

Pre-service Trainee Teachers Perception of Quality Teaching Towards Block Teaching Experience: Action Research

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Abstract:- The impetus of this study is to explore and analyse the perception of trainee teachers towards quality teaching in block teaching practice experience. The insights of trainee teachers sought in this research is intended to improve the practicum programs and practices tailored to the needs of trainee-teachers. The study employs mixed method using both qualitative and quantitative methods adopting Action Research approach. The finding of the study established that trainee teacher's perception of quality teaching depicts four dimensions which constitutes teacher professionalism, teacher management skills, teacher preparation and the dimension of teaching skills. The study also found that mobile group supervision is perceived by trainee teachers as an enabling factor which significantly improves trainee-teacher's block teaching practice. However, inhibiting factors explored in the supervision process largely impedes quality teaching which calls for immediate attention by responsible people to accommodate the expressed views of trainee-teachers in the policy documents and programs to improve block teaching experience.

Keywords:- Practicum, Block Teaching, Quality Teaching, Enabling Factors, Inhibiting Factors, Group Supervision.

I. INTRODUCTION

One commonality of teacher training college is the component of practicum where pre-service students are engaged in a practical experience in the real context of classroom teaching in schools. The theoretical aspect of the job of teaching is put into practical application to enact the skill of teaching. Trainee teachers are engaged to teach from elementary to grade eight (8) for a period of time depending on the type of practicum program. There are considerable variations in the way practicum programs are organised depending on the context of the training institutions. In normal circumstances, students undergo successive developmental practicum programs. Prior to undertaking practicum programs, trainee teachers are taken through numerous lesson observations demonstrated by the lecturers. Chalk-Board Skills are also offered to train students how to do blackboard and paper prints.

In the first year of training, trainee teachers are engaged in five weeks of intensive workshop on planning and programming which further leads to sixteen (16) weeks of micro and peer teaching. The next practicum program is a weekly teaching experience where prospective teachers are engaged to teach one whole day in the nearby schools

for a duration of 10 weeks. Finally, trainee teachers are organised and placed in schools for block teaching experience which lasts for a minimum of 5 weeks depending on the context of training institutions.

Practicum is a core component of teacher training program in Teacher Education. It is a sense making experience for trainee teachers to apply the necessary pedagogical skills and content knowledge learnt in teacher preparation programs and applied to practical situation in the real classroom context. Ulvik and Smith (2011) describe practice teaching as a critical period of time for pre-service teachers to enter into orientation of teaching occupation for skill and content knowledge integration, enactment of learning experience to enhance their professional and instructional skills and development. Placement of students in the care of certified, knowledgeable and experience teachers adequately prepare students to become classroom practitioners upon satisfactory completion of their studies. This gives prospective teachers the opportunity to expose to authentic hands on experience (Ulvi & Smith, 2011) to hone the desired teaching skills to meet up the demand of quality teaching expectations in the mainstream schools of Papua New Guinea.

The purpose of this research is to explore the views of pre-service teachers of their perception of quality teaching during the five weeks of block teaching practice experience. The perception of students would potentially contribute to the improvement of practicum programs in pre-service teacher training institutions in PNG.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ball and Forgani (2009) describe teaching as an intricate work which involves broad cultural competence and relational sensitivity, communication skills, skilful integration of knowledge and skills and values, application of professional judgement (p.497). It is not an easy task for trainee teachers to master at the initial phase of learning to teach. The process of teaching require high order cognitive domain of reasoning with the ability to use deep knowledge to synthesis, integrate, create and apply knowledge in varying context to serve differing learning needs of students (Hollins,2011). This places the massive task in teacher training institutions to prepare prospective teachers to be skilful in enacting the teaching skills and strategies by engaging in practical learning to dissect and analyse the work with sound interpretation of the curriculum, observing lesson demonstration, frequent supervision tied

with the intention of fostering improvement in trainee teachers teaching experience. In view of the noble role of teaching, Ball and Fargani (2009) argued that practicum component be given prominence squarely in teacher education curriculum to help prepare skilled and effective trainee teachers to meet the demand of quality education.

