

## PERCEPTION OF PRE-SERVICE (B.ED) TEACHERS PERTAINING TO EFFECTIVENESS OF PAIR TEACHING AND MENTORING DURING PRACTICUM

Fozia Gulab<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Yousuf Sharjeel<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

*Practicum is considered as an important element of teacher education programmes across the world including Pakistan. It prepares pre service teachers to execute the theoretical knowledge and skills learned in the classroom. Notre Dame Institute of Education (NDIE) is a national institute of teacher education. NDIE is committed to bringing about positive change in the quality of teacher education in Pakistan by introducing innovation into teacher education. One such attempt was made in 2005 when pair teaching and mentoring support was introduced for enriched practicum. This research study investigates the opinion of pre service teachers regarding the effectiveness of pair teaching and mentoring during 1<sup>st</sup> round of practicum. The population of the study consisted of 29 pre service teachers enrolled at NDIE as Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) students. A descriptive and exploratory research design was adopted to conduct the study. Questionnaire was used as data collection instrument. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS both descriptive and inferential statistics on Likert scale. Frequencies were run to measure the four aspects of pair teaching such as emotional support, learning with and from each other, resource development, skill development and three aspects of mentoring such as facilitation by mentor, role of the mentor and skills of the mentor. The results of the study indicate that pre service teachers showed satisfaction towards pair teaching and mentoring support however results signify that they were not overwhelmed about the process as the mean score of all subscales remain between 1 and 2. The findings also indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in their opinion regarding different areas investigated. The findings may be used to improvise pair teaching.*

**Keywords:** Teacher education, pre service teacher, pair teaching, mentor, practicum.

### Introduction

The importance of teacher education for effective learning of students cannot be underestimated. The better teachers are educated; the better they can educate students. Therefore, teacher education is considered as a major contributing factor in the holistic development of students and school effectiveness (Human Development Foundation [HDF], 2004).

Teacher education programs across the world and in Pakistan have been structured on two main constrains i-e theory and practicum. Teacher education around the globe imbeds practicum as compulsory aspect of their program for pre service teachers to gain enriched teaching experiences (Scott, Gentry and Phillips, 2014).

Practicum takes a key position in teacher education programmes. Pre service teachers consider practicum as a mile stone in their career for entering into the teaching profession (Grootenbare, 2006; Ngoepe, 2014). They believe that teaching skills are not gained having theoretical knowledge of teaching but by being actively involved in teaching

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<sup>1</sup> Notre Dame Institute of Education, Karachi, Email: [fozia.gulab@ndie.edu.pk](mailto:fozia.gulab@ndie.edu.pk).

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hamdard University, Email: [dr.sharjeel@hamdard.edu.pk](mailto:dr.sharjeel@hamdard.edu.pk).

through opportunities given during practicum. Thus practicum becomes an independent component of teacher education programmes. Research studies conducted by Noonis and Jernice in 2011 have endorsed the importance of practicum as it provide pre service teachers with the hands-on experiences that are needed to develop an understanding of a link between conceptual framework of theoretical underpinnings and classroom practices, ability of pre service teachers to use new strategies of teaching and reflect on their teaching of particular topics, identify students' needs within the classroom, their social needs and other school related matters. The research study conducted by Tarman in 2012 has confirmed the idea of practicum as an opportunity given to pre service teachers by teacher education institutions to gain an insight into teaching as a profession. The experiences gained during practicum help them to remain in the profession and develop necessary skills and competencies required as professional teachers. (Scott, Gentry and Phillips, 2014). Gustafsib and Rowell (1995) the essence of practicum is that it reshapes the opinion of pre service teachers regarding teaching and learning and thus becomes a means for them to be part of educational community as teachers to share in the beliefs, norms and values of experienced teachers (Grootenbare, 2006).

