
Evaluation of the Teaching Practice Programme of Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island Bayelsa State, Nigeria

Dr. Janet Amasingha Kebbi

Department of Educational Foundations,
Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University,
Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

Abstract. The study evaluated the teaching practice programme of the Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The study was guided by three objectives which focused on the evaluation of the orientation, institutional support, and supervisory components of the programme. The study was further guided by the CIPP evaluation model of Stufflebeam (2003). The population of the study comprised of all students who enrolled and participated in the teaching practice programme at the Niger Delta University during the 2019/2020 academic session. From this population, 85 students were used as the sample of the study. The sample was drawn using the convenience sampling technique. A researcher-developed instrument was used for data collection, which was titled *Evaluation of Teaching Practice Inventory (ETPI)*. Data analysis for the study was done using mean and standard deviation. Result revealed that orientation programme and institutional support were considered not adequate, while supervision was considered very adequate. Based on the results, it was recommended that the content of the teaching practice orientation programme should be enhanced to reflect current teaching methodologies, including classroom management techniques, lesson planning strategies, and student assessment methods.

Keywords: evaluation, teaching practice, orientation, institutional support, supervision

Introduction

As a nation invested in the development of her citizens, Nigeria has made considerable effort towards the standardization of education across all its state and territories. The effort of the federal and state governments, as well as other private stakeholders towards achieving effective educational development is anchored on capacity and professional development of the teaching workforce. It has therefore become a primary feature of most educational institution, especially at the University level to develop a functional teacher education programme.

While differences exist, the goal of teacher education programme in Nigeria was generally captured in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). According to the policy document, the major goal of teacher education is the “encouragement of the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers, and providing them with the intellectual and professional background that will be adequate for their assignments and also make them adaptable to changing situations.” From this policy, it is evident that the purpose of teacher development programme can be broadly achieved using two broad strategies: pre-service and in-service training (Adeosun, 2014). After tracing the historical development and contemporary practice of teacher education in Nigeria, Taiwo (1999) opined that while in-service training offers teachers with more innovative approaches to effective teaching, it is pre-service teacher education that provides potential teachers with the foundational principles, theories and opportunities for becoming effective teachers.

In highlighting the components of a holistic teacher education programme, Adeosun (2014), emphasized that teaching practice is a major component that cannot be overemphasized. The teaching practice program is usually conducted in the 2nd or 3rd year of

the teacher training programme in most universities. The duration of this programme in most universities extends between six to twelve weeks. Nakpodia (2011) identified the aim of the teacher practice programme. According to the author, the primary aim of the programme is to provide student-teachers an opportunity the typical experiences of a teacher in the classroom environment. Also, it enables them to meet actual real-life learners and to practicalize the pedagogical principles in a real-classroom environment. Cohen and Manion (1983) cited by Nakpodia (2011) further asserted that teaching practice provides trainee-teachers with the opportunity to engage, observe, share and participate in the teaching process under the supervision of more experienced teachers.

Beyond the policy consideration, other researchers have investigated the practical importance of teaching practice in teacher education programmes. Specifically, Adagba (2005) asserted that through the teaching practice programme, teacher-trainees are provided with an opportunity to become specialized into the teaching profession. Similarly, Achonye and Ajoku (2003) argued that performance during the teaching practice phase is a significant predictor of future success as a teacher. Additionally, Edem (2003) asserted that the teaching practice period provides trainee teachers with a considerable degree of emotional engagement with various aspects of the profession which not only inspires them, but also empower them to take on additional challenges.

Adeosun (2014) summarized some of the activities that are associated with the teaching practice programme. This includes attendance and participation in every activity in the school they are posted to, develop lesson note based on the syllabus of their subject, and grade students when required. To achieve the goal of the teaching practice programme, principals, vice principals and regular teachers contribute in the supervision of trainee-teachers. Their input is also integrated into the grading done by the faculty supervisor, who also serves as an advisor to the teacher-trainee.

