

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE COMMENTS GIVEN BY SUPERVISORS FOR B.Ed. STUDENTS DURING PRACTICE TEACHING PROGRAMME (PTP) IN RELATION TO THEIR PERSONAL VARIABLES

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Abstract

This paper is the documentary survey of comments written by Supervisors during real classroom teaching performance by B.Ed. students in the Practice Teaching Program (PTP). It is based on randomly selected 51 students' 102 lesson plan notebooks comprising of 979 supervised lesson plans and 3444 supervision remarks given by Supervisors delegated for PTP organized by Faculty of Education, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (India) in the session 2004-05. The major findings of the study revealed that – (1) The very less average number of supervised lesson plans (19.196) was found out of 40 lesson plans of every student and the total percentage of average supervised lesson plans was 47.99% in practice teaching programme. (2) Supervisors' sex does not affect their comments written for B.Ed. students during PTP but they are varying with their teaching experience. (3) Supervisors haven't focused equal attention to each teaching skill. The skills like Black Board writing, Questioning, Illustrating with Examples, Classroom management, Pupil participation are given comparatively more attention by all supervisors while the least attention is given to skills like Introduction, Reinforcement, Silence and nonverbal clues, Probing. Further the comments which do not belong to any of the eleven categories of skills given by Passi (1976) have been identified as 'general remarks' which are given comparatively more attention by all the Supervisors.

Key-words: Comments given by Supervisors, Practice Teaching Programme (PTP), B.Ed. Students, Supervisors, Personal Variables

Practice teaching is a crucial aspect of teacher preparatory programme in teacher training institutions. It is a part of the whole process of teacher preparation during Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program/course in which teacher trainees go to real schools and teach in the real classroom setting. Practicum in general is considered as one of the most important aspects of a student teacher's education (Derrick & Dicks, 2005). The student teachers are aided to put into practice the theories and principles of education which they have learnt in the classroom as they teach students in the schools for giving them a real classroom experience in teaching so that they can develop the required skills for their classroom teaching later after B.Ed. Course. Higher Education institutions are under increasing pressure to better prepare their graduates for the world of work, and within professional courses, the practicum continues to be an important means by which this expectation is addressed. Depending on the discipline, the practicum appears in many forms: as field experiences, cooperative education, sandwich programme, internship, clerkship, clinical practicum, and the like.

Practice teaching provides the “neophytes” some type of pre-service training which serves as opportunity to be exposed to the realities of teaching and performance of professional activities. Yet mere possession of knowledge will not enable him to teach effectively. He needs to know how to present knowledge in a form that the pupil can understand and to use knowledge in appropriate situations. Teaching practice provides trainees the opportunity to utilize the various teaching methods in actual classroom/school conditions under the constant supervision of competent and

experienced teachers. As mentioned earlier, the student teachers are supervised by the internal supervisors during their practice teaching. The supervision is to provide feedback to the teachers and sharpen their teaching skill. Furthermore, besides teaching activities, student teachers are exposed to professional activities, which are part of the teacher roles in schools. Student teachers have been encouraged to adopt various teaching models during the practice of teaching. For this purpose, the pupil teacher needs to learn various practical techniques and strategies; successful teachers have used to enable pupils to learn effectively. In second segment of teacher education programme, the pupil teacher is given training in practical teaching techniques through a programme of practice teaching.

Need of the Study:

The above section clearly reveals that, students of all professional courses are required to undergo on the job training /apprenticeship training and acquire on the job experience before entry in to any profession. In Teacher Education, the word 'practice teaching' implies a period of apprenticeship for a pupil teacher who undergoes a practical training in the job of teaching in actual classroom situation attached to a school under supervision of expert practitioners. In many TEIs practice teaching is also known as “internship in teaching.”

