

Assessment of the Benefits and Challenges Facing Teaching Practice in Private Colleges of Education in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State

Kamaldeen Olohundare Sulyman¹, Biliqis Mosunmola Jimoh², Adenike Florence Sijuade¹ & Oluwatosin Adeniran Okusanya³

¹Department of Educational Foundations, School of Education, Federal College of Education, Iwo, Osun State

²Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, School of Education, Federal College of Education, Iwo, Osun State

³Department of Educational Psychology, Sikiru-Adetona College of Education, Omu-Ajoshe, Ogun State

Abstract

This study assessed the benefits and challenges facing teaching practice in private Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. It adopted descriptive research design of survey type. All the 105 full-time lecturers in the four private Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis constituted the population of the study. All the four institutions and the 105 permanent lecturers therein were selected purposively. 'Benefits and Challenges Facing Teaching Practice Questionnaire' was utilized for gathering data. Validation of the instrument was done and its reliability test was also carried out, using Cronbach Alpha, yielded a coefficient of 0.78. Research questions were answered while hypotheses were tested using mean and standard deviation and t-test respectively. The findings of the study revealed among others, that TP affords students opportunity to put into practice what they have learnt theoretically in their respective Colleges and gives students the chance to embark on the journey of becoming professional teachers. It also found that the challenges facing TP in private Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis included poor attitude of students towards teaching practice, poor compensation of lecturers who assess students and late registration for teaching practice by students due to financial challenge. It concluded that TP affords students opportunity to put into practice what they have learnt theoretically in their respective Colleges. It recommended among others, that lecturers should be highly committed to effective assessment of TP students and endeavour to give them feedback after the exercise, so as to help students understand their areas of strengths and weaknesses.

Key words: Benefits, Challenges, Colleges of Education, Teaching Practice

Introduction

Teaching is a profession which is practical in nature. This necessitates the reason 300 level students in Nigerian Colleges of Education (COEs) are posted to cooperating schools for teaching practice, for 12 weeks, so as to acquire skills, competence, knowledge and techniques needed to become effective teachers. Aglazor (2017) elucidated teaching practice (TP) as a mandatory course which all the 300 level students in COEs in Nigeria must register for. It covers the first semester of three hundred level, that is, it commences from the beginning to the end of the semester. Afolabi, et al. (2019) elucidated TP as a period that trainee-teachers spend in imparting knowledge to students in cooperating schools. It is an indispensable aspect of teacher education and it is purely practical in nature. Haines (2015) posted that TP means the time when a

trainee-teacher spends as part of his or her training period in either public or private schools, under the supervision of the cooperating schools and assessors from their institutions. Aglazor (2017) maintained TP is a latitude for teachers on the training to fathom the knowledge of how the business of classroom is carried out in schools. This exercise exposes students to a tasking yet rewarding experience of operating with students in real classroom situation for the purpose of garnering professional competence. Afolabi, et al. (2019) believed that in Nigeria, TP exercise as be done by education students before they could be awarded Bachelor of Education and Nigeria Certificate in Education. Eze (2018) posited that TP affords students who are on teacher training first chance to participate in the doings which revolve around teaching, in an actual

real world. The exercise acquaints students with required characteristics, knowledge, skills, understanding, and professional competences needed in teaching profession.

Teacher and students need to attach high level of seriousness to TP. Menter (2015) asserted that lecturers and students need to attach much significance to TP, because it is the crux of the preparation for the teaching profession. Not only that, it is the actual link between student-hood and profession membership and the centerpiece of the training for the teaching profession. Hamilton-Ekeke, J. (2012) stated that TP is a vital part of the process in teacher education aims at preparing effective teachers. As education is very fundamental in development of a nation, so also TP is very important for building teachers who can contribute to the success of education system. Ekundayo (2014) emphasised that TP takes a central position in the teacher education programme. It is an indispensable aspect of the teacher education programme aimed at preparing trainee-teachers for quality entry into the teaching profession. Muhammed-Awwal and Alarape (2019) posited that TP is a compulsory course in teacher education programme and as such, there is need for the College management, lecturers, students, government, cooperating schools and parents or guardians to be highly committed to its, for the purpose of helping trainee-teachers to acquire the skills that would make them effective teachers.