From the extant literature, the major components and benefits of teaching practice programmes in Nigerian universities include:

- **Structure and Objectives:** Teaching practice programs in Nigerian universities aim to provide student teachers with hands-on experience in teaching. The programs typically span a specific duration, often one or two semesters, during which students are assigned to schools to observe, assist, and eventually take on teaching responsibilities under the guidance of experienced teachers. The structure may vary across universities, but it generally involves a progression from observation and micro-teaching to full-time teaching.
- **Integration of Theory and Practice:** One of the primary objectives of teaching practice programs is to help student teachers apply the theoretical knowledge they have acquired in their teacher education courses. By being immersed in a real classroom environment, student teachers gain practical insights into instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, and assessment methods. This integration of theory and practice enhances their understanding of pedagogical concepts and equips them with valuable skills.
- **Mentorship and Guidance:** During teaching practice, student teachers are typically assigned a supervising teacher or mentor who provides guidance, feedback, and support. Mentors play a vital role in helping student teachers navigate the challenges of the classroom, offering advice on lesson planning, classroom management, and pedagogical approaches. Their guidance helps student teachers develop their teaching skills and build confidence in their abilities.
- **Reflective Practice:** Teaching practice programs encourage student teachers to engage in reflective practice, wherein they critically analyze their teaching experiences, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and make adjustments accordingly. Reflective

practice helps student teachers develop a deeper understanding of their teaching methods, instructional decisions, and their impact on student learning. It fosters continuous professional growth and enhances the quality of teaching.

- **Classroom Management and Discipline:** One significant aspect of teaching practice programs is learning effective classroom management and discipline techniques. Student teachers gain firsthand experience in creating a positive learning environment, managing student behaviour, and resolving conflicts. They learn to implement strategies to engage students, maintain discipline, and ensure a conducive atmosphere for learning.
- **Professional Networking:** Teaching practice programs provide opportunities for student teachers to establish connections with fellow educators, school administrators, and the wider educational community. This networking can be beneficial for future job prospects, collaboration, and professional development. Student teachers can learn from experienced educators, participate in professional development workshops, and gain exposure to different teaching approaches and methodologies.
- **Assessments and Evaluation:** Universities assess student teachers' performance during teaching practice programs through various means, such as lesson plans, teaching portfolios, classroom observations, and feedback from mentors and supervising teachers. These assessments help universities evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher education programs and provide valuable feedback to student teachers for their growth and improvement.

Previous research has investigated on the evaluation of teaching practice programmes in different institutions. For instance, Andabai (2013) investigated on the impact of teaching practice on trainee teachers in the Niger Delta University. Finding from the study showed that the programme impacted on the respondents because it enabled them build their confidence and competences in lesson preparation and presentation. It also helped them develop administrative skills such as record keeping and documentation of students' activities. Similarly, Amakiri (2021) conducted a research on the evaluation of teaching practice in South-South Nigeria. Findings from the study showed that the level of preparation of teacher trainees before the programme is inadequate, especially as regards non-cognitive assessment. Other challenges identified include irregular supervision and poor feedback from supervisor. From the review above, it is apparent that previous studies have investigated on teaching practice programmes in Nigeria. Also, the study of Andabai (2013) was limited to the impact of the teaching practice programme on the students, and not specifically on the evaluation of the programme. As seen above, none of the studies above investigated on the evaluation of teaching practice programme at the Nigeria Delta University. It was to fill this gap in the literature that informed the conduct of the current study.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to evaluate the teaching practice programme in the Niger Delta University. Specifically, the objectives of this study include to:

1. Evaluate the orientation programme for the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University. Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State.
2. Evaluate the institutional support system for trainee-teachers during the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University. Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State.
3. Evaluate supervision component of the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University. Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State.

Methodology

For this study, the CIPP model of evaluation was taken as the framework guiding the study. This model was taken to guide the study because the focus of the study was aimed at

making a deliberate effort to “identify and correct mistakes made in evaluation practice, and it is also the way to invent and test needed new procedures for more effective practices” (Stufflebeam, 2003). The population of the study comprised of all students who enrolled and participated in the teaching practice programme at the Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island during the 2019/2020 academic session. From this population, 85 students were used as the sample of the study. The sample was drawn using the convenience sampling technique which is a non-probability sampling technique. A researcher-developed instrument was used for data collection, which was titled *Evaluation of Teaching Practice Inventory (ETPI)*. The instrument was constructed using a four-point Likert scale of Very Adequate (VA), Adequate (AD), Not Adequate (NA), and Not Available (NV) which were scored as 4, 3, 2, and 1 point(s) respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts, one each in educational foundations, Arts education and Science education. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using the Cronbach Alpha method which yielded a coefficient of 0.87. Data analyses for the study was done using mean and standard deviation.

