



PATNA UNIVERSITY  
Dept. of Education  
E-CONTENT  
COURSE CC6

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Teacher Education-Issues & Challenges  
Bibha Kumari

Unit IV : Modern Technologies in Education

## Single Subject vs. Multiple Subject Teachers

**Objectives :** *After going through this topic, students will be able to understand:*

- To empower pupil teachers to impart and organize instruction of unified and integrated subjects.
- To prepare them for the study of diversified courses and appropriate of selection of subjects.

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# 1 Single subject verses Multiple subject teachers

Teachers are responsible for the intellectual development of their students. Teacher education programs are meant to train individuals in their subject specialization and teach them the methodology of teaching. Typical teacher education degree programs allow students to choose the level of education they wish to teach. Most elementary school programs do not offer specialization areas. Rather, students are expected to teach all subjects. However, secondary school (high school) education programs allow students to major in the area they intend to teach, such as mathematics, physics, history, English or earth science.

## 1.1 Single subject Teacher

A teacher authorized for single subject instruction may be assigned to teach any subject in his or her authorized fields at any grade level: kindergarten and grades one through twelve. Or A single subject teacher authorizes the holder to teach their specific subject area to middle and high school students.

## 1.2 Multiple subject teacher

A multiple subject teacher authorizes holders to teach in public elementary schools where they are in a self contained classroom teaching all the subjects to the same group of students all day.

## 1.3 Problems of single subject and multiple subject Teacher

- Teachers' success at educating high school students depends in large part on the teachers' own comfort level with their particular subjects, and, if their students are lucky, having a genuine passion for what they teach. Arguably, the most important job of all higher education institutions that prepare high school teachers is to ensure that every teacher they graduate has obtained a sufficient degree of subject mastery.
- All institutions effectively meet the content needs of English and mathematics high school teacher candidates, the schools' preparation of science and social studies teachers is much more of a challenge. Fewer teacher prep programs adequately cover the subject content that both science and social studies teachers will need to teach.
- Programs are inconsistent in their attention to content; they often do well preparing science teachers but not as well preparing social studies teachers — or vice versa.
- Added to the essential function of showing future teachers what to teach is the need for teacher prep programs to instruct and model how to teach their intended subjects.

- Most programs provide courses on teaching methods tailored to specific subjects.
- When we look for the intersection of these two functions — delivering content knowledge and how to teach that knowledge — the results are grimmer. Only a minority of programs systematically deliver on both functions for all of their teacher candidates — not just some — including those seeking certification to teach English, mathematics, science, or social studies.
- Only four in ten programs deliver adequate content knowledge and how to teach it.
- Ultimately, it falls on both the program (through course requirements) and the state (through licensing tests) to ensure that every high school teacher who enters the classroom has the deep content knowledge needed to teach any course to which she may be assigned.
- Nearly all states test candidates for subject-matter knowledge, including licensing tests designed for general science or general social studies certification. In most, but not all, states the tests aimed at these broad subject areas are not sufficient, as they usually report one overall score and not separate scores for each subject the teacher can teach.
- This means that a teacher could do poorly in one or two subjects and still pass the test, provided a strong performance on other areas of the test compensate.
- Due to the shared responsibility between prep programs and states, we checked the adequacy of the policies that serve as the final gateway for teachers, regardless of whether they are policies of the prep program or the state.
- Consequently, for programs located in states with sufficiently rigorous licensing tests measuring teachers' knowledge of each subject they will teach (with separate tests or cut-scores for each subject), we did not evaluate programs' coursework requirements.
- Instead, all affected programs in these states earn an A for the tested subject's content preparation.
- The findings presented here demonstrate how the decisions and actions taken by higher education institutions are greatly influenced by state-level policies and requirements.
- Each state creates its own certification structure and determines what subjects each certification allows teachers to teach. For instance, each state determines whether to offer general science certification, allowing teachers to teach all science subjects (such as biology, chemistry, earth science, or physics);
- Single-subject certification, allowing teachers to teach only one subject, such as biology; or some combination thereof.
- A similar choice must be made regarding the many subjects falling under the social studies umbrella.
- Programs in states that provide general science certification or general social studies certification tend to have a steeper climb to ensure that graduates know the broad subject matter for all the subjects covered under that certification.

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## References

- [1] Washington NCTQ. “*Landscapes in teacher prep*”. Accessed on June 8, 2020. Dec. 2016. URL: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED590749.pdf>.

## Self check questions

1. Discuss role of single subject teacher.
2. Discuss role of multiple subject teacher.
3. What are the problems of single subject versus multiple subject teacher.

## Topics for next class

*Issues related to enhancing teacher competence.*

## Contact

Email - [hrntbibha@gmail.com](mailto:hrntbibha@gmail.com)

Mobile no. - [9905623081](tel:9905623081)