

Anxiety and Teachers-In-Training Performance During Teaching Practice Exercise at Obafemi Awolowo University

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Abstract - *This study examined the anxiety exhibited by teachers-in-training during teaching practice exercise. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study and simple random sampling technique was used to select 300 students from 200 and 300 levels at the Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University. Two instruments were used for data collection were the Teachers-in-Training Assessment Scale (TITAS) for teachers-in-training anxiety and the Teaching Practice Assessment Ratings Scale (TPARS) was used to collect data on their performance. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested. The result revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between teachers-in-training anxiety and lesson note preparation and a significant positive relationship between teachers-in-training anxiety and performance in class management. Based on the findings, it was recommended that teachers-in-training should prepare before the class by writing their lesson notes ahead of the class. Teachers-in-training should be trained in with the pedagogical skills of managing small, large, noisy and quiet classes so as to apply it appropriately as the situation demands. Teachers-in-training should also establish a good relationship with other teachers in the school by interacting in a friendly manner with one another.*

Keywords: *Anxiety, Teachers-in-Training, Performance, Teaching Practice, Lesson Notes, Class Management and interaction with Staff*

INTRODUCTION

All over the world, Nigeria inclusive, education is an important instrument for human and capital development for the survival of the society. Every individual, group of individuals and the society at large link its current state of growth and development to the contribution of education. At the core of every educational endeavour is the teacher. Several factors have been identified by Saban and Cokler [1] as those

having influence on the education of people and one of the most important of these factors is the teacher. They outline the roles of the teacher as including shaping the terminal behaviours of the students, helping the students to have positive relationships and making them skillful and disciplined. Johnson [2] contends that the teacher is the vehicle on which education thrives, and is therefore indispensable. It is therefore widely acknowledged that the role of teachers in the quality of education is vital. Teachers' competence, confidence, dedication, and general predisposition towards the profession are however informed by the kind of education or training they receive. Adeyemo [3] points out that teacher education is critical because it produces the right caliber of professionals to deliver instructions in schools.

Teaching is an exciting and rewarding activity but it is demanding as its practitioners are required to clearly understand what should be done to bring about the most desirable outcome in the pupil and be highly proficient in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills necessary to carry out these tasks [4]. Bhargava [5] argues that teaching process is multi-tasking. Aggarwal in Ghansah [6] notes that the teaching of humanities subjects demands more ingenuity from teachers as these subjects demand the well prepared conscientious teachers of sound knowledge. It is in a bid for teachers to meet the demands of the profession that their training does not only aim at imparting theoretical but also practical knowledge and skills in teaching different subjects at the primary and high school levels.

Ishyaku [7] states that a good teacher education programme should seek to assist the teachers-in-training to grow and develop as a total person and equip him or her with necessary skills and professional abilities that will help him become an effective teacher. Teaching practice is the ground on which this practical skill or experience is gained. It can also be referred to as professional experience, practice teaching or field

experience, a period when teachers-in-training obtain a first-hand experience in teaching.

Teaching practice is an important component of teaching and is recognized as one of the most important aspects of a teacher education [5]. Teacher education institutions worldwide, including Nigeria, are under increasing pressure to prepare their teachers-in-training better for the actual world of teaching, and the exercise provides an avenue by which this expectation may be addressed. Teaching practice is an exercise that distinguishes professional trained teachers from the non-professional ones and grants teachers-in-training the needed experience in the actual teaching and learning environment [8]-[11] informs that during the teaching practice exercise, the teacher-in-training is given the opportunity to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of the teaching profession. Teachers-in-training also appreciated the knowledge acquired during teaching practice exercise; this was remarked by Menter [12], who concluded that they perceive it as 'the crux of their preparation for the teaching profession' since it provides for the 'real interface' between studenthood and membership of the profession. As a result, teaching practice creates a mixture of anticipation, anxiety, excitement and apprehension in the teachers-in-training as they commence their teaching practice exercise [13].

In Nigeria, teaching practice is a compulsory exercise for students offering education in the colleges of education and universities in order to be awarded the National Certificate of Education (NCE) and Bachelor Degree in Education (B. Ed) respectively. As stipulated in the curriculum, students offering Bachelor of Education at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife must undergo a teaching practice training period of 12 weeks taken in two phases of six weeks each in their 200 and 300 levels and must also be certified passed by faculty appointed supervisors who supervises them during the exercise.

