

Investigating Teachers' Socialization Pedagogy from the Perspectives of Teaching Practice Students in Teacher Training Institutions in Sokoto State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study assessed the pedagogical needs of student-teachers during teaching practice (TP) in three teacher training institutions (TTIs) in Sokoto State. A mixed-method design was adopted with a sample of 357 TP students selected through purposive sampling from a population of 4,887. Data were collected using a questionnaire, a classroom observation checklist, and in-depth interviews. The instruments were validated by experts, and reliability indices of 0.69 and 0.70 were obtained for the quantitative instruments using Cronbach's alpha. Interview data were verified using informant triangulation and peer debriefing. Findings revealed that TP students were deficient in key pedagogical areas such as classroom management, use of audiovisual aids, and conflict resolution. It is recommended that TTIs in Sokoto State should place greater emphasis on these pedagogical components in their training programmes.

Keywords: Pedagogical Needs, Teacher Socialization, Teaching Practice, Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs).

Introduction

Teaching is a profession that demands more than content knowledge it requires an immersive process through which aspiring teachers internalize the norms, values, and practices of the teaching profession, a process widely known as teacher socialization. This socialization process enables pre-service teachers to transition from learners to professional educators through exposure to the practical realities of teaching. One key component of this process is Teaching Practice (TP), an essential feature of Initial Teacher Preparation (ITP) programmes offered by Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs) globally.

In Nigeria, Teaching Practice is institutionalized through regulatory frameworks such as the National Universities Commission's (NUC) Core Curriculum Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS, 2022) and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) Minimum Standards (2018). These guidelines prescribe TP as a 12-week compulsory field experience during which pre-service teachers engage in classroom teaching under the supervision of experienced, professionally trained mentors. This practical period is designed to integrate two major components of teacher socialization: content knowledge (what to teach) and pedagogical knowledge (how to teach).

While content knowledge is often clearly structured within disciplinary curricula, pedagogical knowledge remains more complex and context-dependent. Pedagogical knowledge includes essential teaching skills such as lesson planning, classroom management, learner assessment, motivation techniques, time management, and interpersonal communication (Polim, 2019; Negassa & Engdasew, 2017; Hartono, 2016). These components serve as the operational core of a teacher's classroom performance, shaping not only instructional delivery but also students' learning experiences.

However, existing research has continually raised concerns about the adequacy of pedagogical preparation in TTIs. Numerous studies have identified persistent gaps in areas such as assessment strategies, classroom management, teaching methods, and handling diverse learners. For instance, Beck, Kosnik, and Rowsell (2010) and Shohani et al. (2014) reported that many pre-service teachers expressed dissatisfaction with their preparation in essential teaching tasks like student evaluation and collaborative group work. Similarly, Romano and Gibson (2006) and Franco (2015) found that new teachers struggled to address the needs of students with learning difficulties due to insufficient practical training.

Within the African context, several studies echo similar concerns. Schulze and Steyn (2005) and Uugwanga (2010) observed that many graduates felt unprepared in classroom management and time allocation. In Nigeria, Chinyere and Ojinnakaeze (2018) found that NCE graduates perceived themselves as ill-prepared in pedagogical areas such as curriculum implementation, ICT integration, and lesson delivery. A more localized study by Waziri (2018) in Sokoto State revealed specific weaknesses in classroom management skills among NCE graduates, highlighting a discrepancy between different cohorts of teacher trainees.

Although some studies, such as Boakye and Ampiah (2017) in Ghana, suggest that not all pre-service teachers experience these gaps uniformly, the overarching concern remains: Are TTIs adequately equipping pre-service teachers with practical pedagogical knowledge that aligns with the realities of contemporary classrooms? Recent literature continues to reinforce this issue. Faloye and Obateru (2022) argue that despite reforms in teacher education, the disconnect between theory and practice remains pronounced, especially in rural and underserved school contexts.

Despite the provision in the CCMAS and NCCE benchmarks for supervision and mentoring, empirical evidence suggests significant flaws in the implementation of these support systems. Danladi (2019) highlights deficiencies in the organization and execution of TP, including the lack of orientation for supervisors and student-teachers, poor documentation practices, and unprofessional feedback. These issues diminish the potential of TP to serve as an effective socialization process.

This study, therefore, seeks to address a notable gap in the literature by shifting focus from predominantly quantitative evaluations to a qualitative exploration of pre-service teachers' lived experiences during Teaching Practice.