The theoretical cause to which greatest attention is given at present in teacher education are many cases, student teachers do not see the exact relationship between the content of the course and the actual teaching in the classroom with The integration of theory and practice and consequent curricular response to the requirement of the school system still remains inadequate. The Education commission (1964-66) reviewed the major weakness of student teaching, “At present students teachers are commonly required to give a specified number of isolated lessons, many of which are often unsupervised or ill supervised. The practice of continuous block teaching is adopted only in a few institutions and its organization still leaves much to be desired.” The commission had clearly pointed out the fact that student teaching is often 'unsupervised or ill-supervised'. The provision for the number of lessons is varied from state to state or institute to institute in all over India. As reported by Dubey (1981) that number of practice lessons in Maharashtra varied between thirty and forty , except Bombay University where it was twenty , and in Madhya Pradesh student teachers taught 30-35 lessons even if there was provision for forty lessons .In RIE'S of NCERT where two years B. Ed. Programme has been introduced student teachers are to practice 80 lessons in teaching subjects, 40 being in each subject (RIE Bhubaneswar, 1999). The total number of lessons range is from 40 -60 as reported by Singh (1982). And it can be safely asserted that this practice has not improved in any appreciable measure, since the commission presented their report. A brief report of some studies conducted to judge the effectiveness of practice teaching has been given here for ready reference:

According to Ashcroft and Griffiths (1989), Newman (1996), and Zbikowski (1990), practice teaching has to be implemented in such a way that it provides student teachers with the opportunity for a reflective approach towards teaching. Many authors couple the two variations of providing student teachers with teaching experience (practice teaching and evaluation lessons or criticism lessons) in one concept ...teaching practice... (Bozko 1989, Kurian 1988, Oslaitan & Agusiobo 1981). According to them student teachers are observed, supervised and evaluated by teachers in the schools where they are placed and by the college or university supervisors. One of the most important aspects of teaching practice, as explained by these authors, is the fact that supervisors and student teachers have to meet and discuss the latter's progress. This is done during and after the practice sessions according to established criteria. This gives each student a profile of achievements in various aspects of his/her practice. Collinson, V. et al. (2009) has also added, “the improvement of

teacher education is not only a matter of additional supervision, better feedback or adequate facilities for practice, there is also the need for better understanding of the complexities of the teaching process.”

Some other studies pertaining to supervision of practice teaching indicate that Pre-student teaching experiences provided to students by teacher training institutions were not sufficient in terms of skills and techniques of teaching required for classroom teaching (Raj, 1984); many teacher educators are not adequately qualified to supervise practice teaching in the subject in which they supervise the lesson as well as supervisors/examiners do not observe the lesson for adequate time (Mohan,1980), Poor, uneven supervision and lack of preparation by supervisors (Price 1989 , Yeung et al. 1993 , Yarrow 1992). The supervisors do not observe the lessons completely and they rarely put detailed observation on lesson plan (Mohanty,1984). Further he explained that, the practice teaching programmes stressed the delivery of lessons only and other activities expected from a pupil teacher were neglected. The teachers teaching in the campuses also say that the practice teaching has not been very useful for the student teachers as it is not being carried out as it should be. If this is true, this will have a very adverse affect not only in school teaching system but also have a negative impact in the life of the student teachers. In the same way, Clark, A., & Collins, S. (2007) pointed out, “If doctors make worst patients, teachers make the worst students”. I was just curious to find out the current state of student teaching so that the limitations/drawbacks could be found and the suggestions could be made to improve it.

Findings indicate that while practicum is widely accepted as a valuable and successful component of professional education. It has a numbers of shortcomings; and the lack of good quality research into the practicum makes it difficult to draw unequivocal conclusions. A numbers of questions are raised in the mind of researcher are –

What is the average of supervised lesson plans of a pupil teacher in practice teaching programme?

Whether the supervisor's personal variables affect the comments written for pupil teachers in practice teaching programme (PTP)?

In the light of these research questions the researchers have decided to undertake this study .

Operational Definition of Technical Terms :

Practice Teaching Programme (PTP): It is a part of the whole process of teacher preparation during B.Ed. in which pupil teachers go to school and teach. For the purpose of present study, the act of practice teaching includes these 11 teaching skills identified by Passi (1976)— Skill of: (1) Introduction, (2) Questioning, (3) Probing, (4) Explaining,(5) Illustrating with Examples, (6) Stimulus Variation, (7) Silence and Nonverbal Cues, (8) Reinforcement, (9) Pupil Participation, (10) Black Board Writing, and (11) Classroom Management.

B.Ed. Student: It means the students who were doing B.Ed. course from Faculty of Education, BHU, Varanasi (India) during the session 2004-05.

Comments Given by Supervisors: It means the supervision remarks given by different supervisors appointed in practice teaching programme of the B.Ed. students of Faculty of Education, BHU during session 2004-05.

Supervisors:

For the purpose of present study, supervisors means the supervisors appointed to supervise the pupil teacher's delivering their lesson plans in practice teaching programme of the B.Ed. students of Faculty of Education, BHU, Varanasi, during session 2004-05.

