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Microteaching as a Practice-Based Pedagogy in Africa: Evidence, Constraints, and Opportunities for Teacher Education

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Abstract

Microteaching has become a central practice-based strategy in African teacher education, yet persistent structural constraints and emerging technology-enhanced models shape its implementation. Evidence from South Africa, Kenya, and other African contexts shows that microteaching offers a critical bridge between theory and classroom practice, particularly in low-resourced and digitally uneven systems. This review synthesises empirical studies on microteaching in Africa to (i) identify its key achievements and enabling conditions, (ii) map contextual challenges, and (iii) derive policy-relevant recommendations for strengthening microteaching in teacher education. A narrative synthesis of 10 peer-reviewed studies published between 2020 and 2025 was conducted using PubMed, Medline, Scopus, and Google Scholar, focused on African teacher education. The data was analysed thematically to integrate findings on enablers, achievements, challenges, and recommendations. Across the studies, microteaching improved teaching skills, self-awareness, and confidence, enhanced pedagogical content knowledge (especially in mathematics and STEM), and increased preparedness for real-world teaching. However, limited technology and funding, overcrowded classes, weak supervision, fragmented feedback, and scarce role models constrained optimal implementation. Microteaching in Africa functions as a high-leverage, practice-based pedagogy but remains unevenly realised due to structural and pedagogical barriers. Strategic investment in technology-supported, well-supervised, and feedback-rich microteaching can substantially enhance teacher quality and classroom readiness.

Keywords: Microteaching, Africa, pedagogy, teacher, curriculum, classroom,

Introduction

Teacher education systems across Africa are under intense pressure to produce teachers who can respond to rapidly changing curricular demands, large and diverse classrooms, and growing expectations for learner-centred pedagogy. Within this context, microteaching has become a central strategy in many African teacher education programmes for developing core instructional skills in structured, low-risk environments. Microteaching, frequently regarded as an initial pedagogical stage, provides pre-service educators with the opportunity to design and implement brief instructional sessions, subsequently receiving evaluative feedback to enhance their skills before engaging in comprehensive school-based training (Genga-Ayiemba, 2025; Elias, 2018; Kimaro et al., 2021; Bistu & Mangvwat, 2024; Jehovah, 2022).

In various African contexts, microteaching has been widely recognised as a valuable method for developing fundamental teaching competencies, encompassing lesson preparation, classroom control, effective questioning, clear explanations, the utilisation of instructional resources, and the management of instructional time (Genga-Ayiemba, 2025; Elias, 2018; Onwuagboke et al., 2017; Kimaro et al., 2021; Bistu & Mangvwat, 2024). Studies conducted across Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, Eritrea, Cameroon, and Zimbabwe have demonstrated that pre-service teachers perceive microteaching as a valuable tool for cultivating self-confidence, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and rehearsing professional responsibilities within a controlled environment that replicates genuine classroom interactions (Genga-Ayiemba, 2025; Kimwarey et al., 2020; Elias, 2018; Onwuagboke et al., 2017; Kimaro et al., 2021; Jehovah, 2022).

Research suggests that microteaching can significantly improve student teachers' performance in future teaching and help them develop important professional skills (Sithole, 2023; Onwuagboke et al., 2017). Simultaneously, studies in African countries highlight important context-specific possibilities and constraints. In open and distance learning, microteaching is considered a key method for giving practical experience to trainees who are spread out geographically.

However, this is hampered by limited time, insufficient pedagogical support, and inadequate technological infrastructure (Mukomana et al., 2021). Studies point to challenges such as overcrowded cohorts, minimal supervisory capacity, uneven prior preparation, and weak integration between microteaching and later school placements, which can reduce the authenticity and impact of the experience (Kimwarey et al., 2020; Mukomana et al., 2021). A recent study in South Africa, during and after COVID-19, showed how online and technology-enhanced microteaching can both mitigate existing inequalities and introduce new ones while simultaneously strengthening digital competence and readiness for diverse teaching modalities (De Almeida & Weber, 2025; Sithole, 2023).

