



IMPACT OF INTERN TEACHING PRACTICE IN REAL-LIFE CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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Abstract

This study explores the impact of intern teaching practice on real-life classroom instruction among Bachelor of Education (Honours.) graduates in the northeastern part of Bangladesh. The research aimed to examine how teaching internships could influence classroom instruction, enhance pedagogical skills, and strengthen theoretical understanding. A qualitative research design was used, involving fifteen in-depth interviews and two focus group discussions with participants who have completed their teaching internships and are now working in various schools. The data were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns and experiences. Findings revealed that teaching internships significantly contributed to bridging theory and practice, improving lesson planning, classroom management, and reflective abilities. Participants reported gaining confidence, professional identity, and a deeper understanding of educational theories they applied them in real classroom contexts. The study also highlighted the importance of mentorship, feedback, and experiential learning in teacher preparation. However, challenges such as limited supervision, short internship duration, and resource constraints were noted. The research concludes that teaching practice plays a transformative role in preparing competent and reflective teachers and recommends strengthening mentorship, reflective learning, and contextual adaptation in teacher education programs across Bangladesh.

Keywords: *Teaching internship, Pedagogical skills, Pre-service teachers, Experiential learning, Classroom management*

Introduction

Teacher education programs aim to prepare competent, reflective, and professional educators who can manage diverse classroom situations effectively. Among the essential components of such programs, teaching practice or internship plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and classroom realities. During this period, pre-service teachers get an opportunity to apply what they have learned in real teaching contexts under the supervision of experienced mentors (Allen & Wright, 2014). The internship allows student teachers to experience authentic teaching situations, develop professional attitudes, and gain confidence in lesson delivery and classroom management (Hussain & Mahmood, 2010).

In the context of Bangladesh, teaching internships are an integral part of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) curriculum. The program is designed to equip trainee teachers with both pedagogical knowledge and practical teaching experience. During the internship, student teachers are placed in different schools, where they engage in teaching, observation, and reflection activities. This hands-on exposure helps them understand learners' needs, apply appropriate instructional strategies, and integrate educational theories into real classroom practices. However, despite its importance, many studies have reported that the transition from theory to practice is often challenging for pre-service teachers. They face difficulties in managing classrooms, adapting lessons to learners' needs, and aligning theoretical concepts with real-life situations (Larbi & Kuranchie, 2018). These challenges make it necessary to examine how teaching internships actually impact pre-service teachers' pedagogical skills and instructional approaches once they enter the professional teaching world.

Globally, teaching practice has long been recognized as a powerful professional learning experience that shapes teacher identity and competence. According to Cheung, Wong, and Wang (2023), teaching internships contribute significantly to the development of teachers' self-efficacy, reflective practice, and adaptability in diverse teaching contexts. Similarly, Ramirez (2020) emphasized that through guided practice, pre-service teachers develop confidence in their ability to organize learning activities and manage the complexities of the classroom environment. Therefore, understanding how internship experiences affect real-life teaching performance is vital for improving teacher education programs in Bangladesh and beyond. This study

aims to explore the impact of intern teaching practice on classroom instruction, focusing on how it enhances pedagogical skills and connects theoretical understanding with practical experience.

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the impact of intern teaching practice on real-life classroom instruction among graduates who have completed a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program in northeastern Bangladesh. Specifically, the study seeks to explore: at first, how teaching internships influence the instructional approach of pre-service teachers in real classroom settings. Secondly the extent to which teaching internships enhance pedagogical skills and classroom management. Thirdly, how teaching practice strengthens teachers' understanding of educational theories and their application in real contexts. Finally, by exploring these aspects, the research aims to contribute to improving teacher education programs and internship structures within Bangladesh's educational framework.

The study is guided by the following research questions: at first, how does intern teaching practice affect the instructional approach of pre-service teachers in real classroom settings? Secondly, in what ways do teaching internships improve the pedagogical skills and classroom management of pre-service teachers? And finally, how does teaching practice strengthen intern teachers' theoretical knowledge in education?

Although teaching internships are a mandatory component of teacher education programs, there remains uncertainty about how effectively these experiences prepare student teachers for real classroom challenges. Many new teachers report that despite completing internships, they struggle to manage classrooms, implement lesson plans, and translate theoretical concepts into effective teaching practices (Arslan & İlin, 2018).

In Bangladesh, pre-service teachers often complete their internship within limited time frames and under diverse school conditions, which may not fully expose them to the complexities of teaching in real contexts. Supervision and mentoring quality also vary, which can affect the depth of learning and skill development. Consequently, questions remain about how far these internships truly improve teaching competence and professional readiness. Furthermore, most existing studies have focused on quantitative assessments of internship programs, with less attention given to qualitative insights—the voices, reflections, and lived experiences of the interns themselves. Understanding teachers' own perceptions is essential to reveal how internships shape their instructional approaches, confidence, and application of theory in everyday teaching. This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive qualitative study that captures the nuanced impacts of teaching internships on professional growth and classroom instruction.

This study is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it provides valuable insights into the relationship between theory and practice in teacher education. By exploring teachers' reflections on their internship experiences, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how teaching practice fosters real-world teaching competence.

Secondly, the findings can inform teacher education policymakers and curriculum developers about areas that require improvement. For instance, insights into the challenges faced by interns can guide the design of more effective mentoring systems and reflective learning components within internship programs (Filiz & Durnali, 2019). Thirdly, the study adds to the academic literature on teaching internships in South Asian contexts, particularly Bangladesh, where limited research has been done on the qualitative aspects of teacher training. By focusing on lived experiences, it enriches the understanding of how internships contribute to professional growth and teaching identity formation. Finally, the study holds practical relevance for current and future pre-service teachers. The experiences shared by participants can serve as guidance for new interns, helping them anticipate challenges and adopt strategies for successful teaching practice.

