

# International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR)



ISSN 2307-4531  
(Print & Online)

<http://gssrr.org/index.php?journal=JournalOfBasicAndApplied>



---

## Pedagogical Experiences of Students on School Teaching Practice – A Study of Two Teacher Training Institutions on the Copper belt and Central Provinces of Zambia.

<sup>a\*</sup>Kenneth .K. Muzata, <sup>b</sup>Annie Penda

<sup>a</sup>*The University of Zambia Lecturers and Researchers Union, P.O. Box 32379, Lusaka. Post code, 10101, Zambia.*

<sup>a</sup>*email: muzatakenneth@gmail.com/muzykezy@yahoo.com*

<sup>b</sup>*email::anniependa@yahoo.com*

### Abstract

This was a study of pedagogical experiences of students on school teaching practice conducted on two teacher training institutions on the Copper belt and Central provinces of Zambia. For ethical reasons, we gave the colleges pseudonyms. The Copper belt Based College of Education Copper belt Based College of Education (Pseudonym) (CBCE) trains teachers at Diploma level while the Central Province Based College of Education Kabwe Based College of Education (Pseudonym) (KBCE) trains teachers at Degree level. The study was both quantitative and qualitative. It used the case study design. Comment sheets on observed lessons were collected from both lecturers and students for study and analysis to establish the students' experiences in teaching. The instruments used by lecturers (supervisors) as guidelines to observe students and award marks were also studied and analyzed. The main findings were that students adopted one common way of introducing lessons; the lecture and group discussions method of teaching were the most prominent methods of teaching. While students exhibited knowledge of their subjects, they had difficulties using the discussion and group work methods. Problems of time management made them fail to conclude lessons on time. There was also less use of real objects as teaching aids and generally the use teaching and learning aids was limited. The quality of guidance provided to students by lecturers was good but requires to be improved. Lecturers contradicted each other on comments to guide students and did not comment on student files. While one college had adequate instruments for comments and guide for award of marks, another did not have the guide for award of marks.

---

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +639192591573.  
E-mail address: romercastillo@rocketmail.com

We recommended that training institutions should devise uniform instruments for assessing student teaching practice, minimize the numbers of students to be supervised by each lecturer, students teaching specialized subjects be supervised by lecturers specialized in those subjects and that there should be adequate orientation for students' before they embark on teaching practice.

**Keywords:** pedagogical experiences; students; teaching practice; observation.

## **1. Introduction**

Zambia trains teachers at three levels. These are Certificate and Diploma Colleges of Education, and Universities. There are thirteen public Colleges of Education in Zambia at both certificate and diploma level. These are Solwezi College of Education, Mansa College of Education, Kasama, Chipata, Kitwe, Mongu, David Livingstone, Malcom Moffart, and Mufulira Colleges of Education, Charles Lwanga, Copper belt College of Education, Zambia Institute of Special Education, Chalimbana and Nkrumah College of Education. Before 2008, Copper-belt College of Education and Nkrumah College of Education were offering diplomas in teaching while Mufulira and David Living stone were at certificate level. There was upgrading of colleges in 2008. Mufulira and David Livingstone Colleges of Education were upgraded to offering diploma and Copper belt and Nkrumah College of Education started offering degree programmes as they were in the process of transformation to university status. The primary colleges are also going through transformation to offer diplomas in primary education and phase out certificate. Private colleges are also part of teacher production in the country. They are affiliated to existing higher institutions such as the University of Zambia, The Copper-belt University, and The Zambia Open University while others are autonomous but government monitors the standards of teacher training in the private colleges as well.

Teaching practice is a mandatory requirement for students training in Zambian colleges of education and universities. A student cannot graduate without passing teaching practice.

## **2. Materials and methods:**

### *2.1 The Problem*

Teacher training institutions send students into teaching practice for a certain period of time. Students during this time have the opportunity to learn how to teach and apply what they have learnt in theory into practice. Knowledge of whether the students are doing well or not and knowing whether the institutions produce quality teachers at the end of training lies on review of teaching practice. The experiences of students during teaching practice have not been reviewed and documented, the reason this study has been instituted. This study therefore meant to answer the question, "what are the pedagogical experiences of students in teaching practice in a Zambian context?"

