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ASSESSMENT OF MICRO-TEACHING PRACTICUM AS A PREDICTOR TO STUDENT-TEACHERS PERFORMANCE IN TEACHING PRACTICE AMONG COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN KOGI-STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Micro-teaching practicum course is the practical application of teaching skills acquired while Teaching Practice as a course is the actual teaching engagement at cooperating school. This study evaluated relevance of microteaching practicum on student-teachers performance in teaching practice among Colleges of Education in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study adopted survey design. The population of the study comprise all lecturers coordinating micro-teaching practicum and teaching practice supervisors in Federal and State Colleges of Education in Kogi State. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 11 micro-teaching practicum coordinators and stratification based on rank was used to select 169 senior lecturers and above randomly. Two instruments titled Adequacy of Course Objectives Questionnaire (ACOQ) and Alignment between Micro-teaching Practicum and Teaching Practice Questionnaire (AMPTPQ) were used for data collection. Cronbach's alpha statistics was used to measure the internal consistency. The reliability coefficient for the instruments is 0.84 and 0.89 respectively. The data collected was analysed using average weighted mean score and Nvivo-11 statistics. The findings of the study revealed that prescribed objectives set by NCCE were adequate and to a very large extent students' performance in microteaching practicum is a predictor of student's performance in teaching practice. The study recommends that to further enhance adequacy of course objectives, the lecturers need to be adequately involved during curriculum planning, curriculum review, curriculum design, curriculum modification and curriculum development process

Keywords: Evaluation, Micro-teaching practicum, Teaching-practice, curriculum effectiveness and Student-teachers

Introduction

The success of prospective teachers in achieving social expectations is determined by the efficiency and efficacy of the teacher education programme's curricular content. The courses structure at colleges of education allows student-teachers to put theoretical learning experiences acquired in Microteaching theory (EDU 214) classes into practice through Microteaching practicum (EDU 224) practical sessions at the college level before

displaying them during teaching practice (EDU 311) in collaborating schools (NCCE, 2020). In recognition of teachers' critical roles in providing high-quality education at all levels, the National Commission for Colleges of Education's Minimum Standard document (FRN, 2020a) and the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2020b) designated the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) as the entry point into the teaching profession in Nigeria (Majoni, 2017).

According to the act establishing Colleges of Education, the National Commission for College Education(NCCE) is responsible for monitoring and controlling quality among Colleges of Education through harmonized minimum standards for all subject areas and general education, where microteaching theory (EDU 214) and microteaching practicum (EDU 224), and actual teaching practice exercises are core and required courses that students must register for and pass before certification in any Nigerian College of Education (NCCE, 2020).

The knowledge phase, skills acquisition and application phase are all related with the microteaching technique at the college level. In the first step, prospective student-teachers are taught about teaching skills; observe teaching demonstrations, then analysed and discussed proven teaching skills. The skills acquisition phase; which lasts until the intended results are obtained, entails tasks such as planning and preparing micro-lessons for a skill, practicing the skill, evaluating the practiced skill, re-planning, re-teaching, and feedback. The setting is done in a multimedia microteaching laboratory, which has the necessary facilities and equipment. The third phase, the transfer phase, provides for the integration of diverse abilities exercised and allows for the use of learned skills in typical classroom teaching (Onwuagboke *et al.,* 2017)

Programme evaluation serves two important purposes: programme improvement and programme accountability (Ballard, 2020). Programme improvement assesses how well programmes are operating by measuring the extent to which targeted objectives are being met and determining whether further improvement is required to improve effectiveness while programme accountability, on the other hand, demonstrates internal and external accountability for the use of public resources (Farooq, 2014). Evaluating the effectiveness of microteaching practicum (EDU 224) on student-teacher performance in teaching practice (EDU 311) reveals the degree of attainment of the expected learning outcome and provide information for curriculum review, sustenance, modification, or total curriculum change. Discrepancy evaluation model adopted for the study describes the extent to which programme aligned with the prescribed objectives by identifying discrepancies between courses pre-set designed standard and actual performance while following recipient's progression steadily discrepancy evaluation compares intentions to results. (Mark, 2020).

The courses structure at colleges of education level allows student-teachers to put theoretical learning experiences acquired in microteaching (EDU 214) classes into practice through microteaching practicum (EDU 224) practical sessions at the college level before displaying them during teaching practice Obasi and Ifegbo (2014). Curriculum planners envisioned it that, if the courses are properly transacted by lecturers using appropriate methods and instructional aids, student-teachers should receive high grades in teaching practice in terms of lesson preparation, presentation, instructional delivery via appropriate methodologies, variation of teaching skills in achieving pre-set objectives, and effective classroom control. However, hands-on experience, as well as scheduled and unscheduled on-the-spot assessments by lecturers, analyses of student-teachers' supervisors' assessment reports, student-teachers' external examiners' observations reports, and analyses of student-teachers' supervisors' assessment reports, have revealed that teaching practice exercise is marred with irregularities ranging from poor instructional delivery strategies, poor lesson preparation and presentation, and ineffective classroom control.

