

## **PEDAGOGICAL READINESS AND PRE-SERVICE SOCIAL STUDIES AND CIVIC EDUCATION TEACHERS TEACHING PRACTICE EXPERIENCE IN OGUN STATE**

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### ***Abstract***

*This study examined the pedagogical readiness of teachers in training on their teaching practice experience. The study set out to assess the pedagogical readiness of pre-service teachers in terms of knowledge acquisition, lesson notes writing skills, method of teaching skills and handling of instructional materials before their teaching practice. The study employed descriptive survey research design. Seventy-six (76) pre-service teachers were selected to form the sample for the study using stratified sampling techniques. Data collected through structure questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics. The findings of the study showed that pre-service teachers possessed average skills of writing lesson note; they were not taught different teaching strategies by their lecturers; they had not been exposed to proper handling of teaching aids, and they possessed average knowledge of what they are to teach before their teaching practice experience. It was concluded that lecturers do not expose the students to enough micro-teaching before their teaching practice. Based on the findings, the study recommends that pre-service teachers should be exposed to the skill of writing lesson notes; lecturers should use different teaching strategies to teach the students and all teachers in training must undergo micro-teaching before their teaching practice experience.*

**Keywords:** *Pedagogy, Pedagogical readiness, teaching Practice experience, Social Studies, Civic Education*

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## **Introduction**

Teaching practice is an important part of the teacher training programme. It represents the range of experiences which teachers in training are exposed to while working in the classroom and school environment during the course of their training (Marais & Meier, 2004). Teaching practice is an aspect of teacher educational programme in Nigeria during which teachers in training are given the opportunity to put theory into practice. It is the first model of teacher education where student teachers in training put what they have learned during the course of their studies into practice in a real classroom setting and practices the pedagogical skills of becoming a professional teacher under the watch of a professional teacher (Huey, 2023).

Before the student teachers are posted into their schools of practice for observation by expert teachers and put into practice the content, skills, pedagogy and classroom management techniques, they would have been exposed to courses covering the contents, pedagogy, and handling of resource materials, classroom management and micro teaching. This is to prepare them theoretically for the rudiments of the profession. This training in the Faculty of Education or university of education always takes periods between 6 (six) to 7(seven) semesters in Nigeria. The teaching practice period for university education students in Nigeria covers about 4(four) to 6(six) months, depending on the structure of the school programme. This activity, where student teachers are placed in schools in order to gain teaching experience is referred to as teaching practice.

Exposing pre-service teachers to practical teaching for specific periods of time is an important aspect of teacher's educational programme. Pre-service teachers are posted to schools for practical experience after they have been groomed theoretically. The essence of teaching practice is to allow the pre-service teachers to put into practice all what they have learned in the classroom. Experiences have shown that teaching practice teachers find it difficult to perform some tasks during their teaching practice session. Factors such as new environment, the ability to transform theory into practice and non-cooperation of the teaching practice school staff have been ascribed to teaching practice teachers' low performance during teaching practice. However, not much has been illustrated about the adequacy of the preparedness of the students for their teaching practice exercise. This study therefore examines the pedagogical readiness of pre-service Social Studies teachers' teaching practice experience in teachers' educational institutions in Ogun state. The study is guided by the following objective:

### **Objective:**

1. To assess the pedagogical readiness of pre-service teachers in terms of knowledge acquisition, lesson note writing skills, method of teaching skills and handling of instructional materials before their teaching practice.

### **Research question**

1. How ready are the pre-service teachers' in-terms of knowledge acquisition, lesson note writing skills, method of teaching skills and handling of instructional materials?

