



EVALUATION OF THE CHALLENGES FACING PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS DURING TEACHING PRACTICE FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHER PRODUCTION IN TERTIARY EDUCATION IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study which evaluated the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production was guided by one research question and one hypothesis. Descriptive survey research design was engaged. The population of the study comprised 6 public tertiary institutions in Anambra State with about 2,456 level three students in teacher education. Total enumeration sampling technique was utilized thus all the 6 government tertiary institutions were used for the study. 983 students were drawn from 2,456 representing 40% of the entire population. The researcher designed an instrument entitled “Evaluation of the Challenges of Prospective Teachers Educational Instrument” (ECPTTEI) which was used to draw out information from the respondents. The validity of the instrument was guaranteed while test retest method was used to test the reliability of the instrument. The result was exposed to Cronbach Alpha method which gave rise to the coefficient value of 0.82 which is considered adequate for the study. Mean, percentage and frequency counts were used to answer the research question while t-test was used to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed that prospective teachers are faced with enormous challenges like lack of accommodation, lack of finance among others during their teaching practice. The researcher therefore recommended that the host institution should use their good office to assist the students in seeking and off-setting accommodations before sending them out to the teaching practice schools to enable them settle down easily for the tasks ahead hence effective teacher production.

Keywords: Evaluation, Challenges, Prospective teachers, Teaching practice and Teacher production.

Introduction

Teachers are the bane of educational delivery process and as such deserved to be adequately trained both in theory and practice. Teachers are the life-wire of the educational policy implementation through curriculum development and usage. It is in the light of the fore-goings

that Nwosu (2020) echoed that teachers are among the principal guardians of education and are the driving force for educational improvement and development. This is because teachers can make huge differences to children's lives through the impartation of relevant knowledge and skills as well as serve as models to the learners (Craft, 2012).

Teachers are therefore meant to be properly trained because any obsolete knowledge or misconception of information relayed to students could have irreversible consequences simply put, it could influence the children's lives negatively. On the reverse side, properly trained teachers have overwhelming positive influence in the lives of the learners. This is the reason teacher education should not only be an all round education but also continuous so as to adapt to changing situations inherent in modern times. The potential teachers should be properly fortified with relevant technicalities that the profession demands. The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2013) is conscious of the importance of teachers in human capital development thus listed the objectives of teacher education as follows;

1. Produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of the educational system;
2. Further encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
3. Help teachers fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals;
4. Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to changing situation; and
5. Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

In order to achieve the above listed lofty objectives, the training of teachers should be fortified to combat the enormous task ahead of them. Teacher training is thus two faceted; theoretical and practical so as to surmount the huddles of inculcation of relevant information and dexterity amidst students' individual differences and goal attainment. This is in line with what Aminigo & Nwaokugha (2010) citing Obanya (1984) observed that all forms of professional training have both a theoretical and practical aspects.

The Dimensions of Teacher Education in Teacher Education Institutions in Nigeria.

Teacher education is grouped into two components namely;

- a) The theoretical component---the theoretical component consists of all the course work carried out by the prospective teachers in the teacher education institutions. It entails the choice subject area, the necessary general courses as well as the education courses. Micro teaching is one of the theoretical courses to be studied that has in-built miniature practical training. It is meant to give the students an insight into how the practical teaching works. It is done in the class under the supervision of the lecture in-charge. It could last for maximum of 10-15 minutes. By the end of the exercise, the fellow students are given opportunity to criticise the student teacher objectively before the lecturer summarizes all the contributions amicably.
- b) The practical component or the teaching practicum or teaching practise---this is the time the student-teacher is expected to put into practise all the theoretical components into practical terms. It is an extension of the micro-teaching exercise earlier introduced during course work while in training.

