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THE PREDICTION OF FIRST TEACHING PRACTICE PERFORMANCE ON THE SECOND TEACHING PRACTICE PERFORMANCE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

by

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Abstract

This study investigated the prediction of first teaching practice performance on the second teaching practice performance of students. To carry out this study two research questions were raised and hypothesized. The survey research design using the correlation approach was employed. The population of the study comprised 1,720 students from the faculty for 2016/2017 session. Sample size of 350 students was randomly sampled from all the different departments in the faculty. The instrument used was a proforma designed by the researchers. The proforma carried the first and second teaching practice scores of students. The scores were analyzed using linear regression. Findings revealed that the first teaching practice performance did not significantly predict the second teaching practice performance, there was no significant differential prediction by sex. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that student teachers should take the exercise seriously at all levels.

Key words: teaching practice, student teachers, prediction and differential prediction

Introduction

Teaching is not only a job but a way of life. It is a task one can ever be entrusted with. Teachers educate generations of learners and in their hands lay the fate of any nation. A well developed country is a country whose citizens are well educated, and this is done only by effective teaching strategies. For these to be achieved, teachers are expected to possess the teaching skills for effective delivering of their duties. The major period when a teacher can acquire teaching skills is during the training of the teacher. The

Teaching Practice (TP) is one of the practical methods to be employed in exposing the would-be teachers to the rudiments of the teaching profession. Teaching practice is a period when the would-be teachers are posted to schools from their institution of learning to put into practice the theoretical skills they have acquired in the classroom about teaching. It is usually their first teaching experience where they are faced with the realities of the ethics of teaching profession.

During this exercise, student-teachers are provided with the opportunity to interact with students or pupils, learning materials and the learning environment. Teaching practice plays a fundamental role in the exposure of the would-be teacher to practical skills acquisition. It is an integral component of teacher- training programme. When this exercise is effectively carried out by the would-be teacher, there is every tendency that the would-be teacher will make a successful future teacher. This training helps the trainees to acquire and develop purposeful, scientific experiences in advance. Such experiences may help student teachers develop their own potentials which will equip them to perform their future roles as teachers with a lot of precision (Mustafa, 2005). These potentials include skills in lesson planning, visualizing, class control, critical thinking, decision making and problem solving. Bhargara and Pathy (2011), noted that teaching practice provides an opportunity for student teachers to put into practice these skills before they begin to work as professionals.

In all professional fields, training is a crucial aspect with an attempt of testing and assessing the skills attained by learners before the actual consumption in the world of work. This fact stands as vital to the teaching profession where teacher trainees need to attend field training for the purpose of assessing their teaching skills and testing the theories learned in classrooms in actual school context. This field exercise, which is responsible to orient teacher trainees in their learning process, is called "teaching practice".

Teaching practice is the name that denotes the preparation of student teachers by practical teaching (Nwanekezi, Okoli and Mezie-Obi 2011; Al-Mahrooqi, 2011; Kiggundu, & Nayimuli 2009). Pre-service practical training has been established in many teacher education programme; Colleges of Education and universities with teacher education courses both locally and internationally (Albasheer, Khaswawneh, Abu & Hallat 2008). Nwanekezi et al (2011) add that during teaching practice, student-teachers feel engaged and even empowered. The exercise represents the range of experiences to which student-teachers are exposed to, when they work in the classroom.

Chen and Mu (2010), in their cross-national comparison of pre-service teacher education and curriculum study in China found out that pre-service teacher training

programmes cannot be completed without an effective practicum programme where student-teachers go to the field and face the various classroom related situations and taking responsibility for each one of them. During this period, they may start preparing and planning for their lessons, perform teaching and assess their students. A student-teacher requires practice in using the skills involved in teaching before teaching in the real classroom context. A good teacher should be able to demonstrate and practice various teaching skills and behaviors. Teachers must see that ideas are connected across fields and with everyday life. The deep understanding of the subject matter enables the student-teacher to make ideas accessible to the learners.

Teaching practice component aims at improving confidence, putting theory into practice, learning about student behavior, testing knowledge of subject matter, receiving constructive criticism, discovering strengths and weaknesses and developing a core set of pedagogic values to which a professionally competent teacher adheres to. Teaching practice is meant to provide for the authentic context within which student-teachers are exposed to experience the complexities and richness of the reality of being a teacher.

Despite the enriching experiences during teaching practice, student-teachers experience challenges, which significantly affect their ability to derive maximum benefits from the exercise one of the challenges has been short duration of the teaching practice exercise. However, duration of the teaching practice exercise is from institution to institution. For example, the duration of the teaching practice varies amongst institutions and from country to country. Nakpodia (2011), reports that the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) recommends a period of twelve weeks for the teaching practice exercise.