### *2.2 Objectives*

The study was guided by the following objectives;

- To establish student experiences in teaching practice
- To establish the strengths of students in classroom practice during teaching practice
- To establish the weaknesses of students during teaching practice
- To examine the quality of guidance provided by lecturers to students on teaching practice

### *2.3 Research questions*

The study answered the questions,

- What are the experiences of students in classroom practice?
- What are the strengths of students during teaching practice?
- What are the students' weaknesses in classroom teaching practice?
- What is the quality of guidance provided by lecturers to students during teaching practice?

### *2.4 Purpose of the study*

The purpose of the study was to investigate the pedagogical experiences of students during teaching practice from an observer's point of view. Teaching practice is a phase in the teacher training calendar in which students are assessed on abilities to teach and manage classroom proceedings in schools. A review of what experiences students go through during teaching practice would enable teacher training providers, the students themselves and other key stakeholders to uphold faith in the quality of teacher training in the country.

### *2.5 Significance of the study*

This study would help students going into practice to have information on how to handle classroom experiences in teaching practice. It would also act as a review for students who have already done teaching practice and help them improve their practices. The study would further help teacher training institutions improve the ways of preparing students for teaching practice.

### *2.6 Limitations*

The study revealed the experiences of students in teaching practice from the observer's point of view. Thus the study was limited to observation comments made by lecturers, hence the interpretation is based on what is written and not all that goes on during teaching practice, for example lesson post mortem discussions with students and students own perceptions were not captured.

## **3. Literature Review**

Everyone can claim to be a teacher and in fact everyone teaches others. Parents teach children, peers show their friends how to do things and all of us have a role to advise others on how certain things should be done. We take this as teaching but this is the lowest part of it. But professional teaching, the teaching in which a trained teacher

is expected to teach children in formal setting is beyond natural teaching. It requires expertise beyond the natural. As quoted by [7] in press saying that “Professional classroom teaching, on the other hand, is specialized work that is distinct from informal, commonplace showing, telling, or helping” This is what differentiates men from women. Teaching as a specialized area requires certain skills that are unnatural and have to be acquired through rigorous training. Teaching practice provides the skills in addition to the content students acquire.

Quality education emanates from quality teachers and quality teachers are produced in colleges and universities under strict quality teaching and supervision. Teacher training in Zambia takes teaching practice as a very serious exercise that leads to a successful graduation of a student. No student doing a teaching course in Zambian colleges or universities is allowed to graduate without passing teaching practice. It is quality assurance test because trainee teachers are assessed in the application of the theories they have learnt. Teaching practice is practiced world over, though approaches may differ from country to country. In Nigeria, teaching practice is an integral part in teacher training programme geared towards preparation of new entrants into the teaching profession. According to [11] “The exercise is to acquaint student teachers with the practical knowledge of teaching and learning process including lesson plan preparation, presentation, class management, communication skills, evaluation and the required personality of professional teachers”. Teaching requires the acquisition of a set of skills that are not common to all i.e. parents, story tellers, advisers etc. we will summarize the required skills by taking a long quote from [7] who say “The work of teaching is not only unnatural but intricate. Each episode of instruction comprises many tasks and moves, many of them invisible to a casual observer. Teachers must decide how to use time in each lesson, determine the point of the lesson and choose tasks, examples, models or analogies, and materials. During class, they must keep track of 25 or more learners as they move through the content, keep their eye on the learning goals, attend to the integrity of the subject matter, manage individual student behavior and maintain a productive learning environment, pose strategically targeted questions, interpret students’ work, craft responses, assess, and steer all of this toward each student’s growth.” Good teaching practice should provide training in interaction and collaboration among learners, activity based learning, immediate feedback, time on task, promotion of expectations and respect for diversity in learners. All this repertoire of skills is required to be exhibited within a classroom situation of many learners, each learner being guided with equal attention for personal growth.

