

An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Teacher Preparation Programmes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan

Iqbal Ahmad

Department of Education,
University of Malakand, Pakistan

Alam Zeb

Shafiq ur Rehman

Shabir Ahmad

Wajid Khan

Department of Management Studies
University of Malakand, Pakistan

Khalil Ahmad

Abdul Ghani

PhD Scholar, University of Education, Lahore

ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of Teacher Preparation Programs conducted through Regional Institutes of Teacher Education (RITEs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. For the purpose of data collection the researcher developed close-ended questionnaire and administered to teacher educators working as permanent faculties in the RITEs. A sample of 100 teacher educators of RITEs was randomly selected from 10 Regional Institutions of Teacher Education (RITEs). Data were collected, tabulated, analyzed and presented in simple percentages. Findings of the study showed that the teacher preparation programs conducted through RITEs were found useful in developing pedagogical skills of prospective teachers. This study found the following remarkable results.

The trainee teachers were able to communicate easily and clearly in classroom situations. The prospective teachers could make lessons plans and implement it successfully. The teacher preparation program has developed classroom management skills of the prospective teachers. The teachers could use different strategies in their classrooms for student's learning evaluations. The teachers were more confident to share their experiences with other teachers. However, a unique finding of the study is that the teacher preparation program has failed to develop research skills of the teachers. It was found that the trained teachers did not know how to conduct research in their contexts on various issues of teaching and learning. Therefore on the basis of this study it is recommended that a strong component of research project should be incorporated in the curriculum of the teacher preparation program of RITEs to enable the prospective teachers to conduct research on different issues of teaching and learning.

Keywords: Teacher preparation program, effectiveness, prospective teachers, pedagogical skills

Background of the study

Teacher training is the back bone of any education system. Pakistan is a developing country with a poor education system (Siddique, 1990). In Pakistan, at public sector level, teachers find meager chances of training and other professional development opportunities. There are training institutes available at provincial level, but the quality of training provided to the teachers is always questioned and criticized from certain quarters (Elahi and Nizam, 1997). On the other hands, Sheikh and Rasool (1998) have discovered that in Pakistan due to pathetic role of the public sector in teacher education, the private sector organizations have taken the responsibility and are involved in teachers training activities. But due to lack of resources the aspect of quality is either ignored or sacrificed. A research by Darling and Hammond (2000) has proved that quality of education could be improved only by producing quality teachers. In this regard, Scott et al (2007) further elaborates that for this purpose up-to-date, research based and contextually framed teacher development programs are sine-qua-none. However, in order to be effective, the teacher preparation programmes need continuous evaluation, updating and be need oriented. Keeping in view these goals, the present study will analyze the problems, issues in the implementation

of the teacher preparation programmes run through the Regional Institutes of Teacher Education in KPK, Pakistan.

Significance of the study

The results achieved based on this study will enable the educators and planners to make the implementation of teacher preparation programmes in RITEs more useful. This study will further inform the policy makers, and educational managers to bring necessary changes to improve the teacher preparation programmes at provincial level in Pakistan. Furthermore, the study will provide feedback to the policy makers on the issues of quality of education in Pakistan. In the light of the findings of this study, the policy makers will be able to chalk out better policies keeping in view the responses, needs and context based effective approaches towards teacher preparation and development in KPK, Pakistan.

Statement of the problem

Teacher education is the basis of any education system (Goldhaber and Anthony, 2004). The effectiveness of teacher education guarantees the quality of education, because teacher is one of the basic and essential elements in the whole process of education (Frome, Lasater, and Cooney, 2005). In Pakistan, over the years, different training institutes have been established at federal and provincial levels, which impart trainings to teachers at various levels. Unfortunately, despite of these efforts the quality of teaching and learning is doubted and questioned by the general public and even parents. Hence, the purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the teacher preparation programmes conducted through RITEs in KPK province of Pakistan.

Research Objectives

Following were the main objectives of this research study:

1. To explore the perceptions of teacher educators and directors of RITEs about the effectiveness of the current teacher preparation programmes in KPK Province.
2. To find out the problems faced by teacher educators and directors in running the teacher preparation programmes in RITEs in KPK province.
3. To explore the opportunities of improving the teachers preparation programmes.
4. To analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher preparation programmes.
5. To present suggestions and recommendations for further improvement of the teacher preparation programmes in RITEs at provincial levels in Pakistan.

