. /ADE courses at selected teachers training institutions. A qualitative Data analysis technique like seeking themes was used to analyze and interpret this pro forma.

Data assembled for assessment of course guides for all the subjects being taught in first 4(four) semesters were analyzed in terms of Assessment tasks, Course description, Course outcomes, and Teaching learning strategies and over all coherence and interpreted in form of subsequent paragraphs.

***Course Description*:** Mainstream of the respondents were of the view that course description is vividly stated which provide complete information about course objectives. But small numbers of teachers were of the view that course description contains repetition and extra detail. According to their opinion inappropriate/irrelevant material needs to be eradicated.

***Course Outcomes*:** Course outcomes are clearly stated and are attainable according to majority of teachers. Some respondents were of the view that improvement is required in logical arrangement of outcomes. There

is dire need of improvement in term of available resources according to few respondents for better achievement of outcomes.

Teaching Learning Strategies: Teaching learning strategies are learner centered, activity based and easy to implement in class room according to majority of the teachers. But according to few respondents some strategies are time consuming i.e. role play. Teachers need proper and relevant trainings for proper implementation of given teaching learning strategies as suggested by some respondents.

***Assessment Tasks*:** In most of the course guide draft Assessment tasks are not given in proper form.

Tabulation of the data collected through questionnaire is done in term of frequency and further explained in form of percentages, calculated for various categories. After analysis of data from the questionnaire the results are presented in the following tables:

Criteria Used

0= not at all
1=to some extent,
2= to great extent,

Table 1. Provision of Multimedia

Total Respondents	21	%
0	3	14%
1	16	76%
2	2	10%

Table no 1 indicates that majority of the teachers about (76%) is of the view that class rooms are not equipped with Multimedia.

Table 2. Provision of Well-Furnished Computer Lab

Total Respondents	21	%
0	3	14%
1	16	76%
2	2	10%

The above table indicates that 33% institutions are in dire need of well-furnished computer labs while (52%) of institutions are provided with well-furnished computer lab.

Table 3, Provision of Computer Facility and Student Ratio

Total Respondents	21	%
0	5	24%
1	7	33%
2	9	43%

This table indicates that computer to student ratio in 33% of departments it's less satisfactory, in 24% of departments this ratio is unsatisfactory while in 43% of departments is satisfactory to great extent.

Table 4. Access of Internet to Students

Total Respondents	21	%
0	2	10%
1	11	52%
2	8	38%

No one can deny the importance of internet in teaching learning process. But this table indicates that in view of more than half of the respondents the student's easy access to internet is not satisfactory to great extent.

Table 5. Availability of Library

Total Respondents	21	%
0	2	10%
1	16	76%
2	3	14%

According to this table, 76%of the teachers perceived the availability of library as less satisfactory. It showed unsatisfactory conditions of resources for implementation of new program.

Table 6. Transport Facility

Total Respondents	21	%
0	5	24%
1	4	19%
2	12	57%

This table indicates that 57% institutions are providing facility of transport to students.

Table 7. English as Medium of Communication and Instruction

Total respondents	21	%
0	3	14%
1	5	24%
2	13	62%

The above table indicates that according to 62% of respondents, to great extent English is the medium of communication and Instruction.

Table 8. Ample Time Availability as Compared to Work Load

Total Respondents	21	%
0	2	10%
1	12	57%
2	7	33%

Above table indicates that time availability for preparation as compare to work load is satisfactory to some extent according to 57%of respondents of study.

Table 9. Learners Mindset/ Attitude towards Interactive Teaching Learning Strategies

Total Respondents	21	%
0	0	---
1	9	48%
2	12	57%

This table shows that 48% teachers are of the view that prospective teachers' attitude is supportive to some extent while according to 57% teachers to a great extent attitude of prospective teachers is supportive.

Table 10. Gap between Difficulty Level of Courses and Learning Skills of Students

Total Respondents	21	%
0	0	---
1	13	62%
2	8	38%

To achieve the desired objectives the learning skills of the learners must match the difficulty level of the course content. But 62% of the teachers are not satisfied to great extent.

Table 11. Balance Between Theory and Practice

Total Respondents	21	%
0	2	10%
1	12	57%
2	7	33%

Above table shows that according to 57% of teachers the balance of practice and theory are required to be revised while 33% are of the view to great extent it is well balanced.

Table 12. Monitoring of Implementation Process of New Curriculum

Total Respondents	21	%
0	1	5%
1	9	43%
2	11	52%

Coordination and monitoring of the implementation process of new program is satisfactory to great extent according to 52% teachers while 43% are satisfied to some extent.

