Challenges and Problems Faced by Pre-service Teachers While Linking Theory into Practice: A Case of Mirpur. AJK.

Saira Farooq Shah, Raiza Rizve, Atya Khushbash, Maryam Iqbal

1. INTRODUCTION

Education has the most significant position in the life of generations to develop one's own personality, abilities, capacities, attitudes and to know how the balanced personality of a person can help him [2]. The educational institutions are responsible to provide learners such environment that is conducive and in which learner's potential can be maximized. The teachers and their qualification have great importance in educational system. As the teachers' education and their skills required for effective teaching have direct link with the students' performance and results. To ensure the quality result of students we need well qualified and well-trained teachers and for that we need to see the ways and means of teachers' training [42]. The teachers are considered the kingpin in the whole education system [21].

According to Kennedy's [23] point of view a teacher requires four types of expertise. Firstly, the development of technical skills which required questioning skills as well as strategies for instructions. Secondly, the application of concepts and principles of teaching. Third expertise for effective teaching is critical analysis. The fourth one 'deliberate action'. For such expertise the student teachers not only required theoretical knowledge but also need an environment to translate their learnt concepts into practice regarding educational theories. Future teachers require training to become effective teachers.

Since the establishment, the efforts to improve the teaching area were continuously done in Pakistan. However, there have been many hurdles in the way which have slowed down the performance of educational system in the development of the country like inconsistency in curriculum, lack of consistent policies, insufficient resources, low quality of teaching process, and lack of quality teacher trainers.

Different public and private teacher education institutions are working to prepare prospective teachers to deal with the challenges of educational system in Pakistan in the 21st century. Researcher studies on teacher's education in Pakistan seem unsatisfied with the performance and mechanism of teacher's preparation. Teachers' education can be considered a tool to improve quality in education [21]. Education is a complex process of human growth. Although education is considered a simple matter to handle but once we enter in it, we soon realize the complexity of the situation.

For the better understanding of this system one needs the knowledge of sociology, psychology, mental and physical growth, anthropology and much more.

Education of learners is challenging and complex task on the other hand the education, training and retraining of teachers are more difficult and complex matters. Pakistan is continuously ranked low among the countries of the world due to low equity, quality and quantity results of its educational programs and educational system [32].

The training for teacher has a significant relation with effective teaching. Moreover, it provides skills, advance knowledge, improves attitudes and habits to build and develop the strong and effective personality of a teacher. In addition, training help the teacher to minimize the evils of 'hit and miss and save energy and time of the teachers by providing an effective learning environment [35]. Educators always have a significant interest in the phenomena of linking theory into practice. As the gap between learnt material or theories and the actual working in the classroom was felt by different educators [28]. Review of pervious work related to this phenomenon revealed that pre-service teachers set their minds in two different parts whereas in one side they store educational theories and on the other side practical part is working. Pre-service teachers seem unsatisfied while combining these two sides [5].

Future teachers complain that many educational principles and concepts of their curriculum not work in practical classroom teaching. Moreover, master trainers feel helpless to relate theories with practical work. Mitchel and Mueller [27] also emphasized the same phenomena that there is gap between training programs and actual teaching in classroom.

The aim of current research has been to find out the problems and challenges faced by future teachers during their training programs which ultimately become the reason of the gap between theory and practice. It is acknowledged that linking theory into practice is a complex process that needs depth of thought, focus and ongoing improvement, but it is hoped that if we find out the problems faced by prospective teachers while liking theory into practice and challenges faced by them during their professional courses through this study, we will be able to provide base on which it can bridge the gap between theory and practice.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Teaching profession is the most demanding and challenging profession. The teachers are required to get enough command on subject knowledge as well as related skills to achieve the set

goals. To become effective teachers the student teacher, get training before joining this profession. Whereas the prospective teachers sometimes feel that the training or the learnt educational theories cannot be translated into real teaching practice. They face various problems while translating theory into practice. Therefore, the present study seeks to identify the challenges and issues faced by pre-service teachers during their teacher education to make them able to translate theory into practice and become an effective teacher.

1.3. Objectives

This study has been carried out to achieve the following objectives.

