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## Importance of Practicum in Teacher Training Programme - A Need of the Hour

Aijaz Ahmed Gujjar, Ph.D. Scholar, Naeem Ullah Bajwa, Ph.D.,  
Ghazala Shaheen, Ph.D., and Saifulla Saifi Ph.D.

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### Abstract

Teacher education course, both its theoretical and the practical components, is designed to achieve the required targets. This paper aims to unearth the differences pertaining to the theory and practice of pre-occupational teacher training being imparted in Pakistani teacher training institutions.

The experiment for the present study is made up of 120 student teachers of 12 diverse teacher training institutions of Pakistan. They had ended the academic part of the training and were now slotted in practice teaching.

This study represented all the Federating units. Observation was employed as a modus operandi to collect data. Visits were made to the class rooms during the period starting from February 2007 to May 2007.

Information was composed through 34 sets of surveillance. The observation checklist

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was prepared to achieve the purpose of this study while acknowledging the broad gaps between theory and practice and by exploiting means and techniques, the use of computer applications for teaching, experimentation and the use of diagnosis evaluation techniques. However, it was observed that novelty and innovation were absolutely missing and the trainees feel themselves satisfied with the identical obsolete techniques and methods through which they were taught.

It is, therefore, proposed that the teacher trainers consistently stay at the classes during the practice teaching. Furthermore, increasing the duration of practice teaching will guarantee the success of the programme.

## **Introduction**

The importance of practicum in any course of studies is a given thing and teacher education is no exception to this (McIntyre, Byrd, & Fox, 1996). Practicum is a vital component in many educational courses at all levels. Practicum is included in many disciplines and provide the student with the opportunity to put the theory they have learned into practice. The practice can be overwhelmed by the theory but it cannot negate the existence and importance of practicum. Blunden (2000) puts it in these words:

Theory involves the development of understanding and insight and it is what universities often do well. Of course, both of these worlds, practice and theory, are communities of practice, but they are nonetheless very different worlds (p. 8).

However, it is an admitted fact that a theory dies without practice and the aim of a course should always be to give importance to both theory and practice. This will help practitioner and researcher to fill the gaps between theory and practice. Understanding the nature of a theory and knowing its evaluation help us to locate these gaps. The present study is an effort in the same direction.

## **Theory of the Practicum**

Practicum is needed if the reflective and moral work of teachers is to underpin the actual practice and promote knowledge construction in ways that are equitable and just for our young people. Practicum is, in fact, a blend of a variety of diverse aspects, e.g., the performance of the student teachers, the teacher educators, the school and the availability of resources. However, it is more important to have a relationship of all these factors (Ellsworth and Albers, 1995).

The theory of the practice teaching dictates the following:

- Balance course length.
- Prospect to apply skill at the most advantageous level.

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- Directing students to additional resources.
- Conducive atmosphere enabling the student teachers to learn the teaching profession.
- An efficient procedure of scrutiny and assessment.
- While making the final assessment, fair marks should be reserved for practicum vis-à-vis the theoretical exams.

At the end of the practicum, the student teacher is expected to do the following:

- Maintenance of relationship with his students, colleagues and administrators.
- Managerial skill, e.g., maintenance of discipline and punctuality.
- Understanding of the tenets of vital learning.
- Can prepare his lesson for instructions.
- Know teaching skills and be able to exploit them.
- Acquired ability from supervision and appraisal.
- Make a routine of self assessment.

The supervisors are expected to:

- Evaluate the student teachers of the methods and techniques of instruction.
- Assist the student teachers in preparing their lesson plans.

## Research Methodology

### Population and Sampling

The population of the study consisted of all the prospective teachers who are admitted to B.Ed. programme in public sector institutions of Pakistan. The 120 prospective teachers from 8 institutions were considered as sample of the study.

S.No	Gender	Numbers	Percent
1	Male	46	38.3%
2	Female	74	61.7%
3	Total	120	100%

Figure 1 Showing the distribution of sample gender wise

### Research Tool Development and Data Collection

Since the study was descriptive in nature, survey approach was considered appropriate to collect the data. For this purpose, a 34-item observation checklist was prepared by keeping in mind the objectives of teaching practice.

## Administration of Research Tool

Data were collected personally from the Sindh and the Punjab and through teacher educators from the Balochistan and the NWFP.

## Data Analysis

The data collected through observation was coded and analysed through SPSS XII Stat Pac calculator and in terms of percentage and t-test.

## Findings

Data collected through the questionnaire was analysed in terms of percentage. The findings drawn out from the data analysis are given below.

Table 1

Student teachers prepare lesson plans during teaching practice.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	108	90%
No	12	10%
Total	100	

Above table indicates that 100% teachers prepared lesson plans during teaching practice. It was considered that all the student teachers prepared lesson plans throughout teaching practice.