University Education students are exposed to teaching practice twice, in the course of their studies. Education students being prospective teachers are expected to be duly trained practically in order to be well equipped for the teaching task ahead of them as recommended in the National Policy on Education by the (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Colleges of Education students are not exempted from the exercise. They are however exposed to the exercise once in the course of their studies, that is to say they spend a full semester on the programme unlike the university teaching practice exercise pattern which is usually twice in the course of the program. On the long run, it equals 12 weeks which is equivalent to the full term or semester spent by the students of the colleges of education.

The university teaching practice exercise takes place at two different stages in the course of their studies. Thus, student-teachers are provided the chance to familiarize him/herself with teaching and learning skills in their different forms as well as discuss the experiences openly and critically with his/her co-students and

supervisors. The teaching practice experiences build the foundations for a student-teacher's general idea on the teacher's work. The trainee is given feedback on his/her actions during the practice and guided to self-assessment in order to make him/her conscious of the essential features of the teacher's work. An understanding of the student-teachers' experience according to Marais and Meier (2004) will facilitate the teacher training institutions' awareness on how to enable student-teachers achieve the desired outcomes from the teaching practice exercise.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigerian universities, teaching practice exercise is undertaken by education students twice during the course of their studies. The exposures are usually for six weeks each. During the exercise and after, student teachers have the opportunity to interact with their co-student teachers and supervisors about their experiences, strengths, weaknesses and problems encountered during the exercise. More importantly, supervisors give feedback to student-teachers on the level of their effectiveness. Usually, at least two supervisors are assigned to supervise them on the field.

The reports from the supervisors, interactions and corrections from other co-student teachers are expected to strengthen or impact on the student-teachers' effectiveness in the second teaching practice exercise. Again, it is often said that 'experience is the best teacher' and that' practice makes perfect'. A student-teacher haven't been exposed to the exercise the first time is expected to perform better at the second teaching practice exercise but this is not always the case. Some students perform better at first exercise or have similar scores at both exercises more so, some student teachers repeat terrible mistakes that ought to have been corrected in the first teaching practice exercise and also, so many of them exhibit high level of anxiety during their second teaching practice supervision. Thus, one would wonder if students do not acquire or gain necessary teaching experience during the first teaching practice exercise. Therefore, the researchers deemed it necessary to investigate the prediction (contribution) of the first teaching practice exercise on the second.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. Does the performance of student-teachers in the first teaching practice exercise of 2015/16 session predict their performance in the second teaching practice exercise of 2016/17 session?
2. Is there a differential prediction of the student teachers' performance in first teaching practice exercise of 2015/16 session and second teaching practice exercise of 2016/17 session by sex?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

1. The performance of student-teachers in the first teaching practice exercise of 2015/16 session does not significantly predict their performance in the second teaching practice exercise of 2016/17 session.
2. There is no significant differential prediction of the student teachers' performance in first teaching practice exercise of 2015/16 session and second teaching practice exercise of 2016/17 session by sex.

Purpose of the Study

This study aimed at investigating the extent to which university student teachers' first teaching practice performance predicts their second teaching practice performance as well as to determine the differential prediction based on sex of the student teachers.

Significance of the Study

The information obtained from this study will help address some of the challenges confronting the teaching practice program in Nigeria. More importantly, the effectiveness of the program will enable student teachers have a smooth ride into the teaching profession. Again, it will provide all stakeholders in the educational system, especially in teacher education, the right and useful information needed for them to intervene appropriately to improve and promote teaching practice programme.

Methods

The research design employed in this study is the survey research design using correlation approach. The population of the study comprised 1,720 students from seven departments out of the eight (08) new departments in the faculty (Adult and Non-Formal Education, CIT (Curriculum and Instructional Technology), DEF (Department of Educational Foundations), DEM (Department of Educational Management), HKS (Human Kinetics and Sports Science), HSE (Health, Safety and Environmental Education) and VTE (Vocational and Technical Education) of the Faculty of Education in University of Benin. The eighth department which is Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology was exempted as the department was not having student teachers at the time the study was carried out. Sample size of 350 students was randomly sampled from the faculty. Systematic sampling technique was adopted for selection: A fixed interval based on the number of students in the department was used to select 50 students from each department. The instrument used was a proforma designed by the researchers. The proforma carried the first and second teaching practice scores of the students.

