



## Extended internship of two year B.Ed curriculum: examining underlying challenges

Rita Chowdhury

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, PMC College of Education, Delhi, India

### Abstract

The quintessence of teacher education program is Internship which require synergetic portrayal of various teaching skills to establish their competence as an “effective” teacher. The present B.Ed curriculum of GGSIPU has incorporated various relevant facets including extended internship to deal with changing scenario of education. Notwithstanding the essential existence of extended internship, substantial development of competence among prospective teachers was not perceived due to multifarious challenges during implementation. Thus the complications aroused during implementation need to be appraised for better learning outcome and holistic development of prospective teachers. The present article aims at exploring answers of the following questions:

Why prospective teachers need to prepare themselves as the future workforce of complex Indian society?

What are the impediments to proper implementation of extended internship?

How effective implementation can be ensured?.

**Keywords:** internship, implementation, challenge, prospective teacher

### Introduction

The key to enable our students to become global citizens is to assimilate open, inclusive, creative and culturally sensitive teaching practices in the school. In our complex and highly ambitious society, teaching is not expected to be repeating what teachers had already learned instead being creative in imparting what they already know, design and invent the curriculum keeping individual differences in consideration. Hence, in a competitive world we are living in, it is imperative to prepare our prospective teachers as the workforce of future who already have the knowledge and skill to understand the differentiated classroom and its complexities. With the implementation of RTE-2009 in a complex, multicultural and multilingual classrooms of India, it became inevitable to bring reformation in the manner of teacher preparation and adorn them with sufficient practice during internship where they will be covenant to find the answer of “Are we teaching children?” or “Are we teaching the curriculum”?

### Concept of Internship

Fletcher (1990) indicate that *internship experiences enhance students' self confidence, values and attitudes and leads to an increase in student independence, social maturity and interpersonal skills*. Internship is a phase when all the learned theoretical concepts are applied in a lab school setting as suggested by “School Internship: Framework and guidelines” by NCTE in January 2016. Internship is a transitional phase between past role of full time student and future role of full time teacher. According to NCTE (1998) two year B.Ed curriculum “Having gained some experience with the child, the community and schools in Year 1, the second year would offer intensive engagement with the school in the form of

School Internship. During the Internship, a student teacher shall work as a regular teacher and participate in all the school activities, including planning, teaching and assessment, interacting with school teachers, community members and children. Before teaching in a classroom, the student teachers will observe the school and its classroom for a week, to understand the school in totality, its philosophy and aims, organization and management, the life of a teacher, needs of the physical, mental, emotional development of children; aspects of curriculum and its transaction; quality transaction and assessment of teaching learning”. The prospective teacher will be a kind of apprentice teacher, expected to perform routine teaching tasks, to explore the facilities of a school, to observe experienced teachers. *An internship is a supervised off-campus working and learning experience, which earns academic credit. Internships give students opportunities to apply and extend the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom to practical experiences, while also allowing them opportunities to view and evaluate careers to which their academic interests may lead. Ideal internships establish positive contacts with prospective employers and are key to building professional networks for students”* (Stretch and Harp 1991). In short prospective teachers are placed in a school to get the “feel” of a school and “feel” of a teacher, while enjoying the status of “almost” a teacher. The advantage of being “almost” a teacher is that prospective teachers can plunge into teaching in order to test the theories and practices they have been taught and can make mistakes without suffering the full consequences of their actions.

### Changing scenario of internship

NCFTE (2009) has rightly stated “Practice teaching which

constitutes the most functional part of Teacher preparation has suffered severe neglect and dilution in quality". Teacher education has witnessed paradigm shift over the past few years specifically in terms of Internship or field engagement component. The essence of teacher education curriculum is the component of Internship which facilitates the prospective teachers by providing opportunities to correlate educational theory with pedagogical practices in the actual school setting. The present teacher education curriculum is emphasizing upon constructivist approach where the prolonged internship will facilitate the transformation of prospective teachers from being mere recipient of knowledge to generators of knowledge. The overall internship experience should be such that it will provide nourishment to achieve ultimate potential through continuous learning, unlearning and relearning. The new two year B.Ed programme stipulated effective dimensions in internship component but its structural existence in the curriculum merely will not do any help unless

functionally its effectiveness is proved as countless questions are being raised w.r.t its implementation.

