



Analysing the Level of Professionalism in the Teaching Practice Exercise for Pre-service Teachers in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The teaching profession in Nigeria has been relegated to the background such that most people feel ashamed of identifying with the profession. Worst still, educational institutions have compromised professionalism by employing graduates who did not undergo the Teacher-Education Programme (TEP). Most of such people merely took the teaching job just to make a living, thus endangering the scholarship for teaching and learning. The Teaching Practice Exercise (TPE) is one of the components of the TEP which all pre-service teachers are expected to undergo for a period of twelve weeks at two different times. The research thus set out to analyse the level of professionalism in teaching practice and the readiness of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 56 lecturers and 1000 students from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria. A self-designed questionnaire was used to collect data for analysis using descriptive statistics. The study found that the preparatory processes leading to the TPE by pre-service teachers were satisfactory. However, pre-service teachers were faced with the challenge of a lack of confidence in the classroom which hindered their performance. The lecturers who served as supervisors for the pre-service teachers in their various schools also had challenges with transportation costs as the University has no provision for them in this regard. The study recommended the need for supervisors to provide moral support for pre-service teachers to ensure professionalism. There is also the need for incentives to be provided for supervisors to assist them in performing efficiently. The study therefore emphasized the need for professionalism to be incorporated into the teacher education programme for the purpose of improving the quality of teaching and learning.

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INTRODUCTION

“The Lawyer hopes you get into trouble, the doctor hopes you fall sick, the police hope you become a criminal, the coffin maker wants you dead, only the teacher wishes to educate you from the bondage of ignorance.”¹ This axiom gives a perfect description of the Teaching Profession and the Teachers’ personality. As important as the teaching profession is, it is unfortunately being relegated to the background in some nations of the world, especially in Nigeria. In Nigeria, having the ambition of becoming a teacher in the future as a young person is seen as a miserable decision. Individuals who are trained as teachers find it difficult to identify with the teaching profession. The society and the institution of the State are equally not helping matters as the remuneration of teachers is nothing to write home about. Graduates of tertiary institutions who did not undergo the Teacher-Education Programme (TEP) and young school leavers now see teaching as a transiting venture to keep body

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and soul together while scouting for “better” employment. The output of such people who have been described as ‘cheaters’ and not teachers can definitely not be the best as they have not been trained in the methodology and ethics of teaching. On the other hand, they are not passionate about the task but have simply taken it up just to be able to sustain themselves and other people they are committed to.

Teaching, just like other professions such as medicine, law, and engineering among others is expected to require some form of training to be able to practice it at any level be it at the early childhood level, pre-primary level, secondary level, or the tertiary level. This has not been the case in Nigeria, as the profession has been so porous to the extent that every Tom, Dick and Harry find their way into the system. The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) was established in 1993 with the mandate of regulating and controlling the teaching profession at all levels of the Nigerian Education system, both in the public and private sector. Its vision is to ensure an effectively regulated teaching profession in Nigeria founded upon robust teacher education and practice and where teacher quality, discipline, professionalism, reward and dignity match international standards. Its mission, on the other hand, is to assure excellence and professionalism among teachers at all levels of the nation’s education system, using effective system, registration, licensing, accreditation, monitoring and supervision of teacher education programmes, promoting continuing professional development and maintenance of discipline as paradigms for the overall renaissance of the teaching profession in Nigeria.²

The impact of TRCN has not really been felt in the enforcement of the action points in its mission statement until recently when it enforced a directive that anyone who will teach at any level must go through the TEP. Graduates who did not study an education-related course are therefore mandated to undertake a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) which will introduce them to the methodology and pedagogy of teaching. In addition to this, anyone who wants to practice as a teacher is expected to go through a test by TRCN and if successful will then be certified as a teacher. The Body also gives teaching licenses that can be used to teach outside Nigeria. This also applies to lecturers in tertiary institutions where every lecturer is expected to be certified as being qualified to teach and then issued a certificate of registration. All these measures have been able to introduce some level of sanity into the hitherto battered teaching profession in Nigeria.

One essential component of teacher education programmes is the teaching practice exercise. This provides aspiring teachers with practical experience in real classroom settings. In Nigeria, the TEP is obtainable in universities and colleges of education. In universities, the programmes run for an average of four years under the Faculty of Education while the pre-service teachers (teachers-in-training) are expected to undergo the Teaching Practice Exercise (TPE) for a period of twelve weeks (six weeks after the second year of study and another six weeks after the third year of study). During the TPE, pre-service teachers are posted to different secondary schools and supervisors are assigned to visit them on the field for monitoring and evaluation. The TEP is equally obtainable in the colleges of education where the programme runs for three years which culminates in the award of the National Certificate on Education (NCE). The assessment of the conduct of teaching practice exercises and the readiness of teachers in training is a critical aspect of ensuring the effectiveness and competence of future educators.