African academic discussions are increasingly addressing current international concerns, such as the role of microteaching in developing reflective practice, self-assessment, and professional identity. Numerous studies have shown that structured feedback from both peers and instructors, along with video-assisted evaluations, improves self-reflection, professional growth, and teaching effectiveness in pre-service teachers (Mukuka & Alex, 2024; Sithole, 2023; Onwuagboke et al., 2017). A focused examination of mathematics teacher education additionally posits that microteaching holds particular promise for cultivating pedagogical content knowledge and technology integration, while acknowledging ongoing requirements for increased time, resources, and supervisory assistance to fully realise its potential (Mukuka & Alex, 2024).

Notwithstanding this growing body of research, a comprehensive understanding of how microteaching is conceptualised, executed, and experienced across various African teacher education systems, or how local contexts influence its advantages and disadvantages, remains absent. Consequently, this review synthesises existing evidence from African contexts, emphasising African viewpoints to pinpoint deficiencies and suggest strategies for enhancing microteaching as a tool for teacher professional development.

Methods

This review drew on peer-reviewed studies identified through PubMed, Medline, Scopus, and Google Scholar, focusing on English-language publications from 2020 to 2025. Only papers with African settings were included in this review. Based on the search terms, we chose the following terms to identify relevant studies in each database: “classroom management”, “pre-service teacher”, “microteaching”, and “education”, combined with “Africa” or “African Countries”. The narrative synthesis yielded four analytic themes that organised the microteaching challenges in Africa.

Results

Key issues identified in the literature

This section discusses the results of the narrative review conducted. It is organised around themes related to this paper's objective (Table 1).

Table 1 Characteristics of 10 studies included in the narrative review

S/N	Author	Country	Method	Summary of studies
1	TD Makafane [2020]	Lesotho	Qualitative study	This study examined the challenges student teachers faced during microteaching at the National University of Lesotho. Key challenges identified included the use of English as a medium of communication, syllabus interpretation, selection of teaching methods, and poor planning and organisational strategies. The recommendation was that student teachers adopt a variety of teaching methods and prepare their microteaching portfolios in advance.
2	Purwanti et al. [2024]	Nigeria	Qualitative study	How the microteaching course helps pre-service teachers at a private university in Central Java build their pedagogical competencies involving sex English language education students was explored, and it shows that microteaching improved lesson planning, provided practical teaching experience, and developed key competencies such as identifying student characteristics, carrying out reflection, building communication skills, and conducting assessment and evaluation.
3	H Bulus [2020]	Nigeria	Survey	The study examined effect of teaching skills on science student teachers' micro-teaching achievement. Findings revealed that teaching skills had no significant effect on micro-teaching achievement, though students exposed to teaching skills scored higher than those not exposed. Further recommendations were that lecturers emphasise training in teaching skills before engaging students in microteaching.
4	AR Kimaro et al. [2021]	Tanzania	Qualitative study	The influence of micro-teaching on enhancing the teaching competencies of pre-service teachers was explored. Findings show that micro-teaching helped pre-service teachers acquire basic skills in lesson planning, scheme of work preparation, classroom management, motivation, and time management. The experience gave them useful insights into the instructional process ahead of actual teaching practice. It was recommended that teacher educators in higher institutions plan and implement micro-teaching as a core component of teacher training.
5	MM Richard [2021]	South Africa	Case study	The study explored how participation in micro teaching lessons develops professional skills among student teachers. Findings showed that micro-lesson presentations effectively build professional skills when structured progression is in place. The paper recommends that teacher education programmes intentionally structure micro teaching with varied grouping formats and progressive complexity to maximise the professional development of student teachers.
6	MA Malik, H Amin, S Ali	South Africa	Case study	Explored the perception and experience of prospective teachers about online microteaching. Findings revealed that students felt online microteaching was less effective than traditional teaching in

