

## Pre-internship Practice Teaching Techniques at Elementary Level Pre-Service Teacher Training Programme in Himachal Pradesh

Dr. Ajay Sharma<sup>1\*</sup> | Ms. Priksha Kumari<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Elementary Education, NCERT, New Delhi, India.

<sup>2</sup>Research Scholar (Ph.D. Education), School of Education, Faculty of Education, Basic Sciences and Humanities, Abhilashi University, Nau Graun, Chail-Chowk, Mandi, Himachal Pradesh, India.

\*Corresponding Author: sharmaajay219@gmail.com

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### ABSTRACT

*Pre-internship teaching practices implemented at the time of pre-service teacher training programme play an influential role in preparing skilled, confident and competent teaching professional who can enhance and sustain the quality of school education, especially at elementary level. Micro-teaching and simulated teaching practice at the institution level are two such important innovations which are at the core of curriculum transaction procedures in any pre-service teacher training programme since their inception. Present paper highlights the execution of these innovative techniques in terms of methods/ strategies used in orientation process, practicing the skills, duration of these techniques, observations made, number of lessons practiced during pre-school teaching practices etc. in pre-service teacher training programme at elementary level in Himachal Pradesh. Using descriptive survey research, 14 teacher education colleges and 4 DIETs were selected for the present investigation using random sampling. The data collected from prospective teachers through questionnaires and observation checklists was analysed & interpreted using frequencies and percentages. The findings showed disparities in the execution of these techniques and based upon the findings, certain educational implications and suggestions have also been made for fruitful execution of these techniques.*

**Keywords:** Pre-internship Teaching Practice, Micro-teaching, Simulated Teaching, Micro-lessons, Simulated Macro Lessons, Pre-service Teacher Training Programme.

### Introduction

Pre-service teacher education today refers to process of professional development of an individual by understanding the pedagogy of subjects/ disciplines before entering the profession of teaching. The professionally developed individual when starts teaching the children in the formal school set-up, is termed as a teacher. The teacher's professional development, commonly termed as teacher preparation, may take a traditional or objectivist approach which focuses on the achievement of learning outcome derived from a set of competencies. There is also a possibility of having progressive or open type approach having an orientation of subjectivity among pupils mainly focusing the process of learning. Sagar (2019) described the concept of the teacher as a benevolent despot who fills children's minds with the values and information considered important by adults, who shapes their "personality" through the impact of his/her own personality in the background in order to help pupils to be self-directing individuals. It is the teacher, who provides a variety of educative and learning experiences to the individual learner so as to develop them in to good human beings and responsible citizens of a nation, especially in present day scenario. So, teacher's role is of paramount importance from the point of view of a learner, from the point of view of the society, point of view of the community, from the point of view of the locality, and from

the point of view of a country or nation as well. In this context, it is rightly pointed out by American Commission on Teacher Education that "The quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizens. The quality of its citizens depends not exclusively, but in critical measure upon the quality of their education depends more than upon any single factor upon the quality of their teacher". The UNESCO Commission Report (1996) also echoed similar voice in a different way, "The importance of the role of the teacher as an agent of change promoting understanding and tolerance has never been more obvious than today. It is likely to become more critical in the twenty first century improving the recruitment, training social status and conditions of work of teachers, they need the appropriate knowledge skills, personal characteristics professional prospectus and motivation if they are to meet the expectations placed upon them". Hence, the role of teacher education or the process of teacher preparation programme becomes of paramount importance, especially during pre-service teacher preparation.

The process of teacher preparation during pre-service teacher education programmes refers to gaining theoretical knowledge related to process of school education and its broader perspective from the point of view of children, who undergo through the process of school education. It is not limited only in getting theoretical knowledge only but also to apply the acquired knowledge practically in terms of practice for teaching in a formal and real school set up termed as practice teaching or school internship.

Pre-service teacher education is organized for different levels of school education. Earlier these levels were termed as early childhood education (ECE), elementary and secondary, which are still in practice in most of the States and UTs across the country. However, presently with the implementation of National Education Policy (2020), these levels are under re-organisation and restructuring as well, with the newly coined curricular and pedagogical structures for different stages school education viz. Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary.