Thus, the following questions have been raised to guide the study:

- i. What is the conduct and management of teaching practice exercise?
- ii. What are the challenges facing pre-service teachers and supervisors during teaching practice exercises?

The hypothesis generated is as follows: Teaching practice has no significant influence on the preparation of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning.

This study seeks to analyse the level of professionalism in teaching practice and the readiness of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning. A descriptive survey research design will be adopted to seek the views of both students and lecturers from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria. The findings are presented in the subsequent sections.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching practice provides the opportunity for pre-service teachers to demonstrate what they have learnt about teaching methodologies and the general instructional process under appropriate guidance and supervision. The quality of teaching determines the learning process and that is why professionalism must be infused into the teaching process by ensuring that people who would teach at any level are properly trained, and certified and also develop some level of scholarship in the art of teaching. Teaching practice is known to expose student teachers to the actual practice of teaching. It is during this period that student teachers are given the opportunity

² Teachers’ Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), 2023.

to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of the teaching profession.³ Teaching practice has been defined as the period of time during which a pre-service teacher is assigned to both public and private schools for supervised teaching experience as a part of his college programme.⁴

Teaching practice is an important component of becoming a teacher. It grants student teachers experience in the actual teaching and learning environment.⁵ During teaching practice, a student teacher is given the opportunity to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of the teaching profession.⁶ Student teachers also know the value of teaching practice and it has been described as ‘the crux of their preparation for the teaching profession’ since it provides for the ‘real interface’ between studenthood and membership of the profession.⁷ As a result, teaching practice creates a mixture of anticipation, anxiety, excitement and apprehension in the student teachers as they commence their teaching practice. Furthermore, the performance of teaching practice provides a basis for predicting the future success of teachers.⁸ It should therefore be noted that going into the teaching profession without undergoing teaching practice could result in poor future teachers’ performance. It has equally been stated that teaching practice exposes trainee-teachers to the realities of effective teaching and helps them to try out methods of teaching and classroom experience under expert supervision.⁹ In the same vein, it was added that the practical aspect of teacher education is designed to allow trainee-teachers or student-teachers to put into practice certain learnt theories relating to the principles and practice of education.¹⁰

It was further noted during this practice a student is supervised and evaluated not only by a supervisor allotted to him but also by a group of other lecturers who supervise him as a team as well as a staff of the school in which he is teaching.¹¹ It was equally stressed that teaching practice is the most vital part of a trainee teacher’s career training, this is because it is during this practice that the trainee teacher applies the methods, even the philosophy of education which he was taught theoretically in the classroom.¹²

A meaningful teaching practice is expected to include microteaching and field teaching experiences.¹³ This kind of experience will help the teaching practice students to acquire knowledge and skills in coping with classroom situations after their graduation. As part of the process, teaching practice is allocated a specific period of time during which student teachers are sometimes posted to schools to teach and demonstrate in practical terms the knowledge and skills they had acquired during the third or fourth years of training while some universities usually require their students to choose the school of their choice. Teaching practice is a compulsory course for all aspiring teachers registered in a teacher preparation programme in Nigeria. Teaching practice exercise is like Housemanship in Medicine and Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) for engineers and Court Attachment for Lawyers.¹⁴

The National Universities Commission Benchmark and the National Commission for Colleges of Education identified some key objectives of teaching practice that make it a mandatory component of teacher education programme. One is to expose student-teachers to real-life classroom experiences under the supervision of professional teachers; two is to provide a forum for student-teachers to translate educational theories and principles into practice; three is to enable student-teachers to discover their own strengths and weaknesses in classroom teaching and provide opportunities to enable them to address their weaknesses and enrich their strengths; four is to familiarize student-teachers with real school environment as their future workplace; five is to provide student-teachers with an opportunity for further acquisition of professional skills, competencies, personal characteristics and experience for full-time teaching after graduation; six, is to help

³ T. Kiggundu and R. Nayimuli, *Fundamentals of Micro-Teaching* (Awka: Marpat Educational Research and Publishers., 2009).

⁴ R. Haines, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015).