Personal Variables:

For the purpose of the present study personal variables include the supervisors' gender and teaching experience.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To find out the average number of supervised lesson plans of a pupil teacher in practice teaching programme.
2. To study the comments given by Supervisors for B.Ed. Students during Practice Teaching Programme (PTP) in relation to their following Personal Variables:
 - 2.1. Gender,
 - 2.2. Teaching experience.

Hypotheses:

Following research hypotheses were formulated to achieve the objectives of this study.

H1. Supervisors' comments given for B.Ed. Students during PTP vary with their personal variables.

Further the related sub hypotheses were framed as follows:

H1.1. Supervisors' comments written for pupil teachers during PTP vary with their gender.

H1.2. Supervisors' comments written for pupil teachers during PTP vary with their teaching experience.

Methodology:

Documentary survey method was used for conduction of this study .The comments written by supervisors for pupil teachers in Practice Teaching Programme (PTP) were categorized into above mentioned eleven teaching skills as given by Passi (1976).

Population and Sample:

The population of the present study consisted of all the Supervisors appointed for supervision in the practice teaching programme of B.Ed. students of Faculty of Education, Banaras Hindu University (B.H.U) during session 2004-05. It also included all the pupil teachers who participated in the PTP, and obtained written comments on their plan transaction in the classroom.

The researchers randomly selected 51 students' 102 lesson plan note books that comprise 979 supervised lesson plans and 3444 supervision remarks given by different supervisors appointed in practice teaching programme of the B.Ed. students as a sample for the present study.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data:

The written remarks in lesson plan note-books taken as sample of this study were categorized, marked and counted on the basis of eleven skills categorized by Passi (1976). The obtained data in form of 3444 written remarks by Supervisors were tabulated, analyzed, interpreted. It has been presented here along with each objective that is given in section I and II. The collected data was subjected to the percentage of remarks written by different Supervisors appointed for supervision in the PTP. The interpretations are mainly based on the obtained quantitative data only.

Section I: The Average Number of Supervised Lesson Plans of a Pupil Teacher in Practice

Teaching Programme.

The first objective of this study was to find out the average number of supervised lesson plans of a pupil teacher in practice teaching programme. The frequency and percentage of obtained related data revealed that approximately (19.196) average supervised lesson plans of every student were found, while (9.598) average supervised lesson plans were found in each lesson plan note book and the total (47.99 %) lesson plans were supervised out of 40 lesson plans of every student in practice teaching programme.

Section II: Categorization of the Comments given by Supervisors for B.Ed. Students during Practice Teaching Programme (PTP) with Reference to their Personal Variables -

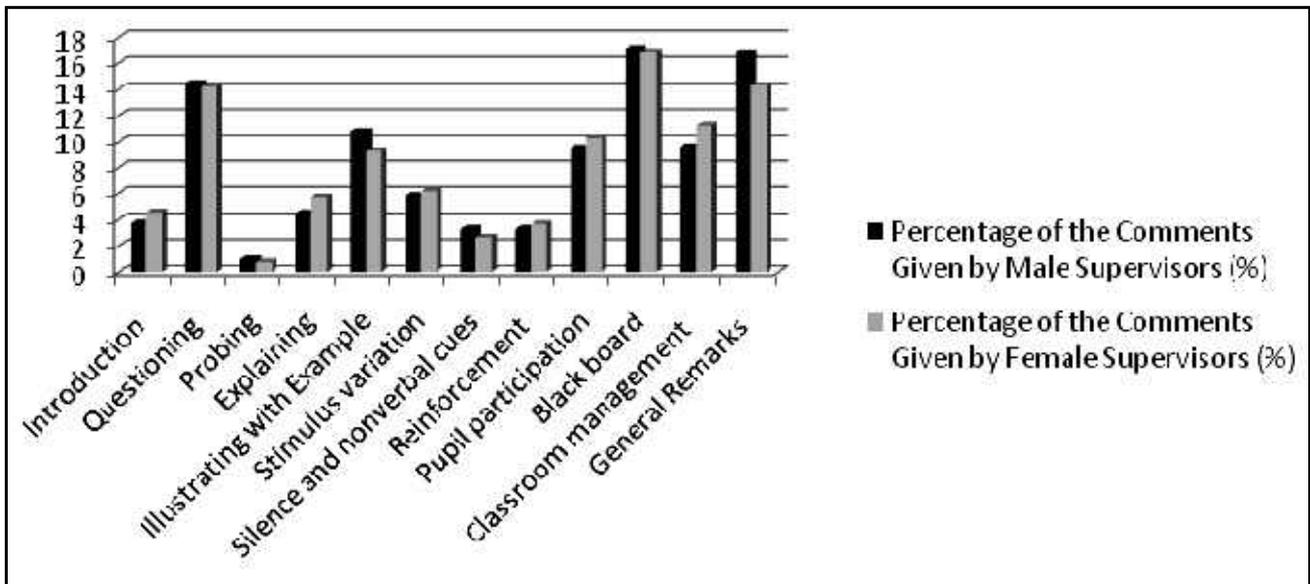
The second objective of this study was to study the comments given by Supervisors for B.Ed. Students during Practice Teaching Programme (PTP) with reference to their Personal Variables. For achieving this objective the related two concomitant objectives were framed which have been given below at their respective places. Further, the frequency and percentage of written comments obtained for each skill have been given below in respective tables and represented in related Bar-diagrams.

