



ASSESSMENT OF TRAINEE TEACHERS' UTILIZATIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN TEACHING PRACTICE IN EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the status of teacher trainees in relation to their utilization of instructional materials in teaching practice in Ebonyi State. Fifty four teacher trainees proportionately sampled from the three educational zones in the state were observed during teaching practice while teaching English and Mathematics in Primaries 4-6 based on the researchers' constructed Observational Schedule titled: "Utilization of Instructional Materials Assessment Checklist for Teaching Practice Students". (UIMACTPS). The instrument was validated using test retest method and Cronbach procedure was used to obtain reliability co-efficient of 0.81. The study also adopted another researcher- made instrument titled: "Perceptions of Teacher Trainees on Strategies to be adopted to Enhance their Utilization of Instructional Materials in Teaching Practice" (PTTSAEUIMTP). The instrument was pilot tested using trainee teachers from Enugu State College of Education (Technical). A reliability value of 0.79 was obtained using Cronbach procedure. In the Checklist simple percentage was used to rate the weightings while mean and standard deviation formed the basis of data analysis in the questionnaire. t - Test of difference was used to test the hypothesis. Among other things data showed that teacher trainees' proficiency in utilization of instructional materials was not observed. Teacher trainees, as strategies to enhance their use of instructional materials suggested orientation and workshop. It was recommended that Microteaching should be made more demanding to prepare teacher trainees for teaching practice.

KEY WORDS: Trainee-Teachers, Instructional Materials and Teaching Practice.

INTRODUCTION:

Teaching practice is an essential and integral part of the training given to students that are being prepared to take up teaching as a profession. Within the period of this practice the trainees are expected to imbibe relevant teaching skills that would enable them become efficient and competent in the teaching. As a result of the importance attached to teaching practice, every teacher trainee is expected to not only participate in the programme but to obtain a credit pass in it. According to Aggarwal, (2006), teaching practice period is time student teachers get acquainted with teaching profession in its practical terms in the sense that they come face to face with the experiences of teaching and learning.

Instructional materials also known as "teaching aids" are those materials which facilitate learning. The importance of instructional materials cannot be overstressed. Among other things, they help to stimulate learners' participation in learning process. Ikonta (2008) argues that the importance of learning materials lies basically on their ability to stimulate learners' interests, arouse their curiosity and enhance meaningful learning. Instructional materials appear in many forms. Iwuamadi (2008:98) classifies instructional materials primarily into three broad divisions:

1. Audio materials, which include: Radio broadcast audio disc, audiotapes and radio cassettes.
2. Visual materials, which include printed and duplicated materials, textbooks, and periodicals. In fact, visual materials include: Board display, pictorial materials, still projected displays, computer mediated material, etc.
3. Audio-visual materials, which include projected and video material.

In order to grasp the relevant approach to teaching, teacher-trainees are to be properly tutored in the area of utilization of instructional materials. In fact Ezeani (2005) observes that a major aspect of curriculum process is the identification, selection and utilization of appropriate and relevant instruction materials for use in the teaching and learning process. If this is the case then teacher trainees are to imbibe the necessary techniques for effective utilization of instructional materials in their lesson delivery. In the process of seeking answers as to a key pedagogical question like "what do I do to get my student to master a given content?" Obanya (2004) contends that the practicing teacher is often involved in a cycle of activities, which often begin in frustration and ends in frustration.

It is however against this odd that there is every need for teacher trainees to be knowledgeable in the selection and utilization of instructional materials. Poor selection and utilization of instructional materials results in poor teaching and learning. Consequently, this would lead to poor implementation of curriculum content. The findings of this study will enhance teacher trainees' selection and utilization of instructional materials for effective teaching and learning.