- To identify the issues faced by pre-service teachers during their training programs.
- The issues identified by the pre-service teachers in-depth.
- To give recommendations to link theory and practice effectively.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This research will provide information to the higher authorities to get knowledge about the problems and issues faced by pre-service teachers while using learnt theories into practice during their training programs. The current study will help in curriculum development for training programs of future teachers by identifying problems of prospective teachers during their training programs to help teacher education institution in the improvement of teacher education.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers can play a significant role in the growth and development of a nation. The training programs for teachers and its quality for the professional development of teachers is considered as the most significant factor in the system of quality education. Quality improvement in education system depends upon training and professional development of teachers [34]. For an effective performance teacher required proper guidance and training. Because teaching is a life time task. In additional knowledge is expanding its wings rapidly therefore it is not sufficient for teachers do work effectively with training [29].

Review of the literature revealed that teacher's educators, from many decades, have to understand and explore the phenomena of linking theory and practice. Furthermore, they try to describe how we can link theory to practice. In their studies they have described that only educational theories are not enough for prospective teachers to deal with the complex atmosphere of the class. The teacher's educators further explored in their studies that traditional way of teacher training does not enable or equip them fully to teach according to the need of the learners and to solve the students' learning difficulties during their careers when they work as a teacher. Therefore, the conventional ways and means of teacher's training fail to achieve the expected objective and goals of teacher training programs [38].

There is a gap between the complex situations of the classroom reality and the theoretical principles those taught in the curriculum of teacher education, teachers training courses, and workshops. Pre-service teachers are taught various theories

during their training regarding to educational system and they learn these theories by heart to become an effective and efficient teacher. However, they feel helpless when they try to use the learnt knowledge in classroom to solve the learning difficulties of students. Researches on this phenomenon have revealed that when student teacher, not able to use theoretical work in practice, they finally decided to set their minds into two different compartments where one part is full of educational theories and the second one is working in actual practice [36].

Moreover, the institutions of teacher education, working to prepare prospective teachers, are not linking their curriculum or practice with actual classroom teaching [15]. Therefore, it seems very important for teacher education institutions to work to fill this gap. The student teachers must be provided opportunities to practice and translate theories taught to them during their training. Different techniques and methods have been used by educators to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Case study methods were also used to understand the complexity of the relationship between theory and practice [36].

Colleges and universities working for teacher education not only provide knowledge of educational theories but also provide opportunities to student teachers for practical work. In addition, these institutions also end up their programs with teaching practice and application of what they have learnt about different teaching strategies and methods. Different programs of teacher's education have their own curriculum and different time duration to complete that syllabus [5]. Practice during teacher education provide chance to student teacher to develop and improve them as a teacher and learn to be professional under the guidance of their supervisors. It is the right time for them to learn about teaching in depth. In this regard they present their lesson in front of other prospective teacher and learn with the help of them [31]. One more suggestion was made by educators to give professional certificates to novice only when they spend at least three to five years working as teacher. So, institutions can ensure that only able prospective teachers can have professional certificates those can justify their learning because the professional certificates should be an evidence that pre-service teachers have learnt and practiced all theories effectively [4].

Teachers face many kinds of problems, related to students as well as to their own working. To deal with these problems, they must focus on problem-solving skills. Few teacher education institutions aim to show student teacher their working. They show them how they can teach and use different methodologies. These institutions planned this activity properly. The phenomena of linking theory to practice have been discussed and researched by various educators. Studies added literature related to this topic and provided a significant knowledge about it.

Various advance and new strategies have been added in teacher education programs so to improve the quality of the programs and to link theory into practice like internship, case methods, portfolios, reflective teaching and problem-solving skills etc. but prospective teachers are still facing problems and having many issues while linking theory to practice. The present study has

been carried out with the aim of identifying challenges and problem faced by in-service teachers while linking theory to practice. This aim can be achieved by exploring challenged of pre-service teachers through collecting their views [14].

3. METHODOLOGIES AND PROCEDURES

The current study has been carried out with the aim of identifying issues and problem faced by pre-service teachers while linking theory to practice during their training programs. The researcher used the mixed methods design to collect, analyze and describe the data. The mixed methods have significant position in social science and investigators took interest in this design by naming it 'third paradigm' [15]. According to Creswell [11] various writers give different name to mixed methods, but the major idea is to integrate and combine the various methods to get powerful mix of data and information [14]. There are different types of mixed methods design. The researcher selected explanatory sequential design. As it is the most popular type and in its data was collected and analyzed by both quantitative and qualitative method in sequence instead of collecting it at the same time.