Practicum as part of teacher education programme plays a crucial role for the professional development of pre service teacher as practitioners. It provides an opportunity for pre service teachers to enhance and practice their teaching, classroom management and assessment skills. In addition to this they learn to work in collegiality with colleagues thus reflecting on their professional practices that make them professional teachers. Learning during practicum is one of approach for preparing effective teachers as it provides them real school experiences but the focus of teacher education in Pakistan is mainly on teaching of theory than enhancement of learning experiences and learning gained during practicum help pre service teachers to be efficient leaders and practitioners. Hence making practicum inevitable and a joint responsibility of pre service teachers, teacher educator and supervising teacher (Saifullah, Sherzaman, Shafqat, Asima and Sehrish, 2013).

In 2005, NDIE introduced pair teaching and mentoring as important aspect of practicum offered. It revolved around three stake holders such as pre service teachers, mentors (an appointed faculty member based on discipline expertise) and supervising teachers nominated by the schools. Practicum at NDIE takes place in two phases. During the first phase Pre service teachers are paired by the practicum coordinator taking into consideration curriculum studies subjects. The pairs are mainly expected to work together to make lesson plans, assist each other in choosing student centered activities, help each other in managing work stress, share creative ideas in making resources and managing resources during teaching sessions, assisting and guiding each other in technology related issues, build confidence level of each other in difficult times, motivate each other, and to seek the advice and guidance of mentor in content, methodology and classroom management and discipline related issues. The role of the mentors is to provide facilitation and support to the pairs by being available and accessible whereas, supervising teacher are expected to observe the pairs teaching together and provide individual feedback keeping into consideration the standard guidelines provided by NDIE for the growth and development of pre service teachers in the profession.

Researcher has been involved in this process from its inception and observed restlessness and non-satisfaction among the three stake holders regarding this process. Some of the issues facing pairs were non-availability of the partner at the suitable time, non-cooperation, unequal distribution of work, dependency on each other, diversity of working habits, and imbalance in competency. The issues facing mentors were similar to those mentioned for pairs including dedicated working habits of pairs and time limitation to reflect, discuss and give critical feedback on the lessons to be taught. The mentoring time was mostly spent on resolving conflicts between the pairs. The supervising teachers faced the issues of observing two teachers simultaneously and providing feedback. Therefore, pre service teachers, mentors and supervising teachers were of the opinion that pair teaching does not support the learning of pre service teachers as professional. This research study was designed to analyze the opinion of pre service teachers' regarding the effectiveness pair teaching and mentoring process during practicum and verify it with research studies and literature.

The current study is situated within this milieu of local reform of teacher education. In Pakistan, the need has emerged for increased research that could help educators better understand the challenges and opportunities in learning to teach in the local educational context. So the present study is situated in a microcosm of the broader context and explored the opinion of pre service (B.Ed) teachers regarding the effectiveness of pair teaching and mentoring support provided during practicum to investigate the effects of reformed practicum on the learning and skill development of pre service teachers as practicum is emphasized as an important element of teacher education in the National Education Policy 2009.