While there is general consensus on the need for quality teaching in schools, the means of achieving it lies in teacher education. Criticisms on teacher training programs drawn from growing body of literature seemingly characterises by weak pedagogy, lack of communication skills, poor work ethics, poor classroom management skills (Hollins, 2011; Russell, 2006; Wilson, 2006). This is not only discussed in the international literature, OBE Exit Task Force Report however, echoes the same sentiment of the issue of inadequate preparation of teachers in training institutions (Czuba, 2013). What trainee teachers learn in teachers college are not put into practice in schools. They succumb to the pattern of what teachers do on the field which is rightly described by Ball and Forgani (2009) in their discussion that teaching is improvisational and wholly context dependent making the teaching role problematic for new graduates compromising quality teaching. This implies that the culture of schools are strong that shapes students behaviours and deviates away from good practices.

According to Ball and Forgani (2009), quality teacher and quality teaching entirely depend on teacher training programs and further argue for practicum programs to be redefined. In their views, practicum programs should train teachers to develop the habits of mind and character that are appropriate to professional practice which adds a moral dimension to a profession besides gaining professional knowledge and skills for the role of teaching (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1986)

Poor practicum holds no value in student's experiences and Berk & Kosnik (2002) pointed out the need for the improvement of practicum programs to add prominence in teacher education. Central to Ball and Forgani (2009) argument to improve practicum programs to train teachers to be effective and skillful, Rhema (2011) expounded that curriculum has to offer reflective, liberating, empowering and responsive to societal needs. In light of this suggestion, student teachers views in this study will in turn help to improve the practicum aspect of teacher education curriculum.

Practicum programs prepare trainee teachers to meet the demand of quality teaching in societies where teachers will be serving. However, the main clients that the practicum program is designed to serve are the pre-service teachers. They are the most affected group of learners in practicum programs. Moreover, it is through student teachers that will determine the success of practicum programs as they are the key players to drive the implementation aspect of the program. Building on this, Wilson (2006) pointed out the need for pre-service trainee teacher's voice to be heard to ascertain their views on how

to improve the practicum program in which this study entails.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study employs mixed method using both qualitative and quantitative research adopting action research approach. The preserve trainee teachers were randomly selected and interviewed to seek their perceptions of quality teaching towards block teaching experience. Semi-structured interviews, field notes and survey questions were the data collection methods used to triangulate data to answer the research questions;

- What are the perception of pre-service students of quality teaching in block teaching experience?
- What are the enabling factors of quality teaching towards block teaching experience?
- What are the inhibiting factors of quality teaching towards block teaching experience?

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Student's Perception Of Quality Teaching During Block Teaching

Trainee teachers had five weeks of block teaching practice. They were allocated to Junior Primary and Senior Primary grades to teach a minimum of two lessons and maximum of four lessons a day. The year two pre-service students were given the questionnaire and also semi-structured interviews to seek their perceptions of what quality teaching is during the five weeks of block teaching. The interview excerpts and survey questions gathered from students are transcribed, coded and clustered to draw themes to answer the research question 'what are the perception of pre-service students of quality teaching during block teaching experience? The study finding of the perception of quality teaching of pre-service students during block teaching experience are categorised in four emerging themes ; Teacher professionalism, good management skills, teacher preparation and instructional teaching skills.

➤ Teacher Professionalism

The students were of the view that quality teaching concerns with the extent of teacher professionalism which covers work ethics, authentic teaching and positive work values. Regarding work ethics, student teachers perceived that teacher's punctuality and commitment towards their instructional duties significantly contributes towards quality teaching and learning output during the block teaching experience. This finding is in line with the National Education Evaluation Report (2018) conducted in New Zealand to investigate enabling conditions for quality teaching and learning in different schools. The report reveals that teacher commitment and dedication is found to be the highest-ranking enabling factor that defines quality teaching and learning. It discusses different ways of commitment teacher's display. Firstly, that teachers hold themselves accountable for learners to improve. This means that teachers were responsible for their own performance as well as their learners. Secondly, teachers

also committed their time to give learners more opportunity to learn by giving extra activities. Thirdly, teachers served with commitment to be punctual to work to prepare lessons prior to the actual lesson to maintain the smooth flow of lesson presentation. Their actions demonstrated that they care deeply about their learners’ performance.