In Bostwana up to 2010, the University of Bostwana was working with schools to assess students on teaching practice where the school mentors for the students’ award marks as well as the university lectures. According to [10] “a Lesson Observation Report Form (LORF) was the main instrument used to assess the competencies of student teachers. Each student teacher was to be assessed at least three times in each teaching subject by both the cooperating teacher and University of Bostwana lecturer; and the final mark shall be the simple average of the six grades.” Further, [10], reports that teachers take student teaching experience as the most meaningful portion of professional preparation. “The pre-student teaching practicum gives students firsthand knowledge of the classroom environment and the teacher's role; and for many students, the practicum is the initial encounter with the real world of teaching.”

In Zambia, teaching practice is part of the teacher training course at all levels of teacher training. Depending on the college or university, the duration for teaching practice varies. Under the ZATEC (Zambia Teacher Education Course), students were going on teaching practice (school experience) for a full one year after a one year college based. Under ZBEC (Zambia Basic Education Course), teaching practice was called block experience where students in the second year were attached to schools within the town of the college's location to practice teaching. The University of Zambia sends students for teaching practice for duration of 8 weeks while its affiliate colleges have their own schedules for teaching practice some having it twice in second and third years. The University of Zambia ensures that quality assurance is maintained by strictly ensuring that colleges affiliated to it undertake and supervise students on teaching practice. According to [2], ".....the university external examiners observe a representative group of college students teaching in schools.....whose purpose is to gauge the quality of teaching of affiliate college students". The University of Zambia therefore attaches great significance to teaching practice by itself and the affiliate colleges among other quality assurance aspects in teacher training. The aspects external examiners on school teaching practice according to [2] are to check on the candidates' Student Teaching Practice (STP) subject files to look for schemes and records of work, candidates lesson delivery, choice and use of teaching and learning aids, pupils participation, achievement of lesson objectives and knowledge of subject matter as well as the candidates work relationships with Heads of Department and the school administration.

However, not all goes well in preparing students for the world of work. A study by [8] revealed the problems of teaching practice that supervisors only assessed students' lesson plans and not the practical teaching. This means students cannot benefit from actual practical teaching experience where they are expected to exhibit their skills. Practical teaching observation provides first hand feedback to the student teacher and commenting on the lesson plan alone is not helpful to student teachers. In a study to establish the challenges faced by student teachers in teaching practice by [3], it was discovered that students faced several challenges among them that the period for teaching practice was too short, lack of instructional materials and resources in schools, poor learning environments and overcrowded classrooms, difficulties preparing notes, inadequate teaching practice orientation of students before actual teaching practice, lack of provision of field trip/ excursion when necessary and other challenges that bordered on relationships with other experienced teachers and personal welfare challenges of accommodation and allowances. Though there is a difference with this study, challenges that had to do with teaching itself could be similar to the challenges students in this study faced. The only limitation is that this study did not take student perspectives because the focus was on the classroom experiences during teaching practice. There is however a direct and indirect connection between external factors such as accommodation, allowances and others affecting the welfare of students and performance during teaching practice.

Teaching practice is therefore a very important undertaking in the training of teachers. Just as Daramola was quoted in [11] noted that education, as a subject is not complete without teaching practice exercise, teaching practice should forever be existent in teacher training to help students training to be teachers to enact what they have learnt in theory into practice. This helps to measure theory against practice as these two are different entities but intended for the same goal.

#### **4. Methodology**

This study is both qualitative and quantitative. We collected lecturers' lesson observation comment sheets of students observed in teaching practice. The comment sheets showed the strengths and weaknesses of students in teaching practice. The comments also show areas of improvement as guided by the lecturer, who becomes a supervisor during the period of monitoring students. We collected written observation comment sheets for the period 2012 and 2013. Forty (40) comment sheets were collected from **CBCE**, thirty nine (39) from **KBCE**.

#### 4.1 Population target

The study targeted seventy nine (79) students observed in teaching practice in the two colleges between 2012 and 2013.