Statement of Problem:

In spite of the relevance of instructional materials to lesson delivery teacher trainees seem to lack basic knowledge of their utilization. While a good many seem not to use instructional materials during their lesson delivery in teaching

practice, others seem to lack the skills required for instance as it relates to the particular point in lesson delivery when instructional materials enhance learning. The resultant of such deficiencies is that materials in question seem to distract the very lesson they are to enhance and promote. Instructional materials ought to be integrated with lesson to be delivered such that the two become a unified whole. Against this situation, it seems that some instructional materials adopted by teacher trainees do not relate adequately with certain topics in given subject areas. These circumstances have motivated this study with the problem being: what is the status of teacher trainees in relation to their utilization of the instructional materials during teaching practice in Ebonyi State, Nigeria?

Purpose of Study:

The central purpose of the study was to assess teacher-trainees' utilization of instructional material in teaching practice in Ebonyi State. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Determine how teacher trainees integrated instruction material in their lessons,
2. Ascertain adequacy of instructional materials utilized by teacher trainees in lesson delivery
3. Find out the perceptions of teacher trainees on the strategies to be adopted to enhance their utilization of instructional materials.

Research Questions:

1. How did teacher trainees integrate instructional materials in their lessons?
2. How adequate were the instructional materials utilized by teacher trainees?
3. What are the perceptions of teacher trainees on strategies to be adopted to enhance their utilization of instructional materials in teaching practice?

Hypothesis:

Ho: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teacher trainees on the strategies to be adopted to enhance their utilization of instructional materials in teaching practice at 0.05 level of significance.

METHODOLOGY:

The study is a descriptive survey design carried out in Ebonyi State, Nigeria because of the seeming negative attitude exhibited by teacher trainees towards instructional material especially during their teaching practice. The population of the study consisted of all the teaching practice students of Ebonyi State College of Education for the 2015/2016 session. There were 550 students who attended the teaching practice (Source: Office of the Dean, School of Education). The students were posted randomly across the 13 LGA and 3 educational zones in the state. Out of 550 students, 317 were females and 233 males. Proportionate sampling technique was used to select 31 females and 23 male bringing the sample of study to 54. 18 teacher trainees were selected from each educational zone: Afikpo, Onueke and Abakalki. Six schools were visited in each zone each containing these (3) practicing teachers. The study adopted observational technique, which the sampled teacher trainees were observed in primaries 4-6

while teaching English and Mathematics to determine how they utilized instructional materials to deliver their lesson. The study adopted two instruments. First was researcher-constructed observational schedule titled: "Utilization of Instructional Materials Assessment Checklist for Teaching Practice Students" (UIMACTPS) validated by Measurement and Evaluation experts in Ebonyi State University. The instrument ranged from Not observed 1 point, Ineffective = 2 points, Apprentice = 3 points, Professional = 4 points to Master = 5 points. Again researcher - constructed questionnaire titled: "Perceptions of Teacher Trainees on Strategies to be Adopted to Enhance their Utilization of Instructional Materials in Teaching Practice" (PTTSAEUIMP) was used. It is a - 10- items questionnaire rated 4 points with response modes of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree

(A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with numerical values 4,3,2 and 1 respectively. Fifty-four copies of the questionnaires were distributed to teacher trainees during school visitation. 100 % return was obtained.

Both descriptive (mean, percentage standard deviation) and inferential statistics (t- test) was used for data analysis. For the mean and standard deviation acceptance criteria of 2.5 were adjudged agreed. 50% and above is acceptable value for percentage. Items below the cut off points of 2.5 and 0.5 were rejected.

RESULT:

Table 1: Percentage observations of how teacher-trainees integrated instructional materials in their lessons