## Literature review

Teaching practice encompasses the entire learning experiences of student teachers in schools during the internship activities (Mokoena, 2017). Teaching practice is in-process training for teachers to show evidence of the knowledge, skills and pedagogy that have been acquired during training, Andabai (2011) posits that teaching practice is the period when teachers in training demonstrate teaching principles, pedagogy, handling of resource materials and practical exercise which involves different activities of daily school programme. Teaching practice is a period of teacher education during which students practice knowledge and skills taught during the course of study. The period provides real life teaching experience within which the teacher in training observes the intricacy and the reality of being a teacher (Koross, 2016; Manjatta, Katja, Sonja, & Minaa, 2023).

Teaching practice is a period where teachers in training acquire attitudes that enlighten them about teachers' activities, rights and responsibilities, and it connotes a field of experiments that teachers in training are exposed to (Al-Shudaifat, 2020). Teaching practice gives teachers in training the opportunity to observe and experience the actual teaching and learning in a real environment where they take charge and translate theory into practice (Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2009). During the process of internships, teachers in training engage in the art of teaching and experimenting with different teaching techniques, as they gain their first teaching experience with the aim of becoming professional teachers. Teaching practice helps to improve pre-service teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes and affords them the opportunity to translate theory into practice under the supervision of a professional teacher. Studies have shown that individuals learn through experience in collaboration with careful preparation, good mentoring, discussions with colleagues and well-designed courses (Basturk, 2016). It is believed that the more effective teaching practice is, the better the opportunities for teachers in training to develop their teaching knowledge and skills acquired and the attitude to becoming professional teachers. The whole essence of teaching practice, therefore, is to ensure that teachers in training are placed in schools where they can put into practice their pedagogical and classroom management skills and interact with the realities of the classroom and school environment (Mokoena, 2017).

The aims of teaching practice in Nigeria are to: develop a positive attitude in pre-service teachers towards the teaching profession; expose them to real life classroom experience; help the teacher in training to translate theory into practice; acculturate the teachers in training with school environments, equip teachers in training with appropriate knowledge, skills, competence, disposition, attitude and consciousness that prepare the teacher in training for full-time teaching (Oparah, Nwoke, & Ikwuanusi, 2017; Chukwudebelu & Eruchalu, 2022).

The word pedagogy comes from the Greek word, which means the art of teaching children. Pedagogy simply means teaching and what we receive in education is called pedagogical training. Pedagogy is concerned with the theory and practice of learning and how the process influences all round development of learners (Rajendra & Sanothimi, 2021). Pedagogy is an unavoidably ethical activity that is undertaken primarily for the

sake of the learner (Norm & Hanno, 2023). Pedagogy requires meaningful classroom interactions and respect between educators and learners. The goal is to help students build on prior learning and develop skills and attitudes and for educators to devise and present curriculum in a way that is relevant to students, aligning with their needs and cultures. Shaped by the teacher's own experiences, pedagogy must take into consideration the context in which learning takes place. It is not about the materials used, but the process, and the strategy adopted which leads to the achievement of meaningful cognitive learning. To Leach and Moon (1999), pedagogy simply means the practice that a teacher, together with a particular group of learners creates, enacts and experiences. It is an act of teaching together with its attendant discourse. It is what one needs to know, and the skills one needs to command in order to make and justify the many different kinds of decisions of which teaching is constituted. Pedagogy, therefore, is a joint activity in which the learner has an active role. Moreover, even when "pedagogy" in teacher education is discussed, the term is used as a substitute for method or technique (Grossman, 2005). Loughran (2008) defines pedagogy in teachers' education as knowledge of teaching about teaching and a knowledge of learning about teaching and how the two influence each other in the pedagogic episodes that teacher educators create to offer students' teaching experiences that might inform their developing views of practice.