#### 4.2 Data collection tools and techniques

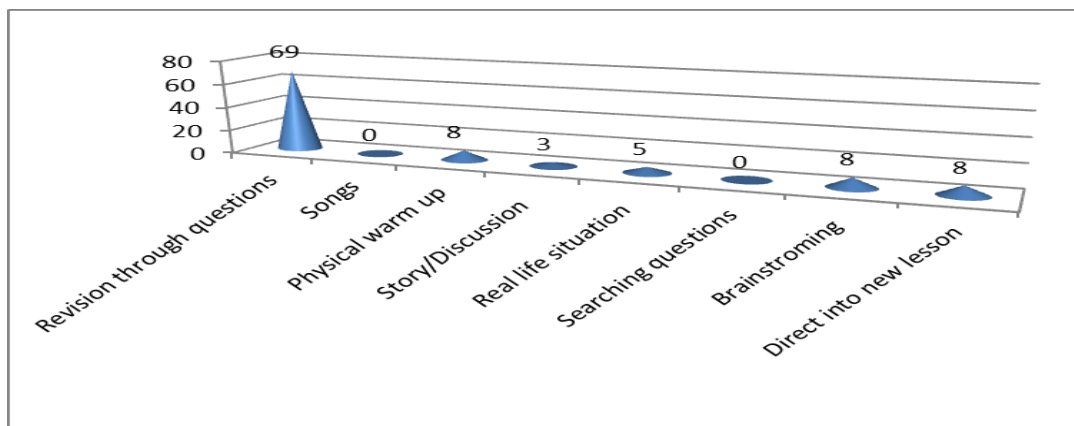
We collected written comments on observed lessons by lecturers for students that were in teaching practice. These were collected from both lecturers and students. We also used the tools used by lecturers to guide the students on teaching practice from the two institutions. CBCE had the lesson evaluation form which is a guide to scoring the student performance in teaching practice and the teaching practice observation sheet on which guiding comments for students were written. The Kabwe Based College of Education had the teaching practice observation sheet and a sheet where marks were entered (scoring sheet). This was readily available data.

#### 4.3 Data analysis

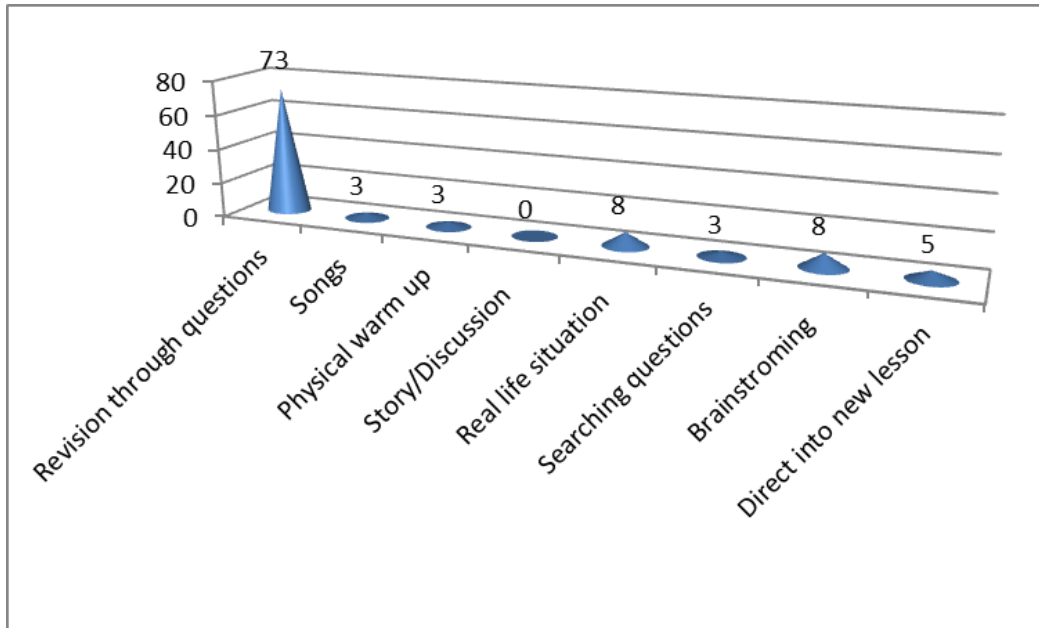
Document analysis was used to analyze the data collected from student observation comments. The comments lecturers made about observed lessons were studied in order to find out the pedagogical experiences of students during teaching practice. The observation instruments were also studied and analyzed to examine their adequacy to fully assess the teacher's readiness to teach. We also looked at the quality of guidance provided by lecturers to students through observation comments made during student teaching.

