

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE PRACTICE OF
"STUDENT TEACHING AND EVALUATION"
PROGRAMME IN
THE TRAINING COLLEGES OF ANDHRA PRADESH

In almost every country of the world today, there is a demand from large sections of the population that the quantity of education needs great improvement. Educationists recognise that no significant improvement in the quality of Education is possible without having good teachers - teachers who are well grounded in the Principles and Practice of Teaching based on the latest techniques and who are acquainted with the use of modern equipment that has been made available by the phenomenal advances in the recent times, in the fields of Science and Technology. In Educational Psychology, too, there has been a great advance. Preparing good teachers is the responsibility of Teacher Training Institutions, and Student Teaching Programme is the most worthwhile instrument in imparting the necessary experience and skills to prospective teachers to help them to become good teachers.

But, by and large, Teacher Training Institutions have not been able to meet the challenge of the times and re-orient their programmes to the new needs and objectives. In fact, the Kothari Commission thought it

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fit to remark pointedly about our Colleges of Education, that "The quality of training Institutions remains, with a few exceptions, either mediocre or poor, competent staff are not attracted; vitality and realism are lacking in the curriculum and programme of work which continue to be largely traditional and set patterns and rigid techniques are followed in Practice Teaching with a disregard for present day needs and objectives".

Nor are the conditions any better in an advanced country like the U.K., for the James Report in the second cycle makes the following stringent remarks; "Many students are vehement in asserting that teaching practice is one of the most valuable and one of the worst conducted parts of their training. The arrangements made for it are subject to severe strain and in some areas, approach breakdown. Many teachers in schools remain in ignorance of the purpose of Teaching Practice and, even more important, of the contribution to it expected of them. Tutors, as the number of students increased and their placements become more distant, have spent more time in travelling to and from schools and less in supervising students. They may find themselves trying to help students in a school situation with which they are themselves unfamiliar. The result is sometimes that students may receive little professional guidance".

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Similar views have been voiced by other eminent bodies and persons interested in or connected with education and also at seminars and conferences both at the state and national levels, which the investigator had the opportunity to attend. All this clearly pointed out the serious defects and deficiencies in Teacher Education Programmes as at present implemented in the various Colleges of Education in India. The investigator, himself a Teacher Educator of considerable standing, hence planned to undertake a critical investigation into the practice of Student Teaching and Evaluation programme in the Training Colleges of Andhra Pradesh. The Colleges - fifteen in number - are situated in the three different regions of Andhra Pradesh and are also under the control of three different Universities - The Osmania University, The Andhra University and Sri Venkateswara University.

The study of relevant literature, undertaken before starting the investigation proper, lead to the following theoretical construct. "The latest theoretical position in relation to the problem under investigation is, if the Universities adopt the best pattern of Student Teaching, the same will contribute to better teacher preparation".

To test the above theoretical construct, a vast mass of data was collected, in the first instance, by the mail questionnaire method from all the fifteen Colleges of

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Education in Andhra Pradesh with all the Principals, all the members of the Teaching Staff and a random selection of Student Teachers forming the population sample for the collection of data. The information obtained by the questionnaire was supplemented by on-the-spot-studies and by the interviews with the Principals, Lecturers, the trainees and co-operating School Staff. The questionnaire, being the main tool in this investigation, is made as comprehensive as possible to cover all relevant aspects of the programmes of Student Teaching in B.Ed., Colleges. A study of the vast mass of the data, which has been arranged in 37 Tabular forms for convenience, has revealed a number of good and bad features about the B.Ed. Programmes as in vogue in the fifteen Colleges of Education in Andhra Pradesh.

Briefly stated, the good features include an almost common pattern of organisation in all the fifteen Colleges of Education; even though they come under different Universities - in respect of admission requirements and procedures, organisation of demonstration lessons, supervision of lessons and feed back and finally the declaration of results. The defects revealed are, however, more in number and of a serious nature. They reveal a lack of sufficient qualified staff in the Colleges, lack of accommodation and equipment, especially modern equipment and the conspicuous absence, in the case of half the total number of Colleges, of attached

practising or model schools. More serious than these are the shortcomings on the human side of the problem, because it has been revealed that, all the personnel involved in the Student Teaching Programme are not taking the programme seriously. They are taking it only as a formality and a ritual for meeting the requirements of the syllabi. This probably is the main reason why there is a complete lack of experimentation in the B.Ed. Colleges in evolving new methods of teaching, for, such experimentation demands total involvement in the programmes of all the personnel concerned.

Based on the above findings of the study of the data, certain recommendations have been made to improve the quality of Student Teaching programmes. While the Government, in respect of government Colleges or managements, in respect of private colleges, may be prevailed upon to provide the necessary additional physical facilities such as additional staff, accommodation, equipment etc., it is yet highly doubtful if the quality of Student Teaching programmes will improve to the desired levels, unless there is improvement in the human aspect. Hence, contrary to the original theoretical construct, the hypothesis of the investigator, that "however, best the pattern of Student Teaching may be, the same would fail if there are administrative and organisational defects and

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insincerity among the personnel", is verified and proved in the light of the information gathered during the course of interviews and on-the-spot-studies. After the hypothesis has been finally established, as above, the investigator has listed a couple of areas where further research can be undertaken on the topic.

Finally, at the end of the thesis, a fairly comprehensive appendix has been added. The appendix includes, in addition to the usual Bibliography of books and documents consulted, the list of Colleges visited and persons interviewed during the course of investigation. The entire comprehensive questionnaire running into 30 pages has also been included in the Appendix. It is earnestly hoped that all these will also prove to be of use to one and all interested in the improvement of Student Teaching Programmes in the Colleges of Education and through it in Education as a whole.

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