	[2022]			developing creativity and multitasking abilities, due to its screen-based nature.
7	Sithole V [2023]	South Africa	Qualitative study	Microteaching during the COVID-19 lockdown at a South African University confirmed the efficacy of virtual microteaching. The study concludes that technology resources were central to the success of microteaching during lockdown, and recommends that teacher education programmes continue embracing technology in microteaching even after the pandemic
8	NN Padmadewi, LP Artini [2019]	Multiple African	Case study	The study identified a significant gap in microteaching research: a lack of focus on developing instruments to assess students' mastery of basic teaching skills. It recommends that teacher education programmes adopt structured, validated assessment tools across all phases of microteaching to ensure more accurate and consistent measurement of pre-service teachers' developing skills.
9	SK Elias [2018]	Kenya	Quantitative approach	The contribution of microteaching to teacher attitudes was critically analysed, and the opinions of pre-service teachers enrolled in the General Methods of Teaching (GMT) programme were also considered. The findings showed that including microteaching in teacher training programmes had a positive impact on student teachers' awareness and attitudes toward teaching competencies. And further recommended continued and intentional integration of microteaching into teacher preparation programmes, as it meaningfully shapes professional attitude, builds instructional confidence, and bridges the gap between theoretical training and real classroom practice.
10	A Mukuka, JK Alex [2024]	Africa	Literature review	A comprehensive review of microteaching within mathematics teacher education, examining prospects and challenges. Findings confirm that microteaching is an effective approach for enhancing pre-service teachers' core mathematics teaching skills. However, the study notes that microteaching requires more time, more supervisors, and more resources to function at maximum capacity. Therefore, the paper recommends that microteaching should not remain confined to a laboratory setting but should be practised in a real classroom to maximise its impact on professional development.

1. Structural and Resource Constraints

Across the reviewed literature, systemic barriers that limit the effective enactment of microteaching include a lack of technology, poor or unreliable ICT infrastructure, limited video equipment, inadequate electricity, overcrowded classrooms, poor physical infrastructure, lack of access to learning materials, and limited funding (Mukomana et al., 2021; Ofosu-Asare, 2024; Agwu & Iderima, 2022; Zickafoose et al., 2024). Similarly, several studies in Africa on microteaching and broader teacher education highlight that resource shortages constrain recording, replaying, and observation, reduce opportunities for individualised practice, and make it difficult to simulate realistic classroom environments (Mukomana et al., 2021; Ofosu-Asare, 2024; Agwu & Iderima, 2022).

2. Reduced Opportunities for Interaction, Engagement, and Reflection

The move to online learning has reduced face-to-face interaction, limited chances for reflection, and removed the structured environments that help people process their experiences. Research on online and blended microteaching in South Africa has highlighted issues related to the diminished immediacy of interaction, difficulties in maintaining participation during whole-class discussions, and challenges in fully embodying the role-play character of microteaching when

conducted via screens (Zalavra & Makri, 2022; De Almeide & Weber, 2025). Furthermore, feedback practices suggest that non-dialogic, criteria-focused feedback, devoid of structured reflection tasks, restricts pre-service teachers' capacity to critically examine their practice and cultivate reflective habits (Zalavra & Makri, 2022; Asregid et al., 2023; De Almeide & Weber, 2025).

3. Inadequate Supervision, Assessment, and Feedback Systems

Students often experience a lack of continuous assessment, inconsistent supervision, insufficient mentorship, limited access to feedback, and insufficient practice opportunities. Studies from Lesotho and Ethiopia show that supervision is often irregular, mentor guidance is limited, and feedback tends to be evaluative rather than dialogic and forward-looking, which weakens its role in fostering reflective practice and sustained skill development (Makafane, 2020; Asregid et al., 2023). Similarly, they highlighted issues such as insufficient time, too few questions, and weak assessment methods, which limited the number of effective practice sessions required for microteaching to work well (Mukuka & Alex, 2024).

4. Weak Professional Learning Ecosystems and Role Modelling

Lack of role models, limited teaching practice facilities, and broader weaknesses in the professional learning environment are evident where open and distance learning and school-based pre-service training have insufficiently resourced teaching practice schools, few exemplary practitioners, and limited opportunities to observe and emulate effective teaching, which restricts how far microteaching can connect to authentic professional practice (Mukomana et al., 2021; Saleh 2024). In addition, mentors lack training in microteaching or technology-enhanced approaches; therefore, student teachers receive little modelling of best practice. Therefore, this difference strengthens the divide between microteaching labs and real-world classrooms (Mukomana et al., 2021; Mukuka et al., 2024; Saleh, 2024).

Discussion

Microteaching has shown itself to be a useful method for developing self-awareness, boosting confidence, and refining key teaching skills in African classrooms. Research from South Africa and Zimbabwe shows that regularly using micro-lessons, along with structured feedback, improves lesson planning, classroom management, resource use, decision-making, and professional conduct.

