

Bridging Theory and Practice: B.Ed. Students' Internship Experiences and Challenges

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Abstract

The internship is a vital component of teacher education, playing a significant role in bringing theoretical understanding with practical experience. This study explores the experiences and various challenges faced by second-year B.Ed. students during their 16-week internship. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 132 valid responses. The findings indicate that the internship contributed to professional development by enhancing teaching skills, building confidence and engaging students in teacher-related activities. Students also acknowledged the cooperation and guidance received from their supervisors, along with improvements in conducting morning assemblies, preparing question papers, and corresponding with parents. On the other hand, several challenges were reported such as classroom management difficulties, inadequate infrastructure in allotted schools and challenges in preparing teaching aids and designing constructivist-based lesson plans. However, most students managed lesson planning effectively, suggesting that the pre-internship training was adequate. The study emphasizes the need for improved logistical planning and stronger institutional support to enhance the overall internship experience.

Keywords: B.Ed. Students, Internship, Experience, Challenges, Education

Introduction

Teacher education is a key element in the development of a nation, as it lays the foundation for a strong and effective education system. The primary aim of teacher training programs is to equip future teachers with essential knowledge, teaching skills and a professional mindset, enabling them to provide meaningful learning experiences and contribute to the growth of society.

Becoming an effective educator is a dynamic, multifaceted and challenging journey that relies on the successful integration of both theoretical and practical knowledge.

The two-year B.Ed. curriculum is typically structured into three main components: theory, practicum and internship (Jeevanantham & Muthuchamy, 2022). Among these, the internship plays a crucial role in the professional development of future teachers, as it enables them to apply their academic learning in real classroom situations (Rani, 2019). The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) emphasizes the significance of field engagement, particularly through school internships as a vital part of teacher training programs.

Internships provide student-teachers with opportunities to put theoretical concepts into practice refine their teaching methodologies and grow under the mentorship of experienced educators. They directly engage future teachers with classroom environments allowing them to gain valuable insights into the day-to-day realities of teaching improve their pedagogical skills and build confidence in their professional roles

The B.Ed. program includes a four-month (16-week) internship. During this period, B.Ed. students participate in various school activities such as morning assemblies, classroom teaching, preparing question papers, conducting examinations, checking answer sheets, organizing parent-teacher meetings, coordinating cultural events, and maintaining attendance registers, among others (Yudhister, 2025).

Despite the significance of internships, student-teachers often face several challenges. These include managing lesson plans, addressing diverse student needs, dealing with time constraints and meeting the expectations of their mentors (Reddy & Paul, 2025). Such challenges can sometimes lead to frustration as they attempt to reconcile theoretical understanding with practical classroom demands.

Understanding how B.Ed. students perceive their internship experiences is essential for designing teacher education programs that effectively prepare student-teachers for real classroom environments (Otara, 2014). A well-designed internship program not only builds confidence and competence in future teachers but also equips them to contribute meaningfully to the delivery of quality education (Parida & Panda, 2024). This research paper aims to explore the internship experiences of

B.Ed. students and examine the various challenges they encounter during their internship.

Literature Review

Previous studies have suggested that factors such as gender, age, the institutional environment, and the availability of support systems significantly affect the internship experiences of B.Ed. students.

Behera et al. (2024) found that male B.Ed. students generally reported more positive internship experiences compared to their female counterparts. Similarly, Tripathi et al. (2023) stated that male B.Ed. students reported higher teaching competencies than female trainees. However, Behera et al. (2024) also concluded that female students demonstrated greater personal development during the internship period. In contrast, the study by Malsawmi et al. (2019) revealed that female student teachers experienced greater benefits from the entire internship program compared to their male counterparts.

Rastogi (2024) reported a positive attitude towards internship among both male and female trainees in the B.El.Ed. curriculum. On the other hand, Reddy and Paul (2025) found that female B.Ed. student-teachers often struggled to balance personal and professional responsibilities, which negatively impacted their overall internship experience.

Collectively, these studies indicate that gender plays a complex and influential role in shaping the internship experiences of student-teachers.