Koross (2016) examined students' experiences and its impact on their perception of the teaching profession and assessed the challenges that students encounter while in the schools that they are attached to teaching practice. The findings of the study indicated that students' experiences had an impact on their perception of the teaching profession, and they did experience challenges while on teaching practice. Göçer (2016) assessed the effectiveness of micro-teaching, a training technique used to help student teachers establish a strong pedagogical background. The study revealed that micro-teaching, which was conducted in consideration of instructor feedback, was helpful in overcoming the fears and concerns of student teachers and that micro-teaching represented a significant opportunity for gaining experience. Mokoena (2017) examined the experiences of student teachers towards teaching practice in an open and distance learning (ODL) institution in South Africa. The findings showed that student teachers experienced challenges with regard to on-time placement in schools, supervision and mentoring. Moses (2019) examined the challenges faced by students' teachers during teaching practice exercise in Ogun. A random sample was used to select three tertiary institutions and one hundred students for the study. The findings showed that there is a significant relationship between problems faced by student teachers during teaching practices and their performance; there is a significant relationship between classroom management challenges facing student-teachers and their performance and there is significant relationship between the challenges faced by student-teachers from their supervisors and their performance. The researcher concluded that student-teachers encounter difficulties that result in problems associated with the classroom management, conducive environment, curriculum-development and instruction and supervision. Dondo, et al., (2019) investigated the impact of teaching practice on students' teaching effectiveness in secondary schools in Benue State using descriptive survey design and samples of 310 pre-service teachers. The results show that teaching practice has a

significant impact on students' lesson planning and lesson note preparation in secondary schools in Benue State.

Nja and Sampson (2020) examined teaching practice experiences of science student-teachers and their effectiveness in the Department of Science Education, Faculty of Education, University of Calabar, Nigeria using case study research design. The sample size was 200 Science Education students and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to analyse data. The results show that there is a significant relationship between proper orientation, financial support, teaching subject in area of specialisation and professional standards of mentors on teaching practice effectiveness. Aliyu et al., (2021) assessed teaching practice experience of pre-service Chemistry teachers at Sokoto State University using survey design with 220 sample students of Sokoto State University and situates the study on variation theory. The findings of the study revealed a preliminary exhibition of attitudes towards teaching practice before posting in practicing schools. The result also indicates maximum utilization and application of instructional materials by pre-service chemistry teachers during teaching practice. Mpate et al., (2023) explored Tanzania's pre-service teachers' demonstration of knowledge and skills of teaching during teaching practice. The study was conducted in three secondary schools located in Moshi rural District in Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania, involving five pre-service teachers, five supervisors mentor teachers from the three pre-service teachers practicing. The study used descriptive qualitative design and thematic analysis. The result shows that the pre-service teachers had limited skills in lesson preparation and classroom management, which negatively impacted their learning during teaching practice. Marjatta et al., (2023) explored the role of teaching practice in the training of special education teachers in Finland. The results showed that curricula could be compressed into basic special education competences, advanced methods, collaboration and interaction skills.

### **Theoretical framework**

The theoretical foundation that supports this study is experiential learning. Kolb, (1984), explains that "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience". Northern Illinois University, (2013) describes experiential learning as learning through action, learning by doing, learning through experience, and learning through discovery and exploration. Exposing teachers in training to practical skills, it will help them to experience practical teaching in the real environment. Experiential learning is also built upon a foundation of interdisciplinary and constructivist learning. Experiential methodology does not treat each subject as being walled off in its own room, unconnected to any other subjects. Dewey popularized the concept of Experiential Education, which focuses on problem-solving and critical thinking rather than memorization and rote learning. An internship or community-based experience may be just that, but it also may be more, linking abstract, isolated experiences to scholarly theories (Breuing, 2017). Therefore, experiential education can be a useful framework for learning-centred educational innovation, including instructional design, curriculum development, and life-long learning (Kolb, 2014).

Proponents of experiential learning assert that students will be more motivated to learn when they have a personal stake in the subject rather than being assigned to review a topic or read a textbook chapter (Northern Illinois University, 2013). A primary responsibility of educators is not only to be aware of the general principle of the shaping of current experience, but also to recognise that experience should lead to growth (Gross & Rutland, 2017). Experiential learning transfers abstract teaching and learning into more meaningful learning situations. It changes the role of the teacher from being a transmitter of knowledge to being a facilitator of knowledge acquisition, thus enabling a more systematic, effective learning outcome (Gross & Rutland, 2017). The relevance of experiential learning theory resides in the fact that ELT supports learning through experience which pre-service teachers are exposed to during the periods of their teaching practice.