Table 2

Student teachers manage classes.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	108	90%			
No	12	10%	119	14.606	0.000
Total	100				

Above table shows 90% student teachers were observed as managing their classes but 10% were not able to manage the class. So it is concluded that significant majority of the student teachers could easily manage their classes.

Table 3

Student teacher uses Team teaching method.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	0	0%
No	120	100%
Total	120	

It is evident from above table that all the 120 student teachers responded that they do not use team teaching method so it is concluded that none of the student teachers use team teaching method.

Table 4  
Student teachers use micro teaching method.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	0	0%
No	120	100%
Total	120	

Above table shows that all the student teachers do not use micro teaching method hence it is concluded that none of the student teachers use micro teaching method.

Table 5  
Student teachers use computer assisted learning.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	3	2.5%			
No	117	97.5%	119	33.328	0.000
Total	120				

It is evident from above table that 2.5 % student teachers preferred computer assisted learning but 97.5% do not use computer assisted learning. Hence it is concluded that a significant majority of student teachers is not using computer assisted learning.

Table 6  
Student teachers use computer assisted instructions

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	3	2.5%			
No	117	97.5%	119	33.328	0.000
Total	120				

Above table indicates that 2.5% student teachers were observed as providing computer assisted instructions but 97.5 did not give computer assisted instructions. Therefore it is concluded that most of student teachers were not using computer assisted instructions.

Table 7  
Student teachers use lecture Method.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	90	75%			
No	30	25%	119	6.325	0.000
Total	120				

Above table indicates that 75% student teachers used lecture method in their classes and only 25% did not prefer this method. So a significant majority of student teachers used lecture method during teaching in classrooms.

Table 8  
Student teachers use discussion method.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	39	32.5%			
No	81	67.5%	119	4.093	0.0001
Total	120	100.0			

Above table indicates that 32.5% teachers are using discussion method during teaching practice but 67.5% are not using this method. So it can be concluded that a significant mostly of student teachers do not use the discussion method in teaching practice.

Table 9  
Student teachers use question answer method

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	60	50%			
No	60	50%	119	0.000	1.000
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that 50% student teachers use question answer method and 50% of them do not use this method. So it is concluded that there is no significant difference between those who used question answer method and those who do not.

Table 10  
Student teachers use activity method

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	42	35%			
No	78	65%	119	3.445	0.0008
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that 35% teachers are observed using activity method but 60% are not applying this method during teaching practice. So it is concluded that significant majority of student teachers do not use the activity method during teaching practice.

Table 11  
Student teachers use bookish method

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	24	20%			
No	96	80%	119	8.216	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

Above table indicates that 20% student teachers use the bookish method during teaching practice but 80% do not use this method. So it is concluded that significant majority of the student teachers do not use the bookish method during teaching practice.

Table 12  
Student teachers use problem solving method

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	6	5%			
No	114	95%	119	22.618	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that it was observed that only 5% student teachers used the problem solving method but 95% did not apply this method. So it was concluded that most of the student teacher were not applying the problem solving method.

Table 13  
Student teacher has the attitude of experimentation.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	39	32.5%			

No	81	67.55	119	4.093	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

Above table indicates that 32.5% student teachers had the attitude of experimentation but 67.5% student teachers were no attitude of experimentation. So it can be concluded that significant majority of the student teachers does not have the attitude of experimentation.

Table 14  
Student teacher has the attitude of observation.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Df	t-value	p-value
Yes	90	75%			
No	30	25%	119	6.325	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

It is clear from above table that 75% student teachers have the attitude of observation but 25% student teachers do not have the attitude of observation. It is concluded that significant majority of the student teachers does not have the attitude of observation.

Table 15  
Student teachers use the method according to the situation

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	72	60%			
No	48	40%	119	2.236	0.0272
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that 60% student teachers use the teaching method according to the situation, while 40% do not use teaching methods according the situation. So it is concluded that significant majority of the student teachers use the methods according to the situation.

Table 16  
Student teacher has the confidence to face the students.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	108	90%			
No	12	10%	119	14.606	0.000
Total	120	100.0			



It is evident from the above table that 90% student teachers have the confidence to face the students, while 10% are not confident to face the students. So it is concluded that significant majority of student teachers have the confidence to face the students.

Table 17  
Student teachers use charts.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	111	92.5%			
No	9	7.5%	119	17.676	0.000
Total	120	92.5			

Above table shows that 93% student teachers use charts during teaching practice, while 7.5% do not use the charts during teaching practice. So, it is concluded that a significant majority of the student teachers use charts during teaching practice.