3.1 Population and Sample

The population of the research was pre-service teachers of Mirpur Azad Jammu & Kashmir. To select the sample from the population the random sampling from the probability sampling was chosen by the researchers. The four major teacher education institutions were selected for data collection. The 350 pre-service teachers from the Education Department of Mirpur University of Science and Technology (MUST), Govt. Education College Afzalpur, Govt. Elementary College Kalyal and students of B.Ed, M.Ed or M.A Education in Allama Iqbal Open University Mirpur Campus were approached by researcher and 340 student teachers participated in this study.

3.2 Data Collection Tools

Data collection is very important and essential phase in the conduction of a research [22]. According to Leary, collecting credible data is a tough task, and it is worth remembering that one method of data collection is not inherently better than another. Questionnaire and one-on-one interview were selected by researcher as data collection instrument. In addition, the questionnaire was developed by researcher herself by using 1-5 Likert scale. The data collected by questionnaire was further informed by data collected through one-on-one interview from 6 participants.

3.3 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

It is necessary to determine that data collection tool of the research accurately and consistently measures what is intended to be measured. The researcher used the construct validity and asked experts to check the questionnaire. The both experts were Ph.D. in education. In addition, the researcher was self-reflective throughout the study about her role [13].

Moreover, to improve the reliability of the study the researcher used pilot testing and SPSS program. Through Cronbach Alpha the results of pilot testing were tested to check internal reliability. Twenty-five items were included in pilot testing instrument and with 25 students the pilot testing was conducted. The Cronbach Alpha of questionnaire for pre-

service teachers was .781 which is considered satisfactory and indicates that questionnaire was reliable.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The present study used a questionnaire comprising 35 items. It was developed and administered by the researchers with 340 pre-service teachers. The descriptive analysis was done means and standard deviations have been computed. The results were interpreted and reported through tables and graphs. The collected data was analyzed by using SPSS software. While data collected through interview was analyzed by frequency of the response around the themes. The items are divided into 6 themes. The detail analysis of the data according to themes is as under.

4.1 Teaching Methodology

The first them of the study was teaching methodology. It is considered the most important part in the curriculum of pre-service training. The term 'teaching methodology' refers to the pedagogy, general principles and management techniques used by a teacher for classroom instructions. There are many new teaching methodologies introduced by educationists for example inquiry method, demonstration method, activity method etc. Student teachers learn different teaching methodologies during their professional course [3].

The current study aimed to identify the issues and problems faced by prospective teachers while learning teaching methodologies. The table 4.1 below showed the cumulative results in percentages, mean and standard deviation to analyze the data related to teaching methodology.

Table-4.1: Teaching methodology in pre-service courses

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	Missing	Mean	St.D
1	2. I am learning new strategies during my professional course.							
	59.9	35.6	5.3	2.4	2.9	.9	4.3294	.91299
3	4. I am learning about activity-based learning method.							
	36.8	44.4	9.4	5.3	1.5	2.6	4.1269	.90230
5	6. I am learning the benefits of discussion method.							
	47.1	41.5	4.7	5.0	.9	.9	4.2760	.84644
7	8. I am learning the demonstration method.							
	32.1	35.3	15.0	10.6	2.6	4.4	3.8738	1.08273
9	10. I am learning the inquiry method.							
	30.6	40.0	11.8	10.6	5.0	2.1	3.8228	1.13878
	9. I am practicing all new methodologies during my professional course.							
	25.3	40.3	9.1	13.5	10.0	1.8	3.5808	1.28418
2	22. My teachers explain and demonstrate new methodologies.							

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	Missing	Mean	St.D
	28.8	38.5	10.9	9.1	8.5	4.1	3.7301	1.23568
24. I get confused about different methodologies.								
	15.9	26.2	26.8	19.4	7.1	4.7	3.2500	1.17473
26. At								
	16.2	23.2	14.1	30.3	11.5	4.7	3.0309	1.31413

The results in table 4.1 regarding theme of teaching methodology depicted that teaching methodology have a significant importance in training programs for future teachers. The means of all items related to this theme like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 21 shows that the maximum number of participants agreed with statement of these items. Whereas, the analysis indicated that student teachers reported that they are learning new and advance teaching methodologies like discussion and activity method or demonstration and inquiry method. The item number 9 got 3.5808 mean which reflects that pre-service teachers are practicing all learnt methodologies.

Whereas, items no 22 and 23 was negatively stated. In the response to these items future teachers show their agreement that they were also confused about various methods of teaching and also not feel confident to use them in future.