This research focuses on B.Ed. graduates who completed their teaching internships in the northeastern region of Bangladesh, particularly Sylhet, and are currently employed as teachers in government or non-government schools. The study uses a qualitative design, relying on data collected through in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus group discussions (FGD). The study is limited to exploring personal experiences, perceptions, and reflections rather than measuring internship outcomes quantitatively. It does not assess institutional differences or compare internship programs across universities. Instead, the focus remains on how participants perceive the influence of their internship on their professional teaching practices.

The conceptual foundation of this study is based on experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) and constructivist perspectives of teacher education. According to Kolb's experiential learning model, knowledge is created through the transformation of experience, involving a continuous cycle of experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation. In the context of teaching practice, pre-service teachers learn most effectively when they actively engage in teaching, reflect on their performance, relate it to theoretical frameworks, and refine their instructional methods. Similarly, Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory emphasizes learning through interaction and collaboration. During teaching internships, pre-service teachers work under the guidance of experienced mentors and peers, which helps them internalize teaching norms and strategies. Schön's (1983) concept of the reflective practitioner also aligns with this process, as reflection-in-action enables teachers to adapt to dynamic classroom realities.

In summary, teaching internships are a cornerstone of teacher education, providing pre-service teachers with opportunities to merge theoretical knowledge with practical classroom experience. However, the extent to which these experiences shape long-term teaching practices remains underexplored, particularly in the context of Bangladesh. By investigating the experiences of B.Ed. graduates who have transitioned from interns to professional teachers, this study aims to reveal how teaching practice influences classroom instruction, pedagogical skill development, and theoretical understanding. The findings are expected to contribute meaningfully to both academic literature and teacher education policy.

Literature Review

Teaching practice, often called a teaching internship or practicum, plays a vital role in teacher education programs. It provides pre-service teachers the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in authentic classroom environments, bridging the gap between educational theory and pedagogical practice (Allen & Wright, 2014). The experience helps aspiring teachers develop instructional competence, classroom management skills, and a professional teaching identity (Cheung, Wong, & Wang, 2023). This literature review synthesizes scholarly insights on how teaching internships influence real-life instructional practices, enhance pedagogical skills, and deepen theoretical understanding among intern teachers.

Influence of Teaching Practice on Classroom Instruction: Intern teaching practice is the foundation of real-world professional learning in teacher education. Hussain and Mahmood (2010) emphasized that practice teaching provides a critical environment for professional development, allowing pre-service teachers to experiment with instructional strategies in authentic settings. Their findings highlight that hands-on experience builds confidence and refines lesson planning, student engagement, and instructional delivery.

Similarly, Larbi and Kuranchie (2018) investigated the transition “*from theory to practice*” and concluded that classroom exposure allows interns to adapt pedagogical theories into situationally appropriate teaching actions. Interns learn to handle the unpredictable nature of classrooms an experience impossible to replicate in university simulations. Allen and Wright (2014) also found that practical teaching enables student teachers to link pedagogical theories to learner-centered instruction, demonstrating that “*real learning occurs when pre-service teachers are in classrooms.*” This hands-on phase often transforms abstract ideas from coursework such as constructivism or behaviorism into observable teaching routines.

Furthermore, Ghufon and Taufiq (2022) examined pre-service English teachers and found a substantial positive relationship between teaching internships and the development of instructional flexibility. Interns who participated in well-supervised placements demonstrated significant improvements in student engagement and differentiated instruction strategies.

In short, teaching practice influences classroom instruction by fostering adaptability, reflective practice, and contextual awareness skills that are crucial for effective teaching in real-world contexts.

Enhancement of Pedagogical Skills Through Internships: Teaching internships are equally significant in enhancing pre-service teachers’ pedagogical competencies. Ramirez (2020) explored how pre-service teachers perceive their teaching preparedness, showing that real classroom exposure improves lesson delivery, questioning techniques, and formative assessment practices. According to her study, “*internship bridges the discrepancy between pedagogical theory and classroom realities.*”

Similarly, Cheung, Wong, and Wang (2023) investigated teacher internships in rural China and found a notable improvement in self-efficacy among pre-service teachers after internship participation. They reported that teaching practice enhances teachers’ ability to organize lessons, manage classrooms, and adapt instructional methods to diverse learner needs.

In Turkey, Arslan and İlin (2018) demonstrated that teaching practice experiences significantly influence pre-service teachers’ beliefs and strategies about teaching. Through exposure to authentic contexts, interns refine their classroom management, communication, and instructional planning. Viciano and Mayorga-Vega (2013) focused on physical education interns and revealed that internships help future teachers understand curriculum planning and instructional sequencing. Their study suggests that structured internships encourage reflective practice and collaborative learning among teacher candidates.

Furthermore, Filiz and Durnali (2019) found that the internship experience shapes pedagogical attitudes by combining theory-based decision-making with practical constraints. Their participants emphasized that guided mentorship during internships improved their confidence in handling diverse student behaviors and needs.

Collectively, these studies confirm that teaching internships significantly enhance pre-service teachers’ pedagogical skills especially in classroom management, lesson design, reflective teaching, and learner engagement.

Linking Theoretical Knowledge with Practice: A recurring challenge in teacher education is the theory practice gap the difficulty of translating educational theory into classroom behavior. Several studies have highlighted the internship as a powerful mechanism to bridge this divide.

