

Problems Encountered By Computer Science Education Student Teachers During Teaching Practice Exercise

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to find out the problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice exercise. Specifically, the study sought to find out the classroom management, environmental, curriculum development and instruction and supervisory problems computer science education student teachers encountered during teaching practice exercise. Four research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The sample for the study was fifty-five (55) 3rd and 4th year computer science education students of Enugu State university of Science and Technology (ESUT). The sample was arrived at using census sampling techniques, this is because of the manageable size of the population. A 29 Structured questionnaire titled Problems Encountered by Student-Teachers during Teaching Practice (PESTTP) was the instrument for data collection. The overall reliability index of the instrument is 0.893 which was determined using Cronbach alpha formula. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. Findings of the study revealed that computer science education student teachers during teaching practice encountered classroom management problems like; poor arrangement of the sitting position of students, controlling noise making and set inducing students. Environmental problems like; lack of tables for the student teachers, lack of chairs for the student teachers, poorly equipped libraries and poorly equipped laboratories. Curriculum developments and instruction problems like; inability of the student teachers to utilize instructional materials properly, inability of the student teachers to apply appropriate teaching skills, non-availability of relevant textbooks, writing of lesson notes, giving of written exercise, marking student exercise and supervisory problems like; supervisors spending few minutes in the class, impatience to go through the lesson notes, lack of cordial relationship between the supervisor and the student teachers, non-co-operative attitude of the regular teachers with student teachers, lack of feedback from supervisors on students' performance to enable them take corrections and extortion of the students by some supervisors. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that proper attention should be given to the classroom management by the student teachers in order to achieve the specific objective at the end of the lesson in the classroom, student teachers should be provided with lodging accommodation by the practicing schools, adequate curriculum guidelines, facilities, reference materials like textbooks etc should be made available to facilitate effective and efficient teaching and learning and competent and dedicated supervisors should be used in teaching practice supervision among others.

Keywords: teaching, teacher, teaching practice, classroom management, curriculum implementation, learning environment, supervisor.

INTROUCTION

Education is very essential in the creation of sound mind in a sound body. Education is a good instrument for the comprehensive development of the human beings where the whole body is effectively utilized to achieve a pre-determined set of objectives (Ejili & Anyanwu, 2006). In Nigeria, education is seen as an instrument “Par excellence” for affecting national development (Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), 2013). Education is a complex process which starts to improve our lives as soon as we are born, and continues to do so until we die. According to Aguba (2006), the aim of education is the production of good men, that is, for one to be educated, one must be prepared to use the knowledge of what is good and must be prepared to use the knowledge in the service of God and humanity. We can therefore say that, education is a process of acquiring ideas, skills and values that facilitate the development of the learner and the society at large.

Educational process is said to be complete when it undergoes the act of teaching. Teaching is the process of impacting knowledge and skills from a teacher to a learner. It encompasses the activities of educating or instructing either formally or informally. It is an act of experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual. Ogunmosunle in Agusiobo and Udegbe (2002) defined teaching as the use of educational knowledge, methods and space to educate whoever desires to be educated. It involves direct contact between the teacher and the learner. It is a complex variety of mutual activities undertaken by both of them (the teacher and the learner) in order to promote learning. Teaching is an activity that takes place when someone who is vaster and knowledgeable in specific field (skills and understanding) tries to influence another person to acquire these skills, understanding, beliefs and thought, so that his life will change at anywhere be it homes, schools, churches, mosque etc.

In Nigeria, these processes do not take place in a vacuum but in the school system which begins from the Nursery up to Primary, Secondary and finally the University education and are carried out by those who are trained specifically for the job and they are called teachers. A teacher is a person who

communicates knowledge, skills and attitude to someone in a school. Okute and Agonomuo, (2010) noted that a teacher is a facilitator of learning who helps students to realize their full potentials educationally, emotionally and socially in career selection and transition. A teacher as a professional and like any other professionals has prescribed services it renders to any human society. It is therefore absolutely necessary for any individual who want to become a teacher to acquire basic skills and knowledge which can only be acquired through teachers’ education programme.