Every education needs to be exposed to TP, for the goals of the programme to be fully realized. Ngidi and Marais (2020) posited that TP is an important exercise which students are exposed to before becoming a professional teacher. It is programme which is based on putting teaching theory into practice for students to acquire hands-on experience in actual teaching and learning milieu. Muhammed-Awwal and Alarape (2022) opined that as Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme and Internship are important to students in Engineering and Health Sciences respectively before they could become professionals, so also TP is very essential for students in Colleges of Education, so as to gain the required knowledge and skills to effectively operate as professional teachers. Olajide and Najimudeen (2023) asserted that a student who properly carries out TP is likely to acquire the wherewithal for effective teaching such as classroom management, methodologies, lesson plan, provision, improvisation and utilisation of methodologies, teaching aids improvisation and utilisation and the likes. Akintunde and Remilekun (2019) asserted that

one of the factors responsible for inadequate possession of knowledge, skills and techniques for effective teaching by some graduates of Colleges of Education is as a results of poor attitude to teaching practice. James and Kolapo (2018) believed that the benefits of TP to the students of Colleges of education. No wonder the TP is made a six-credit unit course, the highest among the courses offered by students in Colleges of Education in Nigeria. The findings of the study conducted by Salami and Ogunmola (2020) revealed that there was a significant impact of teaching practice on teachers' classroom performance. The outcome of the study conducted by Aderibigbe (2019) showed that there was a teaching practice had a significant relationship with classroom management.

The benefits which students stand to gain in TP exercise is numerous. Without experiencing TP, education students might not be able to get the skills needed to properly fit into the teaching profession Olapade (2020) maintained that despite the numerous benefits of TP to the production of well-groomed teachers in Colleges of Education, some factors related to supervisors, cooperating teachers, students, and government are constituting serious challenges to the actualisation of the targeted goals. Mosaic (2019) asserted that one of the challenges facing teaching practice is failure of supervisors to give students enough feedback after the exercise. Aldabbus (2020) found that one of the challenges facing TP is ineffective checking of the lesson plan prepared by student-teachers. Some supervisors usually flip through the pages of the lesson plans, without making a thorough inspections so as to make proper correction where necessary. Alaba (2021) stressed that poor attitudes of students to teaching practice, ineffective assessment of students by supervisors and covering students who are not punctual by the cooperating school or cooperating teachers are part of the challenges facing teaching practice. Olajide (2022) asserted that poor motivation of supervisors, nonchalant attitudes of students, poor assessment and laxity from cooperating schools constitute challenges to effectiveness of TP in COEs in Nigeria.

Teaching practice is aspect of teacher education in COEs in Nigeria which should not be toyed with, due its benefits. Despite the role of TP in making students acquire the skills that would make them become competent teachers, experiences of the researchers coupled with the information derived from some lecturers and students in private Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis and Basic School teachers in the area show that the exercise is facing

some challenges, emanating from the management, students and lecturers, cooperating schools and teachers. To support this, Alaba (2021) lamented that the problems causing ineffectiveness in the TP exercise in Colleges of Education in Nigeria are caused by all the stakeholders involved, especially the lecturers, students, College management.

However, Kolapo (2018) examined the perception of lecturers on the challenges facing teaching practice in Colleges of Education in Delta State, Nigeria. Ekundayo et al (2014) conducted a study on teaching practice exercise for education students in Nigerian Universities: Challenges and the way forward. Akintunde and Remilekun (2019) investigated ways of ensuring effectiveness of teaching practice in private Colleges of Education in Oyo State. Abubakar (2020) examined lecturers' perception of the challenges facing teaching practice in universities in Nigeria. However, to the best knowledge of the researchers, none of the above studies focused on the benefits and challenges facing TP in COEs in Ilorin metropolis. Hence, this the gap which this study filled. The study examined the benefits of teaching practice to students; determined the challenges facing teaching practice; and investigated the benefits and challenges facing teaching practice based on lecturers' gender.