Levy Morchio (2022) conducted a qualitative study exploring pre-service teachers’ voices on the theory-practice gap, concluding that internship experiences compel them to interpret theoretical frameworks such as constructivism and Bloom’s taxonomy in real-life contexts. She argues that this reflective confrontation with theory solidifies conceptual understanding and encourages adaptive teaching. Yin (2019) also examined English-as-a-foreign-language teacher trainees and found that internships help pre-service teachers connect abstract pedagogical knowledge to practical classroom strategies. Her study revealed that exposure to real learners deepens understanding of theories on motivation, differentiation, and scaffolding.

Hussain and Mahmood (2010) supported this connection by asserting that effective teacher education programs must intertwine theoretical coursework with practical exposure, creating opportunities for pre-service teachers to test, question, and refine what they learn in lectures. Moreover, Ismaeel and Al Mulhim (2022) explored the integration of technology and pedagogy (TPACK framework) during online internships amid the COVID-19 crisis. Their findings show that even virtual practicum experiences can strengthen theoretical understanding by requiring teachers to operationalize theory-driven digital pedagogy.

The internship, therefore, not only strengthens pedagogical knowledge but also deepens understanding of educational theory through reflection, experimentation, and feedback.

Interns' Perceptions of Teaching Practice: Interns' perceptions play an important role in how effectively they internalize pedagogical theories and skills. Studies indicate that pre-service teachers generally view internships as transformative learning experiences that reshape their professional identities.

Larbi and Kuranchie (2018) found that interns perceive teaching practice as an opportunity to test their teaching philosophies, adjust to classroom realities, and learn from mentoring teachers. Participants expressed that "the internship is where real teaching begins," marking a shift from student to professional identity. Arslan and İlin (2018) observed that initial anxieties about classroom control often transform into confidence and self-efficacy by the end of the internship. Similarly, Ghufuron and Taufiq (2022) reported that interns develop stronger perceptions of competence in both linguistic and pedagogical skills through reflective supervision. Yin (2019) emphasized that the perceptions of effectiveness are strongly tied to the quality of mentoring and institutional support. Interns who received consistent feedback were more capable of integrating theoretical concepts into their instructional routines.

These studies collectively suggest that interns' positive perceptions of teaching practice correlate with higher pedagogical growth and deeper theoretical engagement.

Theoretical Frameworks Underpinning Internship Impact: The conceptual foundation of teaching practice lies in experiential learning theories, particularly Kolb's (1984) model of learning through experience. According to Kolb, effective learning occurs when learners engage in a cyclical process of experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation a process mirrored in teaching internships.

Constructivist theory also underpins much of the internship literature. Intern teachers actively construct knowledge through classroom interactions, aligning with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of social learning and the zone of proximal development. By engaging with mentors, students, and peers, interns negotiate meaning and internalize professional teaching norms. Furthermore, Schön's (1983) model of the reflective practitioner provides a theoretical lens for understanding how internships cultivate adaptive expertise. Reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action enable interns to critically evaluate their teaching performance and align practice with theory.

These frameworks collectively reinforce the idea that teaching internships represent an essential bridge between theoretical understanding and the development of practical professional competence.

Challenges and Recommendations: Despite the proven benefits, several challenges remain in maximizing the impact of teaching practice. Allen and Wright (2014) cautioned that insufficient mentoring or misalignment between coursework and school contexts can limit the integration of theory and practice. Similarly, Filiz and Durnali (2019) noted that institutional constraints and limited feedback reduce the developmental potential of internships. To address these challenges, Cheung et al. (2023) suggested structured mentorship programs and post-internship reflection sessions to sustain pedagogical growth. Larbi and Kuranchie (2018) advocated for stronger university-school partnerships to ensure that theoretical models are relevant to classroom realities. Moreover, Ramirez (2020) recommended integrating reflective journals and collaborative peer assessments into internship programs to promote continuous professional learning.

The reviewed literature demonstrates that intern teaching practice profoundly impacts pre-service teachers' classroom instruction, pedagogical skill development, and theoretical understanding. Teaching practice serves as a transformative space where theoretical knowledge evolves into professional competence through experience, reflection, and feedback. Studies consistently affirm that the quality of mentorship, alignment between theory and practice, and reflective engagement are crucial determinants of successful internship outcomes. Future teacher education programs should strengthen the connection between universities and schools, encourage reflective teaching models, and integrate continuous feedback mechanisms. By doing so, teaching internships will continue to bridge the gap between educational theory and effective classroom practice, producing confident, competent, and reflective professional educators.

Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology adopted to explore the impact of intern teaching practice in real-life classroom instruction among graduate teachers from northeastern Bangladesh. The study employed a qualitative research design to understand participants' experiences, perceptions, and reflections regarding their internship and its influence on their teaching practices. Qualitative inquiry was selected because it allows an in-depth exploration of participants' meanings and lived experiences in their natural contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study focused on gathering detailed narratives through in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus group discussions (FGD), enabling rich, contextualized data on how internship experiences shape teaching competence and pedagogical development.

Research Design: This research followed a qualitative descriptive design to explore how teaching internships influence classroom instruction and pedagogical growth. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), qualitative research seeks to understand human experiences from the perspective of those who live them. It provides depth and context rather than numerical generalization, aligning perfectly with the study's objectives. The descriptive design allows for the exploration of teachers' perceptions of their internship experiences and the subsequent impact on their instructional approaches.

This study's approach was interpretivist, grounded in the belief that social reality is constructed through human interaction and interpretation (Bryman, 2016). Therefore, understanding how intern teachers perceive their teaching practice experiences requires exploring their personal stories and meanings rather than quantifying their responses.