Research questions

The present research study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of teacher educators and directors about the current teacher preparation programmes in RITEs in KPK province?
2. What are the problems faced by teacher educators and directors in running the teacher preparation programmes in RITEs in KPK province?
3. What are the opportunities available to RITEs in KPK province for improving the teacher preparation programmes?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher preparation programmes in RITEs in KPK province?
5. What are the possible solutions to the challenges faced by RITEs in KPK province of Pakistan?

Review of literature

Teacher preparation programs in view of (Borman, Kimball, 2005 and Ball, 1990) reinforce the belief that there is great importance of pedagogical aspects of teaching and learning process, because according to Ballou & Podgursky (2000) it has a great impact both on teaching practice and on student achievement. Pedagogical approach matters for teacher effectiveness. A research study by Latham & Gitomer (1999) has shown a very positive relationship between teacher preparation and their performance in the real classroom situation. However, according to Gyton & Farokhi (1987) opinions differ on the subject regarding the means and ways by which teachers are prepared and decisions about teacher preparations are made.

There are different views about teacher preparation and its implications on the teacher performance. Pre-service teachers view professional preparation easy but of little academic value (Holtzman and Galton, 2007). Some prospective teachers join teacher trainings programs with different experiences, qualifications, beliefs and perceptions about teaching, teacher, students and learning. This later on affects their practices and actions when they work in real teaching situations, (Wenligsky, 2000 and Clotfelter, Ladd & Vigdor, 2006). Teachers with sound professional preparation contribute to quality in teaching and learning. The major aim of teacher preparation is development of professional skills, enhance their pedagogical knowledge. In this context, teacher training programs are focused on transformation and rebuilding of teachers' perspectives through creating a collaborative and effective teaching and learning environment (American Federation of Teachers, 2000).

Therefore, according to Ballou & Podgursky (2000) effective teaching program must focus areas like teacher knowledge, pedagogical skills, and teacher beliefs. According to Shulman (2000) a good teacher preparation program should produce teachers who have values, knowledge, skills and professional commitment. Furthermore, Coggshall (2007) argues that the trained teachers should know how people learn, grow, and develop their potentials. This indicates that the teachers must grow professionally as well as socially to play its role effectively in the society. These views are supported by Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) that good teachers must be continuous learners. This learning starts prior to entering the classroom. To meet the ever changing, expanding demands teachers needs to be provided with continued learning opportunities. This will help the prospective and in-service teachers to continuously learn and relearn from their profession experiences (Adams, 1998; McNergney, Robert and Herbert, 2001).

Methodology and Procedures

Nature of the study

This study is descriptive in nature. The collected data was tabulated and presented in percentages. Additionally, the results will be shown in graphs for more clarity. All the teacher training institutions in KPK province constitute the population of this study who work under the umbrella of the RITEs.

Participants and data collection tools

Data was collected using a close ended questionnaire was designed based on Five Point Likert Scale. For this purpose a sample of 100 teacher educators of RITEs were randomly selected from 10 Regional Institutions of Teacher Education (RITEs). Data were collected, tabulated, analyzed and presented in simple percentages.

Sampling procedure

Simple random sample according to Gulab (2000) enables the researchers to collect data objectively as in this type of sampling every member of the population has the same chance of being selected which provides a wider opportunity for the researcher to reach out to a good representative number of subjects which indirectly enhances the reliability of the data. Hence, out of the total population of this study, ten (10) RITEs were selected on random basis teacher preparation program.

Ethical considerations

1. First, to observe the ethics of research, the researcher acquired the consent of the entire research samples. For this purpose, individual consent letters were sent to the teacher educators and directors. At the same time permission letters were also sent to the heads of the institutions concerned to seek their permission to allow their team members to participate in the research.
2. Second, it was ensured that any information is not divulged or for that matter, leaked out without the prior consent and permission of the institution, or even the individual respondent without their prior permission.

Data analysis

For the purpose of data collection as mentioned earlier, the researcher used close-ended questionnaires based on Five Point Likert Scale based on the following degree options such as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (DA) and Strongly Disagree (SDA). The questionnaire was validated on the basis of pilot study to ensure the quality of item, validity of content and reliability of information being sought for. For this purpose, three expert research scholars in the field of teachers training were consulted to seek their expert opinion and guidance. Furthermore, before distributing in the field, the questionnaire was piloted in four institutions as well.