Statement of the Problem

Teaching practice (TP) is an aspect of teacher preparation programme which teacher training institutions utilize in order to enable student-teachers put into practice the content and pedagogical knowledge acquire during the training. During TP, student-teachers experience their first real classroom teaching, where they are expected to apply pedagogical knowledge, including lesson planning, classroom management and evaluation of learning outcomes. However despite emphasis placed on the need for rigorous pedagogical training by the Nigeria regulatory and quality assurance agencies such the NUC and NCCE through their benchmarks minimum academic standard, concerns are often raised over inadequacies of ITP offer by TTIs. Pre-service teachers often find themselves deficient in many pedagogical aspects of teaching. It is against this background that this study was embarked upon in order to answer the following specific research questions.

Research Questions

The research questions for the study are:

- i. In what areas of pedagogical Teacher-training programme Student-teachers find themselves deficient?

- ii. Which aspects of the pedagogical teacher-training program do student-teachers wish to see improved by Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs)?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To find out areas of pedagogical Teacher-training programmes Student-teachers find themselves deficient?
- ii. To investigate aspects of pedagogical Teacher-training programme Student-teachers wish to see been improved by TTIs

Methodology

A mixed-method design was adopted for the study and the population of the study was 4,887 students from the three Teacher-Training Institutions (TTIs) in Sokoto State out of which a sample of 357 students was selected using Multi Stage method. The first stage involves the use of purposive sampling to select the three tertiary institutions in Sokoto state where students conduct teaching practice as part of the requirement for graduation as well as simple random to sample the respondents. The second stage involves the use of proportionate technique to determine the number of students per institution. The population and sample of the study were presented on table 1 below:

Table 1

Population and Sample of the Study

S/N	Institutions	Population	Sample
1	Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto	875	64
2	Sokoto State University, Sokoto	1000	73
3.	Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto	3012	220
Total		4887	357

Source: Academic offices of the three Tertiary institutions in Sokoto State 2024

From the total sample of 357 student-teachers, 20 respondents were selected for in-depth qualitative interviews. The limited number of interviewees is supported by Mark (2010), who cautions that “large sample size in qualitative studies may lead to data saturation and repetition.”

Research Instrument

The research instruments were Questionnaire titled Student-Teachers Pedagogical Needs Questionnaire (STPNQ), Classroom Observation Checklist and In-depth Interview. The Questionnaire and checklist contain items based on 4 point rating scale divided into 3 sections, which are section A, B and C. Section A deals with some relevant demographic data of the respondents, whereas sections B and C contain items related to the research questions. On the other hand, the in-depth interview contains some guide related to the two research questions raised for the study. Content validity of all the instruments was ascertained by experts in educational measurement and evaluation from Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto whose suggestions were incorporated in the instruments. Reliability index of 0.69 and 0.70 for the two of Quantitative instruments were obtained using Cronbach Alpha. The Qualitative interview guide reliability was ensured through a technique of repeating question in a slightly different form during the interview as suggested by Best and Kahn (2015) as well as peer debriefing.

Quantitative data obtained was analyzed using descriptive statistics namely frequency and mean score set at 2.1 weighted mean for table 2 and 2.4 weighted mean for table 3. On the other hand, Thematic Method through detailed description of major themes and sub-themes was used to analyze Qualitative data.

Results and Discussions

Table 2

Classroom Observation on Pedagogical areas Student-Teachers were Deficient

SN	Teaching tasks	Mean	Decision
1.	Manage lesson time	1.8	Rarely observed
2.	Good classroom arrangement	1.9	Rarely observed
3.	Efficient use of chalk board	3.1	Frequently Observed
4.	Clarity of objectives (in behaviour terms)	3.0	Frequently Observed
5.	Teacher calls pupils by their names	2.0	Rarely observed
6.	Acknowledges pupils answers	2.4	Frequently Observed
7.	Moves around the class to attend to all pupils	2.5	Frequently Observed
8.	Relates well with learners	2.2	Frequently Observed
9.	Efficient use of Instructional Materials	1.8	Rarely observed
10.	Use of examples for clarity of concepts	2.1	Frequently observed
11.	Use of Lesson Plan as a guide	1.8	Rarely observed
12.	Executing lesson based on the lesson plan	2.2	Frequently Observed
13.	Relevant set induction	1.8	Rarely observed
14.	Pupils' involvement	1.8	Rarely observed
15.	Attending to pupils with learning need	1.9	Rarely observed
16.	Evaluation items (if appropriate)	2.4	Frequently Observed
17.	Pupils working in groups	1.9	Rarely observed
18.	Effectively manages the class	1.6	Rarely observed

Source: *Field Survey, 2024* * *Weighted Mean = 2.1*

Table 2 indicated that, items 3, 4, 6,7,8,10,12 and 16 with their Mean scores ranging from 2.1 to 3.1 were frequently observed during classroom observation. This indicates student-teachers are found not deficient in those aspects of teaching. However, items 1, 2,5,9,11,13,14,15,17 and 18 with their mean scores ranging 1.6 to 1.9 were rarely observed which is an indication that student-teachers are found to be deficient in those aspects of teaching.