Research Questions

- i. What are the benefits of teaching practice to students in private Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State?
- ii. What are the challenges facing teaching practice in private Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State?

Research Hypotheses

- H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in the benefits of teaching practice to students in Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State based on lecturers' gender.
- H₀₂:** there is no significant difference in the challenges facing teaching practice in Colleges

of Education in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State based on lecturers' gender.

Methodology

Descriptive research design of survey type was adopted. All the 105 full-time lecturers in the four private COEs (Imam-Hamzat, Nana Aishat, Life-Gate & Muh-yideen) in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State constituted the population of the study. All the four institutions were selected purposively. All the 105 (Nana Aishat, 24; Imam-Hamzat, 27; Life-Gate, 25; and Muh-yideen, 29) full-time lecturers in the four institutions were purposively selected as respondents. 'Benefits and Challenges Facing Teaching Practice Questionnaire' (BCFTPQ) designed by the researchers was utilized for data gathering. Validation of the instrument was carried out by three experts in the field of Educational Management. The instrument was structured into three segments (A, B & C). Part A contained respondents' bio-data, Part B had items on the Benefits while Part C covered items on the challenges facing TP. Parts B and C had 10 items each and Likert-rating scale of Strongly Agree rated 4, Agree scored 3, Disagree adjudged 2 and Strongly Disagree assigned 1 was used for the study. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, 20 copies were administered to 20 lecturers in Adeshina College of Education, Shaare. Analysis of the data gathered was done using Cronbach's Alpha and reliability coefficients of 0.81 and 0.75 were realized for the Benefits and Challenges Facing Teaching Practice respectively, while overall reliability coefficient of 0.78 was realised. This confirmed reliability of the instrument. Answering of research questions and testing of hypotheses were done using mean and standard deviation and t-test respectively. For decision making, any mean score below 2.50 was considered 'Disagree', while 2.50 and above was adjudged 'Agree'. Also. Any p-value less than the level of significance (0.05) was considered 'Rejected', while any one greater than it was regarded as 'Accepted'.

Presentation of Results

Table 1

Benefits of TP to Students in private Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
	Teaching practice:			
1.	affords students opportunity to put into practice what they have learnt theoretically in their respective Colleges	4.49	1.56	Agree
2.	gives students the chance to embark on the journey of becoming professional teachers	4.35	1.37	Agree
3.	exposes students to teaching and learning in real classroom situations	4.05	1.24	Agree
4.	allows students to showcase the extent of the mastery of their respective subject matter	4.70	1.61	Agree
5.	enables students to gain boldness in facing learners for the purpose of imparting learning to them	3.98	1.19	Agree
6.	affords students the opportunity to gain more knowledge in effective lesson plan preparation	4.41	1.32	Agree
7.	gives students the chance to have the knowledge of how to properly manage classrooms	3.88	1.22	Agree
8.	exposes students to individual differences among students as well gaining knowledge on how to manage it effectively	4.01	1.09	Agree
9.	enables students to be well acquainted with the etiquette guiding mode of dressing in teaching profession	3.29	0.97	Agree
10.	assists students to acquire knowledge in preparation, improvisation and utilisation of teaching aids	3.77	1.34	Agree

Table 1 shows the benefits of TP to students in private COEs in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. As shown on the Table, items 1 (affords students opportunity to put into practice what they have learnt theoretically in their respective Colleges), 2 (gives students the chance to embark on the journey of becoming professional teachers) 3 (exposes students to teaching and learning in real classroom situations) 4 (allows students to showcase the extent to showcase the mastery of their respective subject matter) and 5 (enables students to gain boldness in facing learners for the purpose of imparting learning to them) had mean scores of 4.39, 4.35, 4.05, 4.70 and 3.98 respectively. Therefore, the decision taken on them was 'Agree'.