Categorization of the Comments given by Supervisors for B.Ed. Students during Practice Teaching Programme (PTP) with reference to their Gender: The related data has been given in Table-1 and Figure-1.

Table-1: Comments given by Supervisors for B.Ed. Students during Practice Teaching Programme (PTP) on the basis of their Gender

S. No.	Teaching Skills	Comments Given by Male Supervisors	Percentage of the Comments Given by Male Supervisors (%)	Comments Given by Female Supervisors	Percentage of the Comments Given by Female Supervisors (%)
1.	Introduction	095	03.72	041	04.60
2.	Questioning	370	14.50	127	14.25
3.	Probing	025	00.98	007	00.79
4.	Explaining	115	04.51	051	05.72
5.	Illustrating with Example	274	10.73	083	09.30
6.	Stimulus variation	148	05.80	055	06.16
7.	Silence and nonverbal cues	084	03.29	024	02.69
8.	Reinforcement	084	03.29	033	03.69
9.	Pupil participation	243	09.52	092	10.31
10.	Black board	438	17.16	151	16.93
11.	Classroom management	246	09.64	100	11.21
12.	General Remarks	430	16.86	128	14.35
	Over all remarks	2552	100	892	100

Figure-1: Bar-diagram of the Data in Table -1



Above Table-1 and Figure-1 clearly indicate that the male supervisors focused comparatively more attention to Black Board writing (17.16%), Questioning (14.50%), Illustrating with Examples (10.73%), Classroom management (09.64%), Pupil participation (09.52%), while the female supervisors to Questioning (14.25%), Illustrating with Examples (09.30%), Black Board writing (16.93%), Classroom management (11.21%), Pupil participation (10.31%) and male supervisors focus average attention to Stimulus variation (05.80%), Explaining (04.51%) while female supervisors to Introduction (04.60%), Stimulus variation (06.16%), Explaining (05.72%) and the male supervisors focused comparatively lesser attention on Effective Introduction of Lesson Plan (03.72%), Reinforcement (03.29%), Silence and nonverbal cues (03.29%), Probing (00.98%) while female supervisors on Reinforcement (03.69%), Silence and nonverbal clues (02.69%), Probing (00.79%) and both male and female supervisors very much commented general remarks (16.86%) and (14.35%) while writing comments for pupil teachers in PTP.

Categorization of the Comments given by Supervisors for B.Ed. Students during Practice Teaching Programme (PTP) with reference to their Teaching Experience: The related data have been given in Table-2 and Figure-2.

Table-2: Comments given by Supervisors for B.Ed. Students during Practice Teaching Programme (PTP) on the basis of their Teaching Experience

S. NO.	Teaching Skills	Comments Given by the Supervisors having Teaching Experience	Percentage of the Comments Given by the Supervisors having Teaching Experience (%)	Comments Given by the Supervisors	Percentages of the Comments Given by the Supervisors don't having Teaching Experience (%)
1	Introduction	059	03.79	077	04.07
2	Questioning	211	13.58	286	15.13
3	Probing	017	01.09	015	00.79
4	Explaining	092	05.92	074	03.91
5	Illustrating with Example	158	10.17	199	10.53
6	Stimulus variation	091	05.86	112	05.93
7	Silence and nonverbal cues	059	03.79	049	02.60
8	Reinforcement	068	04.38	049	02.60
9	Pupil participation	155	09.98	180	09.52
10	Black board	247	15.89	342	18.10
11	Classroom management	152	09.78	194	10.26
12	General Remarks	245	15.77	313	16.56
	Over all remarks	1554	100	1890	100