Table 3
Responses on Pedagogical areas Student-Teachers were Deficient

SN	Teaching tasks	Mean	Decision
1.	Content of the teaching subject	2.9	Not Deficient
2.	Methods of teaching pupils	2.6	Not Deficient
3.	Relating with pupils	2.7	Not Deficient
4.	Lesson plan	3.2	Not Deficient
5.	Assessment of Pupils' Performance	3.0	Not Deficient
6.	Coping with Workload	2.5	Not Deficient
7.	Use of visual teaching aids	2.8	Not Deficient
8.	Motivating pupils	3.0	Not Deficient
9.	Use of audio teaching aids	2.1	Deficient
10.	Classroom management	1.5	Deficient
11.	Time Management	1.7	Deficient
12.	Record keeping (diary, register)	1.6	Deficient
13.	Resolving pupils' disputes	1.4	Deficient
14.	Relating with parents	2.0	Deficient
15.	Use of audiovisual teaching aids	1.6	Deficient

Table 3 indicated that, Student-teachers from the three Tertiary institutions in Sokoto rated themselves not deficient in some teaching tasks in items 1 to 8 with mean scores ranging from 2.4 to 3.2; while teaching tasks in items 9 to 15 with their mean scores ranging from 1.5 to 2.1 were considered by respondents as areas where they are deficient. This implies that, Use of teaching aids, classroom management, time management, record keeping, resolving pupils dispute, relating with parents and use of audio-visual aids were teaching tasks that the respondents considered themselves deficient.

Theme 1: Pedagogical Aspects of Initial Teacher Preparation that need to be improved

This research was conducted to find out from the respondents teaching tasks that call for reform within the ITP Programme. In view of this, data gathered from respondents was grouped and explained under relevant sub-themes:

Enhancing Classroom Management Training: Majority of the respondents involved in the present research suggested the need for review of classroom management training to reflect the situation in classrooms. For instance, R1 (Male, SSCO) suggested that:

Classroom management should be taught as a separate course, rather than being part of other courses, to enable student-teachers acquire better skills of managing situations.

This view was echoed by R2 (Female, SSU) who noted that:

The current classroom management training is inadequate, and there is need for more practical approaches to managing classrooms.

These views reinforce the idea that the current training is insufficient and suggest that practical approaches would be more effective in preparing student-teachers for classroom management. Building on this, R3 (Male, UDUS) also emphasized the need for practical training, stating that:

Classroom management training should include more practical strategies for managing large classes and maintaining discipline.

Similarly, R4 (Female, UDUS) added that:

There is need for more emphasis on classroom management techniques that can help student-teachers to effectively manage diverse classroom settings.

The participants therefore emphasize the importance of more training in the aspect of classroom management techniques, suggesting that student-teachers would benefit from more training in this area.

Restructuring Micro-Teaching Practicum: Based on their experiences during micro-teaching practicum, majority of the respondents expressed the need for better organization of micro-teaching. R8 (Male, SSCOE) stated that:

The TTI should improve the process of micro-teaching practicum. All students should present their lesson plans practically followed by appropriate comments and feedback from lecturer.

This highlights the need for a practical approach to micro-teaching, which would allow student-teachers to receive feedback and improve their teaching skills. In support of this, R10 (Female, UDUS) noted that:

Micro-teaching practicum should be more structured to allow student-teachers to practice teaching in a real classroom setting.

R12 (Male, SSCOE) added that:

There should be more opportunities for student-teachers to receive feedback from lecturers and peers on their teaching practices.

Improving Teaching Practice Supervision: Majority of the respondents also pointed out areas where Teaching Practice should be improved. R13 (Male, UDUS) emphasized the need for regular supervision, stating that:

Teaching Practice supervision should be regular and consistent to enable student-teachers to receive timely feedback and improve their teaching skills.

Regular supervision in improving teaching skills is important and the narrative suggests that consistent feedback would enable student-teachers to identify areas for improvement and develop their teaching skills.

R14 (Female, UDUS) built on this, adding that:

Supervisors should provide constructive feedback that can help student-teachers to improve their teaching practices.

R16 (Male, SSCOE) further noted that: "Supervisors should follow students to the classroom to observe their teaching practices". These quotes highlight the importance of direct observation in assessing teaching practices.

Developing Coping Mechanisms for Student-Teachers: Some respondents suggested that the TTIs should improve in the area of training student-teachers how to survive reality shocks and tackle challenges effectively.