Result Presentation

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the evaluation of the orientation programme for the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University

	Item	$\bar{X}$	SD	Criterion $\bar{X}$	Decision
1	The orientation program provided me with a clear understanding of the expectations and requirements of the teaching practice program	2.06	0.89	2.50	NA
2	The orientation program adequately prepared me for the challenges and responsibilities of the teaching practice program.	2.36	1.03		NA
3	The orientation program effectively introduced me to the necessary teaching methodologies and strategies.	2.27	0.86		NA
4	The orientation program provided valuable information and resources to support my professional development	2.18	0.91		NA
5	I am satisfied with the quality and usefulness of the orientation program	2.05	1.02		NA
	Grand Mean	2.18	0.94		NA

From the result shown in Table 1 on the evaluation of the orientation programme for the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University, it was shown that a grand mean value of 2.18 (SD = 0.94) was obtained which suggest that the orientation programme for the teaching practice was evaluated as not adequate.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the evaluation of institutional support system for trainee-teachers during the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University

	Item	$\bar{X}$	SD	Criterion $\bar{X}$	Decision
1	The assigned schools provided needed support during the programmes	2.10	0.97		NA

2	Principals and staff communicated effectively on their expectations	2.06	0.99	2.50	NA
3	Trainee-teachers feel valued and supported by the institution	2.96	1.05		AD
4	Adequate provisions were made to integrate teacher-trainees into the programme of the institution	2.44	1.07		NA
5	The school provided the resources needed to engage in effective teaching practice	2.17	1.01		NA
	Grand Mean	2.34	1.02		NA

From the result shown in Table 2 on the evaluation of institutional support system for trainee-teachers during the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University, it was shown that a grand mean value of 2.34 (SD = 1.02) was obtained which suggest that the institutional support system for trainee-teachers during the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University was evaluated as not adequate.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation on the evaluation of the supervision component of the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University

	Item	$\bar{X}$	SD	Criterion $\bar{X}$	Decision
1	Supervisors provided valuable feedback and guidance during the teaching practice	3.22	0.90	2.50	VA
2	Supervisors went prompt and friendly in conducting their assessment of my skills	2.78	0.97		A
3	The feedback provided by the supervisors has helped me to improve my teaching skills.	3.41	0.87		VA
4	My supervisors were accessible and approachable to address any challenge	3.75	1.09		VA
5	Supervisors help in improving my lesson note development and presentation	3.07	0.98		VA
	Grand Mean	3.25	0.96		VA

From the result shown in Table 3 on the evaluation of the supervision component of the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University, it was shown that a grand mean value of 3.25 (SD = 0.96) was obtained which suggest that the supervision component during the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University was evaluated as very adequate.

Discussion of Findings

From the first objective of this study, the results, as shown in Table 1, indicated a grand mean value of 2.18 (SD = 0.94), which suggests that the participants evaluated the orientation programme as not adequate. One possible reason for the perceived inadequacy of the orientation programme could be a lack of comprehensive content. It is crucial for an orientation programme to cover all essential aspects of the teaching practice, such as classroom management, lesson planning, and student assessment. If any of these components were not adequately addressed or if the content was outdated, participants may have felt ill-prepared for their teaching practice experience. Another contributing factor could be the delivery method of the orientation programme. Effective orientation programmes often utilize a combination of instructional strategies, including lectures, workshops, demonstrations, and practical exercises. If the teaching methods employed during the orientation programme were not engaging or

interactive, participants may have found it challenging to retain and apply the information effectively.

Furthermore, the duration of the orientation programme may have influenced its effectiveness. Research suggests that an orientation programme that is too short may not provide sufficient time for participants to develop the necessary skills and knowledge required for successful teaching practice. Conversely, an overly long orientation programme may lead to information overload and decreased engagement. Therefore, it is essential to strike a balance between the duration of the orientation programme and its content. The result of this study is similar to that obtained by Amakiri (2021) who found out that the level of preparation for teacher trainees was inadequate among universities in the South-South Region of Nigeria.