The results from the second instrument which was one-on-one interviews with selected six pre-service teachers showed that trainers of future teachers themselves were using old teaching methodologies and only few of them used few new methodologies. The words of respondents no 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are as below:

> Respondent no 6: "Lecture method is used by our teachers just like one-way traffic."
> Respondent no 1: "My teachers use lecture method with projector and use questioning technique."
> Respondent no 2: "Mostly teachers use lecture method with the help of projector. Sometimes they also use demonstration method and involve students in activities."
> Respondent no 3: "Mostly they use lecture method sometimes activity method is also used by my teachers."
> Respondent no 4: "Teachers use lecture methodology mostly. Some teachers used discussion method and very few."

Along with the old teaching methodologies pre-service teachers had also mentioned that they were not understanding methodologies in detail as in the response to second question related to methodologies the pre-service teachers described that:

> Respondent no 4: "When teachers teach use different methodologies, they are not well prepared for their lectures and did not have much background knowledge about new methodologies that leads us to face difficulties to understand methodologies in depth."
> Respondent no 5: "Teacher themselves are not well-prepared so we did not understand different methods

and it was teacher centered class, so we feel difficulty to understand."

The preparation of prospective teachers and the quality of their training and professional development is most important in the process of quality education. The analysis of the data showed that training programs of student teachers were not fully effective because the prospective teachers were not able to use advance teaching methods in the future classes.

This response of pre-service teachers illustrated that trainers in teacher education institutions themselves were using old methodologies and were not well prepared by themselves to prepare prospective teachers and due to these pre-service teachers did not feel confident to use new methodologies. Similarly mentioned by Samgorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson & Fry [38] the conventional way of teachers training programs are not preparing pre-service teachers to face the complex situations of classroom. Traditional programs of teacher education are not fulfilling the demands of pre-service teachers [9]. The discussion above revealed that pre-service teachers were not understanding new teaching methodologies as their teachers were only teaching the theories of these methodologies and not used these methodologies in classes by themselves. On the basis it may be inferred that pre-service teachers were not feeling confident to use these methodologies in future. The goal of quality education cannot be achieved if the prospective teachers will not use new methodologies to prepare their students to deal with the challenges of 21st century.

4.2 Classroom Management

The second theme of the questionnaire was also very importance which includes the routines, rules and consequences of classroom environment. Classroom management should be effective in order to engage students in learning and to achieve the desire goals. The positive environment for learning comes through effective management which is considered the foundation of learning and makes learning and teaching achievable [25]. Thus, the questionnaire for future teachers has 3 items regarding classroom management theme. The cumulative table of percentages, means and standard deviation is given below.

Table-4.2: Classroom management in pre-service courses

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	Missing	Mean	St.D
1. I am learning about different types of classroom management.								
	41.5	40.6	6.5	6.5	3.5	1.5	4.1194	1.03017
11. I am learning how to manage diversity in class.								
	28.8	47.9	12.4	5.3	1.2	4.4	3.4831	.87454
16. I am learning questioning skill to build up a lesson.								
	37.1	47.9	5.0	5.9	3.2	.9	4.1068	.97308
25.I am learning about individual differences and how to manage them.								

26.5	45.6	12.9	6.2	4.4	4.4	3.8738	1.03612

The percentages and standard deviation of including items related to classroom management in the table represented the inclination of responses toward agreeing the learning of classroom management skills. The majority of respondents had reported that they have learnt classroom management like questioning techniques, how to manage individual differences etc.

Contrary to the data above, the interview data collected from the pre-service teachers revealed that most of the pre-service teachers did not understand the concept of individual differences which is explained by few participants in following words:

> Respondent no 3: "I did not understand this concept."
>
> Respondent no 4: "Basically individual differences are the way of getting knowledge. Everyone had a different aspect of thinking about life and thus individually everyone had different way of thinking toward life."
>
> Respondent no 6: "I did not understand this concept."

Furthermore, if the pre-service teachers did not understand the individual differences, they will feel difficulty to manage them during their classroom teaching. The researcher has not been able to triangulate the questionnaire data collected from the pre-service teachers with the interviews conducted with the prospective teachers.

4.3 Lesson Planning

The lesson planning is vital component of the teaching and learning process. Adesina [1] defines planning as a way of project in our intentions, that is, a method of deciding what we want to accomplish. Planning refers to the act of taking decisions in advance about what is to be done, where and who is to do it, how and when to do it in order to achieve the set goals and objectives. Although planning is complex task, but it is an essential part of teaching learning process. A well organized and sequenced lesson plan helps a teacher to help the students in learning [33]. All three items related to planning were cumulatively interpreted in table 4.3 in which the item wise responses in percentage as well as mean and standard deviation are presented.