### 5. Findings

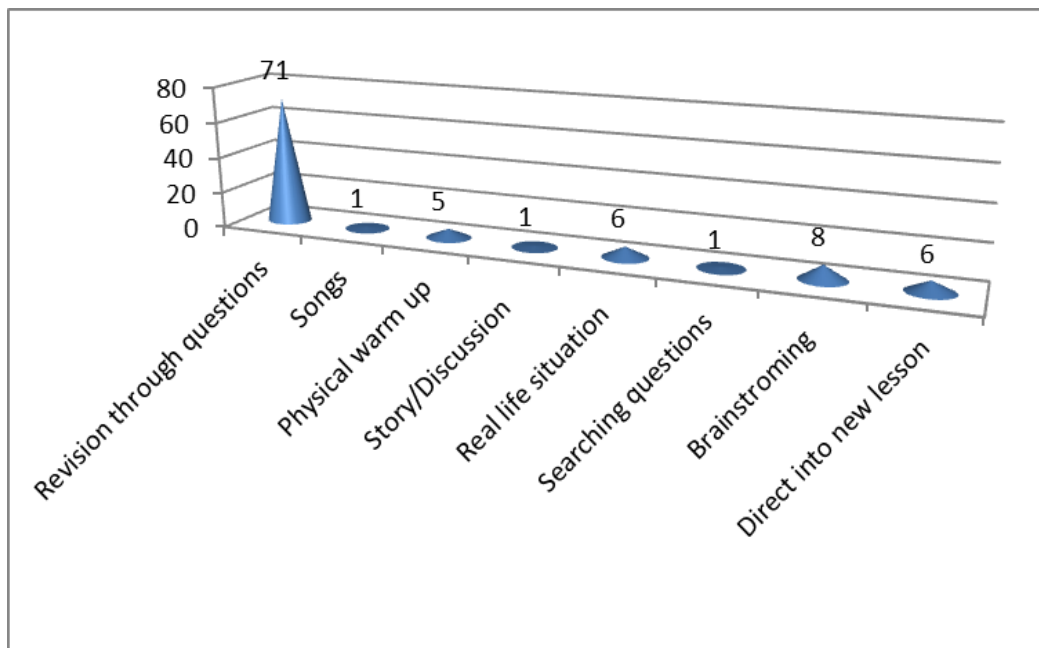
The column charts below represent the manner in which students introduced lessons during teaching practice at the two colleges under study.



**Figure1: How students at KBCE introduced lessons in Teaching Practice (TP)**



**Figure2: How students at CBCE introduced lessons in TP**



**Figure3: Overall picture of KBCE and CBCE on how they introduced lessons in TP**

**5.1 Teaching Methods prominently used by students in TP**

The table below provides frequency of responses in terms of the methods of teaching students used during teaching practice.

**Table 1:** frequency of responses in terms of the methods of teaching students used during teaching practice

S/N	Methods	KBCE (frequency of responses)	CBCE (frequency of responses)
1	Group discussions/Work	22	19
2	Lecture	16	13
3	Question and answer	14	5
4	Presentations	13	5
5	Document study	2	0
6	Observation	0	0
7	Practical	1	4
8	Demonstration	3	4
9	Experimentation	2	0