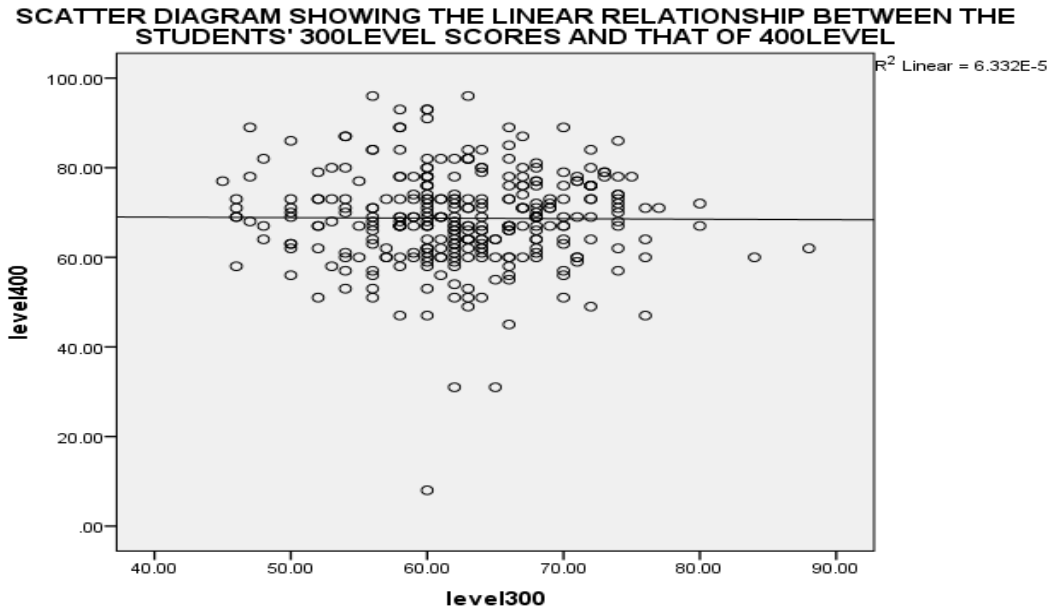
The teaching practice exercise scores for the 2015/16 and 2016/2017 sessions were the data used for the study that is, the 300 level and 400 level teaching practice scores

of the same students were collected from the teaching practice coordinator. The scores are assumed valid and reliable as they were scores obtained from the Faculty graded proforma for assessing teaching practice students, scores approved by the Faculty Board of Studies and senate of the university. Data collected were analyzed using linear regression with the help of SPSS statistical package.

Results

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The performance of student-teachers in the first teaching practice exercise does not significantly predict their performance in the second.



The figure revealed that the line of best fit of the relationship between the students' 300level scores is parallel to the x-axis.

The implication of this is that the linear relationship between the students' 300level and 400level scores is neither positive non-negative.

Table 1a: Model Summary of Regression Analysis of the Prediction of First TP Performance on the Second TP Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Significance
1	Regression	104.940	1	104.940	1.127	.289
			348	93.129		
	Residual	32408.775				
	Total	32513.714	349			

a. Dependent variable; 400 level

b. predictors; (constant), 300 level

Table 1b: Parameter Estimates of Regression Analysis of the Prediction of First TP Performance on the Second TP Performance

Model	**Unstandarzided Coefficients**	**Standardized coefficients**	**R**	**R-square**	**Adjusted R-square**
	B	Standard Error	Beta		
Constant	68.1891	1.060	1057	.003	.001
300 level	.015	.014	.057		

Table 1b revealed that the R Square is .003. This means that 0.3% of the dependent variable (400level scores) was explained by the predictor (300level scores). The constant term was approximately 68.2 and the predictor (300level scores) was .02 and r which is .06 represents the correlation between the predictor and the dependent variable. In Table 1a, it was revealed that the p-value which is .289 is greater than .05 Alpha significant levels. Therefore, the independent variable (300level scores) did not significantly contribute to the prediction of the dependent variable (400level scores). The regression equation is Y = .02X+68.2, where Y is the 400level score and the X is the 300level score.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant differential prediction of the student teachers' performance in first teaching practice exercise of 2015/16 session and second teaching practice exercise of 2016/17 session by sex.

Table 2a: Male Students' Model Summary

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate.
	.040	.002	.005	10.560

a. Predictors: (Constant), 300level Male students' scores

Table 2a revealed that the R Square was .002 and the standard error of estimate ($SE_{1)}$ was 10.560. The implication of this result is that only 0.2% of the dependent variable (400level scores) was explained by the independent variable (300level scores).