At present Himachal Pradesh organizes pre-service teacher preparation programmes for two levels of school education viz. elementary and secondary. At secondary level, it offers two years B.Ed programme and 4 years integrated B.A.B.Ed./B.Sc.B.Ed. programme. At elementary level, it offers two years Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.), for preparing elementary school teachers, who are going to teach children of classes 1 to 5; through 28 self-financed Teacher Education Institutions and 12 District Institutes of Education and Training affiliated to Himachal Pradesh Board of Education Dharamshala. Curriculum of pre-service teacher preparation programme at elementary level was developed by State Council of Educational Research and Training, Solan which was based upon NCFTE, 2009. This programme offers theoretical courses along with mandate of essential school internship to practice the gained theoretical knowledge, in real classroom situations. In the first phase the prospective elementary teachers are required under go one month school internship to get them acquainted school processes in 3<sup>rd</sup> semester and in second phase for four months (16 weeks) they are required to practice teaching with the skills gained or acquired during pre-internship at their institutional level. During pre-internship preparations the prospective teachers are exposed to the innovative practice of micro-teaching and macro-teaching under simulated conditions with their peer or fellow prospective teachers. During micro-teaching prospective teachers are required to gain and practice certain essential core skills with the help of peer prospective teachers under the supervision of a specialized mentor teacher. While during macro-teaching/ simulation they are required to practice certain lessons subject wise, which they will be teaching or practicing in real classroom situations during practice teaching. The macro-lessons are the integrated versions of all the skills acquired during micro-teaching procedures. In this way the techniques of micro-teaching and simulated teaching become important pre-requisites before practice teaching in real schools.

### **Significance of the Study**

The importance of pre-service teacher education/ preparation programme is not a new concept. It has been given due importance since ancient times to present scenario, though the goals and objectives have evolved over a period of time. National Education Policy (2020) also emphasizes that teacher education is crucial in determining a pool of school teachers that will shape the coming cohort. With the changing needs and demands of society, the goals of pre-service teacher education/ preparation have also changed accordingly. The goals of different levels of pre-service teacher preparation programme are different and they have their own importance from the point of view of level and structure of school education. However, none of them is superior or inferior to each other, rather they are interlinked and interdependent, which is true for each stage of school education.

As pre-service teacher training/ preparation programme at elementary level is supposed to equip the prospective elementary school teachers with appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills, attitude and innovative pedagogies that are essential to be attained by a competent and proficient elementary teacher in real world scenario. The facet of elementary school reckons consummate, capable & self-assured teaching professional. This is only viable if ongoing practices teaching is implemented efficaciously in the practice teaching schools. In such a scenario, it is essential to know how far a teacher preparation programme is successful in achieving its pre-decided goals, which further depends upon the practical aspect of the teacher preparation programme. What prospective teachers practice during practice teaching in real schools and real classroom situations depends largely on what they have practiced during their exposure to the techniques of micro-teaching and macro-teaching under simulated conditions. The quality of practice teaching is the reflection of quality of micro-teaching and macro-teaching, as it was rightly highlighted by Syzdykbayeva, Meterbayeva, Ageyeva, Agranovich, & Tyan (2025) during their literature review that lesson modeling, collaborative analysis of practice etc. not only enhance teachers' competence but also directly influence their classroom work.

### **Operational Definitions**

- **Pre-service Teacher Training Programme at Elementary Level**

The pre-service teacher training programme at elementary level refers to the formal training programme being imparted to the individuals before joining the formal schools as elementary teachers.

- **Pre-internship Practice Teaching Techniques**

The term pre-internship practice teaching techniques refers to the innovative practice teaching techniques of micro-teaching and simulated teaching which are conducted in the institute to develop varied and essential teaching skills to facilitate the prospective teachers for practicing them in real classroom situations that they have acquired during micro-teaching and simulated teaching at institutional level.

### **Objectives of the Study**

To study the pre-internship practice teaching techniques of micro-teaching and simulated teaching during the curriculum transaction in the pre-service teacher training programme at elementary level in Himachal Pradesh.

### **Methodology**

Survey method under descriptive method of research was used to realize the stated objective.

### **Sample of the Present Study**

The study was conducted using multistage sampling technique for Selection of Subjects of sample. At first 4 out of 12 districts were selected randomly. Further, out of 28 self-financed teacher education institutions and 12 District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), offering D.El.Ed. programme in Himachal Pradesh; 14 teacher education colleges and 4 DIETs were selected randomly to realize the stated objective. A sample of 517 elementary prospective teachers and 117 teacher educators was selected drawing upon incidental sampling.