Nigeria as a nation recognizes the importance of teacher education when they continued to give a major emphasis in all our educational planning. This is basically because no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers, that is to say that the quality of the teachers in any country determines the quality of her education and the level of national development. The National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) outlined the purpose of teacher education as follows;

- to produce highly motivated, conscientious effective classroom teacher for all learning in our educational system.
- to encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- to help teachers to fit into the society of the community and the society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives;
- to provide teachers with intellectual professional background adequate for assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country but to the wider world;
- to enhance teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession.

According to Okorie (2009) the professional education of teachers cannot be validated without adequate preparation of prospective teachers for dynamic roles in schools through practice. The practical phase of teacher preparation commonly referred to as teaching practice is a crucial aspect of teacher preparatory programme in teacher training institutions in general such as school of education in

colleges of education and faculties of education in Nigerian Universities. Teaching practice is a period of time during which a student teacher is assigned to a specific institution; primary or secondary school for a supervised teaching experience as one of the requirements for graduation and effective teaching experience.

Teaching practice has been defined by various scholars from different perspectives. According to Davidson (2005), teaching practice can be defined as the system by which teachers in training are subjected to a systematic expose to actual classroom situation. Teaching practice is a six weeks programme or a term programme period of time during which a pre-service teacher is assigned to a public school for supervised teaching experience as a part of his college programme. The programme is designed to provide opportunity and guidance in a school setting for the student-teacher in practice to develop professional competences, personal characteristics, understanding, knowledge and skills of a teacher.

During this period, the student teacher may face a lot of problems which include classroom management, attitude of the supervisors towards the student teachers, curriculum implementation and environmental problem which affect teaching practice exercise. The challenges that face student teachers during teaching practice is what necessitates the need for the study and hence the problem of the study. Learning environment according to Okonkwo and Chikwelu (2013), include the classroom surroundings, physical facilities in the classroom and teacher- student relationship. Physical environment comprises all those equipment, materials, furniture and learning space that make up the place where learners learn. When all these things are made available to the student teachers, they will be motivated to carry out the task assigned to them and the aim of teaching practice will be achieved. Bechuke, Thomas, and James (2013) while investigating the challenges that student teachers encounter during teaching practice in South Africa revealed that some of the schools lack human resources to train the student teachers as expected by the programme, they also lack adequate infrastructure.

The classroom environment is the setting where learning takes place. It concerns with the classroom's physical environment, social system, atmosphere, and norms and values. Scholars have noted that classroom climate is one of the most important predictors of student achievement. Classroom management is a complex set of skills that includes much more than being able to influence and control student behavior. However, successful teaching requires more than controlling student behavior. According to Allen (2010), classroom management has changed from describing discipline practices and behavioral interventions to serving as a more holistic descriptor of teachers' actions in orchestrating supportive learning environments and building community. Successful classroom management practices by teachers ensure effective curriculum implementation.

Curriculum can be viewed as the organized knowledge presented to learners in a school. It is the overall plan for instruction adopted by a school system. This includes the subject matter to be learned, the students, the teachers and the physical environments. Curriculum implementation is the process of implementing the theoretical plan to attain educational ends. Curriculum involves the analysis of the purpose of education, the designing of programme, implementation of a series of related experiences and evaluation of the whole process. Okonkwo et al (2013) see curriculum implementation as frequently used to describe the creation of curriculum materials, including materials for use by students that are products of curriculum planning but not in themselves curriculum plan. In order words curriculum implementation is the actual carrying out of the plans including modifications where necessary. It can be viewed as the interaction between the learner and the learning activities and it is through this interaction that learning occurs.

Teaching practice requires that supervisors outline upfront what student teachers can expect during visits. It is important that student teachers are briefed before the commencement of the lesson evaluation about what is expected. During the lesson the supervisor assesses the lesson by providing constructive comments about various aspects of the

lesson. These often include linking new content with learners' prior knowledge, lesson objectives, instructional activities and resources used and their relevance to the lesson, assessment activities provided, including assessment strategies used and enrichment activities. However, the finding of Bechuke et al (2013) revealed that most supervisors do not perform their responsibilities as mentors to student teachers during teaching practice.

