



The Impact of Teaching Practice on the Development of Teaching Skills among Student Teachers at Zawia Faculty of Education

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Abstract:

This study sets out to investigate the importance of Teaching Practice stage on developing teaching skills. It also, to identify which teaching skills are most developed during the practicum and the challenges they encounter in implementing Teaching Practice.

The data of the study was collected through 30 student teachers who are in the practicum experience at Zawia Faculty of Education who were performing teaching practicum during their final semester in public schools. The results of this study indicated that trained teachers are better than untrained and the participants held positive perspectives regarding the importance of Teaching Practice in enhancing their teaching skills.

It was recommended that teacher-training courses for teachers should be achieved and student teachers should be encouraged to undergo professional teaching courses and use variety of teaching methods.

Introduction:

Teaching Practice refers to the period where student teachers apply their theoretical knowledge in a real classroom setting under supervision. Teaching practice is essential for developing the skills and confidence of pre-service English teachers. It connects theoretical knowledge gained in teacher education programs with real-world classroom application. At Zawia Faculty of Education, EFL student teachers undergo a teaching practicum designed to prepare them for the challenges of actual classrooms. However, managing classrooms effectively remains a challenge for many novice teachers. This study examines how teaching practice influences the development of classroom management skills among EFL student teachers.

Teaching practice can be described as one of the most important areas of teacher preparation. It gives student teachers the opportunity to evaluate the extent to which they possess or lack teaching-related abilities and skills.

Teaching Practice in Zawia faculty of education is an essential aspect of teacher proficiency because it prepares student teachers for their future teaching roles. It could provide pre-service teachers with a grounded stand for their future.

Statement of the Problem:

Achieving the need of being well-trained teacher requires an extensive preparation. If student teachers have been exposed to the foundations of education, effective teaching takes place. Many graduates have a lack of confidence in actual classroom teaching, raising concerns about the effectiveness of the practicum experience. Regarding this study, the lack of teacher training to improve teaching skills is one of the most important reasons that contribute of the English language weakness.

Aim of the Study:

This study aims to enhance the importance of teaching practice in EFL teacher training programs, and to identify the most challenging aspects of student teachers' teaching practice.

Significance of the study:

This study is an attempt to investigate the difference between trained and untrained English language teachers according their performance. According to previous literature, Teaching Practice has a direct influence on the process of teaching and learning. This leads to the fact that well trained student teachers have better performance than untrained teachers.

Literature Review

Concept of Teaching Practice

Teaching Practice refers to the period where student teachers apply their theoretical knowledge in a real classroom setting under supervision. Teaching Practice is an essential component of the students professional training. During Teaching Practice, a trainee teacher is given the chance to practice the skill of teaching before getting exposure with real teaching vocation.

Teaching Practice can contribute to the quality of student teachers training and also enhance the teachers' productivity and performance. Singh (2018:188) described Teaching Practice as :

When pupil teachers practice their teaching skills and do their internship in a classroom environment, this type of teaching practice called classroom teaching practice. Classroom based teaching include: face-to-face interaction, Proper discussion, lectures and large group teaching, tutorials /practical teaching.

Practice often is defined by what we do rather than who we are or how we think. It can be understood in terms of its goals, its activities, and historical tradition (Chaiklin & Lave, 1996)

Micro-teaching

Micro-teaching has a major role in developing teaching skills and other related skills. It has a great contribution to the acquisition of the skills. Students teachers are not only learning teaching skills. Reddy (2019:66) states "micro teaching is a concentrated, focused form of peer feedback and discussion that can improve teaching strategies".

Micro-teaching is defined as a teacher training procedure which reduces the teaching situation to simpler and more controlled encounter achieved by limiting the practice teaching to a specific skill and reducing teaching time and class size.

The importance of Micro-teaching Practice

Teaching practice is a vehicle of continuous training. It expands student teachers understanding of the teaching and learning process; also, it builds their self-confidence and enhances their classroom attitudes and behaviors.

Effective teaching practice is useful when student teachers continually practice and engage in self-reflection, and modify classroom techniques according to students' needs.

Student teachers in TP have to practice all the teaching and classroom management theories that they have acquired in their teaching professional development. Trainees have to practice sufficient hours in order to apply the learnt theories. Ogonor and Badmus (2006:9) argue that

An increase in the duration of teaching practice exercise in Nigerian teacher teaching institutions may be required, as a longer period would provide ample time for the practice of professional activities associated with teaching by trainees. This is in total support of the National Universities Commissions' proposal to extend teaching practice exercise to a period of one year in the Faculties of Education in Nigerian Universities.

Micro teaching enables teacher-trainees to learn and assimilate teaching skills under controlled conditions, and also enables them to gain confidence in teaching, and to master a number of skills by dealing with a small group of pupils.

Teacher Training

Teacher training and professional development are seen as important mechanisms for the improvement of teachers' content knowledge and their teaching skills and practices in order to meet high educational standards. (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995).

Trained teachers are those who train in the schools to be effective and trained teachers. On the other side, untrained teachers include those who have graduated without receiving pre-service teacher education. Teacher education has a vital role in the development of teacher's academic knowledge and performance.

Methodology

The descriptive analytical methodology was followed in this research by implementing a student teachers' questionnaire for achieving this purpose and classroom observation to reflect what actually happens in the classroom. It was designed in the form of note taking and a checklist.

Participants

This study included 30 student teachers at the Faculty of Education who were performing teaching practicum experience during their final semester and ten primary school teachers who were teaching different classes .

Analysis of Questionnaire:

It is very important for a researcher to collect as much information as possible. To accomplish this goal of the study, a questionnaire supplied to a number of English student teachers at Zawia Faculty of Education to elicit their opinion about Teaching Practice experience.