Due to the ineffectiveness noticed, some private school principals in the cities and semiurban area have begun to distrust the ability of student-teachers during teaching practice. It is still unclear based on above observations, could it be that the

amount of time, resources, and technology devoted to the theoretical and practical parts of the courses at the institutional level are insufficient to prevent ineffectiveness from being noticed? or pre-set objectives as set by NCCE are inadequate, and or could it be the performance of student-teachers in microteaching practicum defines the performance of student-teachers during teaching practice, or is it that the available resources at the colleges are not put to better use?, this study was driven by this curiosity. This study was purposefully carried out among College of Education students in Kogi-state to be able to attain the pre-set objectives

Statement of Problem

Hands-on experiences, as well as scheduled and unscheduled on-the-spot assessments by lecturers, analyses of student-teachers' supervisors' assessment reports, student-teachers' external examiners' observations reports, and analyses of student-teachers' supervisors' assessment reports, have revealed that teaching practice exercise is marred with irregularities ranging from poor instructional delivery strategies, poor lesson preparation and presentation, and ineffective classroom control. Also, the teacher preparation process revealed that curriculum content packages was highly intellectual based, subject-matter-oriented, and remote from the practical issues confronting real classroom teachers. This study intends to determine if the pre-set objectives as set by NCCE are adequate, inadequate or ambiguously stated. Also, from lecturers' assessments of both micro-teaching practicum and teaching practice supervision of student-teachers, is there any alignment in their performance? It also intends to ascertain if the performance of College of Education student-teachers in microteaching practicum is a predictor to their performance during teaching practice exercise in Kogi-State.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to:

1. Determine the extent of alignment between the adequacy of pre-set courses objectives as prescribed by NCCE and lecturers' assessment of the adequacy of objectives.
2. Ascertain the extent of alignment between prescribed expected student-teacher's performance during teaching practice and the lecturers' actual assessment of student-teachers' in cooperating school.
3. Determine whether the performance of student-teachers in microteaching practicum predicts their performance in teaching practice.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study:

RQ_1: To what extent is the alignment between prescribed objectives of the courses as set by NCCE and lecturers in the department of Curriculum and Instruction assessment on adequacy of the objectives?

RQ_2: What is the extent of alignment between prescribed expected student-teacher's performance during teaching practice and the lecturers' actual assessment of student-teachers' in cooperating school.

RQ_3: To what extent does the performance of student-teachers in microteaching practicum predicts their performance in teaching practice?

Methodology

The study used a survey research approach that involves using techniques including questionnaire, and structured interviews to acquire data about respondent's opinions. The total population of academic staff in the three Colleges of Education stood at 2,725. Purposively, stratification based on rank was used to select the sample size of 1,242 senior lecturers and above owing to their experiences in microteaching practicum and teaching practice. 'Dip-hand' randomization sampling technique was used to select a College of Education. The total sample size in institution selected was 346; and at 0.05 degree of accuracy, research advisor recommended 169 respondents as adequate. Random sampling was used to select respondents. Additionally, all eleven lecturers in the department of curriculum and instruction in institution selected were purposively selected as focus group to get their opinion about the adequacy of the objectives.

Two instruments titled Adequacy of Course Objectives Questionnaire (ACOQ) and Alignment between Micro-teaching Practicum and Teaching Practice Questionnaire (AMPTPQ) were used for

data collection. The ACOQ was an open-ended instrument designed to elicit responses from lecturers in the department of Curriculum and Instruction to assess extent of alignment between prescribed and actual standards so as to assess internal consistency of NCCE-mandated standards and actual standards in terms of course objectives adequacy while the AMPTPQ is questionnaire for Senior Lecturers (SL) and above designed based on the Input, Process and Output (IPO) component of Provus' discrepancy evaluation model. The instrument was used to assess the alignment between NCCE-mandated standards and student-teacher performance in teaching practice. The extent of alignment was determined using the benchmarks of four-point rating scale 4.0-3.1 Very Large Extent (VLE), 3.0-2.1 Large Extent (LE), 2.0-1.1 Small Extent (SE), and 1.0-0.1 Very Small Extent (VSE).