At the same time, it encourages self-assessment and helps identify both strengths and areas for growth (Genga-Ayiemba, 2025; Mukomana et al., 2021; Msimanga, 2020; Sithole, 2025).

Both online and on-campus models have been reported to increase confidence and readiness for real classrooms, with student teachers explicitly linking microteaching to smoother transitions into school-based practice (Sithole, 2025; De Almeide & Weber, 2025; Msimanga, 2020).

This review shows that microteaching supports the development of foundational and pedagogical content knowledge, particularly in mathematics education. A systematic review of mathematics teacher education indicates that microteaching proves beneficial in cultivating essential instructional skills and pedagogical content knowledge, particularly when integrated with authentic classroom scenarios and ample practice opportunities (Mukuka & Alex, 2024). Furthermore, the incorporation of technology into microteaching practices within South Africa enhances understanding of both the subject matter and the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This approach equips student teachers with the necessary skills to design and execute technology-enhanced lessons that are specifically adapted to the diverse educational environments across Africa (De Almeide & Weber, 2025).

Microteaching has also helped develop a wider range of professional skills and improved performance. Participation is associated with improved critical thinking, problem-solving, reflective practice, and the formation of professional identity (Genga-Ayiemba, 2025; Mukomana et al., 2021; Msimanga, 2020). Online microteaching during COVID-19 in South Africa was observed to enhance digital skills, multitasking, and creativity in a multimodal environment while still being perceived as professionally valuable and inclusive (Sithole, 2025; De Almeide & Weber, 2025). Consequently, the results derived from Sierra Leone's multimodal microlearning initiative, designed for in-service educators, corroborate this perspective; specifically, they demonstrate that concise, structured, and practice-oriented modules can enhance both confidence and engagement, contingent upon the availability of appropriate platforms and proficient facilitation (Allela et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2025).

At the same time, this synthesis suggests that these improvements depend on supportive design and resources. Specifically, microteaching is most effective when structured with effective assessment tools, clear rubrics, and regular feedback. Student teachers report higher perceived preparedness and more targeted improvements in teaching performance (Mukuka & Alex, 2024; Genga-Ayiemba, 2025; Asregid et al., 2023). Furthermore, on-campus microteaching is viewed as an effective complement, or in some cases an alternative, to school-based placements when access to schools is constrained, providing deliberately structured scenarios, peer roles, and supervisory input (Mukomana et al., 2021; Msimanga, 2020).

The aggregated research across multiple African countries suggests that microteaching constitutes a valuable, practice-focused methodology for pre-service teacher preparation. Nevertheless, to maximise its efficacy, educational establishments must address existing infrastructural constraints. Furthermore, enhancements in the use of feedback and reflective practices are essential, alongside the contextualised integration of technology and blended learning strategies tailored to specific local circumstances and pedagogical objectives.

Limitations

The narrative review is limited by the small number of African studies focusing on South Africa, Zimbabwe, and a few countries in East and West Africa. Many of the studies were qualitative case designs with small samples, which limit generalisation and causal inference. The available data are mainly secondary and mathematics teacher education, with far less speaking on early childhood, primary, or TVET contexts. Language restriction to only English publication may have excluded relevant institutional reports or non-indexed African journals. Furthermore, most of the technology-related work came from relatively better-resourced institutions, which may be underrepresented in rural and low-resourced environments.

Policy and Practice Recommendation

From a policy perspective, the findings show the necessity for intentional, context-sensitive investment in microteaching within African teacher education systems. A significant concern pertains to the infrastructure that supports these programs. Many African institutions face severe resource constraints, which limit both the design and delivery of microteaching initiatives. To address these challenges, it is imperative to pursue targeted investments in low-cost, scalable ICT infrastructure, basic recording devices, accessible learning platforms, and reliable internet connectivity. Such resources are essential for establishing functional microteaching laboratories and supporting online models (Oubibi et al., 2024; Barakabitze et al., 2019). The integration of technology into teacher education must resonate with the realities of African classrooms, ensuring that the preparation pre-service teachers receive is relevant to the environments in which they will eventually teach, rather than being disconnected from those settings.