### **Literature Review**

Effective teachers influence students' achievement in the class, which are the product of effective teacher education programme. The quality of a teacher is generally dependent on the quality of his/her pre service education. Whatever background experiences and qualifications teachers come with, the quality of their teaching depends on pre-service education. (United States Agency for International Development [USAID], 2006). All the teacher education programs offered in Pakistan and elsewhere have two main components; the theory or course work and the practice or practicum. Though practicum is the most influential factor in preparing teachers to face classroom demands but it has been neglected by Pakistani educators and researchers, and hence is almost a missing factor in policy making and hence no serious endeavors have been taken by both at government and institutional level to improve practicum (Abbas and Lu, 2013). The presently implacable practicum for teacher education programmes offered in Pakistan is traditional and turns out to be ineffective. Consequently, poor skilled and non-professional teachers are produced due to negligence of practicum (Saifi., Sherzaman., Shah., Idrees., Zaman., 2013). Therefore, teacher education institutions end up with the transmission of theory of learning to pre service teachers taking into consideration national and international policies and procedures. The mastery of knowing "What" is focused (Eisner 2002; Flyvbjerg; 2006; Brunstad 2007), whereas, the mastery of knowing "How" is over looked. (Flyvbjerg, 2006). However, the knowledge of 'What' and 'How' is equally important and is the soul of the pre service teacher education programmes. The amalgamation of theoretical and practical knowledge give equilibrium to teacher education and enable pre service teachers to gain practical wisdom to act justly in situations that arise suddenly or regularly in their career as teachers. Thus practicum becomes an important component of teacher education programme (Wilson;2006 and Beck & Kosniet; 2002) because it provides pre service teachers with opportunities to face the realities of teaching/learning and gain firsthand experience of classroom situations. Practicum is valuable for pre service teachers in searching for discoveries in the selected discipline and to give purposeful meaning to teaching/learning process. The two famous models of practicum are 'apprentice' and 'laboratory'. These models were presented by Dewey in 1904. The first model presents "mentor" as a model and teaching is like training thus depending on experts to be mentors. The second model seeks the growth of pre service teachers through classroom observation and analysis. This model demands multiple classroom based experiences and availability of mentors for dialogue, reflection and action (Ulvik and Smith 2011). The three stakeholders in practicum are pre service teachers, supervising teachers assigned by the schools and a representative from teacher education known as mentor. The learning of pre service teachers is enhanced while working in pairs and supervised by a mentor during teaching learning process. To provide support to pre service teachers during practicum they are either assigned a mentor or are paired with a colleague (Sorensen, 2004).

Practicum is basically designed considering the social requirement of individual societies (Ulvik and Smith 2011). Social constructivism is the theoretical framework foundation behind pair teaching and mentoring (Galvin, 2013). Pair teaching identifies its root in the work of Vygotsky (1962) and Piaget (1971). These theorists believed that higher levels of performance on tasks could be achieved with the support and assistance of a partner together with further enhancing cooperative working habits, development of sense of self-efficacy, foster critical reflection and challenge pairs to reassess their ways of thinking and help them to generate new ideas (Sorensen, 2004; Taylor and Francis, 2005). Learning from and with peers give confidence to pre service teachers in trying out to implement new ideas in teaching thus bringing innovation in teaching to foster their growth as professionals. The importance of working in teams at the initial stages of teachers to be is not to be ignored as this will lead to the development of collegial

community for the development of school and community. Pairing allows for mutual support to colleagues, sympathy in times of trials and involvement in each other's learning. Pairing facilitates pre service teachers to learn from the skills of each other, to share ideas and resources for improving their teaching and student learning while enhancing their subject matter knowledge (Sorensen, 2004). The three tenets of mentoring according to Vygotsky (1978) are 1) pre service teachers' construct based on their previous learning, experiences, beliefs and attitudes of classroom teaching and learning, 2) learning is dependent on social interaction between the pre service teachers and their mentors 3) learning happens in a context such as classroom in case of practicum (Ngoepe, 2014).

