

Career Search Efficacy among Pre-Service Physical Educators: A Critical Analysis of Two Year B.P.Ed Programme

Sudheesh C.S*

*Lakshmbai National College of Physical Education, University of Kerala, Trivandrum, Kerala

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*Correspondence Author.

Sudheesh C.S

Assistant Professor

Lakshmbai National College of Physical Education, University of Kerala, Trivandrum, Kerala, India

Email address:

cssudheesh493@gmail.com

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the career search efficacy of pre-service physical education teachers. Four hundred teacher trainees undergoing 2 years BPED course were selected as participants and were surveyed using online questionnaire survey. E-version of the Career Search Efficacy Scale developed by Solberg et al., and an online suggestion form was used for the collection of the data. The study used a mixed-method research design where the CSE was analyzed quantitatively whereas suggestions were coded and analyzed qualitatively. Results of the study showed a near-average career search efficacy among pre-service physical education teachers in all domains. Further teacher education trainees suggested to include internship programmes, interview training, CV creation classes, handling online job search sites, and orientation on professional network sites like LinkedIn.

Introduction

Professional Preparation in Teacher Education focuses on developing Pedagogical Theories, Teaching Skills and Professional Skills (Agarwal & Naaz, 2020). National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), the professional standard-setting body in Teacher Education, directs the training institutes to incorporate aforesaid skills into the curricula. However, training on the curricular contents alone would not equip a professional to secure employment. Hence, efforts are required to prepare the trainees to inculcate professional qualities.

According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy expectations refer to “a person’s beliefs concerning his or her ability to successfully

perform a given task”. Self-efficacy is an essential factor that affects a person’s confidence and in turn, performance. Career search self-efficacy is understood as the ability to carry out career exploration activities successfully (Bacanli, 2006). Career Search Efficacy consists of varied abilities to search for personal exploration, confront interviews, network with others and searching job opportunities (Solberg et al., 1994). Skills of Career Search need to be inculcated in the professional preparation period in order to provide better scope for employability.

In India, Physical Education Teacher Education Training courses are offered in many formats. Among these 2 years Bachelor’s Degree

(BPED) is offered for undergraduates with an aptitude for sports and physical activity. Parallel to this, yet another Innovative Bachelor's Degree (4 years) is also offered for those possessing higher secondary education. The curricular content of the 2-year BPED course is less compared to that of the Innovative course. Hence it is postulated that trainees of 2-years BPED course is lacking professional career-seeking skills which are not addressed in the curriculum.

To validate the postulation the present study was undertaken to examine the Career Search Efficacy of Pre-Service Physical Educators who are undergoing 2 years BPED program. Further, trainees' perceptions of the scope for improvement were also studied.

Materials and Methods

Participants

To understand the Career Search Efficacy of Pre-Service Physical Educators, 400 Physical Education Teacher Education Trainees enrolled in Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) in different institutes in India, were selected as participants. The sample size was estimated as 385 using Cochran's formula and was rounded off to 400 (Uakarn et al., 2021). The participants included both men and women (men= 215 and women=185).

Research Design

The study followed a mixed methods survey research design using an online data collection method. The subjects were identified from various institutes and consent for being the participant was obtained. Upon agreement, the e-format of the Career Search Efficacy Scale (CSES) and suggestion form were mailed to the participants.

Instruments

Table 1

Description of Career Search Efficacy of Pre-Service Teachers

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Personal Exploration Efficacy	6.95	0.84	5.5	8.25
Interviewing Efficacy	6.19	0.76	5	7.36
Networking Efficacy	7.18	0.81	6.5	8
Job Search Efficacy	6.63	0.59	6.31	7.5
Overall Career Search Efficacy	6.59	0.58	5.82	7.57

The E-version of the Career Search Efficacy Scale developed by Solberg et al., (1994), was used for analysing the Pre-Service Teachers. CSES was scored on a 0-9 Likert scale with 35 items and 4 dimensions i.e., personal exploration, interview efficacy, networking efficacy, job search efficacy and overall career search efficacy. An online suggestion form was used to gather suggestions from the participants for improving the career search training during the course. The suggestion form was coded and decoded to develop themes and was further analyzed qualitatively.

Ethical Approval

The study was approved by the departmental research ethics committee and followed the ethical considerations of the declaration of Helsinki.