⁵ S. Ngidi and O. Marais, *Teacher Education in Third World Countries*. (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 2004).

⁶ R. Kasanda, “The Effectiveness of the Teaching Practice Exercise: Its Impact on Student Teachers.” (University of Benin, 2016).

⁷ I. Menter, “Teaching Practice per Student Teachers of B.Ed Programme Issues, Predicaments and Suggestions,” *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education* 10, no. 2 (2015): 30–35.

⁸ Ishola Dada Muraina and Huda Ibrahim, “Student’s Perception to Learning of Innovative Skills through Multidimensional Visualization System: Reliability and Validity Tests of Some Measurements,” 2016.

⁹ F. Osuala, *Teacher Attrition: The Uphill Climb to Staff the Nation’s Schools*. (Santa Monica : Rand Corporation, 2004).

¹⁰ D Ifeagwu, “Special Methods Teaching Practice for Students and Teachers in Africa,” *Lagos: DIC Publishing Company*, 2000.

¹¹ T. Andabai, “Teacher Turnover and Teacher Quality.,” *Teachers College Record* 99 (2011): 45–56.

¹² D. Itejere, “Student Teaching and School Experiences.,” in *Handbook of Research in Teacher Education* , ed. W.R. Houston (New York: Macmillan., 2010), 514–34.

¹³ A. Amuda, “The Conducts of Teaching Practice Exercise in Colleges of Education and Universities in Nigeria: A Call for Revitalization,” *International Journal of Topical Educational Issues* 1, no. 2 (2017): 344–54.

¹⁴ Emerole Elizabeth Nnenna and Muraina Kamilu Olanrewaju, “Teaching Practice Anxiety Sources as Correlates of Teaching Performance among Student Teachers in Federal Colleges of Education in Southwestern Nigeria,” *European Scientific Journal* 11, no. 22 (2015).

student-teachers develop a positive attitude towards the teaching profession and lastly is to serve as a means of assessing the quality of training being provided by teacher training institutions.¹⁵

One fundamental concern about the TPE is that pre-service teachers undergoing teaching practice see the exercise essentially as an evaluative programme. More so that it is part of the course taken and the score is being returned by supervisors. The students are therefore mainly concerned and interested in the evaluation (grade) aspect. Hence, there is the tendency to put up a good performance in the presence of the supervisor, the display and usage of teaching materials, chalkboard, diagrams and sketches. All in a bid to obtain good grades while the reverse is almost the case when they are not under supervision. The concern then is about their preparedness for the teaching profession in being able to put what they have learnt into practice in order to achieve a scholarship in teaching and learning.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is hinged on the self-efficacy theory proposed by Albert Bandura. The Self-Efficacy theory focuses on individuals' beliefs in their own capabilities to perform specific tasks and achieve desired outcomes.¹⁶ Applying this theory to the teaching profession and the teaching practice exercise suggests that students' readiness for the teaching profession is influenced by their self-perceived efficacy in teaching-related tasks and their belief in their ability to positively impact students' learning. Assessing students' self-efficacy beliefs can provide insights into their confidence levels, motivation, and commitment to the teaching profession. This framework can help identify factors that enhance or hinder students' self-efficacy beliefs during the TPE, such as feedback, support, classroom management skills, and instructional strategies.

By utilising this theoretical framework, the study examined the complex interactions and factors that contribute to the readiness of teachers in training. It explored how social interactions, collaborative learning, and self-efficacy beliefs shape students' readiness for the teaching profession, providing a deeper understanding of the TPE process and informing strategies to enhance teacher preparation and support.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. A purposive sampling technique was used to select Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria, which has one of the oldest faculties of Education in the country, for the study. A sample of 56 lecturers and 1,000 students all from the Faculty of Education were selected for the study. In the Lecturers category, 31 males and 25 females were selected across all cadres from Professors to Assistant Lecturers. In the student category, there were 280 males while there were 620 females drawn from students in the third and fourth year of their study who have undergone at least one teaching practice exercise during their ongoing teacher-education programme. A self-designed and validated questionnaire was used to collect data. The data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Research Question 1

What is the mode of conduct and management of teaching practice exercises in universities in the study area? The responses of pre-service teachers also known as teachers-in-training who work as student teachers in secondary schools were collected and presented as follows;

Table 1a: Mode of Conduct and Management of Teaching Practice in Universities (Pre-service teachers)
Keys: SA - Strongly Agree, A- Agree, N – Neutral, SD – Strongly Disagree, D – Disagree