**Table 2:** Comments lecturers (as observers) made on student lessons

S/N	Comment	Lesson Strengths and Weakness lecturers commented on at CBCE			Lesson Strengths and Weakness lecturers commented on at KBCE		
		Strong	Some	Weak	Strong	Some	Weak
1	Students' voice projection	Strong			Strong		
2	Knowledge of subject	Strong			Very Strong		
3	Board work clarity and order		Some		Strong		
4	Capturing learners attention		Some			Weak	
5	Planning lessons	Strong			Strong		
6	Rapport with learners	Strong			Strong		
7	Using pointer		Some		Strong		
8	Connecting previous lesson to new lesson	Strong					Some
9	Teaching from known to unknown	Strong			Very strong		
10	Lesson coherence	Strong			Very strong		
11	Supervision of group activities	Strong			Strong		



12	Communication abilities	<b>Strong</b>			<b>Strong</b>		
13	Involving learners in lesson reflection			<b>Some</b>		<b>Weak</b>	
14	Teacher's Confidence	<b>Strong</b>			<b>Strong</b>		
15	Teacher encourages learner confidence			<b>Some</b>		<b>Weak</b>	
16	Time management		<b>Weak</b>			<b>Weak</b>	
17	Disrupting discussion method		<b>Weak</b>			<b>Weak</b>	
18	Relating lesson to real life			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
19	Providing clear instructions to learners/questions		<b>Weak</b>		<b>Strong</b>		
20	Use of teaching and learning aids			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
	Real objects as T/L learning aids			<b>Some</b>		<b>Weak</b>	
21	Evaluating previous lesson on file			<b>Some</b>		<b>Weak</b>	
22	Summarizing lessons		<b>Weak</b>			<b>Weak</b>	
23	Connecting lesson to next lesson		<b>Weak</b>			<b>Weak</b>	
24	Discouraging chorusing			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
25	Facing class while teaching			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
26	Correcting board mistakes		<b>Weak</b>				<b>Some</b>
27	Asking thought provoking questions			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
28	Lesson learner centered			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
29	Motivation			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
30	Classroom control			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
31	Poor eye contact/not knowing learners names		<b>Weak</b>			<b>Weak</b>	
32	Using right chalk color			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
33	Matching teaching aids to lesson			<b>Some</b>			<b>Some</b>
34	Matching content to intellectual level					<b>Weak</b>	

35	Correcting bad behavior			<i>Some</i>		<i>Weak</i>	
36	Dress	<i>Strong</i>			<i>Strong</i>		
37	Lesson conclusion			<i>Some</i>			<i>Some</i>
38	Conclusion with questions			<i>Some</i>			<i>Some</i>
39	Conclusion by highlighting main points learnt		<i>Weak</i>				<i>Some</i>
40	Conclusion by marking some exercises			<i>Some</i>			<i>Some</i>
41	Keeping answers on board when asking questions		<i>Weak</i>			<i>Weak</i>	
42	Class exercise after teaching			<i>Some</i>			<i>Some</i>
43	Checking lesson plans by HOD s	<i>Strong</i>				<i>Weak</i>	
44	Inclusive strategies						
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>

**Note:** Key 'some' represents that only a portion of students were able to apply the qualities lecturers commented on, 'strong' represents students areas of strength in TP and 'weak' represents points students did not apply in TP. The totals represent areas of strength, weakness and where students were moderately performing.

### 5.2 The guidance provided by lecturers during observation

The nature of guidance provided to students on teaching practice was generally good. However, there were certain observations that require improvement on;

- Lecturers' comments were contradicting; for example, some lecturers advised students to give notes, others discouraged giving of notes.
- Space for comments was not enough to provide clear and adequate guidance to students on teaching practice.
- For KBCE, the comments sheet was not divided into key parts of a lesson that requires guidance on and so lecturers would comment on certain things only. Normally and as in the case of CBCE, the comments sheet has file, lesson introduction, Lesson development, Conclusion, as main parts to be commented on. The lack of this makes subjectivity in assessing students too wide.
- KBCE did not have a scoring guide showing particular aspects requiring award of marks. This further compounded the subjectivity in the award of marks to students in that a lecturer would just have to think of a mark to award without considering the merits and demerits of the students when they were teaching.