In the light of the results of the pilot study and feedback collected from the experts, the questionnaire was finalized and administered to the samples in the field. To ensure maximum collection of distributed questionnaires, the researcher personally visited the sampled institutions for both administration and collection of the questionnaires.

Data collection procedures

Before administering the data collection tools, permissions were sought from the head of the institutions concerned and even individually the consent of the sampled teacher educators were taken to ensure their willingness to participate in the research.

Areas of investigation

For the evaluation of the effectiveness of the teacher preparation program, this study specifically investigated into the perceptions of teacher educators who work as full time trainers in the RITEs regarding the following professional areas in terms of degree of improvement in the trainee teachers who graduate from the Regional Institutes of Teacher Education.

1. Content of the teacher preparation program
2. Improvement in content knowledge
3. Improvement in teaching skills
4. Improvement in attitude and behavior
5. Improvement in practice

Results and discussion

The results of this study are presented in the below tables. Each table provides five statements (items) concerning the various aspects of the main topic theme mentioned for each table.

Table 1. Content of the teacher preparation program

S.#	Statements	SA 100%	A 100%	U 100%	DA 100%	SDA 100%
1	The teacher preparation program content is well organized	50%	20%	10%	15%	05%
2	The teacher preparation program content is relevant	55%	30%	05%	05%	05%
3	The teacher preparation program content is updated	30%	10%	00%	50%	10%
4	The teacher preparation program content is interesting	20%	15%	10%	35%	20%
5	The content covers all areas of teaching and learning	20%	20%	00%	40%	20%

Table 1 shows majority of the teachers 50% strongly agree that the content of the teacher education program is well organized. Similarly 55% of the respondents also strongly agree that content of the teacher education program is relevant. And 30% strongly agree that the content of the teacher education program is updated. Conversely, 35% disagree that the content of the teacher education program is interesting. At the same way, 40% are of the view that the content covers all aspects of the teaching and learning process.

Table 2. Improvement in the content knowledge of the trained teachers

S.#	Statements	SA 100%	A 100%	U 100%	DA 100%	SDA 100%
1	The trained teachers explain the concepts easily	20%	15%	05%	40%	20%
2	The trained teachers provide relevant examples	15%	15%	10%	50%	10%
3	The trained teachers relate the concepts to daily life experiences	20%	10%	35%	30%	05%
4	The trained teachers simplify difficult concepts	55%	20%	00%	10%	05%
5	The trained teachers present the concepts in interesting manner	30%	30%	15%	05%	20%

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents disagree that the trained explain the concepts easily. At the same time, 50% also disagree that the trained teachers provide relevant examples to explain the concepts. Ironically, 35% of the respondents did not know that the trained teachers relate the concepts to daily life experiences of the students.

A great majority 55% of the respondents strongly agree that the trained teachers simplify the difficult concepts. Whereas, 30% of the respondents strongly that the trained teachers present the concepts in an interesting manner.

Table 3. Improvement in teaching skills of the trained teachers

S.#	Statement	SA 100%	A 100%	U 100%	DA 100%	SDA 100%
1	The trained teachers are able to make lesson plan	60%	20%	05%	10%	05%
2	The trained teachers communicate clearly in the classroom	40%	30%	04%	16%	10%
3	The trained teachers manage their classes easily	33%	20%	17%	10%	20%
4	The trained teachers evaluate student's learning competently	43%	23%	17%	07%	10%
5	The trained teachers use various teaching aids effectively	57%	25%	13%	00%	05%

Table 3 shows that majority of the respondents that is 60% strongly agree that the trained teachers are able to make lesson plan easily. In the same way, 40% strongly agree that the trained teacher communicate clearly in the classroom.

Whereas, 33% strongly agree that the trained teachers manage their classrooms easily. Similarly, 43% of the respondents strongly agree that the trained teachers evaluate students' learning competently. And 57% of the respondents also strongly agree that the trained teachers use various teaching aids effectively.