Figure-2: Bar-diagram of the Data in Table -2

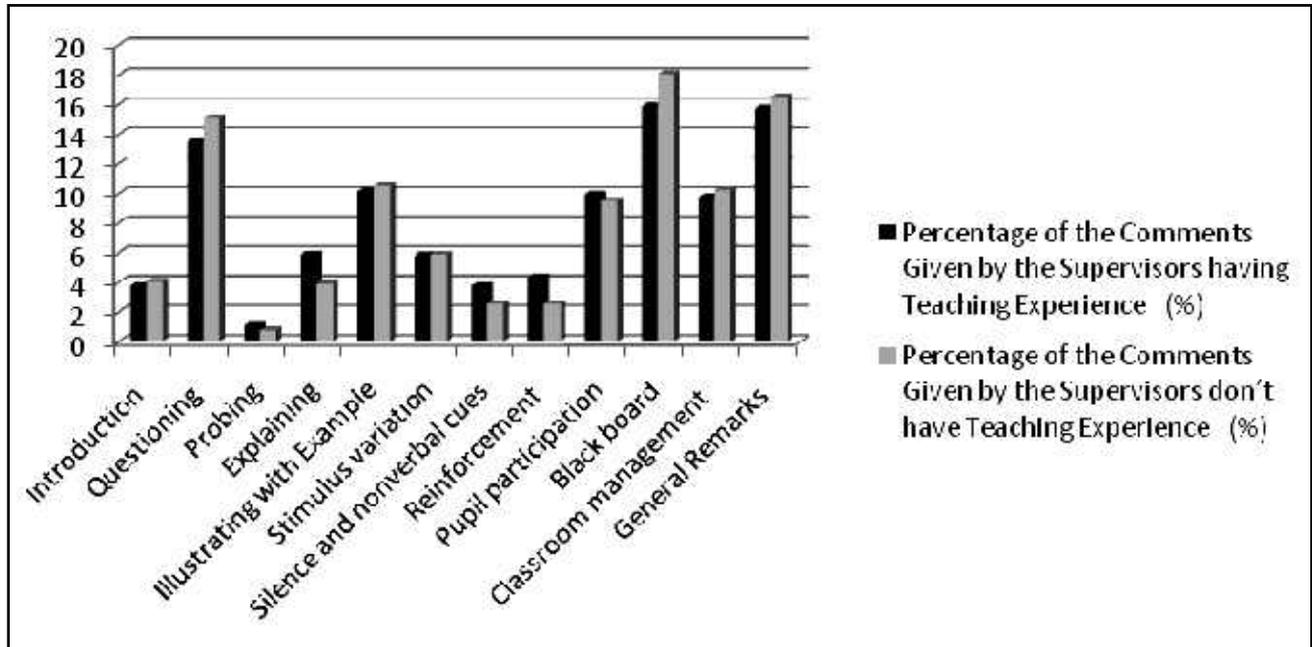


Table-2 and Figure-2 show that the Supervisors having teaching experience focus maximum attention to Questioning (13.58%), Black Board writing (15.89%), Illustrating with Examples (10.17%), Classroom management (09.78%), Pupil participation (09.98%), while the Supervisors don't having teaching experience to Questioning (15.13%), Illustrating with Examples (10.53%), Black Board writing (18.10%), Classroom management (10.26%), Pupil participation (09.52%) and the Supervisors having Teaching Experience focused less attention to Stimulus variation (05.86%), Reinforcement (04.38%), Explaining (05.92%) while the Supervisors don't having Teaching Experience to Introduction (04.07%), Stimulus variation (05.93%), and the Supervisors having Teaching Experience focused least attention to Introduction (03.79%), Silence and nonverbal cues (03.79%), Probing (01.09%) while the Supervisors don't having Teaching Experience to Reinforcement (02.60%), Silence and nonverbal cues (02.60%), Explaining (03.91%), Probing (00.79%) and both the Supervisors having and don't having Teaching Experience very much commented general remarks (15.77%) and (16.56%) while writing comments for pupil teachers in PTP.