### **Tools**

Due to the non-availability of standard tools, the present investigation utilized self-developed tool for collecting information related to the study. A structured questionnaire was used to collect responses of prospective teachers with regard to methods/ strategies used in orientation process, practicing the skills, duration of these techniques, observations made, number of lessons practiced during pre-internship teaching practices i.e. micro-teaching and simulated teaching practices in pre-service teacher training programme at elementary level in Himachal Pradesh.

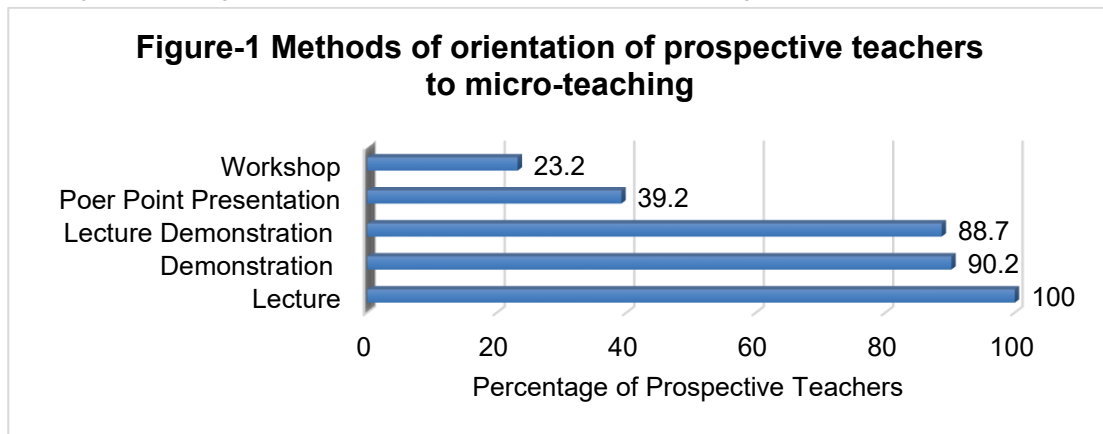
### **Data Analysis**

The information collected utilizing aforesaid questionnaire was tabulated and organized under different categories followed by qualitative data analysis. The tabulated data was further analyzed in terms of frequencies and percentages.

## Findings

### • Micro-Teaching

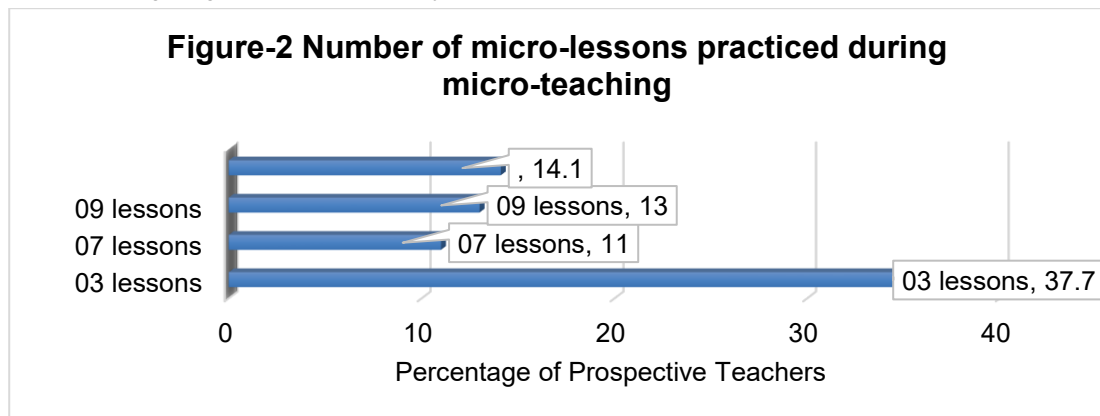
With regard to organization and execution of pre-internship practice teaching at institutional level, it has been responded by the concerned heads and teacher educators that though micro-teaching is not mandated by the prescribed curriculum/ syllabus in the two years D.El.Ed. programme, developed by SCERT Himachal Pradesh. However, the syllabus mentions only simulated teaching with internal 50 marks duration. Further, keeping in view merits of micro-teaching and scaled down teaching encounters, which are very much helpful in instilling the necessary skills and confidence among the prospective teachers from the point of view of real classroom scenarios, micro-teaching cycles on few important core teaching skills are organized at institution level, prior to macro-teaching under simulated conditions.