Table 4. Improvement in attitude/ behavior of the trained teachers

S.#	Statement	SA 100%	A 100%	U 100%	DA 100%	SDA 100%
1	The trained teachers are friendly with the students	39%	22%	11%	12%	16%
2	The trained teachers cooperate with their colleagues	20%	25%	15%	20%	20%
3	The trained teachers share different ideas with other teachers	45%	25%	10%	15%	05%
4	The trained teachers are punctual in their duties	55%	25%	05%	05%	10%
5	The trained teachers accept additional responsibilities happily	15%	25%	17%	33%	10%

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents strongly agree that the trained teachers are friendly with their students. Similarly, majority of the respondents, that is only 25% agree that the trained teachers cooperate with their colleagues.

At the same time, 45% of the respondents strongly agree that the trained teachers share different ideas with other teachers. And 55% of the respondents strongly agree that the trained teachers are punctual in their duties. Conversely, 33% of the respondents disagree that the rained teachers accept additional responsibilities happily.

Table 5. Improvement in practice of the trained teachers

S.#	Statement	SA 100%	A 100%	U 100%	DA 100%	SDA 100%
1	The trained teachers are able to conduct research in education	23%	17%	10%	40%	10%
2	The trained teachers maintain lesson plan diary on regular basis	30%	33%	07%	14%	16%
3	The trained teachers design interesting classroom activities	44%	30%	10%	20%	06%
4	The trained teachers involve students in teaching and learning	18%	15%	12%	20%	35%
5	The trained teachers use different methods of teaching	30%	22%	08%	20%	20%

Table 5 shows that in view of a majority of the respondents 40% disagree that the trained teachers are reflective in their teaching approach. However, 33% agree that the trained teachers maintain lesson plan dairy on regular basis. In the same way, 44% strongly agree that the trained teachers design interesting classroom activities.

Similarly, 35% strongly disagree that the trained teachers involve students in the teaching and learning process. And thus 30% of the respondents strongly agree that the trained teachers use different methods of teaching.

Conclusions

On the basis of the results of this study it can be concluded that the trainee teachers who undergo training in RITEs are able to communicate easily and clearly in classroom situations. The trained teachers can make lessons plans and implement it successfully. The trained teacher cannot explain the concepts easily. The study also found that the teachers did not involve students actively in the process of teaching and learning.

The teacher preparation program has developed classroom management skills of the trained prospective teachers. The teachers now could use different strategies and methodologies in their classrooms for student are learning evaluations. The trained teachers also are more confident to share their experiences with other teachers in the government secondary schools.

However, a unique finding of this study is that the teacher preparation program does not develop research skills of the prospective trained teachers. The study found that the trained teachers did not know how to conduct research in their contexts on various issues of teaching and learning. The study further discovered that the trained teachers could not relate the concepts to daily life experiences of the students. Therefore, on the basis of this study the following recommendations are presented.

Recommendations

1. A strong component of research project may be incorporated in the curriculum of the teacher preparation program of RITEs to enable the prospective teachers to conduct research on different issues of teaching and learning.
2. The teacher preparation courses conducted in the RITEs are needed to be made more interactive, practical, more learner-centered and less examination-centered.
3. The teachers need to be trained to play a mentoring role in the teaching and learning process. In this way the teachers will be able to guide the students to be active learners. At the same time the trained teachers will be able to critically observe the academic progress of students and provide help wherever necessary.
4. The teacher education programs may be supported financially more intensively so that more and more teachers are attracted towards the training programs and the teacher preparation program is made more resourceful and purposeful.
5. Keeping in view the fast changing needs of the current century in the field of pure education, Teachers are needed to be trained on how to be reflective, introspective, critically observer and researcher.
6. Teacher preparation program curriculum is needed to be revised and made more powerful in terms of meeting the needs of the teachers of the current age. In this regard, the teachers could be trained on how to design, implement and evaluate their courses. This will help improve the quality of the courses in vogue in the schools.
7. There is a great need of instituting a highly robust system of follow up. Teachers after getting training from the teacher preparation institutions are needed to be supervised and monitored closely, so that they are able to implement their new learning in their real classroom situations.
8. It is also recommended on the basis of this study that the trained teachers are needed to be supported and encouraged by the principals, head teachers of their schools concerned so that they are able to use their new knowledge and skills without any hesitations and barriers.

