

PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS' OPINION TOWARDS PURSUANCE OF B.ED. COURSE: AN ANALYSIS OF QUALITY IN TEACHING

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Abstract:

Every country develops its system of education to express and promote its unique socio-cultural identity and also to meet the challenges of time. According to University education commission (1948-1949) "People in this country have been slow to recognize that Education is a profession for which intensive preparation is necessary as it is in any other profession". The teachers learn this art through pre-service teacher education programme. The present paper discusses the opinion of prospective teachers towards pursuing B.Ed. course in respect to their academic discipline, gender and habitat. In order to explore the objective of this study, descriptive survey method (a case study) was used. 200 prospective teachers were taken as sample. The main findings of the investigation are: More than half of sample of female prospective teacher willingly take admission and have positive opinions (teaching is a respectable and good profession) regarding this course. More than eighty percent of female rural humanities and social science group prospective teachers pursue B.Ed. Course due to belief that teaching profession gets respect in the society. Majority of the male prospective teachers accept that they pursue B.Ed. course due to job security followed by parent's compulsion or choice. It was also observed that few percentages of prospective teachers pursue B.Ed. course because they think that it is a best way to utilize their spare time.

Education has continued to evolve, diversify and extend its reach since the dawn of history. As quality education aims at holistic development of an individual thereby unveiling the inherent potential thus it is imperative to keep improving the quality of education. In the education system the teacher shoulders the responsibility of imparting education to the students. Various education commissions (Mudaliar Com emphasizes on the issue of quality of education. "People in this country have been slow to recognize that Education is a profession for which intensive preparation is necessary as it is in any other profession". This concern was expressed in the University Education Commission (1948-1949). A good teacher should be patient, creative and firm, tolerant, happy to be among young people, be a efficient communicator, hard working and should enjoy imparting knowledge and fuel the fire of enthusiasm for learning. Some individuals have inherent qualities of good teachers and some individuals acquire the appropriate skills through training.

The teachers learn this art through pre-service teacher education course. Pre-service teacher education often provides the first step in the professional development of teachers. It exposes pre-service teachers to new perspective as well as prepares them in knowledge and skills (Wilke, 2004). Knowledge includes disciplinary content, or subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge or knowledge of how to teach, this shape the basis for quality practice. Pedagogical knowledge can be defined as "the content, skills and strategies required for effective teaching" (Sylvia Chong et. al.2012). Pedagogical knowledge is closely associated to teachers' belief that there are factors that influence teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward the implementation of a variety of instructions, models and strategies.

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The study conducted by Murphy, Delli & Edwards (2004) establishes that pre-service teachers will have vivid images of teaching from their past experiences as students. They have preconceived notions about the characteristics of a good teacher. These beliefs are formed early and remain consistent during their grooming as teachers.

Need & Justification

In India there are several universities and colleges that offer B.Ed. course. Thousands of students take admission and acquire B.Ed. degree every year from various universities and colleges. Pre-service teachers start their education with a wide range of different experiences, opinions, beliefs and conceptions of teaching and learning. Pre-service teachers also feel that they would be good teachers without any preparation (cited by Sylvia Chong et. al.2012). To ensure the quality of pupil teachers, a teacher eligibility test at central and state level is conducted twice in a year, the qualifying percentage of this test is 60% only. When we go through the results of these tests, it is surprising to discover that less than 10% of teachers qualify this test. The result of these tests raises various questions in the mind and motivates the researcher to find the opinion of pupil teachers' towards B.Ed. course. In this direction some questions such as; 'What made them choose this professional course? Is always the primary question as the goals that were established for quality education has not been met, it raises the question of the motive of the candidates who opt for B. Ed.? Is it really their attitude ,aptitude and interest that directs them towards this professional course or temptations such as good salary, low job pressure and job comfort or they opt to be a teacher because their parents want them to? What are the views of the students who undertake B.Ed. training as the profession? To know the answers of these questions, a study was made on B.Ed. students of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India.

Objectives

To find out the opinion for pursuing B.Ed. course from prospective teachers in respect to their -

- (1) To find out the opinion of prospective teachers for pursuing B.Ed. with respect to academic discipline.
- (2) To find out the opinion of prospective teachers for pursuing B.Ed. with respects gender.
- (3) To find out the opinion of prospective teachers for pursuing B.Ed. with respects habitats.