Concerning work ethics, the teachers also perceived that teaching from the heart with self-empathy yields pleasant learning atmosphere where students feel loved,

cared and accepted to learn. It is also indicated that modelling positive values is a reflective learning experience where students emulate the teachers of the best practice they observe.

The quantitative data presented in table 1 supported the finding that majority of 92 % of students strongly agree that work ethics is perceived to be the determinant of quality practicum teaching programs.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Work ethics	92 %	8 %	0 %	0 %

Table 1:- Works ethics

The student-teachers were also engaged in the focus group discussions to express their views through student formation management sessions on professional and unprofessional conduct during the block teaching experience. The study found that teacher professional conduct maximises quality teaching outcomes while unprofessional conduct undermines quality standard in teaching and learning.

➤ *Good Management Skills*

Teaching is an intricate task which requires five management functions of planning, organising, coordinating, delivering, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. Planning concerns with the effort of student-teachers to get the curriculum resources in place to plan the teaching programmes. Organising involves systematic ordering of thought process to make decisions as to how the content and assessment of students to be planned in the yearly overview, termly overview, weekly overview and further trickles down to the daily lesson plan. The teaching programme has to be organised meaningfully in a consistent and coherent manner with the intention to yield possible students learning outcomes. Regarding management function of delivering, lesson is developed out from the teaching program and presented in the classroom. This is where utilisation of teaching skills become essential in facilitating the lesson. Monitoring is basically providing the mediated assistance to closely supervise and mark student’s activities to situate weaknesses so that students can re-work to improve their skills and knowledge. The process is concluded with the evaluation function of management whereby test and assessment tasks are planned and administered to students to ascertain whether students have achieved the instructional goal or not.

Students were interviewed using semi-structured interview with open ended questionnaires to seek their views of their own understanding of quality teaching. The

interview excerpts and questionnaires indicated that good management skills maximises quality teaching towards the block teaching experience. Student- teachers perceived this to be the positive driver to foster quality teaching experience with the view that preparing the lesson should be done thoughtfully and meaningfully in a proper qualitative way. The participants were of the view that lessons are to be planned in detail consistent with the weekly, termly and yearly overview for students to cover the content area that is planned in the teaching programme. Detailed and thoughtful lesson preparation and planning depends on how one manages time and resources to align with the instructional goals.

Responses from students in the open-ended survey questionnaire indicated that management of limited resources to prepare and improvise teaching aids, utilisation of time management to research topics on the lesson prior to teaching, advance black board preparation and well-structured lesson plan guarantees effective lesson presentation.

This is supported with the participants excerpt provided below,

I prepared my mathematics lesson in advance when I was informed by my supervisor for my lesson observation. I utilized my time wisely to get the teaching notes and students activities before the lesson observation starts. I also spend enough time to collect materials to make my teaching aid to create a counting game using a stick. My supervisor was impressed with my presentation with positive comments that my lesson was presented smoothly and students could do the activity correctly.

Supervisor’s evaluation excerpts on the student teachers work clearly shows that the skill of management contributes to effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