Despite the exposure of students to different degrees of courses before embarking on practical teaching in primary and secondary schools to demonstrate the content, pedagogy and classroom management, experience has shown that as a supervisor of students during teaching practice and a one time member of the University Teaching Practice Board in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun state, Nigeria, many teachers in training still find it difficult to teach the right content, select appropriate teaching techniques, properly handle resource materials, write good lesson notes and file some important school records. This calls into question the readiness of the students' teachers before embarking on teaching practice. However, in the course of their training, in addition to their specialized courses, students' teachers are taught general culture and professional teaching knowledge (pedagogy). Within this framework, student teachers are provided with adequate levels of competence in the field, particularly as it applies to classroom management, the use of strategy/method/technique, the use of materials, assessment and evaluation, and so on. It is also essential for student teachers to obtain experience by converting such knowledge obtained from their training into their respective skills during the teaching practice exercise (Göçer, 2016). As teachers play a decisive role in the functioning of educational environments and in improving their own effectiveness, the following questions instantly come to mind: Are teachers exposed to adequate training before embarking on teaching practice? Does the training given ahead of the teaching practice provide student teachers with the necessary experience? It is against this background that this study examined the pedagogical readiness of pre-service teachers during their teaching practice experience.

### **Data collections and methods**

The study employed descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised of students from the faculties of education of two publicly owned tertiary institutions in Ogun state. Seventy-six (76) students were selected to form the sample for the study, using stratified sampling technique. The main instrument used to obtain information for the study was a twenty-one item (21) questionnaire entitled "Pedagogical Readiness and Pre-service Teachers Teaching Practice Experience Questionnaire" (PRPTTPEQ). The content and face validity of the questionnaire was established by presenting two copies of the draft questionnaire to two experts in the field of test and

measurement for further scrutiny and modification. This was to ascertain the suitability of the instrument in terms of language, presentation, clarity and applicability. Based on their comments, necessary modifications were made. Also, a field trial of the instruments was done among the randomly selected Faculty of Education students outside the area of study. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument which was found to be 0.93. Data collected was coded and analysed using descriptive statistics.

## Results

**Table 1:** Distributions on the opinions of respondents on their skills of writing lesson notes acquired ahead of their teaching practice exercise

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
<b>Skills of writing lesson notes</b>					
1.	I have been tasked to write lesson notes and assessed by my lecturer before the teaching practice period.	75	3.17*	1.545	Agree
2.	I found it very easy to write lesson note before my teaching practice	76	2.28	1.001	Disagree
3.	I often found some items difficult during the Preparation of lesson notes during my teaching practice because I do not understand the steps very well.	76	3.58*	1.508	Agree
4.	The instruction given in school and the guidance from the cooperating teachers in the teaching practice schools are confusing	76	1.80	1.096	Strongly Disagree
5.	I found it difficult writing lesson notes	76	1.53	1.000	Strongly Disagree
Grand Mean			2.46	2.664	

Table 1 shows the opinion of the respondents with respect to the adequacy of skills of writing lesson notes acquired by the students before being exposed to teaching practice. Item 3 which stated that “I often found some items difficult during the preparation of lesson notes during my teaching practice because I do not understand the steps very well” has the highest mean score of 3.58 (SD=1.508) followed by item 1 which stated that “I have been tasked to write lesson notes and assessed by my lecturer before the teaching practice period” with mean score of 3.17 (SD = 1.545). However, item 5, which stated that “I found it difficult writing lesson notes” recorded the lowest mean score of 1.53 (SD = 1.000) followed by item 4 which stated that “the instruction given in school and the guidance from the cooperating teachers in the teaching practice schools are confusing” with a mean score of 1.80 (SD =1.096). The total mean score of 2.46 which is lower than 2.5 average level, showed that most positive statements were not agreed to by the respondents. This implies that students sampled possessed average skills of writing lesson notes before embarking on teaching practice.