The concept of collaborative education was introduced at the beginning of 20th century. This was basically to minimize the theory-practice gap in engineering education. This concept was conceptualized in the universities of America and Canada in the years 1906 and 1957 respectively at University of Cincinnati and the University of Waterloo but now it has been incorporated in other disciplines including education (Abbas & Lu 2013). Darling-Hammond, 2005 is of the opinion that collaboration is the key of any professional practice such as teacher education programme as it moves beyond inter-institutional level to interpersonal level. Thus Sorensen, 2004 believes that a strong collaboration is needed between pre service teacher, supervising teacher and mentor (Abbas & Lu 2013). Therefore, efforts have been made from last two decades to develop partnerships between schools and teacher education institutions Sim, 2010 (Abbas & Lu, 2013). Being teaching partners is taken as an opportunity given to pre service teachers to discuss their ideas about a teaching plan or approach, and debate or challenge partner's viewpoint that allow the pair to work in the zone of proximal development with their teaching partner that encourages pre service teachers to provide advice and guidance to each other (Galvin, 2013). Studies conducted by Taylor and Francis (2005) in Australia with the students of early childhood education programmes have revealed the positive impact of peer coaching. The studies have examined the perfection of pre service teachers regarding the peer coaching. The researchers discovered the benefits of peer coaching during the 1<sup>st</sup> field placement in schools such as: the development of support and collegiality; improved lesson planning, preparation and presentation; and expansion of opportunities for reflection and self-analysis. Its benefits were not limited to field experience but it moved to having overall positive impact of the learning of the students. Research studies conducted in Australia by Walsh and Elmslie (2005) in early childhood centers revealed that pairing pre service teachers during practicum encouraged partners to try out innovative and creative ways to organize their teaching delivery. They recommended that teaching cooperative and teamwork skills during the academic strand of the teaching program would further enhance practicum partners' interactions and their professional experiences (Galvin, 2013). McKerr, Stanton and Turner confirmed the idea that "two heads were better than one" when investigating about paired placements in a United Kingdom context. However, they recommend preparation for all (pre service teacher, supervising teacher, and mentor) involved in a paired placement as well as ongoing support for pre service teachers during the practicum. This study has endorsed paired practicum as an opportunity of learning with a teaching partner, receiving feedback from an individual at the same level and having the confidence on each other to try new ideas and teaching approaches. In support of pair teaching this study endorsed it as it facilitates prospective teachers to alter and enrich their lesson plans through partner discussion and reflection to make teaching / learning experience valuable both for students and prospective teachers (Galvin, 2013). However, the compatibility of teaching partners is important for the success of pair teaching. Pair teaching has positive impact on the learning of pre service teachers as they receive from each other both emotional and professional support. Pre service teachers who were paired for practicum have reported that it allowed them to explore different teaching strategies because they had their partner's support and guidance. Further benefits of paired practicum include improved professional documentation and organization, as well as the understanding that pre service teachers contribute to each other's ongoing professional knowledge and development (Galvin, 2013). Pre service teachers who were involved in pair teaching believed that knowing their teaching partner made this initial experience tolerable. They considered it as an opportunity to share responsibility, plan together and support each other. Research participants considered paired practicum as a positive experience as someone is always there to provide feedback to improve teaching for the next lesson thus the cooperative teaching approach result in improved planning and teaching because teaching partners shared ideas, resources and teaching delivery. Resultantly when prospective teachers had leading and supporting role in the class, this means students have rich educational experience and more individual

support. Pre service teachers benefitted from collegial support and were developing cooperative skills which would help them achieve important aspects of teaching (Galvin, 2013).

Paired practicum at times is not valued by the pre service teachers, supervising teachers and the mentors. It is considered as wastage of time thus consequently the objectives of practicum are not achieved because of lack of motivation of the key stakeholders in practicum to nurture the growth of pre service teachers in the profession (Abbas and Lu, 2013). Supervising teachers have reported that giving feedback to two students is difficult, time consuming and tough job whereas the mentors have reported reading and responding to two practicum folders, could be time consuming and working with two people of different capability on one line is challenging (Walsh, Elmslie and Tayler, 2002). Though pre service teachers support pair teaching however a few have issues with it such as learning at the cost of other colleagues and facing the pressure of matching with the compatibility of colleagues thus learning at ones own cost. Working in pairs is not an easy job as it may cause conflicts and misunderstanding between the pair that could be resolved with the intervention of mentors (Sorensen, 2004).