2. LESSON INTRODUCTION		Total	15/5 = 3/3
Gaining Pupils attention: warm up activities, tell story, legend, mime, riddle, role play, songs, hymns, prayers, quiz, previous lesson check, chn's experience on topic, check homework, mental drills, etc			✓
Stating purpose of lesson: state the expected outcome of the lesson. What? How? Why?			✓
Motivation of Children with interesting lead in: activity - mime, riddle, acting out story - relevant to lesson			✓
3. PRESENTATION (Body of lesson)		Total	9/3 = 3/3
Learning Activities: discussion & presentation, listening, practice, role play, case study, drama, cooperation work, set activity for special need chn, etc	Give emblem time for the art activities		✓
Sequencing Instructions: logical and in sequence, confused, according to child's pace, sufficient time allowed for activity, well timed activity or lesson			✓
Explanation & Demonstration: clear & succinct- content knowledge strategies, logical explanation, motivation, example done/shown, use of bridging/bilingual approaches, use of gender/special needs language, use of teaching aids			✓
Communication: clear & precise, clear pronunciation, straight to the point/content, use non verbal language, gestures facial expressions, variation expression of voice & loud to hear			✓
Reinforcement: verbal/written- teacher/chn, individual, group taken/reward, activity, display of work,			✓
Teacher Pupil interaction: pleasant, treating, rough, conscious of gender & special need chn...fair distribution, rephrasing, clear & logical			✓
Questioning: different questioning types- knowledge, comprehension, higher order skills, balance gender, fair distribution, rephrasing, redirecting, probing, clear & logical			✓
Supervision & Class Control: goes around to assist and mark chn's work, control unnecessary noise/chns' movement, relaxed, treating, rough, used harsh disciplinary measures, conscious of gender/special need chn etc			✓

Fig 1:- Lesson Evaluation form

Contrary to this, student-teacher who seem to lack management skills occasionally encounters poor lesson planning and presentation. Teaching without teaching aids signals poor planning and organisational skill which is attributed to poor management. This results to ineffective lesson presentation because abstracts concepts cannot be explained using concrete teaching aids. Moreover, lack of lesson organisation during lesson presentation time tempt student teachers to divert their effort to take up the entire instructional time in preparing the lesson notes on the board. Consequently, much of the time for teaching and lesson activities are used up. This hampers quality teaching which largely affects students learning.

This is supported with the supervisors' excerpts; *Most student-teachers prepare the black board during the allotted teaching time which signals lack of preparation. Lesson plans were done in brief with very little effort to sequence the lessons meaningfully for students. Students rushed their lesson presentation without teaching aids and teaching strategies. I think it is to do with lack of time management.*

The data suggests that good management skills in planning the lesson is desirable as it leverages teacher's effort to enact a thoughtful and meaningful lesson which greatly benefits students learning experiences. Teacher's time devoted in planning, organising, coordinating and controlling the resources and time in preparing the lesson at hand is essential in enhancing quality teaching outcomes.

➤ *Teacher Preparation*

Teacher preparation in this study refers to the on-campus practicum programs such as planning and programming workshop, peer and micro teaching and weekly teaching experience programs to prepare trainee teachers for block teaching. Based on the survey excerpts, students expressed their opinion that effective preparation depends on the on-campus practicum preparation coordinated by the Professional Development Strand. Trainees are basically connecting theory to practice. Teaching skills learnt in the professional development sessions determines the quality of teachers in the actual practice of teaching experience. When asked to reflect on the benefits of planning and programming workshop, the participants echoed positive sentiments during the focus group discussion held during student formation and management program. Majority of students commented positively that this teacher preparation program helped them to understand how to interpret the syllabus and teachers guide. They were also able to plan and program the yearly overview, termly overview, assessment overview and construct class time-table. Participants acquired essential skills in planning an effective lesson using teaching skills and strategies.

This is supported with the quantitative data in table 2 that 85 % of students indicated in the survey question that on-site training on professional development programs prepare them to be effective in their instructional preparation during block teaching. In an interview except, one of the trainee teacher pointed that during the weekly reflection sessions, the supervisors also articulated clearly to students the importance of pre-instructional instructions and the benefit of advance preparation prior to teaching.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Onsite training	85 %	7 %	1 %	7 %

Table 2:- Professional development programs

The research finding is somewhat consistent with the qualitative study recently conducted in Ghana by Bonney, Micah & Hinson (2018) with the total of 15 trainee teachers on their perception towards teaching practice. The results indicated that trainee teachers had positive perception towards on-campus teaching practice which significantly prepared students to carry out their practicum teaching experience effectively. It was also found that on-campus practicum equipped students to know how to plan teaching programs and apply teaching skills to deliver the lessons, black board and paper prints and also provided clear direction to manage time and prepare in advance.