The Concept of Teaching Practice

Teaching practice is the systematic practical training given to the potential teachers while they are in training. Teaching practice takes place outside their training institute. It is carried out in the public schools whether secondary primary and early childhood levels of education. Similarly, Ekundayo, Alonge, Kolawole & Ekundayo (2014) posited that teaching practice involves getting would-be teachers familiar with the practical knowledge of teaching and learning process in the areas of lesson plan preparation, presentation of the lesson, classroom control and management, communication skills, evaluation and acquire the professional and personal attributes of an ideal teacher. Towing the same lane, Nwanekezi, Okoli and Mezieobi (2011) perceived teaching practice as the name ascribed to the preparation of potential teachers for teaching practically in the designated schools.

In his own view point, Odunlade (2020) citing Tanega (2000) espoused that there are three dimensions of teaching practice namely;

1. The practising of teaching skills and acquisition of the role of a teacher,
2. The whole range of experiences that student-teachers go through in co-operating with the school of practice.
3. The practical teaching as distinct from theoretical studies.

Following the above listed areas of teaching practice, it is obvious that teaching practice is a kind of experimentation of the theoretical knowledge, skills and technicalities acquired while in the teacher training institution in the field (actual classroom setting) so as to get acquainted and internalize the proficiency therein. Going further, Akbar (2002) in Odunlade (2020) outlined the objectives of teaching practice to include;

1. Provision to prospective teacher on the opportunity of establishing appropriate teacher-student relationship
2. Provision of an opportunity to evaluate the students' potential as a teacher and suitability for the teaching profession.
3. Development of personal relationship with others such as administrators, teachers, parents and students.
4. To provide future teachers with experience in school to overcome the problem of discipline and enable him/her develop method of control.
5. To provide an opportunity to put theories into practice and develop Akbar (2002) in Odunlade (2020) experience understanding of educational principles and their implication of learning.
6. To enable the student teachers effectively plan and prepare lessons.
7. Development of skills in the use of fundamental procedures, techniques and method of teaching.
8. Development of desirable professional values and ideals relative to teaching profession.
9. To enable students acquire desirable characteristics and traits of a good teacher.
10. To provide student teachers with opportunity to have teaching evaluation and to gain from constructive criticism.
11. To provide an opportunity for self-evaluation and to discover one's strength and weakness.
12. To develop skill in future teachers related to teaching like fluent speaking, meaningful reading, use of blackboard and other teaching materials.

It is established that teaching practice involves moving out of the initial training institution to the assigned area of practical teaching or internship. This implies that the student-teacher should be adequately prepared and informed on the expectations thereby fortifying the student-teacher psychologically for the exercise ahead. This is what prompted Aminigo and Nwaokugha (2010) to identify what preparations should students preparing for teaching practice make as follows;

1. Orientations/Seminars; the students who are about embarking on teaching practice should be prepared adequately by organizing orientations and seminars so as to familiarise them with what they about to face. This programme should be made compulsory for the prospective teachers.
2. The financial obligation of this exercise should be exposed to them to enable them get their family members ready for the financial support thus be in a better position to work with new friends, colleagues and students in the new environment.
3. Working under the supervision of the senior colleagues who are permanent teachers in the school of assignment.
4. Making sure that the student-teacher is regular in school and keeping up to date records of activities so as not to miss the institutions supervisor.
5. Learning and internalizing both the personal and professional qualities of an effective teacher.
6. Putting into practice all the theories and principles of teaching learnt during course work which is the first phase of the teaching practice.
7. Being well-informed on the outstanding objectives of the teaching practice as being essential to the professional training.
8. Student-teachers should submit themselves for supervision at appropriate time for evaluation which is congenial.
9. Determining and selecting suitable working tools for effective and efficient teaching practice.
10. Continuously planning and re-planning one's schedule and activities to attain success.