From the second objective of this study, the result showed that the participants perceived the institutional support system as not adequate, as evidenced by a grand mean value of 2.34 (SD = 1.02). Firstly, it is possible that the resources and infrastructure provided by the institution are insufficient to support the trainee-teachers adequately. Limited access to teaching materials, technology, and classroom resources can hinder their ability to effectively carry out their teaching responsibilities. This lack of necessary resources may negatively impact the trainee-teachers' confidence and overall performance during the teaching practice programme. This likely the case as most trainee-teachers are posted to private schools which lack adequate resources. Additionally, the study results may be influenced by the overall organizational culture and communication within the institution. A supportive and collaborative environment is vital for trainee-teachers' success during their teaching practice programme. If there is a lack of effective communication channels and a culture that does not prioritize trainee-teachers' needs, it can significantly impact their experience and perception of institutional support. This result is similar to that of Andabai (2013) who identified unfriendliness and support from regular teachers as well as lack of instructional materials as challenges of teaching practice programme in Bayelsa State.

Finally, the result from objective three indicated that the supervision component was perceived as very adequate by the participants. These results align with the goals and objectives of an effective teaching practice programme, where supervision plays a crucial role in supporting and guiding aspiring teachers. The high mean value suggests that the supervision provided during the teaching practice programme at Niger Delta University was perceived positively by the participants. This implies that the supervisory practices in place were effective in addressing the needs of the student teachers and facilitating their professional growth.

There could be several reasons contributing to the perceived adequacy of the supervision component. Firstly, it is possible that the supervisors employed a collaborative and supportive approach, focusing on providing constructive feedback, guidance, and mentorship to the student teachers. This approach may have created an environment conducive to learning and professional development, enabling the student teachers to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge.

Additionally, the use of experienced and qualified supervisors could have contributed to the positive evaluation. Supervisors who possess expertise and experience in the field of education are better equipped to observe, assess, and provide meaningful feedback to the student teachers. Their knowledge and understanding of effective teaching practices may have enhanced the quality of supervision and positively influenced the overall evaluation by the students.

Recommendations

Based on the result obtained, the following recommendations were made:

Enhance the orientation content: Conduct a thorough review of the orientation programme's content to ensure that it covers all essential aspects of teaching practice. This may

involve updating the curriculum to reflect current teaching methodologies, including classroom management techniques, lesson planning strategies, and student assessment methods. The content should be comprehensive, relevant, and aligned with the needs of the participants.

Continuous Professional Development: Offer regular training and professional development opportunities for supervisors to keep them updated with the latest research, methodologies, and best practices in teaching. This will ensure that supervisors possess the necessary knowledge and skills to provide effective guidance and support to student teachers.

Standardized Supervision Guidelines: Establish clear and standardized guidelines for supervision practices within the teaching practice programme. These guidelines should outline the expectations, responsibilities, and evaluation criteria for supervisors, ensuring consistency and fairness in the supervision process.

Mentorship and Peer Support: Foster a supportive environment by promoting mentorship and peer support among student teachers. Pairing experienced teachers or alumni with student teachers can provide valuable guidance and encouragement, complementing the role of supervisors and enhancing the overall learning experience.

Improve resource provision: The institution students are posted to should allocate sufficient resources, including teaching materials, technology, and classroom resources, to support trainee-teachers during their teaching practice programme. Adequate access to these resources is essential for effective teaching and learning experiences.

References

- Achuonye, K. A. & Ajoku, L.I. (2003). *Foundations of curriculum: Development and implementation*. Pearl Publishers.
- Adagba, O. & Idu, O. O. (2006). Under funding: An impediment to effective financial administration of higher institution of learning in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economic and Development*, 6(2), 81-93.
- Adeosun, O. (2014). *Teacher education programmes and the acquisition of 21st century: Issues and challenges in Nigeria*. Retrieved 14th March.
- Amakiri, H. A. E. (2021). Reevaluation of teaching practice assessment framework for professional development of teachers in Nigeria: Teacher-trainees perspective. *European Academic Research*, 9(8), 5542-5557.
- Andabai, P.W. (2013). The impact of teaching practice on trainee teachers in the Nigerian tertiary institutions: The Niger Delta University experience. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2, 109-115.
- Edem, D. A. (2003). *Introduction to educational administration in Nigeria*. Leotina Nigeria Ltd.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). *National policy on education*. 4th Edition.
- Nakpodia, E. D. (2011). Teacher and the student practice teaching programme in Nigerian educational system. *International Journal of Educational Administration and policy studies*, 2(3), 33-39.
- Stufflebeam, D. L. (2003). Institutionalizing evaluation in schools. *International handbook of educational evaluation*, 775-805.
- Taiwo, B. M. (1999). *The development of teacher education in Nigeria*. Paper presented at the First National Conference of the School of Science, St Andrews College of Education, Oyo State.