Items	SA	A	N	SD	D
The teaching practice exercise provides opportunities for pre-service teachers to practice their teaching skills in real classroom settings	430 43%	400 40%	10 1%	12 12%	50 5%
The teaching practice exercise incorporates a variety of teaching strategies and methods.	310 31%	580 58%	0 0%	80 8%	30 3%
The teaching practice exercise includes adequate supervision and feedback from experienced teachers.	440 44%	480 48%	10 1%	50 5%	20 2%

¹⁵ National Commission for Colleges of Education, Federal Republic of Nigeria, (FGN, NCCE, 2015). Minimum Standards for NCE Teachers. Abuja: NCCE Press Abuja

¹⁶ Albert Bandura, "Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change.," *Psychological Review* 84, no. 2 (1977): 191.

Table 1a presents the responses of pre-service teachers who work as student teachers in the various schools they have been posted for the twelve weeks teaching practice exercises on the mode of conduct of the teaching practice exercise. 43% of respondents strongly agree that the exercise provides opportunities for student teachers to practice their teaching skills in real classroom settings and consequently in scholarship of teaching and learning. However, there was an indication of the need for room for improvement, as 12% strongly disagree and 5% disagree with this statement. Furthermore, 31% strongly agreed that the teaching practice exercise incorporates a variety of teaching strategies and methods, while 11% disagreed.

Table 1b: Mode of Conduct and Management of Teaching Practice in Universities (Supervisors)

Items	SA	A	N	SD	D
The mode of conduct for the teaching practice exercise adequately prepares teachers in training for the teaching profession.	22 38%	32 56%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%
The duration of the teaching practice exercise is sufficient to gain practical teaching experience.	30 62%	25 36%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%
The evaluation methods used during the teaching practice exercise effectively assess the teaching abilities of teachers in training	15 27%	20 47%	0 0%	13 23%	8 3%
The teaching practice exercise provides opportunities for teachers in training to experiment with different teaching strategies.	21 37%	17 30%	0 0%	8 15%	10 18%
The teaching practice exercise encourages reflection and self-evaluation among teachers in training.	17 31%	34 61%	0 0%	3 5%	2 3%

Table 1b presents the responses of supervisors on the mode of conduct for the teaching practice exercise. Respondents generally agreed that the mode of conduct adequately prepared teachers in training for the teaching profession with about 58% responses. The Supervisors through their responses of about 62% agreement indicated that the duration of the teaching practice exercise which is twelve weeks, six weeks at each instance was sufficient to gain practical teaching experience. However, there were mixed responses regarding the evaluation methods used during the exercise, with a considerable percentage of respondents being neutral (47%) and outright disagreement (23%).

Research Question 2: What are the challenges facing pre-service teachers and supervisors during teaching practice exercises?

Table 2a: Challenges faced by pre-service teachers during a teaching practice exercise.

Items	SA	A	N	SD	D
Student teachers face challenges related to classroom management during the teaching practice exercise.	470 47%	270 27%	10 1%	230 23%	20 2%
Student teachers encounter difficulties in delivering effective and engaging instructional sessions.	370 37%	300 30%	0 0%	170 17%	110 11%
Supervisors face challenges in providing timely and constructive feedback to student teachers during the teaching practice exercise.	470 47%	250 25%	50 5%	120 12%	110 11%

Table 2a presents the responses to the challenges facing pre-service teachers during the teaching practice exercise. Majority of respondents (74%) strongly agreed that student teachers face challenges relating to classroom management during the teaching practice exercise. Additionally, 37% strongly agreed that student teachers encounter difficulties in delivering effective and engaging instructional sessions. In terms of feedback,

47% strongly agree that there is a gap in the provision of timely and constructive feedback to student teachers by designated supervisors. And feedback mechanisms are very important in such an engagement.

Table 2b: Challenges faced by supervisors during teaching practice assessment and monitoring.