➤ *Teaching Dimension*

The views of student-teachers were sought that quality teaching is tied with the desired competence of student-teachers in demonstrating the teaching skills and strategies, classroom management and the availability of teaching and learning resources to support teaching and learning in the school. The participants hold strong views that quality teaching is determined by the teaching dimension without which effective teaching and learning will not occur. The survey questionnaire shows that teaching dimension according to student’s views constitutes the following;

- sufficient teaching aids
- child-centred lesson
- student’s text books
- involves critical thinking

- Teaching strategies.
- Classroom management
- sufficient teaching resources
- Classroom control (full attention of the students in class)

Interestingly as students exposed to real teaching experience for the 5 weeks of block teaching, majority of the trainee teachers were able to opine the importance of teaching aids. The interview excerpts reveal that the use of teaching aids is perceived to be one of the enabling variables to facilitate quality teaching.

Regarding the teaching resources and materials, table 3 indicates that majority of students with 62 % strongly agree that sufficient teaching resources and teaching materials contribute to quality teaching during the practicum programs. One trainee teacher said “the school I am posted to do not have syllabus and teachers guide for me to plan and I find it hard to prepare my lessons well”. Another teacher added “My lesson was not taught satisfactorily because there were not enough teaching materials in the classroom to prepare my lesson”. The data establishes that the quality of student’s lesson presentation in their view can be hampered with the limited resources and materials. This can affect the quality of teaching outcome during the practicum programs.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Resources and Materials	62 %	15 %	8 %	15 %

Table 3:- Teaching Resources and materials

In terms of teaching strategies, student teachers in their views articulated that varieties of teaching strategies with child-centred strategies helps deliver the lesson effectively. Teaching strategies makes the lesson interesting and stimulates students’ interest throughout the lesson. Without which effective lesson will not occur.

The semi-structured interview excerpts supports the research finding on the perception of teachers of quality teaching in practicum program.

• *Participant 1*

In my own understanding, quality teaching means teaching done in a paper qualitative Way in which the lessons are planned in detail with sufficient teaching aids. Teaching with faithfulness or teaching from the heart. Organised teacher with every material in place ready to teach.

• *Participant 2*

Quality teaching is all about the way in which the lesson is delivered to the students by the teacher. Quality teaching involves the use of adequate teaching aids, child-centred lesson, different strategies approach and proper planning and programming. With those steps discuss, the teaching will flow smoothly and the learning objectives of each lesson will be achieved at the end of each lesson.

• *Participant 3*

To my understanding, quality teaching means teaching effectively with adequate teaching Aids to the best of your ability to the understanding of the students in the class. Going and Feeling into the shoes of students and teaching using the materials required promotes quality.

• *Participant 4*

The quality teaching is talking about high standard and expected way or manner of teaching. The following ways determine quality teaching: well prepared lesson from yearly plan to the daily lesson plan, adequate teaching resources, good work ethics, teach with the best of the ability and aim high to produce the best quality students.

• *Participant 5*

Quality teaching means teaching not just facts but how to determine those facts. It involves critical thinking, learning to work with others and also delivering of adequate skills and knowledge upon effective planning and programming with variety of resources and teaching strategies.

• *Participant 6*

It simply means that to prepare the lessons in advance to teach students with the heart. Follow the instruction and the principles of school and do what the school requires you to do. In personally, you are to be punctual all the time, dress and speak English while in school and manage the kids and teach them to the fullest so that they can learn what you teaching. Delivering of well lesson plan with sufficient teaching resources with commitment faithfulness, effort, hard work, accuracy and with love.

• *Participant 7*

It refers to teaching the students with heart. It is also refers to teaching using lesson plans and teaching aids to make the learning to become active. Also getting the full attention of the students in class, not for the sake of just teaching.