Table-4.3: Lesson planning in pre-service courses

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	Missing	Mean	St.D
1 I am learning to plan my lesson during my professional course.								
	47.1	36.2	6.8	5.3	2.9	1.8	4.2006	.99535
12. Planning is easy to learn.								
	35.6	40.9	5.9	6.8	7.6	3.2	3.9422	1.19117
13. I understand fully how to develop SMART objectives.								
	29.4	32.9	11.2	16.5	5.3	4.7	3.6759	1.23245

The results in the table 4.3 showed that the mean of each item is above 3 which revealed that most of the respondents were agreed that they were learning lesson planning. The pre-service teachers were agreed with the statement that they fully understood the development of SMART objectives. SAMRT objective means the specific, attainable, measurable, realistic and time bound objective. However, the interview data tells a different story. The evidence seems to indicate that pre-service teachers did not understood how to develop smart objectives as mentioned by:

> Respondent no 5: "I understand the concept of planning, but I feel that objective is the difficult part in planning to understand."
>
> Respondent no 6: "The difficult thing in planning is deciding intended learning outcomes."

Similarly, few participants had reported that they did not understand the concept of planning at all. It is expressed by the pre-service teachers in following words:

> Respondent no 1: "I did not understand this concept."
>
> Respondent no 3: "About planning I face different difficulties. The most important is the pattern of the planning as every teacher teach us planning in his own way. Objectives are most difficult to understand in planning."
>
> Respondent no 4: "Our teachers do not teach us well about planning, but I have gone through from it during my course work and I felt that to decide the right methodology is difficult."

The interview data also revealed that pre-service teachers did not practice planning in the class. They do plan lesson but did not practice it in class. The work of [33] indicates that lesson plan is very important as it is like a road map of the instructions. The lesson plan is necessary to guide the instruction.

Lesson plan help new or inexperienced teachers to organize content, materials and method. However, the interview data depicted that the pre-service teachers were not practicing planning in their class. It is highlighted in the words of participants as under:

> Respondent no 1: "I do plan lesson but did not present them in class through teaching."
>
> Respondent no 2: "No, I only learnt about planning."
>
> Respondent no 4: "No our teachers do not teach us about it well and did not give us chance to present our planning in class."
>
> Respondent no 5: "Yes I do plan lessons and present them through teaching, but students were not understanding it."

Moreover, in the planning, one can do it by himself, but collaboration is better as working with other teachers and sharing ideas is one of the best experiences in teaching. Along with this in planning the road to success requires commitment and practice [37]. The above analysis reflected that research participants were not well taught by their teachers about planning. This indicates that they will not be able to teach

effectively in class as successful teachers are invariably good planners and thinkers [41].

4.4. Resource Material

Teaching or resource material is a generic term it is used to describe the material or resources teachers use to deliver instruction. It has been observed that the use of teaching material enhances learning and increase student success. The questionnaire developed for pre-service teachers had two items related to teaching material. The following table represented the cumulative results of this theme in term of percentages, mean and standard deviation to examine the responses of pre-service teachers.

Table-4.4: Resources Material as Theme in Pre-Service Courses

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	Missing	Mean	St.D
1. I am learning how to prepare A.V aids during my training.								
	25.0	42.6	9.4	11.8	8.5	2.6	3.6647	1.22936
19. I am learning the use of educational technology.								
	28.8	41.5	9.7	10.0	9.1	.9	3.7151	1.24242

The table 4.4 showed the percentages of responses by pre-service teachers. According to the cumulative result the pre-service teachers agreed with the statements of both items. The pre-service teachers were learning how to prepare A.V aids during their training programs. The pre-service teachers included in the sample for interview were asked to tell the different kinds of A.V aids they learn to prepare during their training course. The responses of pre-service teachers revealed the actual story that they did not learn to prepare A.V aids. This situation was expressed by the participants in following words:

> Respondent no 1: "I only learnt about A.V aids but did not prepare".
> Respondent no 3: "No I did not prepare any A.V aid in class except charts".
> Respondent no 6: "I learn to prepare flash cards only".