Study Setting and Participants: The study was conducted among ten graduate teachers who had completed their Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degrees from universities located in the northeastern region of Bangladesh. During their final year, in the first semester of the last academic year, each participant completed a teaching internship in a real classroom setting as part of their teacher training requirement. At the time of data collection, all 15 participants were employed as teachers in various public and private secondary schools.

The study used purposive sampling, a common qualitative sampling technique that involves selecting participants who possess rich, relevant, and diverse experiences related to the research topic (Patton, 2015). The participants were selected based on the following criteria:

- Must have successfully completed a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program.
- Must have undertaken a teaching internship during the course of study.
- Must be currently employed as a school teacher in Bangladesh.

This sampling approach ensured that each participant could provide meaningful insights into how their internship experience influenced their teaching competence and classroom practices.

Data Collection Methods: Two primary qualitative data collection methods were used: In-depth Interviews (IDI) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). These methods were chosen because they allow participants to share their experiences, feelings, and perspectives in detail while providing opportunities for follow-up questions and clarification (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

In-depth Interviews (IDI): In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 participants, each lasting between 20 to 25 minutes. The interviews were guided by a semi-structured interview schedule consisting of 15 open-ended questions. The questions were designed to elicit participants' detailed reflections on their internship experiences and how these experiences influenced their teaching practices in real classrooms. Each of the three research questions guided the development of three interview questions, resulting in a total of 15 questions. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in a quiet environment at participants' workplaces or nearby venues, ensuring comfort and confidentiality. With participants' consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD): To complement the individual interviews, 2 focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted with five participants who were also B.Ed. graduates from the same region. The FGD included 15 open-ended guiding questions, paralleling those from the interview guide, but allowing for group reflection and interaction. According to Krueger and Casey (2015), FGDs enable participants to share and compare experiences, generating collective insights that may not emerge in one-on-one interviews. The discussion lasted approximately 90 minutes and was moderated by the researcher. Participants were encouraged to reflect, agree, or disagree respectfully, creating a dynamic conversation that enriched the data. The session was audio-recorded with consent and subsequently transcribed for analysis.

Research Instruments: The research instruments included semi-structured interview guides and FGD protocols. These instruments were developed based on the research objectives and questions. Both tools contained open-ended items categorized into three sections corresponding to the study's three research questions. Each section contained three guiding questions, allowing for flexible probing based on participants' responses. The tools were validated through expert review by two senior faculty members in education and one qualitative research specialist. Their feedback helped refine the clarity and relevance of questions. A pilot test was also conducted with two teachers who met the study criteria but were not part of the final sample. Adjustments were made based on pilot feedback to ensure linguistic clarity and contextual relevance.

Ethical Considerations: Ethical principles were rigorously followed throughout the research process to ensure participants' rights, dignity, and confidentiality were protected (Bryman, 2016). The following ethical measures were implemented:

Informed Consent: Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, methods, and confidentiality measures before participating. Written consent was obtained.

Voluntary Participation: Participation was entirely voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any stage without any penalty.

Confidentiality: All identifiable information was anonymized. Participants' names and school affiliations were replaced with pseudonyms in transcripts and reports.

Privacy and Safety: Interviews and FGDs were conducted in neutral, safe settings chosen by participants.

Data Protection: Digital recordings and transcripts were stored securely with password protection, accessible only to the researcher.

These ethical safeguards ensured compliance with institutional and international ethical standards for social research (BERA, 2018).

Data Analysis: The collected qualitative data underwent thematic analysis, as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis is a flexible method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. It allows the researcher to move beyond individual responses and capture shared meanings and experiences across participants.

The analysis proceeded through six systematic stages as follows:

1. **Familiarization with the Data:** The researcher transcribed all interviews and FGD recordings verbatim. Transcripts were read repeatedly to gain a deep understanding of the participants' narratives. Notes were made on initial impressions and recurring ideas.

2. **Generating Initial Codes:** Using a manual coding approach, meaningful text segments related to the research questions were identified and assigned codes. Codes represented short phrases that captured the essence of each idea, such as teaching confidence, classroom management, or linking theory to practice.
3. **Searching for Themes:** Similar codes were grouped together to form broader themes reflecting the key dimensions of participants' experiences. For example, codes about "confidence" and "self-efficacy" were clustered under the theme Professional Growth, while codes about "lesson planning" and "student engagement" fell under Pedagogical Skills Development.
4. **Reviewing Themes:** The emerging themes were compared against the raw data to ensure accuracy and consistency. Some themes were merged, refined, or discarded to enhance coherence. This iterative process ensured that themes accurately represented participants' views.
5. **Defining and Naming Themes:** Each final theme was defined and labeled to capture its core meaning. Detailed descriptions were written for each theme, illustrating how it related to the research objectives.
6. **Producing the Report:** The final stage involved writing up the results, integrating illustrative quotations from participants to support each theme. These quotations provided authenticity and depth to the findings. The results were discussed in relation to existing literature to situate findings within broader scholarly discussions.

In summary, this study adopted a qualitative, descriptive research design using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to explore how intern teaching practice influences real-life classroom instruction among B.Ed. graduates in northeastern Bangladesh. Ethical standards were strictly maintained, and data were analyzed through thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework. The combination of multiple data sources and rigorous analytic procedures enhanced the credibility and richness of findings, offering deep insights into how internship experiences shape teachers' professional and pedagogical development.

Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study titled "Impact of Intern Teaching Practice in Real-Life Classroom Instructions." Data were collected through 15 in-depth interviews (IDI) and two focus group discussions (FGDs) with B.Ed. graduates who had completed their teaching internships in the northeastern region of Bangladesh and were currently working as teachers in various schools.

