

USING INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING PRACTICE IN NIGERIAN SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Teaching practice is practical oriented exercise designed to expose trainee teachers to what they will encounter after graduation in actual classroom situation. Teaching practice equips the trainee teachers with the boldness to stand and control, good instructional board, printed media, real objects enhance effective teaching practice. The paper therefore discussed how using instructional media can be used for effective teaching practice in Nigerian schools. Concepts of teaching practice, and instructional media were discussed. Instructional board, printed media, real objects, models, mock-ups, charts etc. enhance effective teaching practice. Conclusion was made. It was recommended among other things that instructional media make teaching-learning interesting and lively, it should be used by trainee teachers in their TP exercise.

Every profession has ways and periods of training those that want to specialize in the field. On the process of training teachers, trainee teachers (student teachers) for teaching profession are exposed to theories, principles, ethics and practices of teaching. At a stage, to strengthen what was taught and learnt in the classroom, trainee teachers are sent out to the teaching field to practice what they have been taught and experience what they will encounter in the field after graduation under the guidance of a supervisor, head teachers, and permanent classroom teachers of the schools where they are practicing. The

exercise or period is referred to as teaching practice exercise.

Teaching practice (TP) is an integral part of teacher training to achieve professional effectiveness, efficiency, commitment and competency in actual teaching situation. It is a compulsory requirement and activities for the completion of any training, diploma or degree in teacher programme in Nigerian schools. Teaching practice is just like law school for student lawyer, housemanship for student doctors, internship for pharmacist student and industrial training for engineering

student. It is a field practice in teacher education.

Teaching practice is an activity and educative process given to student teacher to acquire specific knowledge, skills and competences required for the actual teaching process. According to Ani, in Eze, Ani and Eya (2003), teaching practice is an opportunity given to a student-teaching to gain the experience of observing and participating actively in the various educational activities of a teacher under a normal school setting for Olaitan and Agusiobo (1981), teaching practice is the first opportunity for the student-teacher to participate in activities involved in teaching in actual situations. They further stated that it is a guided teaching experience, where the student-teacher is given that chance of performing the functions of a teacher under the guidance of a supervisor. Martin and Westcott (1963) defined teaching practice as an apprenticeship or internship which constitutes the gateway to teaching profession.

Teaching practice is of three types according to Nwani and Okorie (2007). They are:

- i. Observation
- ii. Micro teaching
- iii. Actual field work.

According to Apel (1993), teaching practice provides student teachers with opportunity to become fully acquainted with practical way the details of

classroom procedure, control and relationship with students and immediate matters of teaching materials, syllabus and methods of evaluation, among others. But for trainee teacher to be effective in teaching practice exercise, he/she should be able to interact and communicate effectively in teaching-learning environment. Verbal communication alone which seems to be the most commonest means or form of instructional communication and delivery system besides real experiences, is always abstract and teacher centred.

Since students differ in so many ways (abilities, potentialities and age) trainee teachers need to incorporate instructional media in their instructional processes to meet the individual needs, interests, aspirations, levels, abilities and potentials of the learners which will help them understand better retain longer and transfer knowledge when need arises. Instructional media is an important component in the teaching-learning environment. It is a vehicle that carries message, information or ideas from the teacher to the learner. Awotua-Efebo (1999) defined instructional media as anything (materials and equipment) that can help the teacher to communicate effectively his/her ideas to the students so that at the end of instruction, the students can do that which the teacher stated in the objective. To him, these materials and equipment include real objects, projected and non-projected image, models, print, non-print etc.

According to Agun (1988), instructional media are materials used by practicing and trainee teachers to present, illustrate and elucidate teaching. Using media in teaching practice can improve the delivery of subject matter in a well-organized, consistent, specific and clearly defined manner. Use of instructional media by trainee teacher during teaching practice makes delivery of instruction more standardized as varying abilities of learners can be taken care of as they receive the same message at their own pace. It makes instruction more interesting and enjoyable which promote understanding and achievement.