Statement of the Problem

Teaching practice is one of the most important aspects of teachers training programme in Nigeria which is aimed at exposing the student teachers to the field of teaching to experience the practice situation in the classroom under the supervision and guidance of a teacher/lecturer. In some cases, the objective of teaching practice is not fully realized. This is because it has been observed that most student teachers still lack the required and necessary skills after their graduation from college such as not being able to write good lesson plan and lesson note and can't establish good teacher-students relationship among others. The inability to fully realize the objectives of teaching practice or the inability of student teachers to perform to expectation can be attributed to certain challenges or inadequacies of the programme. The challenges that face student teachers during teaching practice is what necessitates the need for the study and hence the problem of the study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to find out the problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice exercise. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. ascertain the classroom management related problems computer science education student teachers encountered during teaching practice exercise.
2. find out the environmental related problems computer science education student teachers encountered during teaching practice exercise.
3. find out the curriculum implementation related problems computer science education student teachers encountered during teaching practice exercise.

4. find out the supervisory related problems computer science education student teachers encountered during teaching practice exercise.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to guide the study,

1. What are the classroom management related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice?
2. What are the environmental related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice?
3. What are the curriculum implementation related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice?
4. What are the supervisory related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice?

RESEARCH METHOD

The researchers adopted the descriptive survey research design for the study. Idoko (2011), defined descriptive survey research as research study which is concerned with specified population of persons, items or situation, in a defined geographical location. It involves the collection of relevant data from or about the population that enables the description of the persons, items or situations the way they are. The study was carried out at Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). The sample for the study consists of all the fifty-five (55) 3rd and 4th year computer science education students of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Education, Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). The sample size was arrived at using census sampling techniques, this is because of the manageable size of the population.

The instrument used for data collection is a 29-items structured questionnaire developed by the researcher, titled Problems Encountered by Student-Teachers during Teaching Practice (PESTTP). The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha, and reliability coefficients of 0.830,

0.706, 0.725 and 0.751 was obtained for cluster 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively, while the overall reliability index is 0.893, this shows that the instrument is reliable. Data collected were analyzed using, descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions.

Table 1- Mean score responses of respondents on classroom management related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice

SN	ITEM	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Poor arrangement of the sitting position of students.	20	19	7	9	2.91	1.08	Agree
2	Controlling student's movement in and out of the class.	28	14	3	10	3.09	1.14	Agree
3	Controlling noise making.	21	15	11	8	2.89	1.08	Agree
4	Set inducing students	23	11	12	9	2.87	1.14	Agree
5	Writing on the chalkboard	7	12	14	22	2.07	1.07	Disagree
Grand Mean						2.77	1.15	Agree

Data in table 1 shows the mean response score of respondents on classroom management related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice. From the table, the respondents agreed to all the items with mean score greater than 2.50 set for the study, except of item 5 which had mean score of 2.07. This shows that the respondents agreed that poor arrangement of the sitting position of students,

Table 2: Mean score responses of respondents on the environmental related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice

SN	ITEM	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
6	Inability of student teachers to conform to rules of the school of practice.	18	9	9	19	2.47	1.27	Disagree
7	Lack of accommodation for the student teacher.	15	15	18	7	2.69	1.02	Agree
8	Lack of tables for the student teachers.	19	12	14	10	2.73	1.13	Agree
9	Lack of chairs for the student teachers.	16	16	13	10	2.69	1.09	Agree
10	Non-involvement of student teachers in extra – curricular activities.	14	17	14	10	2.64	1.06	Agree
11	Poorly equipped libraries	21	13	9	12	2.78	1.18	Agree
12	Poorly equipped laboratories	12	18	13	12	2.55	1.07	Agree
Grand Mean						2.65	1.12	Agree

Data in table 2 shows the mean response score of respondents on the environmental related problems encountered by computer science education student

RESULTS

Research question one: What are the classroom management related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice?

controlling student's movement in and out of the class, controlling noise making and set inducing students are classroom management related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice.

Research question two: What are the environmental related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice?

teachers during teaching practice. From the table, the respondents agreed to all the items with mean score greater than 2.50 set for the study, except of item 6

which had mean score of 2.47. This shows that the respondents agreed that lack of accommodation for the student teacher, lack of tables for the student teachers, lack of chairs for the student teachers, non-involvement of student teachers in extra – curricular activities, poorly equipped libraries and poorly equipped laboratories are the environmental related

problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice.