Research studies conducted in Australia by Walsh, Elmslie and Tayler in 2002 have revealed that pre service teachers who were paired for practicum have marked it as a highly positive experience in a sense that they received emotional and practical support from each other and there were gains in learning areas such as knowledge, skills and attitudes. The research findings proved that through pairing pre service teachers supported and learned from each other, enhanced their skills for critical reflection and learned the importance of communication and cooperation with teaching colleagues. The supervising teachers also found pairing valuable for pre service teachers as they witnessed them grow in knowledge and confidence. Mostly supervising teachers commented that they valued pre service teachers' ideas and enthusiasm. Although evidence from experience revealed that some pairs worked together more effectively and productively than others, and this depended upon a number of factors (Walsh, Elmslie and Tayler, 2002).

Research studies conducted by Bullough, Young, Erickson, Birrell, Clark and Egan in 2002 and by Bullough et. all in 2003 and Gardiner and Robinson in 2009 has emphasized on the importance of paired practicum being effective in providing collegial support for learning as well as enhancement of collaboration and cooperative teaching skills. Working together on lesson planning, assessment of students' learning and teaching together and inquiring together are some of the benefits of pair teaching during practicum and enhancement of their professional growth. (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014). Mentors value pair teaching as an opportunity for the professional development in the schools, the students taught by pairs felt the presence of two teachers beneficial in the classroom as it becomes a means of giving individual attention to students, the pairs felt emotional and psychological support thus learning becomes easier. This in turn helps to achieve higher standards of learning. Pairing at teacher education allow students develop collegiality in improving the school environment (Sorensen, 2004).

Practicum prepares pre service teachers for smooth entry into the profession. Dialogue with mentors help pre service teachers to gain confidence for teaching and makes it an opportunity to reflect on the steps for the development of important skills. Mentoring is one of the important factors of successful practicum. Mentors contribute to the development and progress of pre service teachers by providing emotional support and a type of environment where pre service teachers are motivated, supported and challenged to take risks and be creative in their teaching endeavours (Zeichner, 2002).

Thus mentors are expected to identify and promote the main skills of pre service teachers. Therefore, mentoring becomes a process of not only telling but also witnessing the teaching skills by being role model through giving tutorials as an important factor for the learning of pre service teachers during practicum (Ulvick and Smith, 2011). The role of the mentors during practicum is to be role model teacher and help pre service teachers to plan, teach and reflect on their practices to grow professionally in pedagogy and content area. Malderez (2001) defines mentoring as a support provided by an experienced person to a non-experience for the growth and development of the non-experienced. Tomlines (1995) defines mentoring as providing assistance to pre service teachers on learning how to

teach during practicum. Brooks and Sikes 1997 speaks of the expertise of mentors in the following areas such as helping pre service teachers to learn in most effective ways, to plan lessons, manage and organize classrooms, dealing with difficult learners, selecting content and method according to the learners needs, having good knowledge of evaluation and assessment techniques, selection and management of suitable activities for students and working in collaboration with colleagues.

Shaw (1992) see mentors as senior teachers who facilitate the learning of pre service teachers through training, guidance and counseling, coaching and supervision. Mentors play multiple roles during practicum such as modeling of effective teaching skills, guiding principles for classroom management, acceptance of pre service teachers, provision of instructional support, means of communication of hope and optimism. Hudson et. al. (2005) mentors should provide immediate feedback to pre service teachers for their practices to reflect on their teaching for the improvement of practices. Hudson (2007) mentors must convey their expectations of pre service teachers, provide them with written and oral feedback, review the lessons and help them to reflect on their teaching. The study conducted by Tok and Yilmaz (2011) states that pre service teachers have objections for guiding activities, their expectations are to be treated like colleagues and mentors to be tolerant and patient with pre service teaching during practicum period (Ngoepe, 2014).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the opinion of pre service teachers (Graduates of Notre Dame Institute of Education batch 2014-2015) regarding the effectiveness of pair teaching and mentoring during the 1<sup>st</sup> round of practicum.

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent do pre service teachers perceive the effectiveness of pair teaching in their first round of teaching practicum?

The following four aspects will be the focus of the 1<sup>st</sup> question

- Emotional support
- Learning with and from each other
- Resource development
- Skill development

1. To what extent do pre service teachers perceive the effectiveness of mentoring in their first round of teaching practicum?