Table 13. Provision of Information & Communication Technology

Total Respondents	21	%
0	12	57%
1	9	43%
2	0	---

The table explains that unsatisfactory availability of ICTs tools. As 57% of teachers were in the view that the provision of ICTs is not enough to fulfill the requirement in term of effective achievements of objects set in curriculum document.

Table 14. The Motivation Level of Learners to Participate in Class Room Activities

Total Respondents	21	%
0	0	---
1	6	29%
2	15	71%

This table shows, about 71% of the teachers admitted that learners are well motivated by teachers to contribute or participate in class room activities.

Table 15. Conduction of Training Workshops on Regular Basis

Total Respondents	21	%
0	0	---
1	13	62%
2	8	38%

According to this table 62% teachers are not very much satisfied with the conduction of training workshops while only 38% showed great satisfaction.

Table 16. Impact of Workshops on Teaching

Total Respondents	21	%
0	1	5%
1	11	52%
2	9	43%

This table shows that more than half of the respondents showed less satisfaction about fruitfulness of workshops while 43% claimed workshops are fruitful to great extent.

Table 17. Support for Outdoor Activities from Community

Total Respondents	21	%
0	4	19%
1	7	33%
2	10	48%

This table points out that as said by 48% teachers, the community supports the outdoor activities while according to 33% community is supportive to some extent.

Conclusions

Perceptions about Teachers Course Guides. It was concluded from the analysis of the data collected through the check list that teacher course guides need to be revised to some extent in following areas:

***Course Description*.** In most of the drafts course description may be made more comprehensive, precise and vivid by eliminating extra details.

***Course Outcomes*.** It was concluded by the researcher that less provision of resources like, well-furnished computer lab, multimedia, a highly well-equipped library, access to internet, AV aids, ICTs and reference books are the key barriers in making the outcomes less realistic and hard to achieve. Course outcomes need to be written in précised form and arranged in coherent order.

***Teaching Learning Strategies*.** Although teaching learning approaches given in teacher course guides are exemplary to attain the desired outcomes but in an ideal situation. Because these strategies are time consuming and the existing

teaching faculty needs training to use the given strategies in class room. Therefore it is needed to include teaching strategies like lecture demonstration and others along with new innovative teaching learning strategies.

Assessment Tasks. *A*ssessment tasks are not given in most of the drafts which means these drafts are incomplete. New innovative assessment tasks in accordance with the given teaching learning strategies should be included in the drafts.

Perception about provision of resources. Most of the respondents are of the view that provision of multimedia is not up to the mark. Provision of well-furnished computer lab, students to computers ratio and access to internet is not satisfactory. More than half of the respondents showed satisfaction concerning transport facility. English is used as medium of instruction and communication in more than 60% institutions. Most of the teachers are of the view that time availability for lesson preparation is not adequate. Supportive attitude of students is very important in effective implementation of interactive teaching learning strategies most of the respondents showed satisfaction in this concern. Similarly the learning skills of the students need to match difficulty level of course content and this study revealed that most of the respondents are not fully satisfied.

Most of the respondents are of the view that, balance of theory and practice in course content is needs to be revised. No program can be run smoothly and effectively without proper coordination and monitoring of implementation process. Most of the respondent showed high satisfaction in this area. Learning couldn't be effective without motivation of students. More than 70% respondents are of the opinion that students are highly motivated to participate in learning activities. To implement activity based curriculum teachers need training workshops on regular basis. But study revealed that most of the showed less satisfaction in this concern. Similarly less satisfaction is showed about fruitfulness of these workshops. Without the support of the community the success of newly launched is not possible. Large number respondents are satisfied to great extent in this concerned.

Recommendations

Description of Course may be more vivid, precise and comprehensive. Extra detail may be eradicated from course description. Course outcomes possibly designed more practically/realistically and may be attainable. It is need of the hour to write down course outcomes in more specific and extensive statements. Logical sequence is required in course outcomes.

- To cover sufficient amount of subject matter in less time, teaching strategies like lecture demonstration may also be included for making teaching learning process more effective.

- New innovative assessment tools may be included in teacher course guides drafts.
- Availability of well-equipped library and computer labs should be made sure.
- Class rooms may be equipped with multimedia, ICTs etc.
- There is dire need of conduction of teacher training workshops on regular basis because it's necessary to develop the skills of teachers for effectual use of latest and interactive teaching learning strategies.
- To make the teacher training workshops more fruitful new innovative ideas i.e. (field work etc.) may be implemented in classrooms.

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