Research question three: What are the curriculum implementation related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice?

Table 3: Mean score responses of respondents on the curriculum implementation related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice

SN	ITEM	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
13	Inability of student teachers to master the subject matter.	18	16	15	6	2.84	1.01	Agree
14	Inability of the student teachers to utilize instructional materials properly.	16	15	16	8	2.71	1.05	Agree
15	Inability of the student teachers to apply appropriate teaching skills.	16	18	15	6	2.80	0.99	Agree
16	Non availability of relevant textbooks.	19	13	13	10	2.75	1.13	Agree
17	Non availability of curriculum guidelines.	19	13	13	10	2.75	1.13	Agree
18	Writing of lesson notes.	22	13	17	3	2.98	0.97	Agree
19	Giving of written exercise	19	15	9	12	2.75	1.16	Agree
20	Marking student exercise	16	17	12	10	2.71	1.08	Agree
21	Inability of student teachers to improvise instructional material.	13	18	16	8	2.65	1.00	Agree
22	Nervousness.	20	14	16	5	2.89	1.01	Agree
Grand mean						2.78	1.05	Agree

Data in table 3 shows the mean response score of respondents on the curriculum implementation related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice. From the table, the respondents agreed to all the items with mean score greater than 2.50 set for the study. This shows that the respondents agreed that inability of student teachers to master the subject matter, inability of the student teachers to utilize instructional materials properly, inability of the student teachers to apply appropriate teaching skills, non-availability of

relevant textbooks, non-availability of curriculum guidelines, writing of lesson notes, giving of written exercise, marking student exercise, inability of student teachers to improvise instructional material and nervousness are the curriculum implementation related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice.

Research question four: What are the supervisory related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice?

Table 4- Mean score responses of respondents on the supervisory problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice?

SN	ITEM	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
23	The supervisors spent few minutes in the class.	18	12	17	8	2.73	1.08	Agree
24	Supervisors impatience to go through the lesson notes	21	14	13	7	2.89	1.07	Agree

25	Lack of cordial relationship between the supervisor and the student teachers.	21	7	11	16	2.60	1.27	Agree
26	Non co-operative attitude of the regular teachers with student teachers.	19	13	15	8	2.78	1.08	Agree
27	Lack of feedback from supervisors on students' performance to enable them take corrections.	17	18	9	11	2.75	1.11	Agree
28	No supervision by some supervisors.	23	14	12	6	2.98	1.05	Agree
29	Extortion of the students by some supervisors	17	16	13	9	2.75	1.08	Agree
Grand Mean						2.78	1.10	Agree

Data in table 4 shows the mean response score of respondents on the supervisory related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice. From the table, the respondents agreed to all the items with mean score greater than 2.50 set for the study. This shows that the respondents agreed that the underlisted items are supervisory problems encountered by student-teachers during teaching practice, such as; supervisors spending few minutes in the class, supervisors impatience to go through the lesson notes, lack of cordial relationship between the supervisor and the student teachers, non-co-operative attitude of the regular teachers with student teachers, lack of feedback from supervisors on students' performance to enable them take corrections, no supervision by some supervisors and extortion of the students by some supervisors.

Summary of the major findings

The result of data analysis has shown that:

1. Poor arrangement of the sitting position of students, controlling student's movement in and out of the class, controlling noise making and set inducing students are classroom management related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice.
2. Lack of accommodation, lack of tables, lack of chairs for the student teachers, non-involvement of student teachers in extra – curricular activities, poorly equipped libraries and poorly equipped laboratories are the environmental related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice.
3. Inability of student teachers to master the subject matter, to utilize instructional materials

properly, to apply appropriate teaching skills, non-availability of relevant textbooks, non-availability of curriculum guidelines, writing of lesson notes, giving of written exercise, marking student exercise, inability of student teachers to improvise instructional material and nervousness are the curriculum implementation related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice.