**Table 2:** Distributions on the opinions of respondents on their teaching techniques acquired ahead of their teaching practice exercise

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
<b>Teaching Technique Skills</b>					
1.	I have been exposed to micro-teaching before my <u>teaching practice</u> .	76	3.32	1.472	Agree
2.	I have been made to use different methods of <u>teaching</u> during my micro teaching	76	3.66*	1.502	<u>Strongly Agree</u>
3.	Corrections made during the micro teaching session <u>had</u> prepared me for my teaching practice experience	76	3.84	1.452	Strongly Agree
4.	I was never exposed to micro teaching before my <u>teaching practice</u>	76	1.89	1.448	Disagree
5.	My teaching practice period is the first time I have Practical teaching experience.	75	3.31*	1.577	Agree
6.	Our lecturers do not equip us with different teaching <u>methods</u> before my teaching practice.	77	4.31*	1.103	<u>Strongly Agree</u>
7.	I found it difficult teaching through different teaching <u>techniques</u> .	76	1.99	1.343	Disagree
	Grand Mean			3.15	5.483

The results of table 2 show the respondents’ opinions on the teaching techniques acquired before embarking on the teaching practice exercise. Item 6 which stated that “our lecturers do not teach us with different teaching methods before my teaching practice” recorded the highest mean score of 4.31 (SD= 1.103), followed by item 3 which stated that “corrections made during the micro-teaching session has prepared me for my teaching practice experience” with mean score of 3.84 (SD=1.452). However, item 4 which stated that “I was never exposed to micro teaching before my teaching practice” recorded the lowest mean score of 1.89 (SD = 1.448) followed by item 7 which stated that “I found it difficult teaching with different teaching techniques”. The grand mean score 3.5 showed the level of agreement by the respondents with most of the items on the



questionnaire. Students were not taught by their lecturers through different techniques which had an effect on the proficiency of the students to effectively utilize the techniques during their teaching practice.

**Table 3:** Distributions on the opinions of respondents on instructional materials acquisition skills acquired ahead of their teaching practice exercise

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
<b>Instructional Materials Application Skills</b>					
1.	I know that usage of teaching resources is for effective teaching.	77	4.79*	.713	Strongly Agree
2.	I have practised with different teaching aids under the guidance of my lecturer before teaching practice.	77	3.64	1.423	Strongly Agree
3.	I have never practised with any teaching aids before my teaching practice.	75	3.56	1.188	Strongly Agree
4.	I did not have access to teaching aids before teaching Practice.	77	3.74*	1.281	Strongly Agree
5.	I do not understand the usefulness of teaching aids in teaching and learning	77	1.34	.883	Disagree
Total			3.39	3.663	

Table 3 shows the opinions of respondents on acquisition of the application of instructional materials skills ahead of their teaching practice period. Item 1 which stated that “I know that usage of teaching resources is for effective teaching” recorded the highest mean score of 4.79 (SD=.713), followed by item 4 which stated that “I did not have access to teaching aids before teaching practice” with a mean score of 3.74(SD=1.281). The lowest mean score in the distribution was recorded by item 5 which stated that “I do not understand the usefulness of teaching aids” with mean score of 1.34. The average mean score of 3.39 was recorded, which showed that respondents had acquired necessary skills relating to handling of instructional materials before their teaching practice experience.