The following three aspects will be the focus of 2<sup>nd</sup> question

- Facilitation by mentor
- Role of the mentor
- Skills of the mentor

### **Methodology**

This study employed a descriptive exploratory research design. It has practical significance and potential solutions because answers of the research questions would be helpful for pre service teachers, mentors and the administration of NDIE for the effective implementation of reformed practicum at NDIE.

The population for the study consisted of all the pre service teachers enrolled at NDIE as B.Ed students in the year 2014-2015. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from 29 research participants. Questionnaire was used as data gathering technique which consisted of two parts. Part 'A' had four subscales and its focus was to collect

information regarding pre service teacher’s perceptions of the effectiveness of pair teaching. Part ‘B’ of the questionnaire has three sub scales and its focus was to get the perception of pre service teachers regarding the effectiveness of mentoring support. The items in each sub scale were designed in a five point Likert Scale. The researcher gave levels of Likert scale numerical values to estimate the extent of agreement with statements in the questionnaire. 5 was given for strongly agree (SA), 4 for agree (A), 3 for undecided (U), 2 for disagree (D) and 1 for strongly disagree (SD). The content validity of the questionnaire was ascertained by a team of three experts at NDIE. The experts were experienced researcher, teacher educators and supervisors. The instrument was then pilot tested with 6 randomly selected individuals of a population of 35 individuals. The instrument was improved based on the feedback received as a result of pilot testing. During data analysis, the responses from the questionnaires were coded, scored and then analyzed using descriptive (means and standard deviations) statistics.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1. Effectiveness of pair teaching during practicum**

Sub Scales	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Emotional Support	29	2.447	.75816
Learning from Pairs	29	2.321	.67445
Development of Resources	29	2.424	.88877
Skill Development	29	2.262	.83066

The results of table 1 significantly exhibit that pre service teachers are merely satisfied with pair teacher during practicum. The results generally indicate that they were not overwhelmed or enthusiastic about it as the mean score for all the sub scales remain between 2.262 and 2.447. The assumption was that through pair teaching pre service teachers would gain enriched experience of classroom teaching but mean score calculated for each sub scale describe that the process and experience did not benefit pre service teachers as expected because the tendency of mean scores is towards the lower level. Practicum did not fully benefit pre service teachers in terms of learning with and from each other. This experience of pre service teachers might be due to the fact of negligence of application of cooperative learning methodology adopted as teaching and learning strategies in the Pakistani education system. The education system in Pakistan is based on lecture method of teaching and learning is considered as rote memorization of content. Therefore, generally speaking under rare circumstances the system would provide any formal learning opportunities that would challenge students to support the learning of fellow students. Colleagues of same caliber are considered as rivals and of lower caliber are considered as board or dull.

Thus researcher’s assumption is that during the 14 years of education prior to enrolling at NDIE pre service teachers were hardly given any opportunities of working in big or small groups to support the learning of each other. The researcher believes that an attitude of competition had been there to win the battle alone without supporting others or being supported. Therefore, when pre service teachers are confronted with such situation of facilitate the learning process of each other or being challenged / questioned by someone about their practices they find it quite difficult to accept the draw backs in their learning process. Consequently, they develop dis-likeliness towards the process rather taking it as an opportunity of learning together for the improvement of each other

The other reason for lower mean score for pair teaching could be that this process challenge individual to come out of their comfort zone and be adaptable with those of greater or lesser of their level. Therefore, this process becomes demanding for individuals to break the cocoon of their individuality and learn from the experience/expertise of others or assist someone to experience great learning and develop expertise. Since this gets demanding in terms of time and energy pre service teachers thus prefer remaining within their shells to satisfactorily fulfill the requirements of the programme as this seems to be an easy way to achieve the target.