Internship, in essence is to let the prospective teachers to teach by integrating their creativity explicitly, as they will have to deal with heterogeneity of classroom where learners are at varied level of learning. According to The eleventh Annual Status of Education Report (ASER 2016), released in New Delhi, 18 January 2017 states "Nationally, reading levels in Std VIII show a slight decline since 2014 (from 74.7% to 73.1%). Then and now, three out of every four children enrolled in Std VIII can read at least Std II level (the highest level assessed in the ASER survey)". Hence the prolonged internship will surely help prospective teachers to prepare themselves to negotiate with this huge wide open space between what textbooks wants them to do, the level at which they are and the level of students. NCTE Regulation (2014) stipulated relevant duration of school internship of B.Ed is as follows.

Table 1

S. No		1 <sup>st</sup> Year	2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Total
1	Internship Duration	2 weeks (2nd Semester)	18 weeks (3rd Semester)	20 weeks
2	Total Programme Credit	40	40	80
3	Internship Credits	4	16(14+2)	20
4	Total Marks assigned	1000	1000	2000
5	Marks assigned for Internship	100	400	500
6	Weightage in terms of credits	10%	40%	25%
7	Weightage of Internship in terms of marks	10%	40%	25%

#### Internship scheme of GGSIPU

GGSIPU two year B.Ed syllabus stipulated 400 marks and 20 credits in total with the provision of 16 weeks for internship.

School Internship is divided into two parts namely "School Internship Part I" and School Internship Part II". Various components is as follows.

Table 2

S. No	Components
1	Simulated Teaching
2	Discussion Lessons
3	50 Lesson Plans (in each pedagogy course) (25x2)
4	Achievement Test Report
5	Two Lessons to be Delivered in each pedagogy course through the use of Multimedia
6	Text Book Review
7	Use of Teaching Learning Material in Classroom Discourse (including teaching aids and reference material)
8	Peer Group observation
	Total

#### Organization and Allied problems

The preceding review of the recent evolution of prolonged internship provides a background for reflection on the future, whereas the present section briefly reflects upon certain major problems faced by prospective teachers, supervisors and institutions in the implementation. These problems will be dealt separately and attempts to provide possible suggestions.

**1. School Permission:** Schools generally do not feel happy in providing for Internship. There are various reasons responsible leading to such apprehension but mainly lack of understanding of their being partners in the task of teacher preparation plays a pivotal role. Thus obtaining permission from school authorities for the conduct of such a prolonged 16 weeks internship in schools becomes challenging task for teacher education institutions.

**2. Cooperation of school staff:** The ultimate purpose of teacher education programme is to prepare a successful teacher who may be able to effectively function on their "actual job" but it has been observed widely that prospective teachers were assigned random clerical task by the school staff which ultimately increased the work burden on the prospective teachers.

**3. Accommodation of prospective teachers:** Generally the number of teachers to be accommodated in a school is so high that schools expresses unwillingness to accommodate citing reasons of lack of resources, maintenance of discipline in school, etc. The new B.Ed curriculum comprises field engagement in the initial three semesters of different durations, which causes difficulty in accommodation as schools generally do not feel

comfortable to accommodate 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students in the same school simultaneously.