Teaching practice has been defined differently by different authors. Marais and Meier [9] assert that the term represents the range of experiences to which teachers-in-training are exposed when they work in classrooms and schools. In the opinion of Quick and Sieborger [14]; Bankole [4], teaching practice is challenging but important part of teacher training programme, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria, where the effectiveness of the teaching practice can be diminished or eroded by anxiety and, if not addressed, may affect teachers'-in-training performance during teaching practice and may in the long run affect their perception of the teaching

profession. Akinade [15] further defines teaching practice as the pre-service teacher's initiation into the real-life, world of the school and which must be accomplished in the course of teacher training programme.

Bankole [4] asserts that teaching practice is an opportunity for teachers-in-training to translate their theoretical knowledge into practice. Further, it is a form of work-integrated learning that is described as a period of time when students are working in the school or educational industry to receive some form of in-service training in order to put theory learnt to practice. Jennifer, Amsat and Ohio [16]; Adeyemi [17] define teaching practice as an integral component of teacher training programme to achieve the standards requirement for qualified teacher status. Marais and Meier [9] assert that the term teaching practice represents the range of experiences to which teachers-in-training are exposed when they work in classrooms and schools. Perry [10]; Ngidi and Sibaya [8] informs that it is the practical use of teaching methods, teaching strategies, teaching principles, and teaching techniques for different activities of daily life in a school. Adeola [18] also informs that teaching practice is an exercise that allows the teachers-in-training the opportunity to experiment the basic teaching skills learnt theoretically in schools and get familiar with the rules and regulations guiding the operations of an ideal school situation.

Teaching practice could be summarized to be a deliberate upbringing of students through training in order to acquire knowledge, skills and values to assist them in passing it to others. It can be compared with Housemanship in the medical profession, Court Attachment of the legal profession and Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) in Engineering, among others. Through this exercise, the teachers-in-training physically sees what goes on in the school environment, personally work with the school management as well as the teaching and the non-teaching staff in the school.

There are various challenges confronting teachers in schools. Tella [19] concludes that the challenges confronting teachers are pupils – teacher relationship and class size. However, Ajadi [20] on his own identifies instructional delivery mode as one of the major challenges facing facilitators in distance learning institutions in Nigeria. Ajadi [21] also concludes that school plant planning is a factor that contributes to lecturers' efficiencies in south-western universities in Nigeria. These among others accounted for the reasons why teacher training educational institutions are

mandated to equip teachers-in-training with the necessary skills to cope with the various challenges in schools. Teaching practice is one of the ways by which teachers-in-training are prepared for the challenges of the teaching profession. In the opinion of Oyediji [22] and Olaogun [23] a good teacher training programme must include activities that will support the growth and development of the teachers-in-training. The programme must also include those activities that will equip them with the needed skills that will assist them to become an effective and efficient leader in the school.

Adeyemi [17] points out that teachers-in-training are expected to manage the challenges facing them in the school effectively during teaching practice exercise. However, as a result of the level of experience of the teachers-in-training, Akintunde [24] posits that teachers-in-training could have doubts about their skills to cope with the challenges of managing large class, facing audience and interacting with staff members in the school. Lehner [25] concludes that the various challenges facing teachers-in-training can lead to anxiety which may invariably affects their performance during the teaching practice exercise and invariably affect the academic performance of students.

Anxiety has been referred to by Rollo [26] as a response to a stimulus. Weinberg [27]; Lehner [25] and Marriam [28] posits that anxiety is abnormal and overwhelming sense of apprehension and fear often marked by physiological signs by doubt concerning the reality and nature of the threat and by self-doubt about one's capacity to cope with it. Some of the teachers-in-training finds it difficult to prepare lesson note prior to going for class lesson. This might not be unconnected to the fact that; this has never been part of their task while in the training school. Some of them are given more subjects to teach than they can cope with. This might be why Jennifer, Amsat and Ohio [16] informs that teachers-in-training spent sleepless nights during the teaching practice exercise preparing for lesson notes and instructional materials for four or five subjects daily. Despite this, they write lesson notes that do not match up with the level of the pupils, and develop anxiety when pupils do not respond to questions as expected before, during and after the lesson. As a result, some of the teachers-in-training who are unable to stand the mental stress opted to give up the exercise. Gideon [29] informs that anxiety is also felt when unfavourable comments are passed on the teachers-in-training lesson note or record book by supervisory officer from the institution. This is because they would develop mental attachment to the comments

passed by the supervisor. This accounts for a major factor causing anxiety for teachers-in-training.