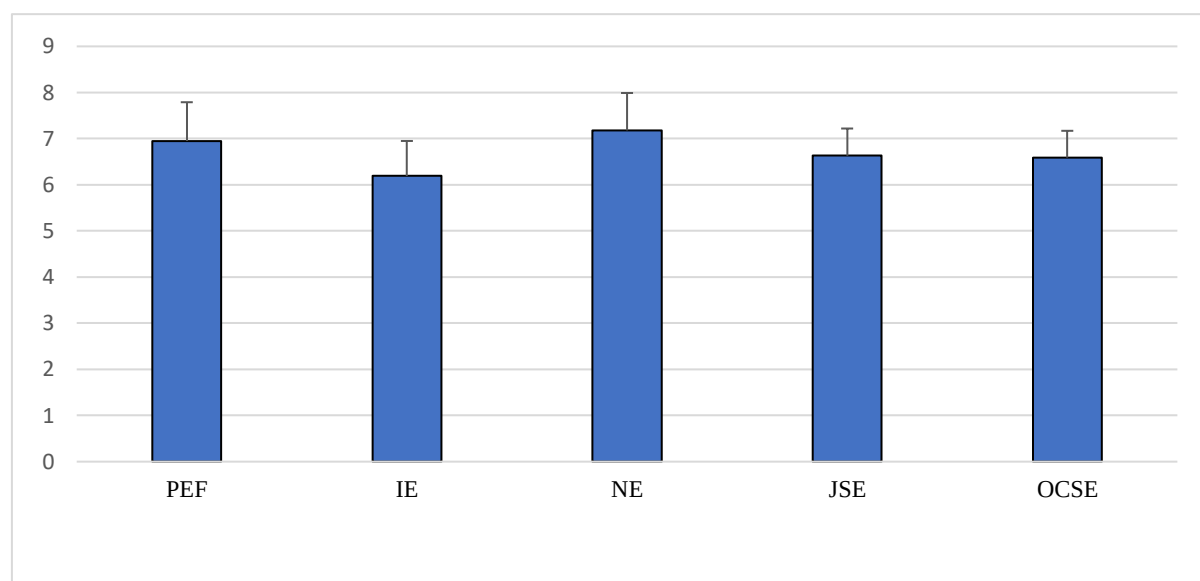
Analysis of Data

The data is presented in mean and standard deviation. SPSS 21.0 version was used for the quantitative analysis of data and developing graph. Qualitative analysis technique named, theme analysis was employed to analyse the suggestions for improvement.

Results

Table 1 illustrates the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum score values of various dimensions of career search efficacy. From the data, it is evident that networking efficacy has got better value compared to others. Further, it is also understood that out of a score of 9 only an average of 6 is scored by the PE teacher trainees. A graphical representation of the career search efficacy dimensions is shown in figure 1.

Figure 1
Varied Dimensions of Career Search Efficacy of Pre-Service Physical Educators



Theme analysis of the suggestions given by the Pre-service teachers are depicted in table 2.

Table 2
Themes of Suggestions on Career Search Training

Having Internship
Inclusion of Interview Training
Practical Training on Curriculum Vitae Preparation
Orientation on Online Job Search Sites
Training on Professional Network Management like LinkedIn

Discussion of Findings

The study aimed at examining the Career Search Efficacy of Pre-Service Physical Education Teachers who undergo 2 years BPED programme. From the analysis of data, it was found that the participants possess nearer-to-average scores on varied dimensions of career search efficacy. Further out of the four dimensions they showed better scores on Networking Efficacy. Theme analysis of the perceptions of teachers on improvement suggestions revealed that according to the students, the course lacks internship, interview training, curriculum vitae preparation, online job

search orientation, handling Professional network sites etc.

According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy demonstrates mastery in performing a given task with confidence. It affects a person's self-belief and in turn confidence. As far as a professional is concerned mere competence in technical skills and knowledge will not get him/her a job, but then skills on marketing their potential in front of the employer will. However, the present curricula of Teacher Education seldom address training of such life skills as curricular activities. Cocurricular suggestions for training institutes give them the freedom to skip it, which will again

discard career search competence training among the teacher trainees. Hence career search efficacy training should be included as a part of the curriculum.

Personal exploration efficacy addresses the ability to explore own skills, goals and values. Job exploration is defined as the skills in identifying an employer. Networking efficacy is understood as the ability to get connected with peer groups or other professionals in executing an employment search. Interviewing efficacy refers to the ability to prepare and face an interview effectively. Professional students of teacher education need to equip themselves with content knowledge and career search skills. Hence, the curricula may be revised in such a way that the provisions of career search efficacy are embedded into the curriculum.

For better understanding of the practical problems of any phenomenon opinions of all the stakeholders should be considered. Hence in order to better understand the possibilities of curriculum modification without burdening the students themselves, their perceptions on scope for improvement was gathered. Lack of internship program was assumed as a drawback of the 2 years BPED program. Though the duration of the programme is 4 semesters internship could be arranged in the semester break i.e., between first and second or second and third semester or third and fourth semester. Literary activities like interview preparation is an essential component which will definitely help the teacher trainees in one or the other way. Practical hands on experience of mock interviews are suggested for inclusion in the curriculum. Further, preparation of curriculum vitae is a skill that need training. CV is a critical document that depicts the strengths and weakness of a professional. Hence a well written CV with the strengths highlighted and weaknesses hidden out will definitely impress the employer. Unlike yester years, nowadays, number of online job sites more than job agencies. Hence accessing job sites like naukari.com will help the teacher trainees to find a job easily. Further professional sites like LinkedIn is a platform where the qualifications and competencies can be manifested. Also, such sites help in developing professional connections. BPED students may also get notified regarding various certifications, academic events, and research materials from LinkedIn. For strengthening the quality of the

professional preparation, as suggested by the student community, 2 years BPED may include various career search training programmes in the curriculum. Thus, equipping the students with the knowledge of career search efficiency will leave them independent for facing and grabbing a job. This will improve the employability of the 2 year BPED Teacher trainees

Further studies may be conducted on experimenting the efficacy of various career related trainings on the placement rate of Physical Education Teacher Trainees. Researches on developing training modules that customise needs of the profession will also throw more light on its scope of implementation.

Conclusion

From the study it is understood that the pre-service physical educators who undergo 2 years BPED programmes possess only near-average overall career search efficacy and also in all the subdomains as well. Students suggest inclusion of internship, interview training, CV preparation training, orientation of online job portals and training on handling the professional connecting sites for improving the career search efficacy.

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