Also, items 6 (affords students the opportunity to gain more knowledge in effective lesson plan preparation), 7 (gives students the chance to have the knowledge of how to properly manage classrooms), 8 (exposes students to individual differences among students as well gaining knowledge on how to manage it effectively), 9 (enables students to be well acquainted with the etiquette guiding mode of dressing in teaching profession) and 10 (assists students to acquire knowledge in preparation, improvisation and utilisation of teaching aids) had mean scores of 4.41, 3.88, 4.01, 3.29 and 3.77 respectively. Hence, the decision taken on them was 'Agree'.

Table 2

Difference in Benefits of TP to Students in Private Colleges of Education in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State Based on Lecturers' Gender

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Calculated t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	105	4.17	1.40	2.51	.063	Accepted
Female	105	4.01	1.18			

Table 3 presented the p-value (.063) which is greater than 0.05 which is the level of significance. Hence, the decision taken on hypothesis one was 'accepted'. This connotes that significant difference did

not exist in the benefits of TP to students in private COEs in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State based on lecturers' gender.

Table 3

Challenges Facing TP in Private Colleges of Education in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Poor attitude of students towards teaching practice	4.32	1.45	Agree
2.	Poor compensation of lecturers who assess students	4.48	1.61	Agree
3.	Late registration for teaching practice by students due to financial challenge	3.07	1.19	Agree
4.	Inadequate skills of some lecturers used for teaching practice assessment	4.55	1.71	Agree
5.	Ineffective assessment of students during teaching practice	3.58	1.32	Agree
6.	Ineffective sensitisation of students to properly prepare them for teaching practice	4.41	1.58	Agree
7.	Inadequate possession of skills by cooperating teachers to effectively mentor teaching practice students	4.19	1.36	Agree
8.	Insufficiency of learning materials in cooperating schools for teaching practice students to make use of	4.61	1.65	Agree
9.	Corruption among assessors	3.63	0.98	Agree
10.	Unprofessional attitudes of cooperating teachers towards teaching practice students	3.77	1.22	Agree

Table 2 shows the challenges facing TP in private Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis,

Kwara State. As shown on the Table, items 1 (Poor attitude of students towards teaching practice), 2 (Poor

compensation of lecturers who assess students), 3 (Late registration for teaching practice by students due to financial challenge), 4 (Inadequate skills of some lecturers used for TP assessment) and 5 (Ineffective assessment of students during teaching practice) had mean scores of 4.32, 4.48, 3.07, 4.55 and 3.58. Therefore, the decision taken on them was 'Agree'. Items 6 (Ineffective sensitisation of students to properly prepare them for teaching practice), 7 (Inadequate

possession of skills by cooperating teachers to effectively mentor teaching practice students), 8 (Insufficiency of learning materials in cooperating schools, for teaching practice students to make use of), 9 (Corruption among assessors) and 10 (Unprofessional attitudes of cooperating teachers towards teaching practice students) had mean scores of 4.41, 4.19, 4.61, 3.63 and 3.77 respectively. Hence, the decision taken on them was 'Agree'.

Table 4

Difference in the Challenges Facing TP in COEs in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State Based on Lecturers' Gender

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Calculated t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	105	4.13	1.52			
				2.42	.071	Accepted
Female	105	3.99	1.30			

Table 4 showed that the p-value (.071) which is greater than the level of significance which is 0.05. Therefore, the decision taken on hypothesis two was 'accepted'. This confirms that no significant difference existed in the challenges facing TP in COEs in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State based on lecturers' gender.

Discussions

As revealed by the findings of the study, teaching practice affords students opportunity to put into practice what they have learnt theoretically in their respective Colleges, gives students the chance to embark on the journey of becoming professional teachers, exposes students to teaching and learning in real classroom situations, allows students to showcase the extent to showcase the mastery of their respective subject matter, enables students to gain boldness in facing learners for the purpose of imparting learning to them. Also, it affords students the opportunity to gain more knowledge in effective lesson plan preparation, gives students the chance to have the knowledge of how to properly manage classrooms, exposes students to individual differences among students as well gaining knowledge on how to manage it effectively, enables students to be well acquainted with the etiquette guiding mode of dressing in teaching profession and assists students to acquire knowledge in preparation,

improvisation and utilisation of teaching aids. It was also found there was no significant difference in the benefits of TP to students in private COEs in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State based on lecturers' gender.