4. Supervisors spending few minutes in the classroom, supervisors impatience to go through the lesson notes, lack of cordial relationship between the supervisor and the student teachers, non-co-operative attitude of the regular teachers with student teachers, lack of feedback from supervisors on students' performance to enable them take corrections, no supervision by some supervisors and extortion of the students by some supervisors are the supervisory related problems encountered by student-teachers during teaching practice.

Discussion of Findings

Discussion of the findings was presented based on the research questions. Research question one sought to determine the classroom management related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice. The finding revealed that poor arrangement of the sitting position of students, controlling student's movement in and out of the class, controlling noise making and set inducing students are classroom management problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice. The finding agrees with the report of Duck (2007), and Stoughton (2007) that student-teachers feel unprepared when it comes to classroom

management skills. The finding agrees with the submission of Okonkwo and Chikwelu (2013) that student-teacher faces classroom management problems during teaching practice exercise.

The finding revealed that lack of accommodation for the student teacher, lack of tables for the student teachers, lack of chairs for the student teachers, non-involvement of student teachers in extra – curricular activities, poorly equipped libraries and poorly equipped laboratories are the environmental related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice. The finding is in line with the report of Bechuke, Thomas, and James (2013) while investigating the challenges that student teachers encounter during teaching practice in South Africa revealed that some of the schools lack resources needed in the training of the student teachers as expected by the programme. Also, the finding agrees with the finding of Okonkwo and Chikwelu (2013), that environmental challenge is one of the problems student-teacher faces during teaching practice exercise.

The finding shows that the curriculum implementation related problems encountered by computer science education student teachers during teaching practice include; inability of student teachers to master the subject matter, inability of the student teachers to utilize instructional materials properly, inability of the student teachers to apply appropriate teaching skills, non-availability of relevant textbooks, non-availability of curriculum guidelines, writing of lesson notes, giving of written exercise, marking student exercise, inability of student teachers to improvise instructional material and nervousness. The finding agrees with the finding of Okonkwo and Chikwelu (2013) that curriculum implementation problems are one of the problems student-teacher faces during teaching practice exercise.

The finding revealed that the supervisory related problems encountered by student-teachers during teaching practice include; supervisors spending few minutes in the class, supervisors impatience to go through the lesson notes, lack of cordial relationship between the supervisor and the student teachers, non-co-operative attitude of the regular teachers with student teachers, lack of

feedback from supervisors on students' performance to enable them take corrections, no supervision by some supervisors and extortion of the students by some supervisors. The finding agrees with the report of Yassin (2004) that the academic supervisors do not hold regular meetings with student teachers to discuss the challenges observed. And also, student teachers do not find adequate encouragement from the academic supervisors for their work. The finding also aligns with the submission of Yassin (2004), that student-teachers do not find adequate assistance needed. This may be as a result that school teachers are not well informed of their responsibilities as mentors to student teachers during teaching practice as revealed by the finding of Bechuke et al (2013).

Conclusion

The study confirms that within the student teaching practice experience, student teachers encounter difficulties that result to problems associated with the classroom management, conducive environment, curriculum implementation and supervision. Classroom management represents one of the major challenges identified by student teachers during their teaching practice experience. Classroom management is challenging for student teachers due to the difficulty providing realistic situation in the educational studies classroom prior to student teaching. Contributing to this are classroom dynamics that vary widely depending on the level of the classes, the time of day and the students. This approach provides a practical approach that still falls short of simulating the experience but exposes student to real-life situations, expectations and strategies in regard to dealing with classroom management.

Student teachers are expected to get the supervisors feedback to enable them take corrections and make amends. The attainment of quality education will be a mirage without adequate preparation of manpower that will dispense the knowledge. This calls for serious consideration of stipulated strategies to be adopted in tackling the challenges which student teachers face.

Recommendations

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

1. Proper attention should be given to the classroom management by the student teachers in order to achieve the specific objective at the end of the lesson in the classroom.
2. The Student teachers should be provided with lodging accommodation by the practicing schools.
3. Adequate curriculum guidelines, facilities, reference materials like textbooks etc should be made available to facilitate effective and efficient teaching and learning.
4. Competent and dedicated supervisors should be used in teaching practice supervision.
5. There is need for the government to provide good library facilities and laboratories.
6. Students' teachers should be sent to high quality schools with enabling learning environment.

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