Based on the intrinsic value of instructional media in teaching and learning process generally, engendered its inclusion in teaching practice exercise by trainee teachers. The following and more instructional media can be used by trainee teachers in teaching practice exercise:

- i. Printed media
- ii. Instructional board
- iii. Chart
- iv. Real objects
- v. Pictures
- vi. Models
- vii. Mock-ups
- viii. Radio
- ix. Flash cards
- x. Posters
- xi. Drawings
- xii. Chalk
- xiii. Erasing board marker
- xiv. Cut-outs/templates

Concept of Teaching Practice and Instructional Media

Different scholars gave individual opinion of what teaching practice is. According to Salawu and Adeoye (2002), teaching practice is a practical teacher activity by which the student-teachers are given an opportunity in actual school situation to demonstrate and improve training in Pedagogical skill over a period of time. For Fagbulu (1984), teaching practice is a kind of apprenticeship stage during which the student are sent out to school to gain practical and professional experience by translating all the educational theories they have acquired or leant during training into practice.

Onyekan (2000), defined teaching practice as a pre-service, professional preparation for interested persons, aspiring to become teachers with a credible vision for sustainable human development.

Teaching practice can also be regarded as a professional training activity given to trainee teacher to have the actual teaching experiences in and actual classroom setting.

Ughamadu (1992), defined educational or instructional media as the wide variety of instructional material like textbooks, chalkboards, models/mock-ups, charts, television, radio and other projected and non-projected devices or tools which bring about efficiency and effectiveness in the teaching-learning process and

invariably, promote and enhance the achievement of instructional objectives. In effect, instructional media increase students' understanding of instructional content and performance. According to Agun (1988), instructional media refer to all forms of information carriers. On the basis of the definition, anything that has some information related to the instructional content is regarded as instructional media. In addition, instructional media are materials that can record, store, preserve, retrieve and transmit information.

Purpose of Teaching Practice

Teaching practice is the actual implementation of the principles, theories, skills and methods that students have learned in school under the supervision of a supervisor, head teacher and permanent classroom teacher.

Teaching practice is practical oriented in nature and there are some vital reasons for its inclusion in the teacher education curriculum. In essence, it has policy base. Section 6 of the National Policy on Education (NPE) (2004) dwells on teacher education. The section specifies among others the following as the objectives of teacher education:

- a. To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system.
- b. To encourage further the spirits of enquiry and creativity in teacher.

The specified objectives of teacher education in the NPE emphasized the production of effective professional teachers in all educational institutions in Nigeria. In an attempt to achieve the set teacher educational objectives, the general component requirements of teacher education curriculum in Nigeria today include:

- a. General studies
- b. Foundation studies (principles and practice of education courses)
- c. Teaching subject
- d. Teaching practice.

The purpose of teaching practice can then be itemized thus:

1. It exposes trainee teachers to the actual activities they will encounter in teaching field after graduation
2. It helps trainee teachers acquire and develop skills required in teaching profession.
3. It gives the trainee teacher the opportunity to practice the theories, principles, techniques and strategies of teaching learned in the course of study.
4. It exposes the trainee teachers to the attitudes of students to teachers which will help to modify their own character after teaching practice.
5. Teaching practice helps the trainee teachers to put into practice the knowledge acquired about of child

growth and development and how it affects teaching- learning process.

6. It equips the trainee teachers with the boldness to stand and control the class.

Instructional Media for Effective Teaching Practice

Media on the whole enhance communication between the teacher and learners which promotes interaction, concentration facilitate effective teaching and learning. It makes instructional activities interesting, concrete, and real.

Instructional Board: This is one of the oldest and most commonly used media in school system. Knowing the importance of board in classroom situation, National commission for colleges of Education (NCCE, 2009) emphasized the use of board in actualization of behavioural objectives in teaching NCE students. This indicates that for a teacher to present his/her lesson content properly, board must be used. Board in this context refer to the one for writing, drawing, illustrating, demonstrating, or presenting information or lesson content to the student ideas in the classroom. Currently, board is of different colours such as black, white, green, brown etc. (Aggarwal, 2007) chalk and erasing board maker are substances used for drawing and writing on the board. As results they go together. They are of different colours as the board too. The

colour of the board determines the colour of the chalk or erasing maker to be used.

The most commonly used for presenting instruction content to the student during teaching-learning situation is black and white board. The lesson content can be written or erased and new ideas added to meet the changing requirement, need, points and steps of the subject matter. As a result, trainee teacher should make proper use of board in teaching and learning process.

Printed Media: Printed media include textbooks, magazines, teachers' handbooks, newspapers, journals etc containing information on the subject matter. They are visual non-projected and very valuable and indispensable in teaching-learning process. Printed media are source of getting information to communicate to the students. They provide realistic details necessary for visual recognition of subject information. They also provide common visual imagery for the teachers and learners. In essence, trainee teacher should consult and use as much relevance and related printed media to have enough, correct and current information and knowledge to be effective in the TP exercise.