**Figure 1: represents various methods employed by teacher educators for orienting prospective teachers to micro-teaching**

Figure 1 shows that most of the prospective teachers are oriented to micro-teaching through lecture, demonstration and lecture-demonstration. Which indicates mostly the use of lecture-demonstration for orientating prospective teachers to micro-teaching. However, a little more than one third and a little less than one fourth of them responded for using power point presentations and workshop respectively.

Further, most of the prospective teachers responded for practicing following skills viz. Stimulus variation (100%), Explaining (99.4%), Probing question (97%), Introducing a lesson (96%), Reinforcement (92.7%), Illustration with example (73.6%), Chalkboard writing (74.9%) and Class management (50%). Which indicates a variety of micro-teaching skills being practiced in pre-service teacher training programme at elementary level in Himachal Pradesh.



**Figure 2: Displays number of micro-teaching lessons practiced by prospective teachers during micro-teaching at institutional level.**

Further, with regard to number of micro-teaching lessons practiced, a large variation was observed. From figure-1 it can be seen that about one third of the prospective teachers (34.2%) responded for 7-8 lessons; a little more than one fourth of them (27.5%) responded for 10 lessons; a little less than one fourth of them (23.2%) responded for 15 lessons, while few of them (11.8%) responded for 15-20 lesson during microteaching. This indicates that prospective teachers on an average practice approximately 2-5 lessons per teaching subject during micro-teaching. During data collection it was found that micro-teaching was practiced under simulated conditions only.

The percentage of responses of prospective teachers about the duration of micro-teaching are shown in Figure 3.

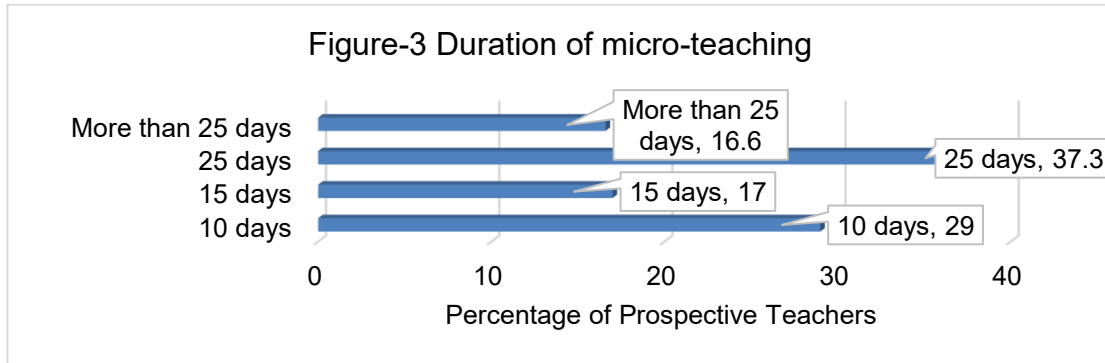
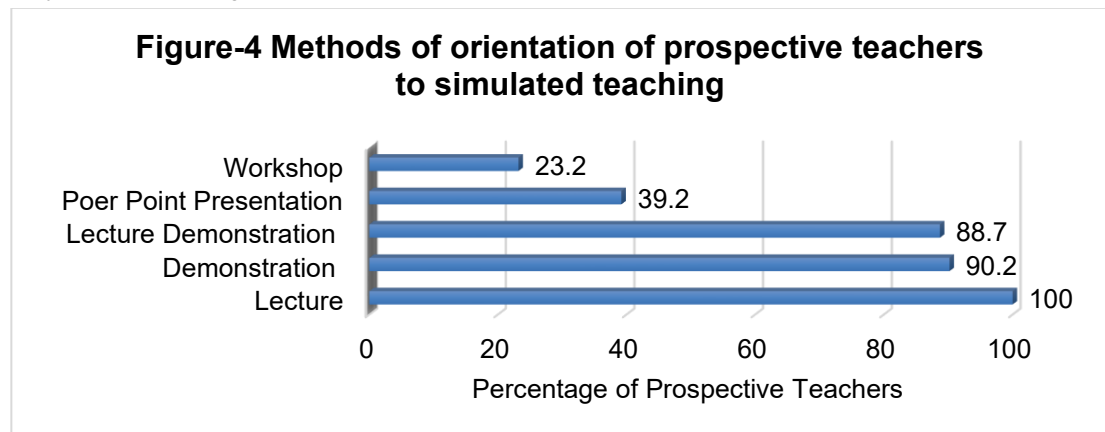