Furthermore, curriculum policy needs to address the historical structural limitations that have often narrowed microteaching to a brief, under-resourced requirement. Expanding the credit hours and practice cycles dedicated to microteaching, particularly in mathematics and STEM fields, would enable pre-service teachers to cultivate the pedagogical competencies needed to meet the demands of classroom practice (Msimanga, 2020; Barakabitze et al., 2019). To foster this development, a blended and flexible microteaching model should be implemented. Such a model would integrate on-campus simulations, school-based practice, and online microteaching experiences, thereby enhancing access, continuity, and resilience across diverse learning contexts (Allel, 2020; Agyei, 2020). The incorporation of multimodal microteaching and digital micro-lessons into teacher education curricula can further extend these advantages to in-service teacher development, reaching educators in regions where face-to-face training is challenging to sustain.

Additionally, supervision, feedback, and mentorship represent crucial areas requiring policy attention. The efficacy of microteaching is intrinsically linked to the quality of feedback received. Policies should advocate for the establishment of clear assessment rubrics and structured feedback protocols that guide supervisors in providing constructive evaluations. This approach will help pre-service teachers engage in genuine reflective practice rather than merely fulfilling procedural requirements (Marlina et al., 2023; Asregid et al., 2023). Establishing formal mentorship structures that connect universities with partner schools is essential to ensure that trained mentors are equipped to model effective pedagogy and the appropriate use of technology. Without this support, microteaching risks devolving into a performative exercise with limited transferability to actual classroom practice.

Finally, the formalisation of partnership and funding mechanisms at both the institutional and policy levels is

critical. Microteaching should be integrated within structured collaborations between universities and schools, fostering coherence between what is rehearsed on campus and what pre-service teachers encounter in real classrooms (Agyei, 2020). Scaling this collaborative approach across African education systems will necessitate regional coordination—sharing models, resources, and adaptation mechanisms that respect local contexts while promoting cross-system learning. Concurrently, it is vital to prioritise targeted funding streams to equip microteaching laboratories and sustain ongoing professional development in ICT-enhanced pedagogies, acknowledging that infrastructure without sustained investment is prone to obsolescence (Oubibi et al., 2024).

Further Studies

Future research should focus on examining microteaching practices in under-researched African countries, particularly within Francophone and Lusophone contexts, as well as in rural colleges and low-resource institutions. It is essential to investigate microteaching in various educational tiers, including the foundation phase, primary education, and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) teacher education, where current evidence remains limited.

Additionally, employing mixed-methods and quasi-experimental designs will be crucial for exploring the impact of different microteaching configurations—namely online, blended, and on-campus modalities. This investigation should also examine the frequency and intensity of microteaching cycles and their effects on teachers' competence and students' learning outcomes.

Furthermore, research should address the content and quality of feedback and mentorship provided during microteaching sessions, examining their relationships with the depth of reflection, the formation of professional identity, and the sustainability of teaching practices. Such studies would provide valuable insights into optimising microteaching as a method for enhancing teacher development in diverse educational settings.

Conclusion

Microteaching in African teacher education has demonstrated significant potential to enhance teaching skills, build confidence, and develop pedagogical content knowledge and digital competencies. This enhancement is most effective when supported by adequate resources, thoughtful design, and robust feedback and mentorship structures. Evidence from South Africa, Zimbabwe, East Africa, and other regions shows that microteaching is a critical, high-leverage component of both pre-service and in-service professional development. This is particularly relevant as educational systems increasingly move towards technology-enhanced and blended models of teaching.

However, the promise of microteaching remains inconsistently realised across Africa primarily due to structural constraints, limited supervision, and inconsistent integration into broader teacher education and policy frameworks. To address these challenges, it is crucial to strengthen technology-supported, reflective, and collaborative forms of microteaching. This can be achieved through sustained investment, the development of school-university partnerships, and context-sensitive policy initiatives. Such approaches offer a strategically viable pathway for improving teacher quality across Africa, positioning African teacher education as a leader in practice-based, digitally enabled professional learning.

Ethical clearance

This study was based exclusively on the synthesis of previously published literature and did not involve primary data collection, human participants, or access to identifiable personal records. Therefore, formal ethical approval was not required. All included studies were assumed to have obtained appropriate ethical clearance as stated in their respective publications.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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