Adekola (2010) gave credence to the above expositions when the scholar posited that student-teacher on teaching practice who wish to successful should guided by the following;

1. Obey the rules and regulations of the universities/colleges sending trainee out for teaching practice.
2. Familiarize yourself with university/college grading system for teaching practice
3. Obey the rules and regulations of the practising school.
4. Familiarize and co-operate with the permanent teachers and principal of the assigned school.
5. Display enough seriousness, devotion, commitment, and discipline to your performance while in practise to indicate your readiness and willingness for the job of teaching.
6. Ensure that the lesson plan is comprehensively prepared always in line with the approved scheme of work for each lesson.
7. Support your teaching with appropriate instructional materials.
8. Be ready for the class before embarking on the teaching and learning encounter.
9. Ensure your master your subject content very well.
10. Be humble and respectful to the supervisor
11. Let the school administrator know your movement as any point in time. Use the movement book if necessary.
12. Be punctual and regular at school all through the internship period.

Despite the above listed rules and expectations from the student-teachers, there are a good number of challenges facing them which could emanate either from the students themselves, the host institutions and the place of posting for the teaching practice exercise. Stemming from the above narrative, Emesini, Ugwu, Mbah & Ikpozu (2019) identified inadequate programme planning, lack of fund to give students required assistance, poor transport system, improper supervision by both institutions among others are problems encountered by the practicing teachers. Still on the same terrain, Ekundayo, Alonge, Kolawole & Ekundayo (2014) posited that problem of accommodation, incompetency in class management, improper knowledge of how lesson should be prepared as well as note writing, assessing of the lesson objectives, fidgeting during supervision, improper use of teaching aids and partial knowledge of eclectic teaching methods are part of the challenges facing student-teachers during their assignment.

Teaching practice being an integral part of teacher education is the kind of apprenticeship training teacher-in-training undergoes so as to internalise the teaching procedures, commitment and dutifulness required of an ideal teacher. Teaching practice affords the student teacher the opportunity of being an independent teacher who is prone to use creative ingenuity in the teaching profession to make advancement in teaching scenario. With problems here and there, the student teacher would experience what is termed divided attention which would definitely encumber successful teaching practice that promotes effective teacher production. The researcher is worried that any bottle-neck that obstructs this apprenticeship period could result to irreversible circumstances at the long run. It is for this reason that the researcher seeks to identify these problems hampering victorious teaching practice for effective teacher production hence the study.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is the evaluation of the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State, Nigeria. Precisely, the study sought to:

1. Identify the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Research Question

1. What are the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State, Nigeria based on gender?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between the mean rating scores of the respondents on the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State, Nigeria based on gender.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was engaged. The population of the study comprised 6 public tertiary institutions in Anambra State with about 2,456 level three students in teacher education. Total enumeration sampling technique was utilized thus all the 6 government tertiary institutions were used for the study. 983 students were drawn from 2,456 representing 40% of the entire population. The researcher designed an instrument entitled "Evaluation of the Challenges of Prospective Teachers Educational Instrument" (ECPTTEI) which was used to draw

out information from the respondents. The validity of the instrument was guaranteed while test retest method was used to test the reliability of the instrument. The result was exposed to Cronbach Alpha method which gave rise to the coefficient value of 0.82 which is considered adequate for the study. Mean, percentage and frequency counts were used to answer the research question while t-test was used to test the hypothesis. Four point Likert scale indicating level of problem was utilized: Strongly Agree [SA=4], Agree [A=3], Disagree [D=2] and Strongly Disagree [SD=1]. These are coded and weighted to answer the research questions using 2.5 as the benchmark. The instrument was administered by the researcher along with four trained research assistants using fill-on-the-spot technique. Out of 983 copies of questionnaire distributed, 980 was retrieved due to the stringent approach adopted and were used for data analysis.

Analysis

Research Question 1. What are the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State, Nigeria based on gender?

Table 1: Responses of participants on the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State, Nigeria based on gender.