The analysis followed thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), resulting in three major themes corresponding to the study's research questions and nine sub-themes reflecting key patterns in participants' experiences. The themes are:

- Influence of Intern Teaching Practice on Classroom Instruction
- Enhancement of Pedagogical Skills Through Internship
- Strengthening of Theoretical Knowledge in Education

Theme 1: Influence of Intern Teaching Practice on Classroom Instruction

The first theme explores how teaching internships shaped participants' teaching practices in real classroom settings. Participants consistently emphasized that internship experiences provided them with practical insight into lesson delivery, student engagement, and teaching confidence.

Sub-theme 1.1: Bridging Theory and Practice in Teaching

Most participants agreed that their internship period helped them connect theoretical understanding with practical teaching. The exposure to real classrooms allowed them to apply methods and strategies learned during their coursework.

For instance, IDI-02 reflected,

"Before my internship, I only knew lesson planning in theory. But when I entered a real classroom, I realized how timing, student behavior, and unexpected situations influence the way I teach."

Similarly, FGD participant FGDs-1.3 added,

"During the internship, I learned that theory is important, but classroom situations often demand quick thinking and adaptation."

These reflections suggest that the internship acted as a bridge between theoretical learning and real classroom application, making participants more aware of the complexities of teaching practice.

Sub-theme 1.2: Gaining Real-World Teaching Experience

Participants described the internship as their first opportunity to teach real students. For many, it was the moment they understood what being a teacher truly meant.

IDI-07 stated,

"I used to think teaching was just about explaining lessons. But during my internship, I learned that classroom management, student attention, and even emotional connection are part of teaching."

FGD member FGDs-2.4 echoed a similar sentiment:

"The first few days were challenging, but after observing experienced teachers, I began to adjust my methods."

The findings show that hands-on exposure during the internship improved participants' awareness of teaching realities and prepared them to handle classroom dynamics effectively.

Sub-theme 1.3: Developing Teaching Confidence

A strong pattern across interviews was the growth of self-confidence in teaching. Participants highlighted that facing real classrooms during the internship removed their fear and built self-assurance.

IDI-10 shared,

"At first, I was very nervous. But after teaching several classes, I felt confident to speak, manage students, and control the classroom environment."

Likewise, FGDs-1.5 stated,

"Internship gave me confidence that I can actually teach. It was the turning point where I started to believe in myself as a teacher."

This indicates that practical teaching opportunities during the internship enhance teacher identity, turning theoretical learners into confident practitioners.

Theme 2: Enhancement of Pedagogical Skills Through Internship

The second theme focuses on how teaching internships enhanced participants' pedagogical and classroom management skills. All participants acknowledged that the internship significantly improved their instructional planning, communication, and reflective teaching practices.

Sub-theme 2.1: Improvement in Lesson Planning and Instructional Strategies

Many participants reported that lesson planning became more effective and realistic after completing their internship. IDI-04 noted,

"Earlier, my lesson plans were just formalities. But after the internship, I understood how to design lessons based on students' understanding levels."

FGDs-2.1 shared,

"Our supervisor guided us to link learning objectives with real student outcomes. This made our teaching more focused and meaningful."

Internship experiences allowed participants to tailor instruction to students' needs and incorporate creative methods, demonstrating the practical refinement of pedagogical design.

Sub-theme 2.2: Mastering Classroom Management

Classroom management emerged as one of the most important skills gained during internships. Almost all participants admitted that initially, they struggled to maintain discipline but gradually learned effective management techniques.

IDI-12 explained,

"Managing forty students was difficult at first. But I learned to use gestures, voice tone, and activity-based teaching to keep students engaged."

FGDs-1.2 added,

"Our mentors showed us how to maintain classroom rules and motivate students instead of punishing them."

The data reveal that supervised practice and mentorship played a major role in helping interns develop real-world classroom control skills.

Sub-theme 2.3: Reflection and Feedback for Continuous Improvement

Another key finding was the importance of feedback and reflection in enhancing pedagogical abilities. Participants valued the constructive feedback from mentors and peers, which helped them refine their teaching performance.

IDI-06 mentioned,

"After each class, our supervisor discussed what went well and what needed improvement. This reflective process helped me grow."

Similarly, FGDs-1.4 said,

"Discussing my mistakes with others made me realize that teaching is a continuous learning process."

This sub-theme highlights that reflective practice and feedback were central to the improvement of teaching competence among participants.

Theme 3: Strengthening of Theoretical Knowledge in Education

The third theme focuses on how internships deepened participants' understanding of educational theories and concepts. The participants recognized that engaging in real classrooms allowed them to appreciate the practical value of theoretical models they learned in the B.Ed. program.

Sub-theme 3.1: Applying Educational Theories in Practice

Several participants noted that theories such as constructivism, Bloom's taxonomy, and student-centered learning became more meaningful during the internship.

IDI-01 stated,

"Before teaching, I studied these theories only for exams. But when I applied them, I saw how they actually shape student learning."

FGDs-2.3 added,

"Understanding Vygotsky's idea of scaffolding helped me to guide weaker students step by step."

These reflections indicate that real teaching experiences help pre-service teachers translate theoretical knowledge into effective teaching practices.

Sub-theme 3.2: Understanding Learner Diversity and Inclusion

Participants also reported that internships expanded their understanding of learner diversity, including differences in student ability, motivation, and behavior.

IDI-09 described,

"In my class, some students learned fast while others struggled. I realized I must adjust my teaching pace and use different examples."

FGDs-1.6 similarly noted,

"Internship showed us that every classroom has mixed learners. We need to be flexible and patient."

Such insights demonstrate how internships foster awareness of inclusive education, an essential component of effective pedagogy.