This throws more light on the gap between theory and practice as pre-service teachers agreed to the fact that they were only learning about the A.V aids and were not learning to prepare them. Teaching resources are considered an integral component in classroom teaching and teachers must be trained and fully skilled in the use of the teaching aids. The use of educational technology is very important for effective teaching [2] and the percentages of questionnaire depicted that the pre-service teachers were learning the use of educational technology. However, the analysis of interview data reflected that pre-service teachers have different point of opinions regarding the use of new technologies. As 50% participants were in this favor that they learn to use technologies as expressed by participants no 1, 2 and 5:

> Respondent no 1: "Yes, I learn the use of projector and computer in class".

> Respondent no 2: "Yes, I learn the use of projector".
> Respondent no 5: "I use only projector during my course we demand for internet, but management did not listen us".

Contrary to this 50% participants reported that they did not learn to use new technologies as mentioned by participants no 3, 4 and 6 in following words:

> Respondent no 3: "No I did not learn the use of new technologies".
> Respondent no 4: "No our university does not have any facility regarding new technologies".

Furthermore, it can be argued that the number of participants agreed with the statement that they learn the use of new technologies only had mentioned the use of projector that showed they were not well prepared for the use of all new technologies in education. Similarly, there are many benefits of resource material like differentiating instruction, helping learners improve different skills, relieving anxiety or boredom, presenting lesson in exciting way. It can be argued that the prospective teachers will not be able to take full advantage of Audio-Visual aids to make the learning experience more concrete, more realistic and more dynamic.

4.5 Assessment and Measurement

Teachers can improve their instruction as well as help students in learning when they are able to develop useful assessment. Teachers can provide corrective instruction and can give second chance to students to demonstrate success by developing effective assessments [17]. In this research, the researcher asked two questions related to assessment and measurement to get the responses of pre-service teachers. The item no 27 and 28 were asked to check the importance of assessment and measurement in training programs from pre-service teachers. The table no. 4.5 represents the cumulative results in percentages, mean and standard deviation to examine the collected data from the questionnaire for pre-service teachers.

Table 4.5: Assessment and Measurement in Pre-Service Courses

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	Missing	Mean	St.D
27. I am learning the different types of assessment and their use.								
	30.0	42.4	11.8	7.1	3.8	5.0	3.9164	1.04713
28. I am learning about table of specification.								
	19.7	34.4	14.7	13.2	10.3	7.6	3.4236	1.27785

The data in table from the questionnaires distributed to the pre-service teachers revealed that the means of both items is above 3 which means that sample agreed that pre-service teachers were learning the different types of assessment and their use as well as they were also learning how to develop the table of specification.

In comparison with the questionnaire data the interview data reflected the other side of the mirror. According to interviewees

they did not develop any type of assessment during their training course as highlighted in their own words:

> Respondent no 1: "We only learn about different types of assessment and did not develop any kind of assessment."
>
> Respondent no 3: "I only learn three types of assessment and did not design any."
>
> Respondent no 4: "I just read about it but do not have much practical knowledge about it as our teachers did not guide us about it."

In addition to that the interview data reported that teacher students were not fully aware of the concept of Bloom's taxonomy or they only learn about it and did not use this concept while developing assessments as mentioned by respondents:

> Respondent no 1: "I did not understand this concept".
>
> Respondent no 6: "Bloom's taxonomy is useful, and it helps the teacher to evaluate students' performance in true sense".
>
> Respondent no 5: Through Bloom's taxonomy we can check the practical implementation of the work and by using it we can check the learning of students in real sense.

Stiggins [40] correctly argues that, despite the realization of importance of assessment in the field of education, teachers are receiving very formal training for the concept of assessment specially how to design them and analyze them properly. The analysis of interview data also depicted the same story as pre-service teachers were not getting proper training in the field of assessment and measurement.

It can be rightly argued that the prospective teachers were not fully prepared to meet the challenges of classroom life and to deal with the problems of their students effectively. As if they were not able to develop the proper assessment for their students, they would surely not able to identify the learning problems of their students. Accordingly, they would not be able to solve the students' learning difficulties and would not be able to deliver effective teaching.

4.6 Professional Development

Professional development is considered as a vital component in questionnaire as professional development is a major focus of systemic reform initiatives [10]. The maximum numbers of items were related to professional development these are item no 10,14,15,17,18,20,24,26,29,30,31 and 32. The results related to these items were given below in the form of table.