Table 18  
Student teachers use models

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	51	42.5%			
No	69	57.5%	119	1.662	0.0992
Total	120	100.0			

It is evident from above table that 42.5% student teachers use models during teaching practice but 57.5% do not use the models during teaching practice. It is concluded that there is no significant difference between those who use models and those who do not.

Table 19  
Student teacher use flannel boards.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	39	32.5%			
No	81	67.5%	119	4.093	0.0001
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that 32.5% student teachers use flannel boards during teaching practice, while 67.5% do not use flannel boards during teaching practice. Hence it is concluded that a significant majority of the student teachers do not use flannel boards during teaching practice.

Table 20  
Student teacher use pictures.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	69	57.5%			
No	51	42.5%	119	1.662	0.0992
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that 57.5% student teachers use pictures during teaching practice, while 42.5% do not use the pictures during teaching practice. So, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between those who use pictures and those who do not.

Table 21  
Student teachers teach according to the lesson plan.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	114	95%			
No	6	5%	119	22.618	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

It is evident from above table that 95% student teachers teach according to the lesson plan during teaching practice, while 5% do not teach according to the lesson plan. So it is concluded that significant majority of the student teachers teach according to the lesson plan.

Table 22  
Student teacher relates the previous knowledge of the students to the current topic.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	99	82.5%			
No	21	17.5%	119	9.370	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

It is evident from above table that 82.5% student teachers relate the previous knowledge of the students to the current topic, while 17.5% do not do so. So it is concluded that a significant majority of student teachers relate the previous knowledge of the students to the current topic.

Table 23  
Student teacher tests the previous knowledge of the students.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
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Yes	117	97.5%			
No	3	2.5%	119	33.328	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that 97.5% student teachers test the previous knowledge of the students but 2.5% do not do so. Hence it is concluded that a significant majority of student teachers test the previous knowledge of the students.

Table 24  
Student teacher knows the objectives of the lesson plan being taught by him/her.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	117	97.5			
No	3	2.5	119	33.328	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that that 97.5% Student teacher know the objectives of the lesson plan being taught by him/her but 2.5% do not know the objectives of the lesson being taught by him/her. Hence it is concluded that a significant majority of the student teachers know the objectives of the lesson plan being taught by him/her.

Table 25  
Student teachers make the partial recapitulation.

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Yes	69	57.5%			
No	51	42.5%	119	1.662	0.0992
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that 57.5% student teacher make the partial recapitulation during their lesson while 42.5% do not make the partial recapitulation. Therefore it is concluded that there is no significant difference between those who make the partial recapitulation and those who do not.

Table 26  
Student teachers make the final recapitulation.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	57	47.5%			

No	63	52.5%	119	1.662	0.0992
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that 47.5% student teachers make the final recapitulation but 52.5% do not make the final recapitulation. So it is concluded that there is no significant difference between those who make final recapitulation and those who do not.

Table 27  
Student teachers invite questions from the students.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	105	87.5%			
No	15	12.5%	119	12.421	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

Above table indicates that 87.5% student teachers invite questions from students but 12.5% do not invite questions from students. As t-value is significant at 0.000 level, so it is concluded that a significant majority of the student teachers invite questions from the students.

Table 28  
Student teachers move around the class while teaching.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	69	57.5%			
No	51	42.5%	119	1.662	0.0992
Total	120	100.0			

It is evident from above table that 57.5% student teachers move around the class while teaching while, 42.5% student teachers do not move around the class while teaching. As t-value is insignificant, so it is concluded there is no significant difference between those who move around and those who do not.

Table 29  
Student teachers complete the topic/lesson with in time.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	99	82.5%			
No	21	17.5%	119	9.370	0.000
Total	120	100.0			

Above table shows that 82.5% student teachers complete their topics/lessons with in time While 17.5% did not complete their topics/lessons. As t-value is significant at 0.000 level, it is concluded that a significant majority of the student teachers complete their topics/lessons with in time.

Table 30  
Student teacher relates the situation/topic with real life situation.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	54	45%			
No	66	55%	119	1.101	0.2731
Total	120	100.0			

The table 30 shows that 45.0% Student teacher relate the situation/topic with real life situation while 55.0% do not associate the topic with real life situations. As t-value is insignificant and p-value is  $> 0.5$ , so it is concluded that there is no significant difference between those who relate and those who do not.

Table 31  
Student teacher gives example from the daily life.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	81	67.5%			
No	39	32.5%	119	4.093	0.0001
Total	120	100.0			

Above table indicates that 67.5% Student teachers give examples from daily life situation but 32.5% do not give examples from daily life. As t-value is significant at 0.0001 level, it is concluded that a significant majority of student teachers gives example from daily life situation.