Items	SA	A	N	SD	D
Supervisors encounter difficulties in balancing their workload while effectively supervising teachers in training during the teaching practice exercise.	24 42%	27 49%	0 0%	5 9%	0 0%
Supervisors encounter difficulties in balancing their workload while effectively supervising teachers in training during the teaching practice exercise.	24 42%	27 49%	0 0%	5 9%	0 0%
The inability of the supervisees to adapt teaching strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of students during the teaching practice exercise assessment.	27 48%	25 44%	0 0%	3 6%	1 2%
Poor classroom management and discipline and student behavior during the teaching practice exercise.	30 53%	26 47%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
There is a lack of sufficient resources and materials for effective teaching practice exercises in the study area.	25 45%	24 43%	0 0%	6 10%	1 2%
Adequate support systems are in place to address the challenges of transportation and logistics of supervisors during monitoring visits to the schools where pre-service teachers have been deployed.	26 46%	25 45%	0 0%	4 7%	1 2%

Table 2b presented information on the challenges faced by supervisors designated for monitoring and assessment during the teaching practice exercise. The respondents agreed that students faced challenges in managing classroom discipline and student behavior (53%) and encountered difficulties in adapting teaching strategies to meet diverse learning needs (48%). About 91% of the supervisors acknowledged that serious challenges were faced in transportation during teaching practice monitoring coupled with a lack of proper remuneration and motivation. The challenge of balancing workload while effectively supervising teachers in training was also identified as a prevailing limitation by over 50% of the respondent supervisors.

Hypothesis

Teaching practice has no significant influence on the preparation of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning.

Table 3: Influence of Teaching Practice on preparation of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning.

Items	SA	A	N	SD	D
The teaching practice exercise adequately prepares pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning.	600 60%	390 39%	10 1%	10 1%	20 2%
The teaching practice exercise contributes to the development of essential teaching skills and competencies.	440 44%	380 38%	40 4%	90 9%	50 5%
The teaching practice exercise should be further improved to promote scholarship in teaching and learning.	550 55%	400 40%	0 0%	20 2%	30 3%
The teaching practice exercise provides adequate opportunities for student teachers to reflect on their teaching practices and make improvements.	450 45%	510 51%	0 0%	30 3%	10 1%
The teaching practice exercise incorporates effective assessment methods to evaluate pre-service teachers' performance.	590 59%	350 35%	0 0%	50 5%	10 1%

The teaching practice exercise is an essential component of a teacher training programme aimed at enhancing scholarship in teaching and learning.	33 59%	23 41%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
The teaching practice exercise provides pedagogical training for pre-service teachers toward scholarship in teaching and learning	25 45%	29 52%	0 0%	2 3%	0 0%
Pre-service teachers feel confident and ready for scholarship in teaching and learning as a result of the experiences gained during the teaching practice exercise.	30 53%	22 40%	0 0%	4 7%	0 0%

In Table 3, all the respondents (100%) agreed that the teaching practice exercise is an essential component of the teacher training programme and has a significant influence on the preparation of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning. However, there were suggestions for further improvement to enhance its effectiveness. Overall, the table indicates that the teaching practice exercise in the studied area has several strengths, such as well-structured preparatory processes, sufficient guidance and support, and effective development of pedagogical skills. However, there are also areas that need attention, including addressing challenges faced by teachers in training, evaluating teaching abilities effectively, and providing timely feedback to teachers. The respondents generally recognized the importance of the teaching practice exercise but suggested further improvements to enhance its effectiveness. The study showed that teaching practice exercise has a significant influence on the preparation of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning. Hence, the null hypothesis raised for the study was rejected.

DISCUSSION

In line with previous research, the present study found that well-structured and comprehensive preparatory processes are crucial for the effectiveness of the teaching practice exercise. This aligns with the findings which emphasized the importance of a structured framework for teacher training programs.¹⁷ Additionally, both this study and another study highlight the significance of providing adequate guidance and support to teachers in training during the preparatory processes.¹⁸

However, there are also discrepancies between the current study and other recent research. For instance, while this study emphasizes the need to address challenges faced by teachers in training, a previous study argued that encountering challenges during the teaching practice exercise can be beneficial for professional growth and development.¹⁹ Furthermore, in contrast to the present study's findings regarding the evaluation methods used during the exercise, another study submitted by Kilic suggested that alternative assessment approaches, such as portfolios and self-assessments, can better capture the teaching abilities of teachers in training and their preparation for scholarship in teaching and learning.²⁰

These comparisons highlight the complex nature of the teaching practice exercise and the varied perspectives in recent research. It underscores the need for ongoing dialogue and further investigation to refine and enhance the effectiveness of teacher training programs. By examining the findings from multiple studies, researchers and educators can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the strengths, challenges, and potential improvements in the assessment of teaching practice exercises, ultimately contributing to the continuous improvement of teacher preparation and the readiness of teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made:

The Need to Strengthen Mentorship Programs: Establishing robust mentorship programs is crucial for supporting pre-service teachers and imparting to them the requisite skills and knowledge for scholarship in

¹⁷ Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Elizabeth Stringer Keefe, "Strong Equity: Repositioning Teacher Education for Social Change," *Teachers College Record* 124, no. 3 (2022): 9–41.