The validity of the instruments for this study was ascertained using the face and content validity approaches. The reliability of an instrument shows the extent to which the results obtained from an instrument can be relied upon as the true measure. Therefore, Cronbach's alpha statistics was used to measure the internal consistency. The reliability coefficient for the instruments is 0.84 and 0.89 respectively. ACOQ was administered through the Head of Department, Curriculum and Instruction while AMPTPQ was ran through Teaching-practice directorate during 2021/2022 teaching practice exercise. Students' academic performance was used as documentary evidence to substantiate the findings to answer research question two.

Results

Table 1: Summary of Adequacy of courses objectives as assessed by lecturers in the department of Curriculum and Instruction

SN	Statements	Mean	SD	Decision
1	assist student-teacher in developing competence in writing instructional objectives	3.15	0.68	VLE
2	assist student-teacher in developing competence in communication skills	2.77	0.64	LE
3.	assist student-teacher in developing competence in stimulus variation skills	2.61	0.83	LE
4.	provide student-teacher with set induction skills	2.70	0.74	LE
5.	equip student-teacher with reinforcement skills	3.55	0.65	VLE
6.	assist student-teacher in developing competence in classroom questioning skills	3.05	0.70	VLE
7.	assist student-teachers in developing competence in classroom management skills	2.75	0.67	LE
8.	prepare student-teacher in using closure skills	2.59	0.73	LE
9.	assist student-teachers in developing competence in planned repetition strategies	2.40	0.81	LE
10	assist student-teacher to gain confidence in teaching	2.74	0.97	LE
	Average Weighted Score	**2.83**		**LE**

Benchmark: Between 4.0 and 3.1 Very Large Extent (VLE); Between 3.0 and 2.1 Large Extent (LE); Between 2.0 and 1.1 Small Extent (SE) and between 1.0 and 0.1 Very Small Extent (VSE)

Table 1 presents responses from 11 respondents who are the focus group. The items sought information on alignment between prescribed objectives and lecturers in the department of Curriculum and Instruction assessment on the adequacy of the course objectives. The findings revealed that the alignment between prescribed objectives of the courses and the lecturer's assessment on the adequacy of the course objectives was to a large extent adequate, because the benchmark weighted mean score of a large extent stood at (2.1– 3.0) and the weighted mean score calculated was 2.83, which is within the large extent threshold. Table 2 presents the Nvivo-11 analysis of the focus group on adequacy of course objectives.

Table 2: Nvivo-11 analysis of focus group in the department of curriculum and instruction sampled on the adequacy of courses objectives.

Respondents	Course Objectives	Respondents	Course Objectives
R2	Adequate	R1	Inadequate
R3	Balance	R4	Weak
R6	Appropriate	R5	Not Achievable
R7	Sequenced	R8	Overloaded
		R9	Not All Inclusive
		R10	Ambiguous
		R11	Not Complete

Focused group, respondents R2, R3, R6, and R7 assessed the adequacy of courses' objectives to be adequate, balanced, appropriate, and properly

sequenced while respondents R1, R4, R5, R8, R9, R10 and R11, assessed the objectives of the courses as grossly inadequate, weak, unachievable, overloaded, incomprehensive, ambiguously stated and not complete accordingly. The group further identified causes of discrepancies between prescribed and actual transacted curriculum. The difference may be due to inadequate time allotted, high lecturers-student ratio, poor admission policy, learners' unseriousness, teachers' lack of commitment, and ineffective supervision.

Table 3: Summary of extent of alignment between prescribed student-teachers performance during teaching practice and the lecturers' actual assessment of student-teachers' in cooperating school.

SN	Statements	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Uses Learner-centred approach to deliver instruction during?	1.56	.81	**SE**
2.	Display mastery of using set induction skills during instructional presentation	1.43	.41	**SE**
3.	Exhibit proficiency in varying teaching strategies during instructional presentation at the cooperating school?	1.67	.62	**SE**
4.	Demonstrate excellent ability in lesson preparation during TP?	2.64	.99	**LE**
5.	Display competency in lesson presentation during TP?	2.79	1.02	**LE**
6.	Show ability to use instructional materials and models during?	3.61	1.35	**VLE**
7.	Display skills in lesson evaluation strategies during TP.	2.40	.98	**LE**
8.	Demonstrate classroom management skills during TP.?	2.58	.96	**LE**
9.	Adequately uses questioning skills during instructional presentation during TP.	2.76	.93	**LE**
10.	Uses varieties of rewards to stimulate teaching-learning process during TP?	3.48	1.61	**VLE**
11.	Uses stimulus variation skills during TP?	2.74	.86	**LE**
12.	Demonstrate lesson closure skills while teaching during TP?	2.53	.79	**LE**
13.	Adequately use-up time allotted to each subject on the general timetable during TP?	1.46	.69	**SE**
14.	Combine verbal and non-verbal communication skills to deliver instruction during TP.	2.94	1.47	**LE**
	Average Weighted Score	**2.47**		**LE**

Table 3 shows 169 lecturers across schools and departments in the sampled institution for output component of the Provus discrepancy evaluation model. Responses to items sought out information on the extent of the alignment between the prescribed expected student-teacher's performance during teaching practice and the lecturers' actual assessment of student-teachers' in cooperating school. The study revealed that the alignment and placement was to a large extent adequate, because the calculated average weighted mean score was 2.47, which falls within the (3.0 and 2.1) large extent benchmark.