The questionnaire in this study consists of seven multiple questions. Thirty student teachers from English department were asked to choose one of the alternatives. It was designed to get more information about the

challenges that face teachers in teaching English as a specific purpose inside different departments of Education Faculty.

Item 1: Teaching Practice improved my ability to design lesson objectives (yes/ no)

Options	No. of students	Percentage
YES	24	80%
NO	06	20%

The findings presented in item 1 show that the majority of student teachers, 80% agree that teaching practice has important role of achieving the ability to determine any lesson goals while only six students, 20% said no.

Item 2: Teaching Practice helped me reflect on my strengths and weakness as a teacher. (yes/ no)

Options	No. of students	Percentage
YES	27	90%
NO	03	10%

The purpose of this question is to identify if the student teachers know how to find out strength and weak points in producing a new lesson. Twenty-seven of the student teachers (90%) said that they think so, while only three student teachers (10%) said no.

Item 3: Teaching Practice developed my confidence in handling large classes. (yes/ no)

Options	No. of students	Percentage
YES	30	100%
NO	0	0%

In this item, out of thirty students, no one said that Teaching Practice doesn't develop the student teachers in handling large classes. 100% of the students agree that teaching practice has vital role in mastering student confidence.

Item 4: Teaching Practice improved my ability to maintain discipline in the classroom. (yes/ no)

Options	No. of students	Percentage
YES	18	60%
NO	12	40%

The results indicate that 60% of student teachers agree with the importance of teaching practice in the classroom controlling while 40% don't care to this point.

Item5: Teaching Practice feel me more prepared to face challenges in real classroom settings. (yes/ no)

Options	No. of students	Percentage
YES	30	100%

NO	0	0%
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In item 5, 30 student teachers, 100% strongly agreed that TP exposed them to face the challenges of teaching in real classroom situations. It encourages them to face the difficulties strongly.

Item 6: Teaching Practice contributed to building my professional identity as a teacher. (yes/ no)

Options	No. of students	Percentage
YES	24	80%
NO	06	20%

When student teachers were asked whether teaching practice contributed to building their professional identity as a teacher, 24 of them, 80% responded with yes while only 20% said no.

Item 7: Teaching Practice improved my understanding of how to make plans for my lessons. (yes/ no)

Options	No. of students	Percentage
YES	21	70%
NO	09	30%

The majority of student teachers, 70% strongly agreed that teaching practice helped them to be well equipped with preparing good lesson plans while only 30% of them disagreed.

Data obtained from classroom observation

This technique was used in the form of note-taking and a checklist. The checklist consists of eight points. These points were focused on three major aspects that should be taken into consideration during the lesson. These are:-

1. instructional strategies
2. variety of teaching methods
3. classroom managements

Analyzing Classroom Observation (Checklist)

Observation Focus	YES		NO	
	TT	%	UT	%
Instructional strategies		80%		20%
● Clear Learning Objectives				
Variety of Teaching Methods		70%		0%

● Teaching Aids				
● Using of Technology				
Classroom Management		60%		10%
● Effective Use of Transition				
● Connected With individual Students				
Using pair and group work				

The data obtained from classroom observation was designed to measure the differences and similarity between trained and untrained teachers.

1. Clear Learning Objectives

The findings presented in the table above show that 80% of trained teachers focus on the overall goal of the lesson; they break it down into specific while only 20% of untrained teachers focus on the goals of lessons. This means that trained teachers follow the strategies of teaching.

2. Variety of Teaching Methods

The results obtained from this item reflect the lack of using teaching aids and applying grouping methods by untrained teachers. The analysis demonstrated that 70% of trained teachers use variety of teaching aids while 0% of untrained teachers use teaching aids. This creates boring classroom atmosphere.

3. Classroom Management

Because of the importance of using classroom management in the teaching process, this item has been chosen. The results in the table above indicate that 60% of trained teachers pay attention to classroom management while only 10% of untrained teachers care about classroom management. They just give the lessons in traditional way.

Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusion

Some of the problems mentioned dealt with graduates' lack of confidence or skills in actual classroom teaching. The results in this study suggest that the preparation of student teachers teaching practice had a major role in the professional development of student teachers in the classroom.

The findings of this study showed that student teachers were aware of the importance of participating in Micro-teaching courses. Micro-teaching courses have an important role in student teachers' proficiency. The results revealed that student teachers need more preparation and support from their school teachers to facilitate the learning process.

Recommendations

To improve students' outcomes, a significant progress in teaching and learning is required. Based on the results of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- Student teachers should be encouraged to provide feedback on both pedagogical techniques and language use.
- Place student teachers in different school setting to broaden experience.
- Student teachers should be encouraged to undergo professional teaching courses to update them.
- Encourage student teachers to use variety of teaching methods such as (pair work, group work ...etc.).
- Teacher training courses for teachers of English at secondary level are needed.

Appendix 1
Questionnaire

No.	Statement	Yes%	No%
1	Teaching Practice improved my ability to design lesson objectives		
2	Teaching Practice helped me reflect on my strengths and weakness as a teacher.		
3	Teaching Practice developed my confidence in handling large classes		
4	Teaching Practice improved my ability to maintain discipline in the classroom		
5	Teaching Practice feel me more prepared to face challenges in real classroom settings		
6	Teaching Practice contributed to building my professional identity as a teacher		
7	Teaching Practice improved my understanding of how to make plans for my lessons		

Classroom Observation Checklist:

Observation Focus	YES		NO	
	TT	%	UT	%

Instructional strategies				
● Clear Learning Objectives				
Variety of Teaching Methods				
● Teaching Aids				
● Using of Technology				
Classroom Management				
● Effective Use of Transition				
● Connected With individual Students				

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