¹⁸ Jonathan B. J. (2021). Teachers' perspectives of changes in their practice during a technology in mathematics education research project. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 64. 52-65. 10.1016/j.tate.2017.01.022.

¹⁹ Ekundayo H. T. et al (2014). Teaching Practice Exercise for Education Students in Nigerian Universities: Challenges and the Way Forward. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. 5(9). 486-492.

²⁰ Davis Wilson Kilic, (2022). An Examination of Using Self-, Peer-, and Teacher-Assessment in Higher Education: A Case Study in Teacher Education. *Higher Education Studies*, 6(1), p.136. 10.5539/hes.v6n1p136.

teaching and learning. The teacher-education programme should incorporate the mentorship component into its activities and training process. Supervisors must ensure they provide valuable guidance, support, and feedback to pre-service teachers during the process of monitoring and evaluating the teaching practice exercise. Through mentorship, pre-service teachers can refine their teaching skills, address challenges, and gain insights from experienced professionals. Regular meetings and classroom observations can be conducted to monitor progress and offer constructive feedback for improvement.

Foster Collaboration between Universities, Colleges of Education and Schools: Creating partnerships between universities and other providers of TEP and local schools is essential for the improvement of teacher education. These collaborations allow for the exchange of knowledge and experiences between academic institutions and the teaching community. University faculty members should actively engage with practicing teachers to understand the current needs and challenges in the profession. This collaboration can lead to the development of relevant and practical curriculum content that aligns with the demands of the teaching profession.

Enhance Practical Experiences: Providing teachers in training with ample opportunities for practical experiences in real classroom settings is highly beneficial. Collaborating with local schools and educational institutions can facilitate this process. Student teachers should have the chance to observe experienced teachers, assist in classroom activities, and gradually take on teaching responsibilities under supervision. These practical experiences help in developing effective classroom management skills, adapting to diverse learning environments, and applying pedagogical knowledge in a practical context which could strengthen scholarship in teaching and learning.

Provision of Adequate Resources: Ensuring that teachers in training have access to sufficient resources is critical for their professional development. Universities and colleges should invest in modern teaching tools, educational technology, and relevant teaching materials. Additionally, access to a well-stocked library, online databases, and educational journals can further support the acquisition of knowledge and the development of effective teaching practices.

The Need for Continuous Professional Development: Promoting a culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development among teachers in training is essential. Encouraging them to participate in conferences, seminars, and online courses related to their subject areas and teaching methods can enhance their pedagogical skills and keep them updated with current educational trends and practices. By prioritizing continuous professional development, teachers in training can stay abreast of emerging research and best practices in education.

Implement Comprehensive Workshops and Training Programs: It is recommended to organize regular workshops and training programs to enhance teaching practices among teachers in training. These initiatives should focus on various aspects such as effective instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, and the integration of technology in teaching. By providing practical exercises and simulations, teachers in training can develop their pedagogical skills and become more effective educators.

Provision of Support and Motivation for Supervisors: There is a need to provide adequate support and motivation for supervisors during the monitoring and assessment of pre-service teachers while on the field. The study showed that supervisors face a lot of challenges in financing their transportation to the various school locations where they are expected to assess pre-service teachers. It was generally noted that adequate support is not provided in this regard as supervisors have to fund the transportation by themselves. The study further showed that the honorarium given to supervisors at the end of the exercise is usually not able to cater for the cost that they have incurred during the monitoring and visitations to the schools.

CONCLUSION

This article has looked at issues around professionalism in teaching practice and the readiness of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning. It established that teaching is a profession just like other professions such as medicine, law, and engineering among others and as such adequate and requisite professional training must be provided for individuals undergoing the teacher education programme. The study identified the teaching practice exercise as a vital component of the teacher-education programme. It investigated the mode of conduct and management of the teaching practice exercise drawing from the perspectives of both the pre-service teachers and supervisors who are major stakeholders. The study further

determined the influence of the teaching practice exercise on the preparation of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning. The study concluded that teaching practice exercise has a significant influence on the preparation of pre-service teachers for scholarship in teaching and learning. All stakeholders must develop strategies to ensure that the programme is well executed so that pre-service teachers are well-equipped to perform efficiently and effectively.

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