Figure-3 shows great variations in the duration of micro-teaching across the institutions offering pre-service teacher training programme at elementary level. As per the responses of prospective teachers, it can be seen that it is only about little more than one third of them who responded for one hour per day and a little more than one fourth of them responded for 25 days for micro-teaching, whereas some of them responded for 15 days (17.8%) and to 35 days (17.2%). Very few of them responded for 07 days to organize micro-teaching in their respective institution.

For observing micro-lessons no prescribed limit was reported by the prospective teachers, however, few of them informed about observing these lessons as per their requirement and/or convenience.

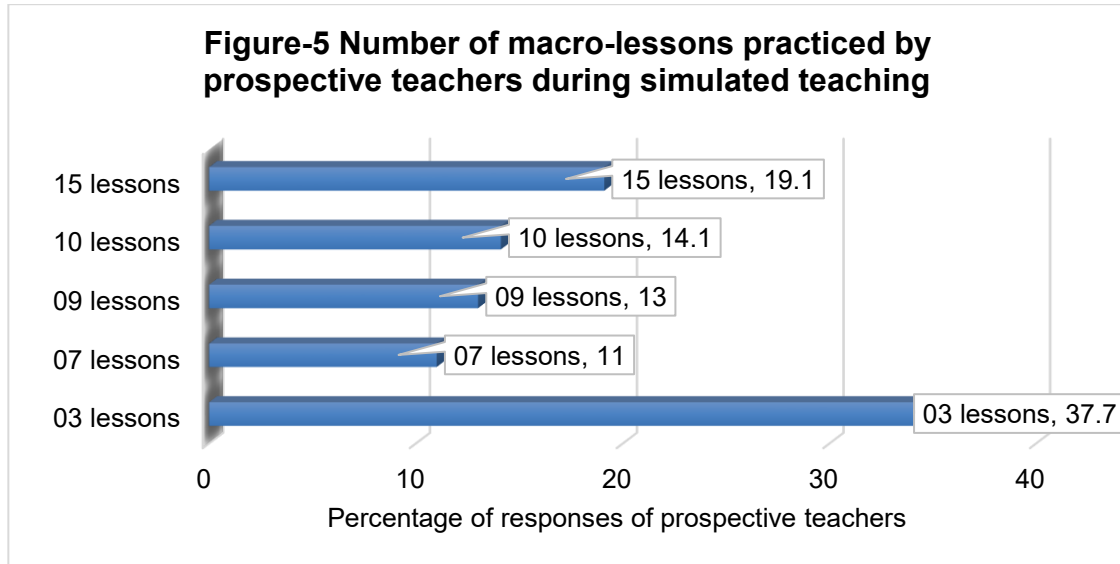
**Simulated Teaching (Macro-teaching)**

With regard to organization and execution of pre-internship practice teaching at institutional level, as the syllabus finds mention for executing simulated teaching, for 50 internal marks in the two-year D.El.Ed. programme, developed by SCERT, Himachal Pradesh. However, no clear-cut guidelines have been provided for simulated teaching, which makes it completely the discretion of the institution offering two-year D.El.Ed. programme.



**Figure 4: Represents various methods employed by teacher educators for orienting prospective teachers to simulated teaching**

Figure 4 shows that most of the prospective teachers are oriented to simulated teaching through lecture, demonstration and lecture-demonstration. Which indicates mostly the use of lecture-demonstration for orientating prospective teachers to simulated teaching also termed as macro-teaching. However, a little more than one third and a little less than one fourth of them responded for using power point presentations and workshop respectively.



**Figure 5: Displays number of macro-teaching lessons practiced by prospective teachers during simulated teaching at institutional level.**

Further, with regard to number of macro-teaching lessons practiced, a large variation similar to that of micro-teaching was observed. From figure-5 it can be seen that about little more than one third of the prospective teachers (37.7%) responded for 03 lessons; about one fifth of them (19.10%) responded for 15 lessons; some of them (14.1%) responded for 10 lessons; some of them (13.0%) for 09 lesson and few of them (11.0%) for 07 lessons during simulated teaching. This indicates that prospective teachers on an average practice approximately 03-15 macro-lessons per teaching subject during simulated-teaching.