Table-4.6: Professional Development in Pre-Service Courses

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	Missing	Mean	St.D
10. I am learning the law of learning.								
	26.8	45.6	11.5	10.0	2.4	3.8	2.5872	1.01084
14. Duration of practice time is enough during my professional course.								
	26.8	34.4	12.6	16.2	8.5	1.5	3.5433	1.28176
15. I am learning qualities of an effective teacher.								
	55.9	33.6	4.4	1.8	2.4	Nill	4.4088	.84869
17. I am learning the use of educational psychology.								
	34.4	47.4	7.9	6.8	1.8	1.8	4.0985	.92994
18. I am learning how to develop creative skills in students.								
	30.9	43.8	9.7	8.8	4.7	2.1	3.8919	1.09504
20. My teachers have clear concepts about what they are teaching to us.								
	37.4	38.2	8.5	6.5	7.6	1.8	3.9281	1.19593
24. I am learning about mentoring.								
	18.8	31.8	14.4	15.0	13.5	6.5	3.2925	1.34305
26. I am learning how to do SWOT analysis.								
	19.4	28.5	18.8	13.8	10.3	9.1		1.28352
29. Teaching is my passion.								
	53.2	26.8	6.8	5.3	4.4	3.2	4.2561	1.09618
30. Teaching is just a profession for me.								
	20.6	16.8	12.9	20.3	24.7	4.7	2.9198	1.51060
31. Training program is enhancing my teaching skills.								
	52.1	37.6	3.2	2.1	1.8	3.2	4.4043	.81042
32. My teachers use appropriate examples and explanations of new teaching concepts.								
	45.9	29.1	5.3	6.8	10.0	2.9	3.9697	1.31821

The mean of each items depicted that maximum number of respondents seemed agreed with the items no 10, 15, 17, 18, 24, 26 that showed pre-service teachers were learning different things related to their teaching profession like how to develop creative skills in students.

In addition to that, the pre-service teachers had shown agreement towards the item 20 and 32 which enlightened that they were satisfied with their teachers' methodologies and with their teaching as well. The results of item 14 had shown that pre-service teachers agreed that practice time during their professional courses was enough for their learning. Contrary to this the pre-service teachers reported in interview that they have no practice time or only lesson plans were delivered during practice time as mentioned by pre-service teachers:

> Respondent no 1: "We practice different things in class, but we do not have any separate practice for all activities. We did not go to any other institution for teaching practice."
>
> Respondent no 3: "Only teaching practice and activities related to teaching."

Respondent no 6: "We have to deliver lesson during our practical time."

In accordance with above results of interviews, that student teachers sometimes have opinion that the theoretical knowledge provided by their trainers is good, but this knowledge does not work accordingly in real teaching world.

In addition, the pre-service teachers in the questionnaire believed that their professional courses were enhancing their teaching skills that has been shown through the results of item 3 in questionnaire. Similarly, the data from interview reflected that prospective teachers were also satisfied with the evaluation techniques of their teachers as expressed by respondent no 2 and 6:

Respondent no 2: "My teachers use quizzes, assessments, projects and terminal exams to evaluate us."

Respondent no 6: "Weekly test, class presentation and examinations are the techniques used by our teachers to evaluate us."

The point of view of different participants about critical thinking was expressed by the interviews in the following words:

Respondent no 1: "I did not learn this concept."

Respondent no 2: "I think critical thinking means to understand the thinking of students and to know their backgrounds."

Respondent no 3: "I did not understand this concept."

Respondent no 5: "There is two type of critical thinking one is positive, and one is negative. The positive critical thinking is to achieve your goal."

Respondent no 6: "I did not understand the concept of critical thinking."

The analysis of interview data has revealed that pre-service teachers did not understand the concept of critical thinking then how they will critically think on all alternative solutions of different problems and how they will develop critical thinking in their future students. Heitzmann [19] has drawn attention to the fact that the deliberate action is very important for prospective teachers after the critical analysis of the situation. Thus, it could be concluded that pre-service teachers were not fully prepared to deal with the critical situations of classroom teaching.

Another interesting finding related to professional growth of pre-service teachers was revealed through interview data. As reported by five participants of the interview data that their teachers did not evaluate their professional development:

Respondent no 1: There is no specific technique for this. I don't know how they evaluate our professional growth.

Respondent no 2: I don't know how they evaluate our professional growth.

Respondent no 3: I don't think so they evaluate our professional growth.

Respondent no 4: They check our teaching practice assessment registers only and did not brief us about

them in detail. So, I do not have any idea how they evaluate my professional development.