Studies of Wilson [30] and Claxton [31] on anxiety experienced by teachers-in-training during practicum showed that anxiety has a negative effect on student-teachers' well being (physically, behaviourally or mentally and emotionally), and affects not only teachers, but also the school (e.g. loss of teaching time), and more importantly the students in the class (e.g. students' perceived relationship with the student-teacher). Teachers-in-training anxiety is therefore seen mainly as having a negative effect, with diverse psychological, physiological and behavioural links [32]. Anxiety experienced by teachers-in-training in their practicum has been reported in many different studies [33]-[36], and these suggest that it is not an isolated phenomenon, although teachers-in-training regard teaching practicum as a valuable and very vulnerable part of their teacher education program, they also consider it to be anxiety-laden.

A number of studies have explored the extent to which teachers-in-training experience anxiety from teaching practice related factors. Some studies indicated that teachers-in-training experience moderate levels of anxiety [34], [36], [37], [5] while others showed that teachers-in-training reported high anxiety levels [38], [39]. Hart [40] reported that teachers-in-training in the United States of America experienced anxiety from factors such as evaluation, pupils and professional concerns, class control and teaching practice requirements. Bhargava [5] reported that teachers-in-training anxiety was related to evaluation, pedagogical, classroom management and staff relations factors.

In addition, Youn [41] found that the anxiety experienced by beginning teachers ranged from classroom discipline, motivating students, organization of class work to insufficient teaching material. Youn [41] however cautioned that concerns faced by beginning teachers were real and these concerns could limit and frustrate their already complex teaching situation. A similar study carried out by Ong, Ros, Azlian, Sharnti and Ho [42] in Malaysia revealed that the pressures felt by teachers-in-training during practicum prevented them from positively engaging in theory and practice. They identified supervision, workload other than teaching, pedagogical and content knowledge as challenges many teachers-in-training faced during their practicum. Teachers-in-training could also have been overwhelmed by the numerous realities of the classroom students' expectation of emphasizing teaching as telling, and learning as mere

listening [43], and the challenges of mixed-ability classes [44].

Teachers-in-training can also experience role ambiguity, especially when they are beginning their careers and also when there are major role changes. In addition, they can sometimes experience role conflict. Student behaviour has also been reported as a factor explaining teacher stress and teacher exhaustion [45], [46]. In addition, teachers-in-training perceive lack of parental involvement/support along with the presence of parents who are confrontational and abusive especially when there is lack of administrative support in dealing with such parents, translating into teacher stress.

Performance of teachers-in-training could be measured in relation with their ability to prepare lesson notes, communication skills, lesson evaluation skills and teachers personality. Performance evaluation during teaching practice provides some basis for predicting the future success of the teacher-in-training [47]. During teaching practice, working with students in school provides a high degree of emotional involvement. Teachers-in-training feel challenged and empowered. Institutions need evaluation to guide students to achieve excellent academic performance. Evaluation implies objective judgement about student's performance by identifying those who pass or fail. When students are evaluated, the use of pass or fail may be used to describe their academic performance.

Akinade [15] asserted that the performance of teachers-in-training in the course of teaching practice determines how much the teachers-in-training has learnt/received from the college and this lies on his/her level of intelligence. David [48] traced most teachers-in-training performance in teaching practice to various kinds of social disadvantage. He mentioned that some teachers-in-training are endowed with high intellectual potentialities and some with low intellectual potentialities and they are reinforced by the environment but if the environment is not stimulating, it affects the performance of the teachers-in-training.

Theoretical Framework

The Social Learning Theory (SLT) propounded by Bandura [49] is used to explain this study. The theory states that a significant part of learning occurs through imitation or modelling. Bandura went ahead to explain that the socialization of the individual, his exposure to learning situations, observations and constant rehearsals of learning behaviour of others is paramount in the teaching and learning activity of the individual.

A crucial element of this theory is that the environment of learning determines what the learners will learn.

The theory also suggests that human behaviour cannot be explained by stimulus response operation alone; cognitive and social motivation plays important roles in the manifestation of human behaviour, work performance and achievement. SLT focuses on observation that learning in social situations is basis for acquiring new behaviour. Bandura, however, asserted that consequences, reinforcement and motivators are automatic re-enforcers except the human organism involved is able to perceive the consequences of reinforcement and other incentives as useful within a social learning setting.