**Table 4:** Distributions on the opinions of respondents on knowledge acquired ahead of their teaching practice exercise

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
<b>Knowledge Acquisition skills</b>					
1.	I have good knowledge of all the subjects I taught during my teaching practice	76	1.80	.994	Disagree
2.	The courses I did in school have prepared me for the subject I taught during my teaching practice.	76	4.20*	1.143	Strongly Agree
3.	I found it difficult to teach the subject I was given to teach during teaching practice.	76	4.26*	1.147	Strongly Agree
4.	I was sometimes faced with strange topics different from what we were taught in school	76	1.43	.899	Disagree
Total			2.93	1.721	

Table 4 shows the respondents' opinions on knowledge acquired ahead of the teaching practice exercise. Item 3 which stated that "I found it difficult to teach the subject I was given during teaching practice", has the highest mean score of 4.26 (SD=1.147). This is followed by item 2 which stated that "the courses I did in school have prepared me for the subject I taught during my teaching practice" with a mean score of 4.20 (SD=1.143). The lowest mean score in the distribution was recorded by item 4 which stated that "I was sometimes faced with strange topics different from what we were taught in school" with a mean score of 1.43 (SD = .899). The total mean score is 2.93 which shows average agreement with the statements put forwards in the questionnaire. This showed that students only have average knowledge of what they set out to teach in their teaching practice.

### Discussion of the findings

The result of the respondents' opinions on the acquisition of lesson note writing skills before embarking on teaching practice showed that students sampled possessed average skills of writing lesson notes before embarking on teaching practice. This supports the findings of Mpate et al. (2023) who also found out in his study that pre-service teachers had limited skill in lesson preparation and classroom management, which negatively impacted their learning during teaching practice. The findings relating to students possessing average skills of writing lesson notes might be due to the large number of students at a level which makes it difficult for the lecturers to mark several lesson notes of the students and make appropriate corrections which might have helped the students to develop better lesson note writing skills before their teaching practice.

The result of the opinions of the students on the acquisition of appropriate teaching techniques before their teaching practice experience showed that students were not taught different techniques and this negatively impacted on the proficiency of the students to effectively utilize different techniques during their teaching practice. This is in line with

the findings of Gocer, (2017) who concluded that micro-teaching present's significant opportunity for gaining experience. This finding in this study might be due to the fact that lecturers mostly adopt direct instruction in teaching or presented the different strategies theoretically without demonstrating how the method should be used. This limited students' mastery of the techniques before embarking on their teaching practice. The result of the respondents' opinions on students' acquisition of instructional materials skills showed that pre-service teachers had average skills of handling instructional materials skills before embarking on teaching practice. This is in line with the findings of Aliyu et al., (2021), Koross (2016) and Mpate et al., (2023) who stated that students' experience had impacts on their perception of teaching and the challenges they undergo while on teaching practice. This might be due to the fact that most of the students do not have the experience of using teaching aids during their training before they embarked on teaching practice. This indicates that students had average knowledge of what they set out to teach during their teaching practice. Another contributing factor is that during teaching practice most of the pre-service teachers are made to teach courses that are relevant to their courses of study and not the exact courses they did in school.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it was therefore concluded that teacher pedagogical readiness in-terms of knowledge acquisition, lesson note writing skills, method of teaching skills and handling of instructional materials before their teaching practice is still on the average level in the areas of lesson note writing, handling of instructional materials and application of different teaching methods during the teaching and learning process. This can be ascribed to the pre-service teachers not being exposed to enough micro-teaching during the course of their training.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

## **Recommendations**

1. Lecturers should endeavour to use different methods during lectures to help the students to learn all the skills that will be involved in using such methods when they are doing their teaching practice.
2. Teaching methods should not be theoretically oriented alone, but lecturers must learn to demonstrate how the methods can be applied during classroom teaching.
3. Pre-service teachers should be exposed to proper handling of teaching aids during the course of their studies.
4. All departments in teacher training institutions should have demonstration rooms equipped with modern resource materials for pre-service teachers' training.
5. During their teaching practice periods, pre-service teachers must be made to teach subjects within their area of study.

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