S/N	Indicator	Not observed (1)	Ineffective (2)	Apprentice (3)	Professional (4)	Master (5)
1.	Student teacher initiated activities involving the manipulation of material presented.	30 55(%)	5 9.2(%)	19 35(%)	0 0(%)	0 0(%)
2.	Teacher trainees displayed charts on a strategic points to enable learning views	7 13(%)	6 11(%)	37 68.5(%)	4 7(%)	0 0(%)
3.	Practicing teacher centered discussion around the materials presented	40 74(%)	7 13(%)	6 11(%)	1 1.8(%)	0 0(%)
4.	Student teacher copied out reading test on card board	31 57(%)	9 1 66(%)	6 11(%)	8 1.8(%)	1 0(%)
5.	Teacher trainee reproduced texts on flip charts	47 57(%)	7 13(%)	0 0(%)	0 0(%)	0 0(%)
6.	Student teacher rearranged classroom to enable pupils have access	50 93(%)	4 7(%)	0 0(%)	0 0(%)	0 0(%)
7.	Practicing teacher tape-recorded text for audio exercise	51 94(%)	3 5.5(%)	0 0(%)	0 0(%)	0 0(%)
8.	Teacher trainee passed material round the class for closer consideration by pupils	6 11(%)	20 37(%)	25 46(%)	3 5.5(%)	0 0(%)
9.	Teacher trainee played video tapes for public to see	54 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
10.	Practicing teacher added reality to material abstraction	27 50%	10 18.5	7 12.9	5 9.2%	5 9.2%

Data in table 1 revealed that utilization of instructional material among practicing teachers was very poor. Items numbers 1,3,4,5,6,7,9 and 10 have 55%, 74%, 87%, 93%, 94%, 100 and 50% respectively indicating very poor utilization of instructional materials as observed.

Table 2: Adequacy of Teacher-Trainees Instructional Materials Assessment Checklist

S/N	Indicator	Not observed (1)	Ineffective (2)	Apprentice (3)	Professional (4)	Master (5)
1.	Teacher trainees selected materials based on instructional objectives	5 9.2%	30 55%	19 35(%)	0 0(%)	0 0(%)
2.	Practicing teacher adopted instruction materials in line with instructional methods	33 61%	10 18%	7 13%	3 5.5%	2 1.8%
3.	Student teacher selected materials suitable for learners levels	5 18.5%	6 11%	13 24%	13 24%	20 37%
4.	Learners participated in the choice of materials	40 74%	10 18.5%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
5.	Instructional materials were adequate for learners environment	34 62.9%	20 37%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
6.	Instructional materials reflected learners' goals, needs and aspirations	29 53%	3 8.8%	4 7%	0 0(%)	0 0(%)

Data in table 2 show that items 1,2,4,5 and 6 have 55%, 61% 74% 62% and 53.7% respectively indicating inadequacy of instructional materials selected and utilized by teacher trainees.

Table 3: Means and standard deviations of perceptions of teacher trainees on strategies to be adopted to enhance their utilization of instructional materials in teaching practice

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Remarks
1.	Government should provide instructional materials in school to check the problem of short supply.	35	14	4	-	3.6	0.92	Agree
2.	Colleges of Education are to organize compulsory orientation and special trainings for trainees teachers prior to teaching practice	40	14	-	-	3.6	0.92	Agree
3.	Micro-teaching is to emphasize selection and utilization of instructional materials.	38	16	-	-	3.7	0.94	Agree
4.	Computer-based education and training should be integrated into teacher education to enable teacher trainees utilize effectively computer based materials	50	4	-	-	3.9	0.92	Agree
5.	The available materials in school are to be properly managed and preserved to prevent their damages.	44	10	-	-	3.6	0.98	Agree
6.	Education technology in colleges of education is to inculcate relevant skill for selection and utilization of instructional material	48	6	-	-	4.0	0.98	Agree
7.	More time should be given for lesson delivery in primary schools to enable practicing teacher utilize instructional materials effectively	10	15	10	19	2.3	0.73	Agree
8.	Conditions (physical, materials and social) under which practicing teachers often work ought to be improved	31	13	-	-	3.0	0.85	Agree
9.	Socializing through group works could enable trainees teachers improve their capacity to select and utilize teaching materials	40	14	-	-	3.7	0.44	Agree
10.	Trainees teacher are to learn how to involve the pupils in selection of instructional materials	39	15	-	-	3.7	3.7	Agree

Data in Table 3 show that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10 have means and standard deviations of 3.6, 3.6 3.7, 3.9, 3.6, 4.0, 3.0, 3.7, 3.7, and 0.92, 0.92, 0.94, 0.96, 0.92, 0.98, 0.85, 0.94 and 0.94 respectively. The values are above the cut of point and are accepted as factors. Item 7 with values of 2.3 and 0.73 is rejected. Standard deviations are slim indicating homogeneity in practicing teachers' responses

Table 4: t test of difference between the means rating of male and female trainee teachers

Categories	X	SD	N	DF	t-CAL	t -TAB	P-Value
Male trainees	3.6	0.92	23	52	11.4	1.96	0.05
Female trainees	3.9	0.96	31				

In table 4 t- cal is greater than t- tab consequently the hypothesis is rejected. Alternate hypothesis is upheld meaning that mean ratings of male and female trainee teacher are significantly different.