Sub-theme 3.3: Building Reflective and Lifelong Learning Attitude

Finally, participants emphasized that the internship experience encouraged them to adopt a reflective mindset, continuously evaluating their teaching and learning from experience.

IDI-14 expressed,

"The internship taught me to think about my teaching after every class. I started asking myself what worked and what didn't."

FGDs-2.5 mentioned,

"We learned that reflection helps improve practice. Even now, I keep a small teaching diary to note my observations."

This suggests that the internship nurtured a habit of self-reflection, supporting teachers' ongoing professional growth and theoretical understanding.

The analysis of data from 15 in-depth interviews and 2 focus group discussions reveals that the intern teaching practice significantly influenced participants' development as professional teachers.

Theme 1 (Influence on Classroom Instruction): Participants experienced a shift from theoretical learners to confident classroom practitioners. They learned to adapt teaching methods to real situations, manage unexpected challenges, and gain teaching confidence. Theme 2 (Enhancement of Pedagogical Skills): The internship improved their instructional design, classroom management, and reflective practices. Mentorship and feedback were identified as crucial elements of professional growth. Theme 3 (Strengthening of Theoretical Knowledge): Participants learned to apply theoretical concepts effectively in real classrooms, understood the diversity of learners, and developed a reflective and lifelong learning attitude.

These findings collectively demonstrate that teaching internships play a transformative role in shaping teachers' professional identity, practical competence, and educational understanding. However, participants also emphasized the need for better supervision, consistent mentoring, and extended internship duration to maximize the benefits of the program.

The findings indicate that the intern teaching practice serves as a critical bridge between teacher education and professional teaching. It allows pre-service teachers to experience authentic teaching situations, refine their pedagogical skills, and internalize theoretical principles through reflection and practice. The combination of real classroom exposure, mentor guidance, and reflective dialogue fosters professional confidence and readiness among new teachers. However, several participants pointed out the limitations of the current system, such as inadequate supervision, limited teaching duration, and varying school support. Addressing these issues can make the internship program more impactful and better aligned with the goals of teacher education in Bangladesh.

In conclusion, this study reaffirms that teaching practice is not just a training requirement but a transformative professional journey one that shapes teachers into reflective, competent, and adaptive educators capable of managing real-life classrooms effectively.

Discussion

This chapter discusses the findings of the study titled "Impact of Intern Teaching Practice in Real-Life Classroom Instructions." The purpose of this discussion is to interpret the results presented in Chapter Four and relate them to existing literature, theories,

and the research objectives. The study explored how teaching internships influence classroom instruction, develop pedagogical skills, and strengthen theoretical understanding among B.Ed. graduates from northeastern Bangladesh. Data were collected through fifteen in-depth interviews (IDI) and two focus group discussions (FGD). The discussion shows that teaching internship experiences help pre-service teachers grow professionally by building confidence, improving instructional competence, and connecting theory to practice. However, it also highlights areas needing improvement, such as supervision quality, reflective support, and institutional collaboration.

Influence of Teaching Practice on Classroom Instruction: The study found that teaching internships have a strong influence on how pre-service teachers conduct real-life classroom instruction. Participants shared that the internship allowed them to experience the realities of classroom teaching such as student diversity, time management, and discipline which cannot be fully understood in theoretical lessons alone. This finding supports Allen and Wright (2014), who emphasized that the practicum is the “heart” of teacher education, as it allows student teachers to apply educational theories in real settings. During their internship, participants learned to adapt to unexpected classroom situations, modify lesson plans, and engage students using practical strategies. For instance, participants explained that through direct classroom teaching, they learned to communicate better, manage large classes, and use different teaching aids. This aligns with Hussain and Mahmood’s (2010) findings that teaching practice strengthens professional confidence and helps new teachers handle the challenges of classroom realities. Many participants described their internship as a “turning point” in developing their teaching identity. At the beginning, they felt nervous, but by the end of the internship, they had gained confidence in lesson delivery and classroom control. This gradual development echoes the view of Schön (1983), who argued that professional growth comes through “reflection-in-action” learning while performing. The data also reveal that internships act as a bridge between learning and practice. Several participants noted that classroom realities helped them understand that theoretical ideas are not always directly applicable and require adjustment. This observation is similar to the findings of Larbi and Kuranchie (2018), who found that pre-service teachers often re-interpret theories once they face authentic classroom conditions.

Thus, this study confirms that intern teaching practice plays a key role in shaping teachers’ classroom approaches, providing them with the first-hand experience needed to become competent educators.

Enhancement of Pedagogical Skills Through Internship: The second research objective was to evaluate how the internship improves pre-service teachers’ pedagogical skills. The findings revealed that participants developed several core competencies during the internship, including lesson planning, classroom management, instructional strategies, and reflective thinking.

Before their internship, most participants viewed lesson planning as a formal task. However, after teaching real students, they realized the importance of aligning lesson content with learners’ abilities, interests, and available time. This practical understanding reflects the findings of Ramirez (2020), who reported that teaching practice allows pre-service teachers to turn theoretical lesson planning into a functional classroom tool. Participants mentioned learning to make lesson objectives realistic and achievable. They also practiced using visual aids, questioning techniques, and cooperative learning activities to engage students. These insights are consistent with Cheung, Wong, and Wang (2023), who found that internships help student teachers develop self-efficacy and creativity in instructional design.

Another major outcome was the improvement of classroom management skills. Participants learned that effective teaching depends not only on content knowledge but also on maintaining discipline and engagement. They reported using positive reinforcement, student grouping, and interactive lessons to control disruptive behavior strategies consistent with Filiz and Durnali (2019), who emphasized the importance of experiential learning for classroom management development. The findings further indicate that supervision from mentors played an essential role. Mentors provided constructive feedback on how to manage classes and motivate students without punishment. This mentorship relationship reflects Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development, where learning occurs through guided interaction with more experienced individuals.

