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NEW TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS: B.ED (HONS.) ELEMENTARY 4-YEAR AND ADE 2-YEAR PROGRAM: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Abstract

This research study aimed at follow up of new teacher education programs viz B. Ed. (Hons.) Elementary 04 year program at universities and Associate Degree in Education ADE 2 year program at Government Elementary Colleges of Education GECEs with the affiliation of universities have been launched throughout Pakistan. The focus of the study was on Province of Sindh. Qualitative research method was used to collect data through document analysis and field observations. All important areas of the programs like systematic implementation, curriculum development, professional development of teacher educators, scholarship awards for student teachers, practicum policy etc were covered in the study. In the end, recommendations were made to cover the main gaps in the proper implementation of the program.

Introduction

According to the National Education Policy (2009), According to the National Education Policy of 2009, in order to improve the overall quality of education in Pakistan, the standard of teacher education must be raised. Amongst its various proposals, the Policy calls for reform in pre-service training and standardization of professional qualifications.

The Policy makes the following recommendations:

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"A Bachelor's degree, with a B.Ed., shall be the minimum requirement for teaching at the elementary level. A Masters level for the secondary and higher secondary, with a B.Ed., shall be ensured by 2018. PTC and CT shall be phased out through encouraging the present set of teachers to improve their qualifications."

Teacher training arrangements, accreditation and certification procedures shall be standardized and institutionalized." Pp.42

A five-year, \$75 million Teacher Education Project aligned with the National Education Policy 2009 was launched by USAID to improve the quality of basic education through better-prepared teachers under the U.S. Government's long-term commitment to assist the Government of Pakistan in strengthening the education sector, the project is working towards institutionalizing reforms in pre-service teacher education in Pakistan. The USAID Teacher Education Project which previously known as Pre-STEP is supporting the Universities, provincial Departments of Education and the Higher Education Commission (HEC) in implementing the B. Ed. (Hons.) Elementary four year program at universities and Associate Degree in Education ADE 2 year program at Government Elementary Colleges of Teacher Education GECEs with the affiliation of universities. The one year and PTC and CT conventional programs have been phased out. (Retrieved from www.pakteachers.org/)

Big Achievements related to Implementation of B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary 04 year program: Pakistan Scenario

1. B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary 04 year program has been launched in 19 universities throughout Pakistan and according to latest figures total 1,268 students have been enrolled in the program throughout Pakistan. Associate Degree in Education ADE 2 year program has been launched at 92 Government Elementary Colleges of Teacher Education GECEs with the affiliation of universities by phasing out one year PTC and CT conventional programs and total 5,205 students have been enrolled in the

program. Students of ADE 2 year program will join B.Ed. 04 year program at universities from third year to complete B.Ed. 04 year degree.(Enrollments Consolidated March 2013)

2. The National Curriculum Review Committee NCRC in collaboration with Teacher Education Project partner universities has developed syllabi, course content, instructional materials and internal assessment procedures of the revised B.Ed. (Hons.) program and the interim ADE. The revised courses has been piloted at selected Pre-STEP universities and shared with others for wider adoption.
3. In order to meet the future accommodation needs of B.Ed.(Hons) Elementary 04 year program students new building construction projects have been launched at different partner universities.
4. Foreign PhD Scholarships have been awarded to Teacher Educators of universities and Elementary Colleges in order to enhance their professional capacity through the provision of higher qualification so that they may meet the future pedagogical needs of B.Ed. (Hons.) Elementary program and may teach core courses, foundation courses, professional pedagogy courses, and content courses in better way.
5. Merit based Scholarship incentive for B.Ed. (Hons.) Elementary four year program and Associate Degree in Education ADE program students has been implemented in order to encourage and motivate intelligent and hardworking students to join teaching as a Profession.
6. Professional Development and Capacity building of Teacher Educators of B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary 04 year program and ADE 2 year program have been carried out for the improvements in classroom teaching through the development of better qualified and well equipped teachers.
7. Developmental practicum course has been developed and being implemented. The courses aimed at provide Elementary grade student teachers with carefully sequenced and supervised field experiences in all areas of the elementary curriculum.

B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary 04 year program: Sindh Scenario

In the Province of Sindh, University of Sindh, University of Karachi, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Nawabshah, Sindh Maderssatul Islam University, Karachi, Institute of Business Administration, have launched B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary 4 year programs and Government Elementary Colleges of Teacher Education GECEs with the affiliation of universities have launched ADE 2 year program.

The University of Sindh being important partner in the Teacher Education Project (TEP) USAID since 2008 is actively involved in different initiatives regarding reforms in Teacher Education in the province of Sindh. The Faculty of Education first started Associate Degree in Education pilot program in the one Govt. Elementary College of Education for Women Hyderabad Sindh 2011 and simultaneously, Faculty of Education University of Sindh is a leading institution to launch B.Ed. (Hons.) Elementary 04 year Program in 2011 in the province of Sindh. Three batches have been enrolled till yet.