The percentage of responses of prospective teachers about the duration of simulated-teaching are shown in Figure 6.

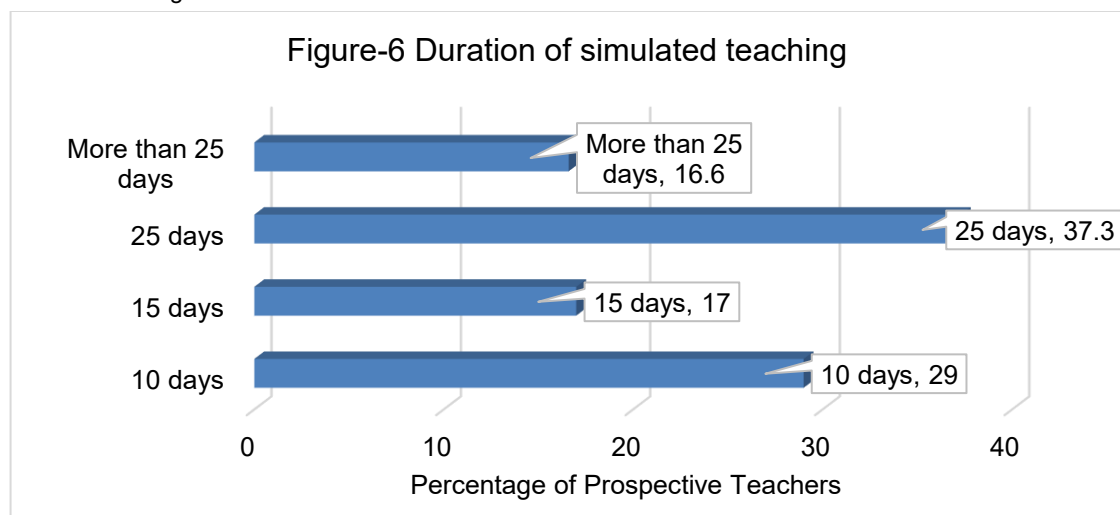


Figure-6 also shows great variations in the duration of simulated-teaching across the institutions offering pre-service teacher training programme at elementary level. As per the responses of prospective teachers, it can be seen that it is only about little more than one third of them who responded for 25 days and a little more than one fourth of them responded for 10 days for simulated-teaching, whereas some of them responded for 15 days (17.0%) and to 35 days (16.6%).

For observing macro-lessons also, no prescribed limit was reported by the prospective teachers, however, few of them informed about observing these lessons as per their requirement and/or convenience. The range of observation lessons during simulated teaching varied from as low as three to 10-15 lessons of peers.

### Discussion and Educational Implications

The findings indicate the orientation of prospective teachers to the two innovative techniques by using lecture-demonstration method. However, the findings also huge variations in the procedures for micro-teaching and simulated teaching (macro-teaching), in terms of number of lessons practiced, type of micro-teaching skills practiced, number of observations lessons of peers or fellow prospective teachers and duration for the execution of the two innovative techniques during the pre-internship practice teaching exposure to prospective elementary teachers. This variation is obvious as the prescribed curriculum/ syllabus does not find any specific procedure or requirement for the same. This might be one of the main reasons as the two innovations seems to be taken up casually at the convenience of the programme offering institutions with no fix credibility and standards for it. Which might adversely affect the practice teaching in real classroom situations. These findings are also in tune with the questionable quality of teacher education pointed out by Justice Verma Commission report 2012 and recently by NEP 2020. Justice Verma Commission (2012) stated that most of the teacher education institutions are running on commercial bases, which lack quality pre-service training. This pathetic condition of teacher education is the main cause of degradation of quality in school education. This situation was also echoed 8 years later by National Education Policy (2020) as it states that teacher education institutions are of poor standard and are selling degrees to earn profit. Both of these documents suggested for overhaul of teacher education especially at pre-service teacher education level. Similarly, these finding of present investigation also demand for the revision of syllabus/ curriculum of the two-year D.El.Ed. programme to set some standards in the changing classroom scenarios, as if teachers are born not educated then such teacher preparation programmes could not have been imagined and being run.

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