Methodology

Descriptive research survey method was used to conduct this study. All the students pursuing B.Ed. course from the research survey Faculty of Education, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India were the subjects of the present study. In this faculty, students were admitted in five groups i.e In present study 100 prospective teachers of Science Group (Mathematics, Life Science and Physical Science) and 100 prospective teachers from Humanities and Social Science Group were taken purposely. A questionnaire was designed for the purpose, has face validity & reliability coefficient is 82. The researcher contacted the pupil teachers personally and explained importance and purpose of the study.

Results and discussion

This section deals with the analysis of the data obtained and the interpretations of the findings. The analysis is presented along with each aspect. The interpretations are based on the quantitative as well as qualitative data collected by the researcher. The observations of the researcher have also been incorporated while interpreting the data.

Opinion of male and female prospective teachers: In the tool one of the questions is that do you willingly take admission in B.Ed. Program and to become a teacher? 32% of male prospective teachers answered 'yes' and rest of the students opts 'no' as their response. To the same question 50% of the female candidates answered in positive and 45% of them registered their unwillingness for such programs. It is observed that the teaching profession is considered safe and respectful for the girls. Girls also develop an inclination of mind towards teaching career, which may be strong reason why girls wanted to be a teacher in future while boys have chance to explore multiple avenues. They take interest in various competitive exams and join B.Ed. as an option for job security, and they keep trying for their primary goals even after joining B.Ed. course. This may be a reason that about 68% of the male prospective teachers said that they do not want to become a teacher.

Table No. 1

Opinions of respondents who pursue B.Ed. course willingly and want to become a teacher

Gender	Male prospective teachers (in %)				Female prospective teachers (in %)			
Academic discipline	Science		Humanities and social science		Science		Humanities and social science	
Habitat	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Opinions								
1. Good profession and Respectable job	30	20	30	27	25	25	83	30
2. Inspired by family /his or her teacher	4	2	2	3	15	6	5	3
3. To serve the country	None	None	2.5	2.0	3	2	7	4

It is observed from the Table (1) that 20% of male candidates from science stream of the urban areas chose B.Ed. course because they considered it a good and respectable profession while 30% of male candidates from science stream admitted that they have chosen B.Ed. course because this profession is held in high esteem in the society. When humanities and social science stream urban and rural male prospective teachers were compared, it was found that 27% of urban male prospective teachers considered it a good profession while 30% of rural male prospective teachers considered it is a respectable job. The percentage of humanities and social science rural male prospective teachers was found better than that of humanities and social sciences stream urban setting male prospective teachers.

No difference was found in the percentage of prospective female teachers of both rural and urban background in the stream of science as 25% candidates in both the categories accepted that they chose B.Ed. course because it is a good profession. A vast difference was found in the percentage of humanities and social science stream urban and rural locale female prospective teachers as 53%. Only 30% humanities and social sciences stream urban female prospective teachers considered it a good profession on the other hand 83% humanities and social sciences

stream rural female prospective teachers accepted that they opted B.Ed. course because they considered it a respectable job.

An analysis of prospective teachers and their orientation through inspiration by teachers and parents.

The above table further reveals that a small percent i.e. 4% of rural and 2% of urban background science prospective male teachers were pursuing B.Ed. course due to inclination of parents or teachers. On the other hand only 2% of rural and 3% of urban social science prospective male teachers show their opinion in this dimension. When female prospective teachers were compared on this basis, it was found that 15% rural and 6% urban background of prospective science teachers have chosen this course because they are motivated by the behavior of their teachers. The data also convinced that more girls pursue B.Ed. course because they believe that teachers are the role model of the society. Researcher also observed that some female prospective teacher pursue this course because their parents or family members belong to teaching community and due to this reason they are self motivated. Generally students are encouraged by the behavior of teacher very easily in their early education and they want to become a teacher in future. A girl namely 'Totto Chan' has narrated in detail in a book namely "A girl at window" that due to influence and observations about her teacher named as 'Kobayashi' she decided to become a teacher in a school where she has studied. Kagan (1992) examined in his studies and found that pre-service teachers enter teacher education programmes with personal beliefs about images of good teachers, imagine themselves as teacher and cherish memories of themselves as students. The study conducted by Murphy, Delli & Edwards (2004) establishes that pre-service teachers will have vivid images of teaching from their past experiences as students. They have preconceived notions about the characteristics of a good teacher. These beliefs are formed early and remain consistent during their grooming as teachers.