Future research

This small study due to lack of resources and time constraints, could not investigate into other critical areas of the teacher preparation programs in RITEs. Therefore, it is suggested that researchers in education must investigate into other areas of this problem such as teacher preparation curriculum, teacher preparation program evaluation, implementation issues and management issues involved in it.

References

- Adams, T. (1998). Prospective elementary teachers' mathematics subject matter knowledge: The real number system. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 20, 35-48.
- American Federation of Teachers (2000, April). *Building a profession: Strengthening teacher preparation and induction* (Report of the K-12 Teacher Education Task Force). Washington, D. C.: Author.
- Ball, D. L. (1990a). Prospective elementary and secondary teachers' understanding of division. *Journal of Research in Mathematics Education*, 21, 132-144.
- Ballou, D., & Podgursky, M. (2000). Reforming teacher preparation and licensing: What is the Evidence? *Teachers College Record*, 102, 28-56.
- Borman, G.D, & Kimball, S.M. (2005). Teacher quality and educational quality: do teachers with higher standards based evaluation rating close students achievements gap? *The elementary school journal* 106 (1), 23-37
- Clotfelter , C.T., Ladd, H.F, & Vigdor, J.L.(2006). Teacher student matching and assessment of teacher effectiveness, (NBER working paper No. 11936). Cambridge MA, National Bureau of economic research pp.22-3
- Coggshall, J.C. (2007). Communication framework for measuring teacher quality and effectiveness: Bringing coherence to the conversation. Retrieved from [www.ncctq.org/publications/NCCTQ/cmmframe work.pdf](http://www.ncctq.org/publications/NCCTQ/cmmframe%20work.pdf) on 12/09/2012
- Darling &Hammond, D. (2000). *How Teacher Education Matters?* *Journal of Teacher Education*, 51 (3), pp.145-155
- Elahi & Nizam (1997). *Teacher Education in India*. New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation
- Fullan, M., with Stiegelbauer, S. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change*. New York: Teacher's College Press.
- Feiman-Nessmer, S. (1990). Teacher Preparation: Structural and Conceptual Alternatives, in Houston, W. (ed.),*Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*. New York: Micmillan
- Frome, P., Lasater, B., Cooney, S. (2005). Well qualified teachers and high quality teaching: are they the same? Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Educational Board. Retrieved from www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/briefs/05vo6_research_brief_high_teaching on dated 24/10/2012
- Gitomer, D. H., & Latham, A. S. (1999). *The academic quality of prospective teachers: The impact of admissions and licensure testing*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Guyton, E., & Farokhi, E. (1987). Relationships among academic performance, basic skills, subject matter knowledge, and teaching skills of teacher education graduates. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 38, 37-42.
- Goldhaber, D.D., & Anthony, E.(2004). Can teacher quality be effectively assessed? (Working paper) Seattle, WA: Center on reinventing public education. Retrieved from www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/410958/NBPTSoutcomes.pdf
- Gulab, C. (2000). *Teacher Education and professional Organizations*, New Delhi, Autherspress
- Holtzman and Galton, S.J. (2007). Does teacher preparation matter? Evidence about teacher certification, teach for America and teacher effectiveness. *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 13 (48). Retrieved from www.eppa.asu.edu/eppa/v13n42/v13n42.pdf on dated 21/10/2012

- Imig, G.David, & Imig, R. Scott. (2007). *Quality in Teacher Education: Seeking a Common Definitions*, Handbook of Teacher Education, Springer, P.95
- McNergney, Robert, F. & Herbert J.M. (2001). *Foundations of Education: The Challenge of Professional Practice*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon
- Shulman, L.S. (2000). Teacher development: Roles of domain expertise and pedagogical knowledge. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*. 21(1).129-135.
- Siddique, S.A. (1990). *Teacher Education in Pakistan*, National Training Workshop on Educational Planning and Management for Principals of Teachers Training Institutions, AEPAM, Islamabad, Pakistan, Ministry of Education, PP. 17-19
- Sheikh, M. & Rasool, M. G (1998). *Allied Material for Teacher Education in Pakistan*, Islamabad, Pakistan. AIOU, pp. 40-48
- Wenglinsky, H. (2000). *Teaching the teachers: Different settings, different results*. Princeton,NJ: Educational Testing Service