Age is another important factor influencing perceptions of the internship experience. Gangadhara Chary & Perumal (2022) found that student-teachers generally demonstrated below-average perceptions regarding their school internships. However, interns under the age of 21 had higher perception scores than their older counterparts, indicating age-related differences. The same study found no significant differences in perceptions of the internship based on gender, rural or urban background, or academic qualification (undergraduate vs. postgraduate). Roy (2023) concluded no significant differences in perception regarding their school

internships based on the academic stream of B.Ed. students. These studies suggested that some demographic factors may have restricted impact on internship experiences.

Regarding institutional support and preparation, Sahoo (2024) revealed that teacher trainees felt more adequately prepared for their internships when they utilized structured teaching tools such as lesson plans and the 5E instructional model. Furthermore, 66% of trainees reported active participation in various school activities during their internship and 56% indicated having friendly relationships with their faculty members. The study also highlighted the importance of orientation programs, regular supervision, and access to well-equipped schools with sufficient resources as key factors contributing to a successful internship experience.

The type of institution is also a predictor of satisfaction. Harish and Patil (2022) studied the difference in satisfaction levels among teacher education students from private unaided and private aided B.Ed. colleges. The results indicated that students from private unaided colleges were more satisfied due to a supportive work culture and institutional environment compared to those from private aided colleges. Similarly, Khan & Trique (2022) concluded in their study that the B.Ed. pupil teachers of private institution have more positive perception of the internship compared to the B.Ed. pupil teachers from government institutions. Khajuria (2024), in his study of 100 M.Ed. students in Jammu, concluded that students considered the internship program significant for their professional development.

Several challenges faced by student teachers during their internship have been reported by various researchers. Ummaimah et al. (2022) concluded that student teachers encountered academic workload, time management, and a lack of punctuality among supervising teachers as key challenges. Similarly, Gupta (2019) identified main challenges like classroom management, the distance between internship schools and home, a hectic schedule involving lesson plan preparation, and administrative responsibilities.

Further supporting this, Singh & Dhawan (2025) highlighted difficulties in classroom management, building confidence in teaching, engaging students during

lessons and adapting to the school environment. Sharma & Chahal (2022) pointed out transportation issues from home to the designated school, which particularly affected the safety of female interns. The researchers also noted that many interns initially struggled with preparing effective pedagogical materials, although this challenge was generally overcome over time with consistent teaching practice.

Additionally, Kaur (2024) recommended improvements in areas such as classroom management, workload, and logistical issues faced by student teachers.

Overall, these studies highlight that student teachers face numerous practical challenges during their internship, which need to be addressed to enhance the effectiveness of the internship program through better planning and support systems.

Objectives: The specific objectives of the research are:

1. To evaluate B.Ed. students' experiences during internships.
2. To identify the challenges encountered by B.Ed. students throughout their internships.

Methodology

The present study is based on a quantitative approach, focusing on B.Ed. second-year students, who successfully completed their 16-week internship. Using convenient sampling, the questionnaire, developed by Gupta, S. (2019), was distributed via Google Forms to 200 students, out of which 148 responded. Sixteen responses were discarded as they were incomplete. Hence, 132 valid questionnaires were considered for data analysis.