Table 32  
Student teachers apply formative evaluation technique.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	78	65%			
No	42	35%	119	3.445	0.0008
Total	120	100.0			

It is evident from above table that 65% student teachers apply formative evaluation,

while 35 % do not apply formative evaluation techniques, as t-value is significant at 0.0008 level, it is concluded that majority of the student teachers apply formative evaluation technique during teaching practice.

Table 33  
Student teacher applies summative evaluation technique.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	69	57.5%			
No	51	42.5%	119	1.662	0.0992
Total	120	100.0			

Above Table indicates that 57.5% student teachers apply summative evaluation technique while 42.5% do not apply the summative evaluation. As t-value is not significant and p-value > 0.05, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between those who apply summative evaluation and those who do not.

Table 34  
Student teacher applies diagnostic evaluation technique.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	df	t-value	p-value
Yes	12	10%			
No	108	90%	119	14.606	0.0000
Total	120	100.0			

It is evident from above table that 10.0% student teachers apply diagnostic evaluation while 90.0% do not apply the diagnostic evaluation. As t-value is significant at 0.000 level, it is concluded that a significant majority of student teachers do not apply diagnostic evaluation technique.

## Conclusions

Following conclusions are drawn on the basis of findings.

- All the student teachers prepare lesson plans during teaching practice.
- 90% student teachers manage the classrooms during teaching practice.
- All the student teachers do not use team teaching method.
- All the student teachers do not use micro teaching method.

- 2.5% student teachers use computer assisted learning.
- 2.5% student teachers use computer assisted instruction.
- 67.5% student teachers use lecture method during teaching practice.
- 67.5% student teachers do not use discussion method.
- 50% student teachers use question answer method and 50% do not use question answer method during teaching practice.
- 65% student teachers do not use activity method.
- 80% student teachers do not use bookish method.
- 95% student teachers do not use problem solving method.
- 67.5% student teachers are not having the attitude of experimentation.
- 75% student teachers having the attitude of observation.
- 60% student teachers use method according to the situation.
- 90% student teachers have confidence to face the students.
- 92.5% student teachers use charts during teaching practice.
- 42.5% student teachers use models and 57.5% do not use models during teaching practice.
- 67.5% student teachers use flannel boards during teaching practice.
- 42.5% student teachers use models and 57.5% do not use pictures during teaching.
- 95% student teachers teach according to the lesson plan.
- 82.5% student teachers relate the previous knowledge of the students to the current topic.
- 97.5% student teachers test the previous knowledge of the students.
- 97.5% student teachers know the objectives of lesson being taught by them.
- 57.5% student teachers make partial recapitulation and 42.5% do not make partial recapitulation.
- 57.5% student teachers make final recapitulation and 42.5% do not make partial recapitulation.
- 87.5% student teachers invite questions from the students.

- 57.5% student teachers move around the class while teaching and 42.5% do not during teaching practice.
- 82.5% complete the lesson /topic with in time during teaching practice.
- 45% student teachers relate the situation /topic with real life situation and 55% do not.
- 67.5% student teachers give examples from daily life during teaching practice.
- 65% student teachers apply formative evaluation during teaching practice.
- 57.5% student teachers apply summative evaluation and 42.5% do not during teaching practice.
- 10% student teachers apply diagnostic evaluation.

### **Recommendations**

Following Recommendations are made on the basis of the findings and conclusions.

- i. Student teachers should be trained to use Computer Assisted Learning and Computer Assisted Instruction.
- ii. School Classrooms should be facilitated enough to use computer assisted learning and computer assisted instruction techniques.
- iii. Actual teacher should observe the student teacher time to time in classroom.
- iv. Actual teachers/supervisors should guide the student teacher how to apply different types of evaluation during teaching
- v. Sense of assimilation should be developed in student teachers during their training for how to relate different types of knowledge with different types of life situations.
- vi. Contents of teaching practice should be related to the actual environment of the schools or facilities should be provided according to the contents taught to the student teachers.



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Aijaz Ahmed Gujjar  
Federal College of Education  
H-9, Islamabad  
Pakistan  
[seek\\_to\\_learn@yahoo.com](mailto:seek_to_learn@yahoo.com)

Naeemullah Bajwa, Ph.D.  
National Institute of Science and Technical Education  
H-8 Islamabad  
Pakistan  
[becpakistan@gmail.com](mailto:becpakistan@gmail.com)

Ghazala Shaheen, Ph.D.  
Department of Management Sciences  
Federal Urdu University of Science and Technology  
Islamabad, Pakistan  
[drghazalashaheen@fuustisb.edu.pk](mailto:drghazalashaheen@fuustisb.edu.pk)

Saifullah Saifi, Ph.D.  
Department of Education  
The University of Gujrat  
Gujrat, Pakistan  
[saif1390@yahoo.com](mailto:saif1390@yahoo.com)