Prospective teachers and service to nation- An Analysis

None of the prospective male candidates of science background had joined the B.Ed course because they wanted to serve the nation whereas 2.3% rural and 2.6% urban males from humanities & social sciences had the strong intent of serving the nation and hence had joined the B.Ed program. When prospective female teachers were compared, it was found that 3% of the rural and 2% of urban candidates with science background wanted to serve the country in their way and 7% of rural and 4% of the urban background prospective female teachers have chosen it as the means of serving the country. Empirical studies have shown that the pre-service teachers enter into the programme in believing that they imparted their knowledge and shared experiences to others very easily and respectable manner (Sylvia Chong et. al.2012).

Table No. 2

Opinions of respondents who pursue B.Ed. course not willingly

Gender Academic discipline	Male prospective teachers (in %)				Female prospective teachers (in %)			
	Science		Humanities and social science		Science		Humanities and social science	
Habitat	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Opinions								
1.Job security	34.5	58.0	57.0	58.0	57.0	42.0	None	40
2. Parents compulsion/choice	16.5	9.0	3.5	4.0	None	25	None	17

3. Spare time utilization	5	9.0	2	6	None	None	None	None
4. To study in B.H.U.	7	2	3	None	None	None	5	6

When we go through the opinion of science urban and science rural candidates and compare, it was found that 58 % of science urban prospective male teachers select B.Ed. course because they want job security which B.Ed. course may provide them while 34.5% of science rural male prospective teachers admitted that they have joined B.Ed. course because of job security (Table 2). Prospective teachers are most important concern about their future is not being appointed (Guneyb, Aslan 2009).

The difference may be due to the fact that the urban men always strive for higher achievements in their career but keep this professional course as second choice as B.Ed. course renders maximum job opportunities. When arts stream urban students compared with humanities and social sciences stream rural students it was found that 58 % urban students opted B.Ed. course while 57% rural students opted the course for job security.

When science stream urban and science stream rural female prospective teachers were compared it was found that 42% urban female prospective teachers pursuing the B.Ed.course for job security while 57% of science stream rural female prospective teachers prefer the B.Ed. course for job security. The difference establishes the fact that girls in urban area may have other opportunities to explore while girls in rural area have limited opportunities.40% humanities and social sciences stream urban female prospective teachers accepted that they have joined B.Ed. course because of job security.

How parents influence a candidates' decision in choice of a career- An Analysis

When science stream urban and rural male prospective teachers were compared it was found that 9% urban prospective teachers opted B.Ed. course because their parents wished them to do so, while 16.5%of science stream rural boys were compelled by parents to opt B.Ed. course. As far humanities and social science group urban male prospective teachers concerned 3.5% of them accepted that they have joined the B.Ed. course because they were forced by their parents.

On the other hand humanities and social science rural setting male prospective teachers revealed that they have joined the B.Ed. course because their parents compelled them.25%Science stream urban female prospective teachers and 17% humanities and social science stream urban background female prospective teachers have joined the B.Ed. course because their parents forced them.

Utility of time vis a vis choice of career for a candidate- An analysis

When science stream urban and rural male prospective teachers were compared, it was found that only 5% rural background male prospective teachers pursuing B.Ed. course because they wanted to utilize their free time while 9.2% urban male prospective teachers have taken it better utilization of their spare time. The percentage is very low in case of humanities and social sciences i.e. 2% in rural and 6% in urban. However female prospective teachers of either subject or background have not shown this opinion. This is only the professional course that time period is one year and future prospects of B.Ed. course is good in comparison to other professional courses as it ensures higher job security, handsome salary in such a short span of time.

An analysis of candidates and their willingness to pursue academics from Banaras Hindu University

It is observed from table 2 that some of the students pursuing B.Ed. course only because of their desire to study in Banaras Hindu University. When the male prospective teachers of science background were compared, it was found that 7% rural male prospective teachers and 2% urban Male prospective teachers desire to do the B.Ed. course because they wanted to study in Banaras Hindu University. When students of humanities and social sciences were compared on this ground it was found that 3% urban male prospective teachers used the B.Ed. course as a medium to full-fill their wish to study in Banaras Hindu University. When female prospective teachers were compared it was found that no girl with science background opted the course just because they preferred the university while students with humanity background have shown the interest for the university and 5% of rural and 6% of urban setting female prospective teachers have chosen the course for the same reason.