• *Participant 8*

In my understanding, quality teaching should be practiced by individual teachers, wise management of the time and things must be organised and do the planning and programming earlier so that everything will flow smoothly

in teaching and we will achieve every goal that we aim in order to maintain quality teaching Quality teaching simply means educating students in the best way of learning standards Adequate teaching aids and varieties of teaching strategies makes quality teaching.

B. Enabling Factor That Contributes To Quality Teaching During The Five (5) Weeks Of Block Teaching.

➤ *Supervision*

There were two approaches of supervision adopted during the block teaching which are mobile supervision and single supervision. Mobile supervision involves group of supervisors who moved around from various locations of participating schools to observe students during the block teaching. Single supervision refers to supervisors who remain stationed in their allocated schools to supervise the students over the five weeks. Students were interviewed to seek their views on the type of supervision that would help them to improve their teaching practice during the five weeks of block teaching. The result in table 4 shows that dominant of 38 % of students strongly agreed that mobile group supervision significantly improves their teaching and professional practices.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
Mobile supervision	38 %	31 %	0 %	31%
Single Supervisor	8 %	69 %	23 %	0 %

Table 4:- Approach of supervision

The questionnaires distributed to respondents showed that majority of students expressed their views that mobile supervision prompted them to work hard and get them to prepare the lessons in advance because supervisors were on par with timing which signals their readiness to supervise students. One of the students remarked “group supervisors usually come early that’s why I have to prepare my teaching materials in advance”. They also expressed positive sentiments that supervisor’s cooperation in the group supervision had significantly improved student teachers preparation towards their lesson presentation. One of the participants had to said “I have to prepare well to meet the expectations of different supervisors who come for observation”

Regarding feedback from the supervisors, some students view that comments given by different supervisors in their lesson plan and lesson observation within the three rounds of supervision had helped them to improve.

Concurrent research conducted in Toronto by Clive Beck & Clare Kosnik (2002) to seek student’s perception on components of a Good Practicum Placement established similar finding that supervisors collaboration and constructive feedback among other factors perceived to constitute good practicum placement which help them to improve the quality of their teaching experience. The research found that student teachers hold strong views for supervisors to collaborate with student teachers to provide direction, guidance and necessary intervention during

lesson observation. It was also found that constructive feedback was viewed valuable in student teachers instructional and professional improvement. It guides and help student teachers to reflect on the weaknesses and strengths in a refined and systematic way.

While majority of students commented positively on mobile supervision that entails good cooperation and feedback outcomes in their instructional improvement, few students however, view mobile supervision not helpful. Table 4 indicated that 31 % of students disagreed with mobile supervision. When asked about how they feel about group supervision, most students raised their concern that supervisors in the group supervision move in haste due to tight schedule to supervise number of schools daily resulting to lack of conferencing held with the student teachers. one student commented “Supervisors leave early without conducting post conferencing” Another participant added “Supervisors should talk to us to explain the comment’s written in our lesson plan, lesson observation and journal for us to understand and make improvements.

Considerable evidence needed for supervisors to hold conferencing with students which is beneficial for their own instructional and professional improvement. Direct communication give students the opportunity to reflect on the weaknesses and make finer improvements in the teaching process to prepare them for the massive task of teaching that lies ahead of them when they graduate. The benefits of conferencing perceived by student-teachers is

supported with the recent research finding done by Antonio (2019) on teacher supervision support and its impact on professional development of teachers in primary schools with the sample size of 14 participants found that conferencing between the supervisor and supervisee significantly improved student-teachers teaching skills as they enter into open dialogue to discuss the areas that needs improvement.