S/n	Item: do you agree on the following as the challenges faced during teaching practice?	Male = 365 Frequency counts							Female = 615 Freq. Counts						
		SA	A	D	SD	x	SD	Rmk	SA	A	D	SD	x	SD	Rmk
1	Accommodation	139	156	37	33	3.09	0.53	A	203	198	109	105	2.98	.65	A
2	Finance	143	127	56	39	3.02	0.58	A	200	213	89	113	2.81	.58	A
3	Teaching techniques	146	114	53	52	2.96	0.57	A	321	187	59	49	3.27		
4	Classroom management	100	165	36	64	2.82	0.62	A	256	200	111	48	3.50	.56	A
5	Lesson note preparation	164	123	58	20	3.18	0.55	A	199	210	100	106	2.81	.54	A
6	Stage fright	80	90	150	45	2.56	0.62	A	204	232	121	58	2.94	.62	A
7	Transportation	189	100	52	24	3.24	0.54	A	188	110	179	138	2.56	.58	A
8	Assessing the lesson objectives	160	124	35	46	3.09	0.56	A	159	186	134	136	2.59	.60	A
9	Responding to students' questions	144	121	46	54	2.97	0.58	A	169	98	136	212	2.36	.56	D
10	Adapting to the new environment	265	100	nil	nil	3.72	0.51	A	198	189	125	103	2.78	.58	A
	Grand mean					2.69	0.62	A					2.86	.66	A

Table 1 presents that all the respondents agree that the challenges facing prospective teachers are accommodation, finance, teaching techniques, classroom management among others as seen the items with serial numbers 1-10 for males and items 1-8 and 9-10. All of which have their mean rating scores ranging between 2.56-3.72 which is in line with the benchmark of 2.5.

However, the females disagree on item with serial number 9 that responding to students' questions does not pose any challenge to them with mean rating score of 2.36 which is below the benchmark. The grand mean gave rise to 2.69 with SD of 0.62 and 2.86 with SD of 0.66 for both male and female respectively.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean rating scores of the respondents on the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State, Nigeria based on gender.

Table 2: t-test statistics between the mean rating scores of the respondents on the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State, Nigeria based on gender.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit.	Sig. level	Remark
Male	365	2.69	0.62	1.68	1.96	0.05	Not sig.
Female	615	2.86	0.66				

Table 2 shows the mean rating scores of 2.69 with SD of 0.62 for male and 2.86 with SD of 0.66 for female, the t-calculated of 1.68 as against t-critical of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant. Since the t-critical is greater than the t-calculated, the hypothesis testing is not rejected but declared that there is no significant difference between the mean rating scores of the respondents on the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State.

Findings

Following the analysis, the findings revealed that almost all the respondents agree that prospective teachers are faced with a lot of problems during teaching practice exercise in the tertiary education in Anambra State. The hypothesis testing upheld that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the respondents on the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production. Teachers hold the key to functional education and should be well fortified during teacher education especially when practicing the profession as an apprentice. It is for this reason that Akbar (2002) in Odunlade (2020) outlined the objective of teacher education to include; provide future teachers with experience in school to overcome the problem of discipline and enable him/her develop method of control, to provide an opportunity to put theories into practice and develop experience, understanding of educational principles and their implication of learning, to enable the student teachers effectively plan and prepare lessons, development of skills in the use of fundamental procedures, techniques and method of teaching. When the teachers are challenged in the course of teaching practice, the process could hamper effective teacher production as identified by Emesini, Ugwu, Mbah & Ikpozu (2019) and Ekundayo, Alonge, Kolawole & Ekundayo, (2014) that lack of fund, poor transport system, improper knowledge of lesson note writing and accommodation among others are impediments to teaching practice students.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and findings, it is concluded that there are the challenges facing prospective teachers during teaching practice for effective teacher production in tertiary education in Anambra State, Nigeria based on gender

Recommendation

From the findings and conclusion of the study, it is recommended that;

1. The government through the host institutions should endeavour to assist prospective teachers with finance as well as accommodation during teaching practice so as to enable them face with zeal their primary assignment for effective teacher production not just in Anambra State but nation-wide.

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