This finding agrees with the finding of Muhammed-Awwal and Alarape (2022) which revealed that teaching practice gives students opportunity to acquire adequate knowledge in lesson plan preparation, lesson delivery, use of methodologies and preparation, utilisation of instructional materials and classroom management. This finding is also in tandem with the finding of Abubakar (2020) which found that teaching practice helps students to have good mastery of lesson preparation and presentation, class control, time management, student discipline and motivation, improvisation and utilisation of teaching aids and subject matter. This finding corroborates the finding of Abubakar (2020) which revealed that there was no significant difference in opinions of lecturers on the impacts of teaching practice on education students in Universities in Nigeria based on gender.

As shown by the findings, the challenges facing teaching practice were poor compensation of lecturers who assess students, poor attitude of students towards teaching practice, , late registration for teaching practice by students due to financial challenge, inadequate skills of some lecturers used for TP assessment, ineffective

assessment of students during teaching practice, ineffective sensitisation of students to properly prepare them for teaching practice, inadequate possession of skills by cooperating teachers to effectively mentor teaching practice students, insufficiency of learning materials in cooperating schools for teaching practice students to make use of, corruption among assessors and unprofessional attitudes of cooperating teachers towards teaching practice students. It was also found that there was no significant in the challenges facing students in COEs in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State based on lecturers' gender. This finding corroborates the finding of Alaba (2021) which showed that the challenges facing teaching practice in Universities in Nigeria were poor attitude of students, poor attitude of assessors, poor attitude of cooperating teachers or cooperating schools, poor motivation of student teachers by government. This finding supports the assertion of Kolapo (2018) that the challenges facing practice are student-related, institution-related, cooperating school-related and government-related. Unless the problems are properly tackled, the goals of the exercise might not be well-achieved. This finding supports the finding of Muhammed-Awwal and Alarape (2022) which showed that there was no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the challenges facing teaching practice in Colleges of Education students in Abia State, Nigeria based on gender.

Conclusion

The study concluded that TP affords students opportunity to put into practice what they have learnt theoretically in their respective Colleges, gives students the chance to embark on the journey of becoming professional teachers, exposes students to teaching and learning in real classroom situations, allows students to showcase the extent to showcase the mastery of their respective subject matter, among others.

The challenges facing TP in private colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis were poor attitude of students towards teaching practice, poor compensation of lecturers who assess students, late registration for teaching practice by students due to financial challenge, inadequate skills of some lecturers used for TP assessment, ineffective assessment of students during teaching practice, ineffective sensitisation of students to properly prepare them for teaching practice, among others. Gender did not cause any significant difference in the lecturers' opinions on the benefits and challenges

facing TP in private Colleges of Education, Kwara State.

Recommendations

The study recommended that:

- i. the managements of the private Colleges of Education in Ilorin metropolis should properly orientate the lecturers used for TP on yearly basis for the purpose of assisting them to continually acquire the skills to effectively assess students, and serious punishment should be given to any lecturers found in any corrupt practice that could falter the realisation of the TP goals;
- ii. cooperating schools should always intensify efforts in providing teaching and learning materials for TP students to make us of, while the cooperating teachers should be more committed to properly guiding the TP students to acquire adequate skills which would make them competent and resourceful teachers;
- iii. lecturers should be highly committed to effective assessment of TP students and endeavour to give them feedback after the exercise, so as to help students understand their areas of strengths and weaknesses;
- iv. parents should endeavour to pay their children's final year school fee at the right time, so as to enable students register for TP and start the exercise in due to course, and acquire the teaching skills required of them to become effective teachers; and
- v. students should always be given adequate orientation, for the purpose of intimating them to the benefits of TP, enhance their seriousness to it and consequently help them to acquire the necessary skills to become effective teachers.

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