C. Inhibiting Factors Towards Quality Teaching Over The 5 Weeks Of Block Teaching

➤ Inconsistent Comments

The survey questions indicated that student-teachers had different responses relating to ‘supervisors comments’ towards students work output in the lesson plan, reflective journal and lesson observation. For example, few students claimed that there were no comments written by the supervisors to justify the marks given in the lesson plan, lesson observation and reflective journals. One student commented “there were no comments written in the lesson plan and lesson observation to point out weaknesses for us to improve” For student-teachers who received supervisors comment on the other hand, had positive views that this comments were beneficial for them to make adjustments. Few students appreciate the comments written by the supervisors, however they view that the comments were not sufficient because there were no proper dialogue and conferencing sessions with the supervisors. This data did not establish reasons why supervisors did not write comments or take time to explain the comments after the lesson observation.

The data shows that inconsistency of comments draw confusions in the supervision process which hampers quality teaching. It is worth considering the significance of comments which direct the efforts of students to improve the instructional deficiencies identified during supervision which is beneficial to student teachers practice.

➤ Skipping Conclusion part of the Lesson

The survey questionnaire shows that student teachers were not satisfied with the lesson observation done by the supervisors. Student teachers assert that marks awarded to them were based on estimation with impressive marking which is not fair. As one student noted “supervisors did not observe the conclusion part of the lesson they just estimated the marks”. Another participant echoed the same sentiment “ The supervisor did not fully observe the lesson and she gave me a guess mark in the conclusion of the lesson which is not good” Another participant commented “They observe only introduction and body”

• One of the student teachers remarked;

The supervisor should observe our lessons starting from the introduction to the conclusion, because in a particular lesson planned, most interesting parts were inside but they gave estimated marks just by looking at the introduction which is not good. Some trainee teachers were marked down by looking at the way their lessons were introduced

Researchers field note in school. It was noted down in the diary that lesson observation took less than 30 minutes in the three supervision zones. The students were only observed in the introductory and body part of the lesson. The conclusion of the lessons were not observed. The lesson plan would give hints to the supervisors of the outcome of the conclusion.

The data suggests that conclusion of the lesson is determined by the lesson plan to enable the supervisors to give a subjective assessment without actually observing how trainee teachers demonstrate the strategies and skills in concluding the lesson. Although supervisors use subjective assessment based on the set benchmark to compare against the lesson plan to assess the concluding part of the lesson, student-teachers perceived that pre-empting marks is unfair and not helpful. Student teachers are of the opinion that three phases of the lesson should be observed to fully grasp the skill of teaching to help them become effective teachers.

➤ Different Expectation from Supervisors

Student teachers indicated their comments in the survey questionnaire that different expectation from supervisors apparently become the inhibiting factor in their teaching experience. Different comments from supervisors create confusion in student teachers. This finding is supported with the excerpt from the participants;

- Participant one “ *Due to different supervisors expectation, it is hard for me to find out my own weaknesses and strengths*”
- Participant 2 “ *Supervise the lesson presentation from the introduction to the conclusion, do not observe only introduction part of the lesson*”
- Participant 3 “*They were three different supervisors and they confused us with different comments and we really don’t know our weaknesses and strengths*”
- Participant 4 “ *Lecturers have different ideas altogether and when we follow one, others mark us down so one supervisor can supervise all five weeks*”

Flaws encountered may hamper block teaching practice which needs immediate attention. The data indicated that the supervisors in the group supervision have differing views and expectations in the way students are being observed. Supervisors have come from different teaching background and this dissonance of teaching experience, sector and specialisation poses many challenges which affects student teachers practical teaching experiences. The study suggests that supervisors should reach consensus to use the agreed set standard criteria to assess student teachers competency to minimise the likelihood of impersonal decisions.

D. Students Views to Improve Block Teaching Programs.

Trainee teachers were asked to suggest ways to improve the block teaching experience so that quality teaching outcomes are achieved. The survey shows that the trainee teachers suggested for supervisors to observe the full segments of the lesson from Introduction, body and conclusion. One of the teachers said “Supervisors only observe the introduction and body of the lesson not conclusion”. Another trainee teacher commented “supervisors should take up the 30 minutes to observe the full lesson from the introduction, body to conclusion”. Concerning the comments in the lesson plan, lesson observation and reflective journal, trainee teachers suggested for supervisors to write comments and point out the weak areas for improvement. This will help students to refer to comments and make improvements in their practices.