Following tables show the details of enrollment in **B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary 04 year and ADE 02 year Programs in Province of Sindh Program**

Table 1 ***Students Enrollment in B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary program at the Universities of Province of Sindh***

Program offered by the institution	Name of Institution	Male	Female	Total Enrollment
B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary 04 year	University of Karachi	20	61	81
B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary 04 year	University of Sindh	32	27	59

Source: USAID Teacher Education Program, www.pakteachers.org

Associate Degree in Education (ADE)

Table 2 *Enrollment in ADE 02 year Program in Province of Sindh*

Institution granted affiliation	Number of Affiliated Colleges	Male	Female	Total
University of Sindh	12	367	406	773
University of Karachi	03	60	138	198
Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur	06	211	212	423

Source: USAID Teacher Education Program, www.pakteachers.org

Achievements related to Implementation of B.Ed. Hons 04 year program: Sindh Scenario

1. The standardized scheme of studies for the B.Ed.4 year degree which includes a set of general education core courses, foundation courses in education, professional pedagogy courses, content courses and for the development of subject-matter proficiency in at least two disciplines of knowledge a sequence of supervised field experiences/internships in schools has been developed and approved by NCRC at HEC forum is being implemented in Sindh Province.
2. In the Province 21 Elementary Colleges have been affiliated with universities to launch ADE 2 year program
3. Teacher Educators of B.Ed. (Hons) 4 year program in universities and ADE program in affiliated colleges have got Professional Development opportunities.
4. Practicum component has been improved and implemented.
5. Collaborative Schools idea has been rationalized to improve and strengthen the internship and practicum component.
6. First batch of ADE 2 year program has passed out from affiliated colleges of Karachi and Hyderabad. ADE students will now join B.Ed. 4 year program at universities to complete their 4 year B.Ed. degree.

7. New recruitment and grade/scales of service policy for ADE and B.Ed.(Hons) 4 year graduate teachers have been developed according to which the provincial governments have agreed to increase starting salaries for ADE holders to BPS-16 and B.Ed. (Hons.) holders to BPS-17. The provincial Department of Services and General Administration have to formulate new recruitment rules that will give preference to the holders of these degrees to fill new teaching positions which is under approval phase.
8. Scholarship incentive to students of B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary four year program and Associate Degree in Education ADE program is provided.
9. Deans of Faculties, Faculty members, Teacher Educators of Elementary Colleges and officials of provincial government has been provided an opportunity of study tour of USA and Philipine in order to give them awareness about the Teacher Education system of USA and their school system.
10. In order to strengthen the Teacher Education in the Province and establish quality criteria, Sindh Teacher Education Development Authority STEDA has been established after the passage of the bill from the provincial assembly. With the establishment of STEDA, Sindh is first province which is working to build follow up mechanism for the sustenance of B.Ed. 4 year and ADE 2 year programs in the Province. Sindh Government had decided that PTC and CT certificates would not be accepted after the 2012, as Associate Degree in Education (ADE) will replace the PT and CT, adding that ADE has been approved by the Higher Education Commission.

Challenges Ahead

Student Teachers enrolled in Associate Degree in Education ADE 2 year program in Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education GECEs will join universities for further 2 years to complete their B.Ed. 4 year program. That is why Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education GECEs have been given affiliation by the universities in the Province. Following Challenges were observed through

research, based on observations, on site visits, personal discussions and field experiences which are being faced by the system of Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education GECEs to bring it at a par with system of universities;

Follow up mechanism

Follow up mechanism for the sustainability of B.Ed. 4 year program and ADE 2 year program is necessary. Sindh Province through the establishment of Sindh Teacher Education Development Authority STEDA is trying to build follow up mechanism.

Bridging the gap

The ADE students will continue education at affiliated University with two more years to obtain a B.Ed. (Hons.) degree. But now currently there exist a gap between the university semester system and Elementary College semester system.

Therefore, there is the need to introduce internship policy to bridge the gap between ADE program at Elementary Colleges and B.Ed.(Hons) elementary program at universities.

Quality Mechanism

Currently there exists a big difference between the systems of Govt. Elementary colleges of Education GECEs and University in the province of Sindh. There is the need of uplifting the quality of services and teacher education in Govt. Elementary colleges of Education GECEs. Therefore, there is a need that Quality Enhancement Cells QECs for enhancing the quality of teacher education in Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education GECEs, should be established.

Recruitment policy as per new programs

Recruitment policy for ADE and B.Ed.(Hons) 4 year graduate teachers have been developed according to which the provincial

governments have agreed to increase starting salaries for ADE holders to BPS-16 and B.Ed. (Hons.) holders to BPS-17. The provincial Department of Services and General Administration have to formulate new recruitment rules that will give preference to the holders of these degrees to fill new teaching positions.

Now, it is necessary that recruitment policy should be approved and announced clearly.

Staffing Issue

It is generally observed that Staffing at Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education is not according to need base. Personal and political influence is dominated factor in transfers and postings. Most of the Principals of Elementary Colleges are appointed on political and personal liking and disliking basis therefore they lack managerial skills and not motivated to accept new changes. Therefore, staffing should be according to needs and political and other influence should be stopped in transfers and postings.

Awareness Gap

Awareness gap regarding the ADE and B.Ed.(Hons) program is observed among district level educational managers. Therefore awareness should be given to EDOs, DOs and school heads regarding new programs.

Faculty Development

Teacher educators of Elementary Colleges remain disinterested towards new changes due to non-existence of competitive service structure like university service. Promotions and other incentives are on the basis of seniority not on higher qualification.

There exist no research base at Govt. Elementary Colleges and teaching faculty is not provided M.Phil./PhD opportunities at local or foreign level. So, it is important that teaching faculty at

Elementary colleges should be provided opportunities to do M.Phil./PhD alike university faculty. Promotions and other incentives should be linked with higher qualification.

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