Learning according to this principle is a combination of psychological principles and social conditions. Miller [50] opined that learning occurs through observation resulting from the manipulation of internal cognitive variable. The theory therefore places much premium on cognition. It thereby focuses on individual's active cognitive processing to select, extract as well as maintain environmental information and to generate meaningful information from the information gathered. Social learning theorists believe that one can observe someone's behaviour and acquire new behaviour without actual performance. It also believes that performance is merely an overt manifestation of learned behaviour and an index of learning. This implies that a student's performance in a given test is an indication of how much the student has learnt or acquired on that particular subject.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers-in-training are expected to perform well during the teaching practice exercise based on the theory they have acquired from their training institutions and the interest they have in the profession. However, the performance of the teachers-in-training seems not satisfactorily. This may however be traced to anxiety on their part and this constitutes a major issue among Teachers Training Institutions in Nigeria. This unsatisfactory performance of teachers-in-training has been observed in preparation of lesson notes, management of large class size, and their interaction with other members of staff of the school. As a result, this study investigated the relationship between anxiety and the Obafemi Awolowo University teachers-in-training performance during teaching practice exercise.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between teacher-in-training anxiety and performance in preparation of lesson notes.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between teacher-in-training anxiety and performance in large class management.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between teacher-in-training anxiety and their interaction with other member of the staff in the school.

METHODS

The study is a descriptive research survey with a population of 1,230 Faculty of Education students in 100, 200, 300 and 400 levels as at 2015/2016 session. From this, simple random technique was adopted to select 150 participants each from 200 and 300 levels making a total of 300 participants selected for the study. The choice of 200 and 300 levels was purposively made because they are the only group involved in the teaching practice exercise. Two questionnaires tagged “Teachers-in-Training Anxiety Scale (TITAS)” and Teaching Practice Assessment Rating Scale (TPARS) were used to collect data for the study. The TITAS was used to elicit information about teachers-in-training anxiety while (TPARS) was used to assess the teachers-in-training performance during teaching practice. The identity of the students was not requested for on the questionnaire as students were required to objectively fill in their responses. To determine the reliability co-efficient of TITAS and TPARS, reliability co-efficient of 0.75 and 0.84 were obtained respectively. Out of the 300 copies of questionnaire distributed, 288 were duly completed, returned and found useful for data analysis. Data gathered were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows that there is a significantly negative relationship between teacher-in-training anxiety and lesson notes preparation ($r = -.105$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis one is rejected. The negative relationship implies that the more the anxiety level, the lower the teachers-in-training scores in lesson preparation becomes.

Table 2 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between teacher-in-training anxiety and the performance in class management ($r = .121$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis two is rejected. The positive relationship implies that the more the anxiety level, the better the teachers-in-training scores in class management.

Table 3 shows that there is no significant relationship between teachers-in-training anxiety and the interaction with other members of staff ($r = -.024$; $p > 0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis three is not rejected.

DISCUSSION

The result reveals that there is a significant negative relationship between anxiety and teachers-in-training in the preparation of lesson notes. The negative relationship implies that the more the anxiety level, the lower the student-teachers scores in lesson notes preparation. This might be as a result of the fact that when a teacher-in-training experience too much of anxiety, he or she might be confused on how to prepare the lesson notes.

Table 1: Correlation of Teacher-in-Training Anxiety and Performance in Lesson Note Preparation

Variable	N	Mean	SD	R	Sig.	Remark
Teacher-Training Anxiety		126.28	17.27	-.105*	.05	Significant.
Preparation of Lesson Notes Scores	288	5.12	1.31			

Table 2: Correlation of Teacher-in-Training Anxiety and Performance in Class Management

Variable	N	Mean	Std.D	R	Sig.	Remark
Student-Teacher Anxiety		126.28	17.27	.121*	.05	Significant.
Class Management Scores	288	4.14	1.60			

Table 3: Correlation of Teacher-in-Training Anxiety and Performance in Interaction with other Members of Staff

Variable	N	Mean	Std.D	R	Sig.	Remark
Student-Teacher Anxiety		126.28	19.87	-.024*	.05	Not
Interaction with other Members of Staff Scores	288	3.21	1.21			Significant.

Such lesson notes might be full of unnecessary details with the belief that the supervisor might be impressed or that students might need such for understanding. Besides, too much anxiety might make a teacher-in-training to prepare instructional materials that are not related to the topic or forget to prepare one. This position is related to the findings of Yourn [41] who posits that an anxious person experiences physical feelings and worrying thoughts which make it hard to perform even simple task correctly. Also, D'Rozario and Wong [35] found out that insufficient planning and preparation was the major reason behind ineffective instruction. This might be why the reports of Jennifer Amsat and Ohio [16] informs that teachers-in-training write lesson notes that do not match up with the level of the pupils and develop anxiety when pupil do not respond as expected to questions when lessons are been introduced.