Findings and Implications:

The analysis and interpretation of the data in the above sections I and II clearly reveal the following findings followed by their implications:

1. Based on Section-I it can be said that the very less average number of supervised lesson plans (19.196) were found, as well as the lesser average number of supervised lesson plans (9.598) were found in each lesson plan note book of every student and the total percentage of average supervised lesson plans were 47.99 % out of 40 lesson plans of every student in practice teaching programme.

Implications: The findings of the study reveal that the average number of supervised lesson plans were not preferably sufficient in Practice Teaching Programme (PTP). There may be several reasons for this.

For example as rightly said by Mohan (1980), Supervisors may not be trained properly for supervision work. Even if trained they may not supervise the lesson for sufficient/adequate time. The other reason can be lack of preparation for supervision (Price 1989, Yung et.al. 1993, Yarrow 1992). Therefore, there is a need of proper orientation of Supervisors regarding supervision techniques.

Based on section-II the following findings related to each of the supervisors' personal variables emerged-

With Reference to Supervisors' Gender: It can be said that unnecessary much attention is given by both male and female supervisors to the skills of- Black Board writing (17.16%), Questioning (14.50%), Illustrating with Examples (10.73%), Classroom management (09.64%), Pupil participation (09.52%) and the least attention is given to Introduction (03.72%), Reinforcement (03.29%), Silence and nonverbal clues (03.29%), Probing (00.98%). The comments which do not belong to any of the eleven categories of skills have been identified as 'general remarks' which are given comparatively more attention by both male and female supervisors as compared to eleven teaching skills. Therefore, it can be said that equal attention is not given to each of the eleven skills by Supervisors while writing comments for pupil teachers during PTP.

With Reference to Supervisors' Teaching Experience : It can be said that unnecessary much attention is given by the Supervisors (both with and without Teaching Experience) to the skills of- Black Board writing (15.89%), Questioning (13.58%), Illustrating with Examples (10.17%), Pupil participation (09.98%), Classroom management (09.78%), and the least attention is given to Explaining (05.92%), Introduction (03.79%), Reinforcement (02.60%), Silence and nonverbal clues (02.60%), Probing (00.79%). The comments which do not belong to any of the eleven categories of skills have been identified as 'general remarks' which are given comparatively more attention as compared to eleven teaching skills by Supervisors (both with and without Teaching Experience). Therefore, it can be said that equal attention is not given to each of the eleven skills by Supervisors while writing comments for pupil teachers during PTP.

Implications:

The above findings reflect that many teaching skills are totally neglected. No care is given to them while writing comments. The reason may be that, the Supervisors do not observe the lessons completely and they rarely put detailed observation on lesson plan (Mohanty, 1984). Similarly the observation of Mohan (1980) that the Supervisors do not observe the lesson for adequate time also holds well. The findings of this study also get support from the study of Singh (2008) where the problem of pupil teachers during PTP have been highlighted and they reflect that supervisors are not well prepared for the supervision work of PTP. Singh and Gardia (2008) have also suggested for curricular reform to improve the quality of teacher education in India. Therefore the above findings can contribute greatly in preparation of Teacher Educators for Supervision work. Even the Refresher courses organized for Teacher Educators can be enriched through taking care of these findings.

Conclusion

Quality is the key to success of Practice Teaching Program (PTP) in Teacher Education is the axle of the program. Therefore its quality is key to success of the program. Success of PTP depends to a great extent on the successful Supervision work of PTP. The present study reveals that the very less average number of supervised lesson plans was found. Supervisors' sex does not affect their

comments but their comments written for pupil teachers during PTP vary with their teaching experience. Further the equal attention is not given by Supervisors to each teaching skill. As evident from findings least focus is given on several teaching skills. General remarks which do not fall in the category of any of the skills are given comparatively more focus by Supervisors. Therefore, there is a need to properly train and educate Teacher Educators who are assigned the task of Supervision. Further research in this area is required as the area lacks deeper longitudinal and horizontal researches with overall focus on PTP. This study may act as an indicator of existing loophole in the process of PTP.

Suggestions for Improvement in Practice Teaching Programme –

It is very much needed to train and educate the Teacher Educators (and all those scholars involved in the task of supervision) regarding supervision of PTP. While going through such programs they should focus proper attention to all the teaching skills as well as all the components of different teaching skills in writing comments for pupil teachers in PTP. Organizing a programme on integration of teaching skills would also be much lucrative for teacher trainees.

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