Table 2b: Male Students' Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandadized coefficient		Standadized coefficient	t	significance
	B	Starndard error	Beta		
Constant	63.821	7.259		8.792	.0001
300 level	0.59	.115	.040	.511	.610

a. Dependent Variable: 400level
b. Predictors: (Constant), 300level male scores

Table 2b revealed that the approximate constant term was 63.8 and the predictor variable was .06. The regression equation is:

Y_1=.06X_1+63.8
$_1$…………………………………. (1)

Where Y_1 is the dependent variable (400level score) and the X_1 is the predictor.

Table 2c: Female Students' Model Summary

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate.
	.049[a]	.002	.003	10.980

a. Predictors: (Constant), 300level female students' scores

Table 2c revealed that the R Square was .002 and the standard error of estimate (SE_2) was 10.98. This implies that only 0.2% of the dependent variable was explained by the predictor.

Table 2d: Female Students' Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized coefficient		Standard coefficient	T	Significance
	B	Standard error	Beta		
Constant	74.568	7.146		10.436	.001
300l	0.075	.114	0.49	.662	.509

a. Dependent Variable: 400level
b. Predictors: (Constant), 300level female scores

In Table 2d, the constant term was 74.57 and the coefficient of the independent variable was .08. The equation of regression is

Y_2 = 74.57 + .08 X_2……. (2), where Y_2 is the dependent variable (400level female score) and X_2 is the predictor (300level female score).

Comparing equations (1) and (2), the predictor in equation (1) was .06 while that of equation (2) was .08. The constant term of equation (1) and (2) were 63.8 and 74.57 respectively. The implication of these results is that the two equations are both gradient and intercept biased. Hence there was differential prediction between male and female students.

More so, from Table 2a male standard error of the estimate (SE_1) was 10.560 and table 2c revealed that the female standard error of the estimate (SE_2) was 10.980

$$(SE_1)^2 = (10.560)^2$$
$$= 111.514$$

$$(SE_2)^2 = (10.980)^2$$
$$= 120.560$$

$$F_{cal} = (SE_1)^2 \div (SE_2)^2$$

$$= (111.514) \div (120.560)$$
$$= 0.925$$

F_{tab} at p = .05 = 1.26, $df_1 = 161 - 2 = 159$ and $df_2 = 189 - 2 = 187$.

Since $F_{cal} < F_{tab,}$ there was no significant differential prediction of 300level teaching practice scores on the 400level scores between male and female students. Hence the null hypothesis is retained.

Discussion

The results revealed that students' first teaching practice scores did not significantly predict their second teaching practice scores. In line with the finding of this study, Oluwatayo and Adebule, (2012) in their study titled "Assessment of Teaching Performance of Student-teachers on Teaching Practice" found that previous experience of teaching has no significant influence on teaching performance of the student-teachers. This result was a surprise to Oluwatayo and Adebule as they expected the 400-Level student-teachers to have higher teaching performance than their 300-Level counterpart because of the former's previous exposure to teaching practice which might have provided them with higher experience. On the contrary, Akinsola (2014) found that student teachers were more confident at the second teaching practice and the level of anxiety was lower than their first teaching practice. The finding of this study could be attributed to the variations in the supervisors awarding of marks and grades. According to Leke-ateh, Assan and Debeila (2013), the assessment and awarding of teaching practice marks are subjective. Muyengwa and Bukaliya, (2015), in a similar view, noted that grades awarded by different assessors tended to be at variance. It was also found in the study of Oyedeji and Osarumwense, (2017) that teaching practice supervisors do not stay for enough time to watch the supervisees when teaching. Hence, their assessments could be inaccurate as every aspect of the teaching is not observed by the supervisors. Nakpodia (2011) noted that, the start and end of lessons, and checking of students' notebooks are part of what supervisors evaluate in order to give the right assessment of the teaching practice of students. More so, it could be that students who have experienced the teaching practice exercise do not take the exercise seriously when they go the second time. So, they take the exercise for granted while the first timers engage in it with all seriousness.

Also, it was revealed that there is no significant differential prediction between male and female student teachers. This result is similar to the one obtained by (Oluwatayo & Adebule, 2012). They found that Gender had no significant influence on teaching performance of the student-teachers. This result is reasonable in the sense that both the male and female student teachers were from the one-cohort of undergraduates in the faculty of education in the same University.

Conclusion

It can be concluded based on the findings of the study that first teaching practice exercise did not significantly predicted the second teaching practice performance and

there is no significant differential prediction based on sex.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was therefore recommended that:

I. Student-teachers should be properly guided to take the exercise seriously at all levels.
II. Effective seminar and induction programme where the supervisors will be properly trained on how to assess student teachers should be organized before they go for supervision.
III. Supervisors should ensure they go to the field with the guidelines on how to assess student teachers and strictly adhere to the guidelines so as to reduce variations in assessment.

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