4. **Assigned Classes:** The classes were not provided as per the qualification of prospective teachers for fear that the unskillful teaching by the trainees may lead to a low pass percentage. There is general belief among school staff and authority that prospective teachers do not teach effectively, but in most cases, it is an apprehension rather than reality.
5. **Medium of Instructions:** It has been observed that prospective teachers (trainees) of Hindi medium background faced huge challenges in the transaction of curriculum as mostly schools in metro cities prefer teachers of English medium background, keeping in consideration the medium of instruction of the school. Also, availability and search of Hindi medium schools for internship has posed to be a challenging task for the college authority.
6. **Time Table:** It has been found that schools are unwilling to reschedule their time table for even distribution of classes among all the prospective teachers for 16 weeks internship. The school staff feels it as a hindrance to completion of syllabus in time and disturb the normal routine of the school. Prospective teachers, in most cases were given substitution classes leading to unplanned delivery of lessons and hence, cannot command discipline in the classroom in the way regular teachers do. Also some schools do not prefer innovative and experimental ways of teaching in the classroom killing the essence of 16 weeks prolonged internship.
7. **Supervision:** Supervision becomes a misnomer if the supervisor is not present when the lessons are being delivered by the prospective teachers. Sometimes school authorities opine that regular supervision by supervisor from college will disturb the routine and discipline of school. Thus, irregular supervision gives rise to carelessness and inadequate preparation of lesson by the prospective teachers making the whole internship a futile experience.
8. **Adjustment of prospective teachers in the School:** Prospective teachers are introduced as “Pupil Teacher” to students in the school. There is wide accepted notion among students and teachers of the school that prospective teachers do not do their job well. Also students consider prospective teachers as students like themselves, thus expecting “informal” approach which may lead to discipline issues in the classroom. Prospective teachers, thus, are required to be introduced as “Teachers” only for their adjustment in the school keeping the extended internship duration in the new curriculum in consideration.
9. **Reflection:** Writing down self evaluation report on any interesting experience is a captivating endeavor to relish. But generally prospective teachers do not take reflection work seriously. If taken seriously, reflection may give rise to some innovative practices that can actually contribute in the system of education.

#### Suggestions

- Facilitation programme should be organized for the

Principal/Head of schools in order to make them aware of their being partners in the training of teachers.

- Head of school should appoint one of their staff as “coordinator” to give needed help and direction to prospective teachers. It is also desirable that the “coordinators” will help staff and prospective teachers to get acquainted and develop favorable attitude towards each other.
- Participation of affiliated university and respective state government is highly recommended in the allotment of schools. It is a well known fact that Delhi schools especially government schools are suffering from lack of teachers. The concerned government can provide schools for prolonged internship. This arrangement will prove to be beneficial for government and teacher education institutions simultaneously.
- Prospective teachers should be equipped with necessary skills and motivation before commencement of internship as suggested in the curriculum. Hence, demonstration lessons by prospective teachers need to be taken up seriously and followed by positive criticism to ensure better productivity in the actual classroom.
- Workshops should be organized for supervisors. It is an expertise task not meant for commenting rather than suggesting ways to improve further. Hence good supervisors should be appointed who are able to give constructive feedback. Schools which are reluctant to allow college supervisors to supervise considering discipline issues may appoint “mentor teachers” as suggested in NCTE (2016) guidelines. According to NCTE (2016) “In an academic session, 3-4 student-teachers could be attached with a mentor-teacher keeping in view his /her subject specialization. The identified mentor-teachers who could be treated as members of the extended teacher education faculty shall be provided intensive orientation to the responsibilities of a mentor-teacher to avoid wastage of resources. It would be desirable to ensure stability of the tenure of the mentor-teachers”. The respective institutions may provide monetary benefit to the mentor teachers for their active partnership.
- Preliminary School Engagement and Internship could be consolidated in one semester i.e. in semester 3 to reduce the workload of students and multifarious complexities in the arrangement of school in every six month.

#### Conclusion

Organizing internship for extended period is a challenging task where college personnel and prospective teachers are bound to come across some problems if they are not envisaged in advance and necessary preparation or arrangements are not being made. No programme or scheme can be successfully implemented, unless all the stakeholders at the very outset are perfectly clear about the objectives i.e to prepare an “effective” teacher. Though, internship is challenging but perhaps most relished experience by prospective teachers as prolonged internship enriched them as a human being. Besides being a teacher of subject matter, they learned to be more patient, to admit mistakes more easily and above all, they find

a “Teacher” in themselves who is always ready to learn and helping others to learn

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