**Table 2. Effectiveness of mentoring during practicum**

Sub Scales	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Facilitation by Mentor	29	1.9895	.61167
Attitude of Mentor	29	2.0307	.77225
Skills of Mentor	29	1.9391	.78103

The results of table 2 clearly indicate that pre service teachers were merely satisfied with mentoring support received during practicum. The pre service teachers had lower level of satisfaction about the facilitation provided by the mentors in terms of assistance in making lesson plans, framing behavioral objectives, selection of suitable teaching resources, choosing topic related teaching methods, making questions of different level and providing feedback for improvement. However, pre service teachers had slightly better opinion about attitude of the mentors during practicum. They discovered mentors remained committed to their role and accepted them as novice teachers by communicating hope and optimism during challenging moments of practicum. Pre service teachers were of the opinion that they did not benefit from the skills of mentors such as instructional and providing constructive (oral, written and on line) feedback.

### **Findings**

The findings of the study generally reveal that pre service teacher are of the opinion that teaching in pairs and being supported by a mentor satisfactorily contribute to advanced teaching experience during practicum. Pre service teachers are of the view point that practicum to an average is strengthened by sharing achievements, ideas, opinions, problems, burdens, issues and challenges with someone and is it taken as an opportunity of reflecting together on and sharing of learning experience in relation to the effectiveness of various teaching and learning methodologies/strategies. The belief of pre service teachers is that pair teaching supports in the learning to make effective resources such as flash cards, charts, worksheets, puppets, maps, sketches and three dimensional models. In addition to this pairs assist each other in developing and enhancing some of the important skills such as making lesson plans, writing behavioral objectives, asking various categories of questions, effective communication skills, managing classroom and writing on the charts / blackboard and managing the boards.

To an average degree pre service teachers appreciated the support received from the mentors by having a critical look at the lesson plans and provided critical feedback on the method, strategies, resources to be used and proper understanding and writing of behavioral objectives. The attitude and role of the mentor was appreciated as pre service teachers thought that it facilitated the learning process

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Pre service teachers enrolled at NDIE do not have strong positive opinion about pair teaching. It seems they go through this process as a requirement of the programme and are of the opinion that to an average pairing and mentoring provides enriched teaching experience. However, the researcher wants to recommend that pre service teachers must be educated regarding the demands of working to together as accepting the strengths and weaknesses of each other for better learning. An impact study could be conducted on the process of pair teaching and mentoring.

Collaboration and partnership among different agencies is considered key feature for successful progress. Similarly, teachers would require to work together for improving teaching. Pairing students for practicum is not uncommon at tertiary institutions such as teacher education. Maloney and Campbell-Evans (1998) studied pre service teachers planning, implementing and evaluating lessons during practicum in Western Australia. The finding of these researchers have explored that practicum becomes less stressful while working in pairs because of shared burden and responsibilities. Prior to pairing pre service teachers should be prepared to work together by getting insights about



the demands, challenges and benefits of working in teams. Supervising teachers in schools should be given orientation in helping pre service teachers teaching together. Students get individual attention with pair teaching as with having more adults in the class thus having more of co-operative learning activities in the class. Pairing facilitate for emotional, practical support and gains in learning of knowledge (opportunity to talk, share, discuss, compare and reflect on learning experiences), skill (planning, reflecting, working together) and attitudes/values of pre service teachers (Tyler and Walsh, 2002).

Issues with pair teaching are time pressure, evaluation of two students at a time, working with students of different aptitudes, facilitation of team spirit and co-operation between pairs. Challenges of pair teaching for pre service teacher are the variation in the level of commitment and enthusiasm, competition and comparison, non-supportive attitude of host teachers for pairs, supervision of pairs was found to be burdensome. Pair teaching could be promoted by 1) having briefing and debriefing session daily 2) creating supportive learning environment by giving feedback to each other for improvement 3) Demonstrating learning attitude 4) taking practicum as positive experience 5) schools to create non-threatening environment for teacher to be 6) pairing produces worthwhile learning for students

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