To determine if student-teachers' performance during teaching practice was a function of microteaching practicum curriculum. A proforma was design to harvest academic performance of the student-teacher in microteaching practicum and final grades of the student-teacher in teaching practice through the Head of Department, Curriculum and Instruction and teaching practice unit respectively and juxtapose. The result of the analyses revealed that the performance of student-teachers in microteaching practicum did not predict student-teacher performance in teaching practice.

Discussion of findings

The findings in Table 1 revealed that to a large extent the objectives of the courses as set by NCCE are adequate as there is a great association between the objectives set and assessment of its adequacy by the lecturers. This finding established that objectives of the courses are adequate. This finding is in agreement with Obasi and Ifegbo (2014), where it was established that micro-teaching theory and its practical component's objectives are adequate and achievable and that since its emergent in the Teacher Education Programme (TEP), it has been found effective and has equally added a new dimension to the teaching profession owing to its repertoire of teaching skills. Also, the finding is in line with Majoni (2017) where it stated that owing to the adequacy of the course objectives, student-teachers who are the recipients of the curriculum have indicated that they benefited enormously from participating in micro-teaching practicum procedures. The findings of the focus group (Table 2) on the reasons why the objectives of the courses are not adequate is consistent with Israel and Israel

(2020), where it was established that the NCE curriculum was overcrowded with activities and, at the same time, the college time table was seriously overloaded as learners hardly had time for recreational and extra-curricular activities. Also, some lectures sometimes started as early as 7.00am and ended as late as 6.00pm, so objectives set are rarely realized.

The results in Table 3 revealed that the extent of alignment between prescribed objectives of the courses and the lecturer's assessment on the adequacy of the course objectives was to a large extent adequate is in the same direction with Awalia (2018), where it was established that student teachers' exposure to microteaching practicum results in positive experiences in supporting teaching skills. Also, the finding of this study is on the same path with Olusanya (2020), where it was established that, to a very high extent, micro-teaching practicum course objectives are adequate as the recipients of the content are able to present classroom instructions logically and sequentially and effectively use instructional materials during teaching practice. However, individual responses coded remarked that course objectives are not adequate due to non-involvement of critical stakeholders during the process of curriculum review.

This study revealed that relatively to a large extent the performance of student-teacher in microteaching practicum can dictate the performance of student-teachers in teaching practice as the alignment on average was 2.47, which fall within (3.0 and 2.1) threshold. The finding of this study is line with that of Onwuagboke *et al.,* (2017), who found that microteaching theory and microteaching practicum interventions significantly improve student teachers' teaching skills, with significant differences between the three intervention groups. However, documentary evidences and analysis of student-teacher performance (Table 4) in microteaching practicum with their corresponding final grades in teaching practice shows that there is no direct relationship between the performance of student-teacher in teaching practice and microteaching practicum. This finding contradicts average mean score obtained for this study. The findings could be due to subjectivity in scoring students during teaching practice as this corroborated earlier study by Joy-Telu (2016) where it listed subjectivity as a factor that leads to students' high scores during teaching practice. Hence, suggested that grades from cooperating school (mentor) should be cumulative, continuous and objective then merged with external supervisor's grades, and find the average as score obtained.

Conclusion

The lecturer's assessment on the adequacy of course objectives was found to be adequate to a large extent on average mean score, while individual respondents as focus group described the course objectives as ambiguous, inadequate, overloaded, and weak, while other respondent within the focus group described the objective as adequate and achievable. Statistically the study concluded that to a large extent student-teachers performance in teaching practice was a function of microteaching practicum curriculum delivery, however, documentary evidences established it that student-teachers performance in microteaching practicum does not predict student-teacher performance in real teaching practice, rather the final grade during teaching practice is influenced by subjectivity in grading, infrastructural facilities in schools and emotional disposition of the student-teachers during teaching practice

Recommendations

The study recommends the following:

1. To further enhance adequacy of course objectives, the lecturers need to be adequately involved during curriculum planning, curriculum review, curriculum design, curriculum modification and curriculum development process

2. All course work at the college level must be completed before going for teaching practice as it is done in other profession, as this would boost content and pedagogical knowledge of student-teachers

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