Data Analysis

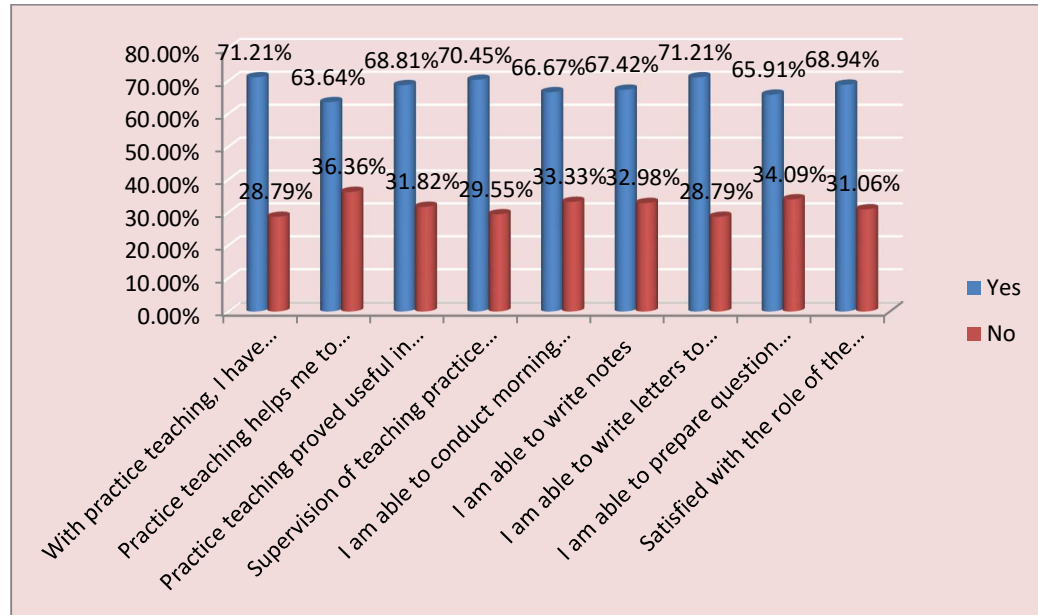
The data presented in Table-1 and 2 offers an overview of the experiences and challenges faced by the B.Ed. students during their internship.

Table-1 Showing Experience of B.Ed. Students' during Internship (N=132)

S.No	Statement	Yes (Percentage)	No (Percentage)
1	With practice teaching, I have learnt to take responsibilities as a teacher.	94 (71.21)	38 (28.79)
2	Practice teaching helps me to gain confidence in teaching	84 (63.64)	48 (36.36)
3	Practice teaching proved useful in improving upon my classroom management skills	90(68.81)	42 (31.82)
4	Supervision of teaching practice helped me in developing a disposition in effective teaching	93 (70.45)	39(29.55)
5	I am able to conduct morning assembly	88 (66.67)	44 (33.33)
6	I am able to write notes	89 (67.42)	43 (32.98)
7	I am able to write letters to parents regarding the performance of students	94 (71.21)	38 (28.79)
8	I am able to prepare question papers	87 (65.91)	45 (34.09)
9	Satisfied with the role of the supervisor in enhancing my teaching skills	91(68.94)	41(31.06)

Table-1 summarizes the experiences of 132 B.Ed. students during their internship. A total of 71.21% of B.Ed. students reported that practice teaching encouraged them to assume responsibilities as teachers, while 68.81% claimed an enhancement in their classroom management skills. Moreover, 63.64% stated that it helped them gain confidence in their teaching abilities. Furthermore, 70.45% agreed that supervision during their teaching practice contributed to the development of positive teaching dispositions.

Figure 2: Experience of B.Ed. Students' during Internship



competencies across various tasks. Specifically, 71.21% stated they were able to write letters to parents regarding students' performance, while 67.42% were able to write lesson notes effectively. Additionally, 66.67% reported gaining the capability to conduct morning assemblies and 65.91% felt equipped to prepare question papers. Moreover, 68.94% expressed satisfaction with their supervisors' role in enhancing their teaching skills. Overall, the findings indicate a positive impact of the internship experience on B.Ed. students' professional development.