DISCUSSION:

Results in table I show that teacher-trainees have poor knowledge of selection and utilization of instructional materials. Student teachers were not aware that learning activities should be centered on materials selected. Generally speaking teacher-trainees lack the relevant skills for effective utilization of instructional materials such as display of instructional materials, centering of discussions around instructional material presented, copying of flips charts, re-arrangement of classroom to enable pupils have access to materials presented, playing of videotapes etc. These findings are in line with that of Ominyi (2008) who found that student teachers found it very boring to integrate instructional materials to their lesson delivery.

In table 2 it was found that the instructional materials selected and utilized by teacher-trainees were not adequate in terms of agreement with instructional objectives, methods, learners' participation in choice of materials, learners' environment, learners goals, needs and aspirations. Practically, trainees' teachers' instructional materials were not in line with instructional objectives stated in their unit plans. Their methodologies were not consistent with the materials adopted. Learners did not participate in the provision of instruction materials, etc. Student teachers' instructional material differed from the goals of pupils' learning. Olof (2015) identified lack of proper knowledge of use of instructional material as major cause of variance in the utilization of instructional materials. Jegede (2009) remarks that any instructional materials chosen should be related to the goals of learning, that is, the instructional materials should be designed to enable the pupils to achieve the goals more effectively. Obanya (2004) notes that there should be close relationship between instructional materials and teaching methods for achievement of learning goals.

Table 3 advances strategies to be adopted to enhance utilization of instructional materials. The study identified government's provision of instructional materials in schools; compulsory orientation for practicing teachers, improved micro-teaching exercise, emphasis on computer education, effective management conditions of practicing teachers, group work on the part of teacher trainees and involvement of learners in choice of materials as factors to be adopted to enhance teacher trainees utilizations of instructional materials in teaching practice. Edemfield (2010) argues that learners should be involved in the selection of instructional materials to be used. Jegede (2009) maintains that technology education of student teacher will go along way to enhance integration of computer and ICT materials into lesson delivery

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Student teachers constitute a crucial bloc in the realization of educational goals. As would be teachers, their role in curriculum implementation cannot be underscored. Since this is the case, efforts should be made to inculcate in them relevant skills that would enable them become effective teachers in their respective areas of studies. Teaching Practice time is a very important period in training of the teachers. It is a time to expose teacher trainees to the experiences of teaching and learning. They are also expected to come to terms with the challenges of teaching and learning. Instructional materials are indispensable in the teaching learning process hence the need to educate teacher trainees on the utilization of those materials. It is from this locus that the need for utilization of instructional materials in the teaching learning process is viewed. It is therefore recommended that:

1. Educational Technology as course of study should be given proper attention in Colleges of Education and Faculties of Education in the Universities in connection to this; qualified personnel should be employed to handle it.
2. Micro- Teaching should be made more demanding. Teacher trainees who have performed badly in Microteaching should not qualify for teaching practice.
3. Teacher trainees being prepared for teaching practice should be conducted a- two- week - orientation programme within which teaching skills are to be reiterated.
4. Since theory informs practice, teacher trainees should be exposed to the theories of teaching whereupon, the types of methods, teaching aids selection of materials, adequacy of materials and content, etc are to be seriously discussed and understood.
5. There is need for government to provide instructional materials in schools especially those ones that cannot easily be improvised. In this way teacher trainees on teaching practice can readily use them.
6. There is also the need to improve the working conditions, of teacher trainees on teaching practice. This would enable them to be 'more properly disposed psychologically and otherwise to discharge their duties.

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