The study also reveals that there is a significant positive relationship between teachers-in-training anxiety and the performance in class management. The positive relationship implies that the more the anxiety level, the better the teachers-in-training scores in class management. Class management can be seen as the environment according to SLT which determines what the learners will learn in the class. This finding should not be seen as a contradiction to the previous findings that revealed negative relationship. In fact, the finding has just revealed the actions taken by the teachers-in-training when they are experiencing serious anxiety. In most cases, as soon as a teachers-in-training is aware that the supervisor is around, he would quickly go and make arrangement for the best class he/she can manage. In fact, some supervisor will intentionally wait at the principal's office and inform the teacher-in-training to go and get the class ready. What anxious teacher-in-training do at this time is to go and plant brilliant students in the class and remove the dull and troublesome ones from the class. This is in contrary to the findings of Akintunde [24] who posited that teachers-in-training could have doubts about their skills to manage large class.

Finally, the study shows that there is no significant relationship teachers-in-training anxiety and their interaction with other members of staff in the school. Human behaviour is one of the crucial elements of the SLT which cannot be explained by stimulus response operation alone, the cognitive and social motivation plays important roles in human behaviour. Teachers-in-training should be able to have friendly interaction with other members of staff even the students in the school. This finding must have been as a result of

the fact that the interaction skills are scored based on communication skills and general relationship of the teachers-in-training and during the training, the acceptable mode of communication and relationship has been made known to the teachers-in-training. Therefore, it was difficult for anxiety to change this in the teachers-in-training. That is the reason the study found no relationship between the level of anxiety and the relationship with other members of staff in the school. This is not in line with the findings of Wilson [30] and Claxton [31] who found that anxiety has negative effect on teachers-in-training well being and affects not only the teachers, but also the school and more important the students in the class.

Limitations of the Study

Teaching practice comes up at the convenience of the Faculty of Education in the University. In addition, teachers-in-training handles all the arms in secondary schools including the terminal classes such as the Junior Secondary School Class 3 and the Senior Secondary School Class 3 who are to sit for external examinations

CONCLUSION

The SLT propounded by Bandura used to explain this study emphasised that learning occurs through imitation or modelling. This is related to the exposure of the teacher-in-training to the way the lecturers at the Faculty of Education, OAU demonstrates teaching in the class during micro-teaching. The theory also informs that individual's socialisation plays a significant role on what teachers-in-training learnt. This can be related to teacher's-in-training relationship with other staff in the school. The exposure to learning situations and environment which can be related to the preparatory training of the teacher's-in-training and the learning environment which is at the Faculty of Education, OAU. These are some of the ways in which SLT can be related to the study.

The study examined the influence of anxiety on teacher-in-training performance in preparation of lesson notes, class management and interaction with other members of staff in the school during teaching practice exercise. Data was carefully analysed using inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation). The findings among others are that anxiety negatively influences teachers-in-training lesson note preparation, but there is a significant positive relationship between teachers-in-training anxiety and the performance in class management.

However, anxiety has no significant relationship on teachers-in-training interaction with other member of staff in the school. Based on this, the study concludes that anxiety experienced by teachers-in-training during teaching practice exercise is a major factor affecting negatively their performance during teaching practices. The reduction of anxiety and fear in these set of teachers-in-training will bring about better performance in their teaching practices and in teaching profession when they eventually get teaching appointment after graduation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended for improved performance of teachers-in-training during teaching practice exercise to prepare them for the challenges of teaching profession in the next generation in Nigeria:

Universities, Colleges of Education and other Teachers Training Institutions should organise regular orientation programmes and workshop for teachers-in-training who are to take part in teaching practice exercise and lecturers who are to supervise them during the exercise on what is expected by the teachers-in-training and skills needed by the lecturers for effective supervision that will encourage and build confidence in the teachers-in-training instead of instilling fear and anxiety.

In addition, universities, colleges of education and other institutions that train teachers should prepare students adequately during the training in the school by exposing them to micro-teaching exercise in their institution where they will be exposed to criticism from colleagues and lecturer(s) attached. This may reduce the level of anxiety when the teachers-in-training are on the teaching practice exercise.

The supervisors/lecturers need to realise that the output from the teachers-in-training is a function of the training received from them in school. As a result, they should see the teachers-in-training as those to be assisted and not those to-be intimidated. Teaching practice supervisors should put up a friendly disposition during their interaction with the teachers-in-training during the exercise. Let them realise their strength and weaknesses and adequately advice them on how to build on their weaknesses to be a good teacher.

The teaching practice comes up based on the convenience of the Faculty of Education in the University. This often is not favourable for secondary schools who are the beneficiary of the exercise. The exercise should be permanently arranged for first or

second term in the secondary school calendar year. The third term is a promotion term in the secondary school that students should not be handled by a teacher-in-training who has not gathered the needed experience.

Teachers-in-training should not be allowed to handle any terminal class such as Junior Secondary School Class 3 and the Senior Secondary Class 3. Student at these classes are being prepared for external examinations that required experienced teacher's knowledge.

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