Table-2 Challenges Encountered by B.Ed. Students during Internship

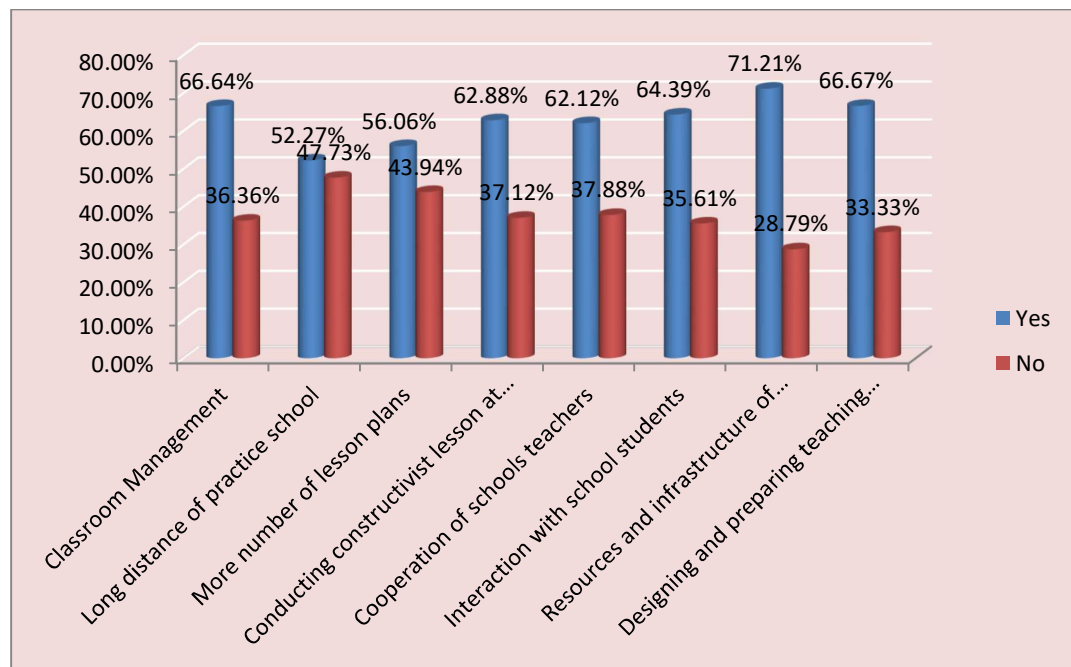
S.N	Statements	Yes (Percentage)	No (Percentage)
1	Classroom Management	84 (66.64)	48 (36.36)
2	Long distance of practice school	69 (52.27)	63 (47.73)
3	More number of lesson plans	74 (56.06)	58 (43.94)
4	Conducting constructivist lesson at school level	83 (62.88)	49 (37.12)
5	Cooperation of schools teachers	82 (62.12)	50 (37.88)
6	Interaction with school students	85 (64.39)	47 (35.61)
7	Resources and infrastructure of practicing schools	94 (71.21)	38 (28.79)
8	Designing and preparing teaching aids and materials	88 (66.67)	44 (33.33)

Table-2 outlines the challenges encountered by B.Ed. students during their internship. The data reveals that 71.21% of students faced challenges related to the resources and infrastructure of the practicing schools. Similarly, 66.67% reported difficulties in designing and preparing teaching aids and materials, and 66.64% experienced problems with classroom management.

Furthermore, 62.88% of respondents found it challenging to implement constructivist lesson plans at the school level, while 62.12% also viewed the lack of cooperation from school teachers as a significant issue.

In addition, more than half of the students (56.06%) identified the excessive number of lesson plans as a major challenge. Lastly, 52.27% reported that the long distance between their homes and the allotted schools posed a serious difficulty during the internship period.

Figure: 2 Challenges Encountered by B.Ed. Students during Internship



Conclusion and Discussion

The findings suggested that the internship experience had a significant impact on the professional development of B.Ed. interns. Most of the respondents showed improvement in responsibility, teaching skills, and confidence levels. They also acknowledged the support received from their supervisors.

Most of the students demonstrated self-confidence in completing teaching-related tasks such as conducting morning assemblies, preparing question papers, and corresponding with the parents of students. This suggests that the internship effectively bridged the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

However, despite the overall positive experiences, several challenges were identified. These included inadequate infrastructure in some schools, difficulties with classroom management, challenges in designing and preparing teaching aids and materials, the demands of implementing constructivist lesson plans, and the long commuting distance to practice schools.

Interestingly, the majority of students did not perceive the preparation of a large number of lesson plans as a major challenge. This suggests that they were well-prepared in this area through prior training at their home institution, which made the task more manageable during the internship.

Despite the positive outcomes, some challenges related to logistics and infrastructure requires further attention. Institutions should focus on improving the logistical aspects of internships such as reducing travel burdens by assigning nearby schools, ensuring adequate teaching resources and support for lesson planning.

In conclusion, the internship provides a strong foundation for the professional development of B.Ed. students. However, addressing the identified challenges is essential to better prepare them for their future roles as competent and confident teachers.

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