Participants also highlighted the role of reflection in improving their teaching performance. After every lesson, supervisors encouraged them to review what went well and what needed improvement. This continuous self-evaluation process helped them become reflective practitioners, as proposed by Schön (1983). The combination of experience, mentorship, and reflection contributed to the development of professional confidence and competence. Therefore, the findings confirm that intern teaching practice significantly enhances pre-service teachers’ pedagogical skills and equips them with the tools to manage real classrooms effectively.

Strengthening of Theoretical Knowledge Through Practice: The third research question examined how internships help teachers connect educational theory with classroom practice. The findings clearly show that internship experiences deepened participants’ understanding of theoretical concepts and made them more meaningful.

Participants reported that theories such as constructivism, Bloom’s taxonomy, and student-centered learning became more understandable when applied in real classrooms. For example, they learned that active participation helps students retain knowledge, which reflects constructivist principles. This connection between theory and practice supports Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning theory, which argues that knowledge develops through the transformation of experience. Many participants mentioned that they had studied theories only for examinations before the internship. However, once they implemented these ideas in real lessons, they realized their practical value. For instance, using Bloom’s taxonomy to design questions helped them assess students’ higher-order thinking skills.

Internships also gave teachers the opportunity to understand the diversity of learners. They discovered that every classroom includes students with different learning speeds, interests, and backgrounds. These experiences encouraged them to differentiate instruction and provide individual support when needed. This aligns with the findings of Ghufron and Taufiq (2022), who emphasized that internships help pre-service teachers develop adaptive teaching strategies suited for diverse learners. The ability to respond to student diversity demonstrates that the internship fosters not only theoretical understanding but also practical inclusiveness.

Finally, participants described becoming more reflective and open to lifelong learning after their internship. They developed the habit of self-evaluation, often noting their strengths and weaknesses after each class. This reflective behavior is consistent with Schön's (1983) view that professional expertise develops through continuous reflection and adaptation. Participants also mentioned keeping teaching journals and discussing experiences with peers, showing the internship's long-term impact on professional development. These practices promote sustainable learning attitudes, confirming that teaching practice reinforces theoretical knowledge through reflective experience.

Integration of Findings with Literature: The overall findings of this study align with a growing body of research emphasizing the importance of teaching internships in teacher education. Studies by Allen and Wright (2014), Larbi and Kuranchie (2018), and Ramirez (2020) all found that teaching practice plays a central role in preparing competent and confident teachers. This study adds to existing literature by showing that internship experiences not only enhance teaching techniques but also shape teachers' professional identity. Participants described themselves as becoming more reflective, confident, and capable of linking theory with practice characteristics essential for quality education. The results also highlight the importance of mentorship and structured reflection. When interns received supportive feedback from supervisors, they improved faster and showed greater confidence in teaching. This finding echoes Cheung et al. (2023), who reported that guided internships produce higher self-efficacy and motivation among pre-service teachers.

However, the study also points to certain limitations in the current internship system in Bangladesh. Participants mentioned that short internship duration, limited resources, and inconsistent supervision sometimes restricted their learning opportunities. Addressing these challenges would further improve the effectiveness of teacher education programs.

In summary, the discussion confirms that intern teaching practice has a strong and positive impact on pre-service teachers' professional growth. It provides a platform for applying educational theories, developing pedagogical competence, and nurturing reflective habits. Internship experiences transform theoretical learners into confident practitioners who understand the complexities of real classrooms. By improving instructional design, classroom management, and reflective practice, teaching internships prepare teachers to meet the diverse needs of students. The discussion also suggests that continuous mentorship, adequate duration, and structured reflection sessions are key to maximizing the benefits of teaching internships. When effectively implemented, the internship becomes not only a requirement for graduation but also a transformative learning journey that shapes capable, confident, and reflective educators.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study, titled "Impact of Intern Teaching Practice in Real-Life Classroom Instructions," set out to examine how teaching internships influence pre-service teachers' professional growth, pedagogical competence, and understanding of educational theory. Drawing upon qualitative data from 15 in-depth interviews and two focus group discussions with graduates who completed their Bachelor of Education teaching internship in the northeastern region of Bangladesh, the study sought to connect participants' lived experiences with the broader context of teacher education reform. The analysis demonstrated that teaching practice is not merely an academic requirement; it is a critical experiential process that helps pre-service teachers evolve from theoretical learners into confident, reflective practitioners. The chapter concludes by summarizing the key findings, linking them to national and international literature, and providing practical and policy-oriented recommendations for enhancing teacher education in Bangladesh.

Summary of Key Findings: The study identified three central themes: the influence of intern teaching on classroom instruction, the enhancement of pedagogical skills, and the strengthening of theoretical knowledge through practice.

Influence on Classroom Instruction: Internship experiences enabled participants to translate theory into practice, manage real classrooms, and gain self-confidence as teachers. Participants shared that their first encounters with actual teaching helped them understand student behavior, classroom dynamics, and the complexities of lesson delivery. These findings echo the arguments of Rabby, Mahdiya, and Chakraborty (2025), who highlighted the gap between theory and lived classroom realities in Bangladesh's education system. Like their study on rural curricula, this research found that classroom learning often remains abstract until teachers experience practical teaching situations that connect learning to real-life contexts.