Conclusion

Teaching profession in our country is considered prestigious and respectable. Teachers play a pivotal role in a student's life. He/she is not only expected to develop academic knowledge of students but also to sharpen their skills. So it is a must that a teacher should be worthy and dynamic in order to be effective. The result of the present study show that pre-service teacher's opinion play a pivotal role in the acquisition and interpretation of a knowledge and subsequent teaching methodology and how lack of stringent rules for the candidates who enter the B.Ed. programs and their eventual graduation to the teaching profession has undermined the practice over the years and adversely affected the quality of teachers. To become a teacher of secondary or senior secondary school a qualification in B.Ed. degree is compulsory. After implementation of Right to Education Act – 2009, the requirement of trained and qualified teachers in government as well as private sector schools has increased. The professionals in this field have many benefits like job security and good pay packages. But only temptation can't do miracles. The first and foremost requirement for being a teacher is, 'dedication'. But the candidates investigated have joined the B.Ed. course because of several other reasons like job security or parents wish. Such teacher may teach students but can't inspire them. The picture becomes bleaker when only 32% of the male prospective teachers while 50% female prospective teachers accepted that they want to be a teacher. Perhaps that is why female teachers have always been proved better than male teachers. It was also revealed from the results that more rural background female prospective teachers pursue this course. The reason may be for this difference is girls of rural background think that it is the best career for them. They are not apprised of coaching culture and varied career choices. They think of this profession as very respectful and decent for them. Indian rural society girls are not so much motivated for doing job. Parents are more bothered about the safety and security of girls in comparison to boys. Girls get less accessibility to education in comparison to boys. Some parents do desire that their daughters become independent when they grow up and thus motivate them to opt for this profession..We can easily infer thus that the opinion regarding any professional course/s directly and indirectly influenced the quality and performance of the candidates. Hence, it may be one of the important reasons behind the poor quality of trained teachers.

The result of this study shows that nearly 30% of sample pursuing B.Ed. course due to respectable and good profession. This indicates that in our society teaching is not a demanding profession vis a vis other attractive avenues. During the interaction of Dr. A.P.J. Kalam, Ex.

President of India with students of secondary school in Varanasi district, he asked the students how many of them wanted to become teacher. He was surprised that very few students wanted to become a teacher. It is also observed that students in a very early age decided to become an engineer or doctor or select their career as an I.A.S. or equivalent offices. But very few students like the teaching profession. Researcher also observed that many students who are pursuing B.Ed. courses fail to achieve their first and second preference of their career and spent a lot of years in preparation of such type of examinations. It is their failure in their dreams and aspirations that drives them towards teaching and knowledge dissemination.

The percentage of science rural background male prospective teachers is more than that of science urban setting male prospective teachers who accepted that B.Ed. course is a good profession therefore they are pursuing this course. It may be due to the fact that even today the students of rural background have limited opportunities and hence they chose a profession they are acquainted with, while students in urban areas have many opportunities so they are able to change their choice of vocation at any point of time. A very less percentage of prospective teachers have a tendency to serve the country through this noble career. It may also influence the quality of teacher.

Suggestions:

The findings of this study indicate that most of the prospective teachers are not willing to become a teacher. But they are pursuing this course only for job security, utilization of spare time etc while very few students choose this field because it's a respectable job or they want to serve the nation. Hence, there is a need to enhance the function and improve procedure of taking admission in this course. On the basis of present study results researchers submit some suggestions to overcome the problems and challenges in quality teachers. These are as follows:

- There is an urgent need to modify the pattern of B.Ed. entrance test. The number of teaching aptitude based questions must be increased. There is a need to give the space of some subjective type test items as well as interaction is also one of the important components of the entrance of B.Ed. course. This procedure can be helpful to select only those students who are actually willing to complete this course and want to become a teacher.
- Like engineering, medical, law and other courses the duration of B.Ed. course must be increased. Teacher Education courses should be started for students after completing the senior secondary education.
- There should be a provision of campus selection in teacher education course like other professional courses.
- The image and prospects of a teacher should be given a makeover in order to attract more and more people towards it.
- There is a demand to facilitate and psychologically impress the mind of the young generation towards this worthy profession.

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