Charts: They are graphic learning materials, which form a distinctive medium for visualization. According to Nwoji (2002), charts are handmade

drawing, graphs, and diagrams made on cardboard papers. They are common in presenting instructional content in Nigerian schools. Charts are of different types; namely, flow charts, flip charts, tabular charts, organization charts, pie charts, tree chart etc. (Nwoji, 2002). They make lesson real and easy to understand. Trainee teachers should form the habit of incorporating media (charts) in the teaching-learning exercise as they are cheap and be easily produced by both the trainee teacher and the students.

Cut-out/Templates: Cut-outs are information ideas, pictures or shape cut-out of paper, wood, plastics, clay etc. According to Nwoji (2002), the cut-out shapes are called templates. They are inexpensive visual media. It is then expected of trainee teacher to be resourceful, creative and be able to cut-out and use important aspects of their learning content to achieve effective teaching and learning.

Models: Models are imitation of the real object. They are concrete objects which represent the real thing. It is a replica of the original (Aggarwal 2007). In a situation where the lesson contents cannot be observed in their natural state or environment.

For one reason or the other such as size, prize, safety, complexity, security etc, models become the alternative/ideal. Models give correct perspective of what the topic is all about though it can be bigger or smaller. For

Aggarwal (2007), models can be static or working. As in the case of working models, it attracts attention and sustains learners' interest; for example, model of working car, aeroplane etc. Trainee teacher should use models in their practicing exercise to present clearly and correctly the lesson content as they are not expensive. Most of the materials to be used are from our immediate local environment such as clay, newspapers, cassava starch, plastic, colour, cement, sand, wood,. Models are used to enhance teaching and learning process. At this juncture, resourcefulness and creativity of the trainee teacher is highly necessary.

Mock-ups: Mock-up is a working/operating replica of what it presents. In mock-ups, features or characteristics of the original object to be learnt are incorporated as in the case of mock-up of clock, house etc. trainee teacher should source out the areas mock-up can be used to make the lesson real to the students.

Real Objects: Real objects are the actual things needed or required to concretize lesson content. These are those things in their natural state found in our immediate environment which can be used to offer first aid experience, enhance effective teaching-learning and performance of the student, real object can be in form of agricultural products or seeds (yam, cassava, beans, rice, banana, paw-paw etc) human beings, ICT devices/tools (Television, radio,

computer, phone etc) farm tools (Hoe, machetes, basket, rake, fork etc). Real things can be felt, tasted, operated, heard, seen, smelled by student etc. Based on their availability, cost and effectiveness in promoting teaching-learning process, trainee teachers should endeavour to use them to improve their teaching practice exercise.

Pictures

Picture is a representation of a person, place or thing (Nwoji, 2002). It is a visual medium which appeals to the sense of sight only. Students learn by viewing the image on the paper which aids them to identify the concept in a different environment. Pictures are acceptable educational medium at all levels of education as it gives clarification of what it portrays or represent and widen students' horizon of experience.

Nwoji (2002) categorized pictures into two namely: still pictures and motion pictures. Still pictures are of two types: flat opaque pictures like photographs, prints, drawings and transparent pictures like filmstrips, slides and transparencies. Still pictures cannot move. Motion pictures are those pictures that can move. They are images with actions as in the case of in television and videotape recorders.

Pictures are cheap and readily available. In essence, trainee teachers are advised to incorporate pictures where necessary during TP exercise for positive outcome.

Conclusion

Instructional media had been identified as being indispensable and central in teaching-learning process at all levels of education. Therefore trainee teachers should be trained in such a way that they will appreciate the roles of media in achieving instructional objectives and be able to source out media they need for their teaching-learning exercise.

Recommendations

To enhance effective teaching and learning, by trainee teachers the following recommendations were made:

1. Instructional media serve as nutrients that bring out the true taste of teachers' activities in the classroom, as a result, trainee teachers should incorporate them in TP exercise.
2. As most instructional media are capital intensive, trainee teachers should learn how to improvise to facilitate their teaching during TP exercise.
3. Instructional media make teaching and learning interesting and lively, in this vein, it should be used by trainee teachers in their TP exercise.
4. To encourage trainee teachers incorporate instructional media during TP exercise, the school management of the practicing school should not be allowed to teach any subject without the instructional media.

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