Development of Pedagogical Competence: Participants reported considerable improvement in their ability to design lesson plans, manage diverse classrooms, and use interactive strategies. They also developed greater awareness of student-centered learning, cooperative activities, and reflective practice. This aligns with the constructivist and experiential learning perspectives described by Vygotsky (1978) and Kolb (1984), as well as who emphasized that education in Bangladesh must move from rote-based delivery toward learning-oriented pedagogy. The internship experience, supported by mentor feedback, acted as a platform for continuous self-assessment and growth.

Strengthening Theoretical Understanding: The internship also enhanced participants' comprehension of educational theories, such as Bloom's taxonomy, constructivism, and scaffolding. By applying these theories in real classrooms, participants discovered their relevance to student learning. This finding reflects Tyler's (1949) view that educational objectives must be linked to concrete learning experiences and assessment outcomes. Participants' reflections also mirror the findings of Rabby et al. (2025), who concluded that aligning theory with practical realities leads to better learning outcomes and a more sustainable educational system.

Integrating the Findings with Broader Educational Contexts: The insights from this study reinforce existing literature on teacher education and curriculum development. Rabby et al. (2025) argued that Bangladesh's education system remains heavily centralized, exam-driven, and often detached from contextual realities. Similarly, this study found that many pre-service teachers initially struggled to adapt theoretical models to rural classrooms. Only through hands-on experience did they develop strategies to teach effectively within resource-limited environments. Moreover, the internship revealed a strong need for reflective practice and local adaptation principles also supported by Biggs and Tang (2011) in their concept of constructive alignment. When teaching activities, learning outcomes, and assessment methods are aligned with learners' realities, education becomes more meaningful and productive.

The study also confirms that effective teacher development must be continuous and context-driven. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) both emphasized that isolated workshops or exam-focused training sessions cannot produce the depth of understanding or confidence required in teachers. Instead, long-term mentorship, collaborative learning, and reflective supervision are crucial components of professional growth. Lastly, the findings highlight the need for decentralization and contextual flexibility. Hossain (2020) both observed, centralized curriculum and rigid assessment systems limit teachers' creativity and responsiveness. The internship experience provided evidence that autonomy in lesson planning and adaptation to student needs significantly enhances teaching quality and student engagement.

Conclusion

The results of this study demonstrate that teaching internships are an essential bridge between educational theory and classroom practice. Through real-world engagement, pre-service teachers learn to manage classrooms, develop effective pedagogical skills, and apply theoretical concepts meaningfully. The experience transforms their perceptions of teaching, shifting focus from memorization to understanding, from compliance to creativity, and from dependency to confidence. In the broader context of Bangladesh's education system, these findings underscore the urgent need for reforms that emphasize practical learning and teacher empowerment. The challenges identified such as limited resources, inadequate supervision, and excessive centralization mirror the systemic issues described by Rabby et al. (2025). Addressing these challenges requires structural change that connects teacher education with community realities and national development goals. Ultimately, the internship experience reaffirms the value of experiential learning in building competent, reflective, and compassionate educators. It demonstrates that quality education depends not only on curriculum design but also on how teachers internalize, interpret, and implement that curriculum within authentic classroom environments.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings and supported by existing research, several key recommendations are proposed to strengthen teacher education and internship practices in Bangladesh.

Strengthening Internship Design and Duration: Extend internship periods to ensure that pre-service teachers have sufficient time to observe, teach, and reflect on classroom dynamics. A longer duration allows interns to adapt to the school environment, receive ongoing feedback, and refine their teaching strategies.

Establish structured mentoring systems where experienced teachers guide interns through observation, co-teaching, and reflective discussions. Rabby et al. (2025) highlighted that practical mentorship is often missing in rural contexts but is crucial for skill development.

Enhancing Teacher Training Programs: Integrate experiential and reflective learning within teacher training curricula. Training should emphasize observation, peer discussion, and classroom-based inquiry rather than focusing solely on theoretical content. Include modules on contextualized pedagogy, helping teachers design lessons that draw on students' cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. As Hossain (2020) observed, local relevance is vital to student motivation and learning retention. Promote professional learning communities (PLCs) within teacher education institutions where interns and educators share challenges and innovations, fostering a culture of continuous learning.

Resource and Institutional Support: Provide essential teaching resources such as libraries, science kits, and ICT tools in training institutions and partner schools. Rabby et al. (2025) found that lack of such resources restricts creativity and reinforces rote learning. Encourage partnerships between TTCs and local schools to ensure that internship sites have adequate support and supervision capacity. Collaboration enhances both institutional accountability and student learning experiences.

Policy and System-Level Recommendations: Decentralize teacher education policies, allowing institutions to design internship activities that align with regional contexts and needs. This echoes Levin's (2008) call for balancing national coherence with local autonomy. Reform assessment systems to evaluate teaching practice holistically, considering not only lesson delivery but also

creativity, reflection, and community engagement. Institutionalize reflective practice by requiring interns to maintain teaching journals and self-evaluation reports as part of their assessment. This fosters habits of critical thinking and self-improvement.

Future Research Directions: Future studies should examine the long-term impact of internships on teachers' professional performance after employment. Comparative research between urban and rural teacher education programs could highlight structural inequalities and guide equitable policy design. Studies should also explore how digital tools and blended learning can support supervision, reflection, and collaboration during internships. This research concludes that the internship experience is the most transformative stage in a teacher's professional journey. It builds not only skills and knowledge but also values, empathy, and a sense of purpose. As Rabby et al. (2025) rightly argued in their study on curriculum relevance, education becomes meaningful when it connects learning with life. The same applies to teacher preparation: when theory meets experience, learning becomes living.

Therefore, improving teaching internships is not just an academic concern it is a national priority. By equipping future teachers with real-world experience, reflective capacity, and contextual understanding, Bangladesh can nurture educators who inspire critical, compassionate, and community-centered learning for generations to come.

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