Respondent no 5: They did not evaluate our professional development as they were not interested in our professional development.

In addition to this, the results of items no 29 and 30 in questionnaire has created a confusion as statement 29 is positively stated that is 'teaching is a passion for me' whereas the statement 30 is negatively stated that is 'teaching is just profession for me'. The mean of both items showed that pre-service teachers were agreed with both statements. It shows that pre-service teachers in Mirpur believe that teaching is just a profession and they are joining this noble profession just to earn money. As noted previously this shows the lack of professional development of prospective teachers.

A study carried out by Borko [7] also reinforces the findings of the analysis that the realization of educational reforms movements around the world has led policy makers and educational scholars to demand professional development opportunities for teachers. Professional development for teachers is essential to efforts to improve our schools. Despite recognition of professional development importance, the available process of professional development is inadequate and is not up to the required standard [7]. The literature review also strengthens this point that the professional development of pre-service teachers did not help them to enhance their knowledge and develop new instructional practices to face the challenges of 21st century students.

5. FINDINGS

The existence of human beings is ensured by the quality of education by bring the positive change in economic growth, development of the nation to bring prosperity. In any education system, teacher's qualification is of great importance as only teachers can work as an agent of change by developing the future citizen according to the needs of the time [9]. Training provides individuals an opportunity to improve the level of knowledge and skills and only qualified and well-trained teachers can bring change. Teachers requires to understand that they can bring out the desirable outcomes only when they work proficiently like a skilled person. The current study was aimed to identify problem faced by pre-service teacher during their training while linking theory into practice in the area of Mirpur City of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

However, the student teachers reported through the questionnaire and interview that their trainers are using old teaching methodologies by themselves and not fully prepared to teach them new methodologies, so they did not understand new teaching methods. The research found that teacher trainer required training regarding various aspects of training. Moreover, the study data explored that pre-service teacher were not equipped fully to manage a class effectively as they are confused about various classroom management skills. Additionally, the student teachers revealed that different parts of lesson planning were difficult to understand like how to develop smart objectives or deciding the right method for presentation. Same is the case with the concepts of A.V aids and

assessment. Pre-service teachers were only learning the theoretical information about these concepts and did not prepare A.V. aids or develop assessment test practically.

In addition, student teachers also described that they were not satisfied with the evaluation criteria of their teachers and did not even know how their teachers measure their professional development.

6. CONCLUSION

The present study identifies various loopholes in the process of developing prospective teachers. Firstly, the method of training becomes an obstacle to achievement of the practical use of theories in classrooms due to the use of old teaching techniques by teacher's trainers. Therefore, student teachers are not confident to use new methods of teaching in their classes. This attitude of pre-service teachers will promote the rote learning and memorization in their students. Secondly, teacher's trainers were not trying any strategy to develop creative or thinking skills in pre-service teachers. They were not even promoting the problem-solving skills in the students which is the most common skills required to become a reflective teacher.

The research finding have underlined that only by improving the teachers' training can the standard of teaching be improved and can bridge the gap between theory and practice as no matter how good the printed teaching material are , if the teacher trainers are not trained to give practical experiences to their student teachers the desired aims cannot be achieved. Therefore, it can be concluded that the training of pre-service teachers needs to be aligned with the practical experiences and teacher educators should be trained to take an initiative in the classrooms and able to take decisions according to the needs of the students they are working with. This training can help future teachers to use their thinking and decision-making skills for the application of theory to changing needs of the circumstances more convincingly.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the recommendations is to restate the basic reforms which are essential for the success of any educational system.

- Teachers' trainers should use all new methodologies during training and give practical experience to their student teachers of advance teaching methods. Teachers trainers should practical demonstrate modern techniques and methodologies.
- Teachers' trainers must provide practical opportunities to pre-service teachers to develop each and every component of lesson planning in their classes.
- Assessments of different types can only be understood by student teachers when they practically develop them in classes and use them to understand their merits and demerits.
- They should be Lab classroom where student teachers practically perform learnt theories to understand how they work in classroom.

- The supervision during teacher training programs should be regular and a proper record of each student should be maintained by supervisor.
- Another way to bridge gap between theory and practice is Case method.
- The activity of internship should be planned properly to get the desirable results with the help of proper portfolios.
- An effective change is required in curriculum of pre-service training programs.
- A student's teacher should have a proper examination with practical work before getting the certificate of training.

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