R15 (Male, SSU) noted that:

Since it is a common knowledge that there is no standard teacher-pupils' ratio in most public schools, the TTIs should always train pre-service teachers how to cope with the overcrowded classrooms.

R18 (Female, UDUS) added that:

There should be more emphasis on developing coping mechanisms for student-teachers to handle challenging classroom situations.

R19 (Male, SSCO) suggested that "Student-teachers should be trained on how to manage classroom behavior and discipline."

R20 (Female, UDUS) concluded that:

TTIs should provide more support for student-teachers to develop their teaching skills and confidence."

Views from respondents (R18, 19 and 20) underscore the importance of classroom management and discipline and also the need for providing support for student-teachers.

Summary of Major Findings

The major findings of the study were:

- a. Student-teachers on teaching practice from TTIs find themselves deficient in many pedagogical areas. The use of audiovisual aids in teaching, Classroom management, Resolving pupils disputes, Time management, Inadequate practical exposure have been identified as the most deficient areas.
- b. On basis of their deficiencies, student-teachers liked to see TTIs improve many pedagogical aspects of their ITP. The main suggestions were the need for the review of minimum standard of NCE and B.Ed programmes to enable classroom management been treated as independent course, not a topic in other courses such as EDU 113 and EDU 213.

Discussion of Findings

The present study revealed several findings which on one hand, supported findings of other previous studies conducted; while on the other hand contrary to other previous studies. For example, the respondents were presented with Questionnaire of 15 broad categories of items asking them to rate on a 4-point rating scale, the degree of deficiency and level of need ranging from high level of need to the low, least and no need at all. From the results presented and analyzed on Table 3, the findings revealed that the use of audiovisual aids in teaching, Classroom management, Resolving pupils disputes, Time management, Inadequate practical exposure with much emphasis on theory have been identified as areas of deficiency. This was because their mean scores ranging from 1.4 to 2.1 fell below the weighted mean 2.4. Many respondents acknowledged learning about audio and audiovisual teaching materials in their lectures, but never during the ITP that the use of such instructional materials was practically demonstrated. Franco (2015) and Ugwanga (2010) findings concurred with this finding, where it was argued that during the training, the focus was on theory than practice; and thus some things teachers were taught could not be implemented in school. The findings of the present study that Student-teachers on teaching practice from TTIs find themselves deficient in pedagogical areas such as use of audiovisual aids in teaching and Classroom management among others also coincided with Ladan et al (2022) study where respondents felt inadequately prepared by their ITP in similar pedagogical aspects of teaching.

The findings that respondents find themselves deficient in Classroom management techniques on table 2 and sub theme under theme 1 (Enhancing Classroom Management Training) is supported by findings of studies conducted by Waziri (2018), Shohani, Azizifar and Kamal (2014), which found graduated Pre-service teachers deficient, and need training in the identified areas of teaching with the prominent being the classroom management. However, the present study is in disagreement with the study conducted by Waziri (2018), who found COE NCE graduates proficient in usage of instructional materials; and Boakyev and Ampiah (2017)'which revealed that classroom management not deficient area of newly graduate Pre-service teachers in Ghana.

In addition, respondents were also asked to reflect on their experiences during the initial preparation and during the actual teaching and suggest how best TTIs can improve the ITP. The main suggestion made by respondents was that the minimum standard of NCE and B.Ed need to be reviewed; so that classroom management should be treated as independent course, not a topic in other courses such as EDU 113 and EDU 213. Other suggestions made are in the subject matter and pedagogical preparation; there should be a balance in emphasis between theory and practice. This is necessitated by the fact that respondents were unanimous in their argument that during the training, little prominence is given to the practical aspects which exposed respondents to dilemma of applying what they learnt at the TTIs to real practice in the classroom.

Conclusion

The study assessed pedagogical areas where student-teachers from TTIs in Sokoto state are deficient and thus need the ITP to improve upon. It can therefore be concluded from the findings of the study that, student-teachers during teaching practice and in the process of putting into practice theoretical knowledge acquired during ITP find themselves deficient in many pedagogical aspects of teaching. The prominent among the deficient areas are settling pupils' disputes, classroom management and use of instructional materials among others which are also aspects that they liked TTIs improve upon during ITP.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- a. TTIs should give more emphasis to those aspects of teaching that Student-teachers found themselves deficient and need more training by the findings of this research. Such deficient aspects of teaching include settling pupils' disputes, Classroom management, use of instructional materials particularly audio and audiovisual instructional materials.
- b. TTIs should enhance the aspects of the Initial Teacher Preparation (ITP) programme that student-teachers have identified for improvement. Particular attention should be given to the practical components, including stronger emphasis on classroom management practicum, micro-teaching practicum, teaching practice supervision, and ensuring a better balance between theory and practice.

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