Different expectations of the supervisors in lesson observation, marking reflective journals and lesson plan remains the biggest concern for the trainee teachers. They suggested for supervisors to reach group consensus to assess students work. Expectations should be made clear to avoid conflicting views in supervisor’s comments. This creates ambiguity on the part of trainee teachers practice compromising standard of teaching outcomes.

Students suggested for supervisors to avoid impressive marking in the reflective journals, and Lesson plans and avoid giving estimated marks in Lesson observation particularly in the concluding part of the lesson. Students opined that this practice does not measure quality.

There has been numerous cases of clash between school and the supervisory team. To avoid clash, students suggested for supervisors to inform the administration of the participating schools of their supervision schedule particularly to the mobile supervision team. This will also help the trainee teachers to prepare well to avoid inconveniences.

Post conferencing is also important for the trainee teachers which leads to further suggestions for supervisors to go through the lesson observation or comments written in the lesson plan and reflective journal with the trainee teachers so that necessary improvements can be made. Marking rubric should be designed to assess lesson plans and reflective journals to avoid flaws in marking.

V. CONCLUSION

The research finding represents the student’s voice based on their experiences, beliefs and personal philosophy of what quality teaching is in the context of practice teaching. The student teachers perception of quality education is defined by the dimension of teacher professionalism. Feiman- Nemser & Buchmann (1986) postulated that practicum programs should train teachers to develop the habits of mind and character that are appropriate to professional practice which adds a moral

dimension to a profession besides gaining professional knowledge and skills for the role of teaching.

Emphasis on teacher professionalism and work ethics is beneficial to student teachers as it helps them to become responsible with commitment and diligence in undertaking the intricate task of teaching. When student teachers are responsible and loyal in the discharge of their instructional and professional roles, the productivity of work performance in the classroom is maximised which will contribute to quality teaching and learning.

The loss of work values and ethics in teacher professionalism in schools is described by (Sawhney, 2015) as dilution of quality. She further added that teaching is an ethical job and teachers have to reflect and uphold the good professional practices to ensure that the clients (students) that they are morally educating are observing the best practice. Therefore, it is imperative that training institutions should accommodate professional ethics and student formation programs in their training to shape and mould students professionally, morally and responsibly fit for the role of teaching. Large body of literature affirm that teacher professionalism constituting work ethics, work values and authentic teaching guarantee quality teaching.

Students perceived that teacher preparation contributes significantly towards their teaching practice experience. Areas identified as flaws in the supervision process should be accommodated in all the practicum programs (preparatory programs) so that the practicum experience can become effective. Management skills and teaching skills be strengthened in all teacher preparation programs as enabling factors towards quality teaching.

In light of student’s views for improvement in supervision, Antonio (2019) suggested for a paradigm shift in the supervision process to allow for supervision approach to be teacher centred rather than supervisor centred. While mobile supervision is an enabling factor as perceived by student teachers, much needed support is necessary to direct the efforts of student teachers to improve on “what is lacking to what should be attained and demonstrated” (Antonio, 2019 p. 242)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations provided in this study will help improve the block teaching program with the intention to promote quality teaching experiences for the trainee teachers in the near future.

1. Supervisors induction should be done thoroughly prior to block teaching to ensure that there is uniformity of expectations
2. It is important for supervisors to observe the full segment of lesson presentation done by the trainee teachers.
3. Supervisors to give full attention to mark lesson plans and reflective journals as these skills are important
4. The mixed supervision model should be followed. All the supervisors should be stationed at their allocated

schools for familiarisation with trainee teachers. The group supervision begins in week 2 of block teaching and ends in week 4. In week 5 of the block teaching will be left optional.

5. Supervision Schedule has to be given to the participating schools to avoid clash. These will help the supervisors to follow the schedule to avoid inconveniences.

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