- The KBCE observation instrument has not provided for assessing a student on the teaching file while CBCE has a provision. This means that students at CBCE receive guidance on teaching file while students at KBCE did not.
- Some lecturers did not provide comments on content presented by students in teaching.
- Students were not guided on filing at KBCE and there were no comments on lesson evaluations. The CBCE had lecturers seriously guiding students on how to evaluate lessons and how to formulate lesson objectives. Even the instruments used to observe students did not have this component for assessment.

## **6. Discussion**

The discussion focuses on the main components of lesson presentation but highlights other key prerequisite aspects that make effective pedagogy.

### **6.1 Pedagogy**

Pedagogy refers to the art, science or profession of teaching. Practice refers to what you actually do in the classroom [9]. There are a variety of skills needed to be exploited in a classroom situation to enhance effective learning. The combination of the various skills teachers use is what we describe as pedagogy. According to Kasambira [6], pedagogy involves planning lessons, planning the chalk board, organizing group work, making or using teaching aids, encouraging communication, questioning for teaching and learning, reflecting, exploiting text books, using local environment, testing for teaching and learning, drawing, using songs, games and rhymes. In other words, teachers are expected but not limited to using a variety of skills that would enhance effective learning.

### **6.2 Lesson introduction**

Let's liken a lesson introduction to an appetizer. An appetizer gives an impression that the food you are going to eat is going to be enjoyable. [5], observes that the pedagogical practices involved in a classroom have a very important value in determining learning, likening teaching to a business involving a seller (teacher) and a buyer (learner) in which the seller would want his or her commodities to be bought. In this case teachers during introduction of a lesson have to advertise the goods they have (i.e. knowledge) to the learners and the learners should be attracted to the goods (knowledge) teachers want them to buy. Thus the buyers (learners) have to determine whether the goods (knowledge) are of value or not.

Lesson introduction serves as an appetizer or an advert in which the value of the lesson is determined by the recipient, (the learner). The learners' attention through the lesson is determined by how well they value the lesson from the introduction. It is therefore very important that students training to be teachers place more emphasis on how best they can begin lessons. Lesson introduction should be mind-capturing, motivating and valuable to learners, a concept we postulate as Mind capturing, motivating and Valuable (MMV). An MMV introduction is responsible for a well ordered lesson progression, classroom management and control and for the achievement of the objectives because learners have the reason to attend to the product being presented.

But it should be noted that lessons that are introduced in the same manner create monotony. Teachers need to be creative in devising a variety of ways to introduce lessons. This study reveals a certain kind of introduction of lessons commonly practiced by student teachers. Most teachers introduced lessons through revision of the previous lesson. There is strength in revision as it connects the previously learned information to the new lesson to be taught. But the manner can be varied. The student teachers' manner of introducing lessons through revision questions on previous lessons shows that lecturers placed more emphasis on this approach when preparing them than other approaches that only very few used such as songs, presenting a real life situation connected to the lesson, giving searching questions that lead learners to the lesson of the day, brain storming and other approaches. 69% and 73% introduced lessons through revision questions at KBCE and CBCE respectively. Overall percentage indicates that 71% percent of students used revision questions as opposed to the other approaches (*see fig 1, 2&3*). According to [4], "achieving a successful start to a lesson is most important. It is a period when students decide whether they are being offered a valuable educational experience that they will engage with, or whether they reluctantly endure the next 70 minutes." Learners pay particular attention to content that they find value in.

One aspect we observed students failing to bring out in lesson introductions is the value of the lesson which is embodied in the rationale. Lecturers equally did not bring out this aspect in comments guiding students. The first guideline of the five guidelines to delivering instructions provided by [1] is that teachers should state the purpose and the importance of the lesson because the student should know clearly the focus of the lesson and should not have to wonder what is being taught. This is the aspect that teachers should provide in the introduction because it leads the learning process.

An attractive lesson introduction settles learners down to the task. [4], advises teachers to be clear about the aims of the lesson further explaining that students perform best when they understand both the purpose of the lesson and the expectations of how they should act and perform academically and behaviorally. When learners are clear about the expectations and value of the lesson, they will behave well through the lesson. Most problems in poor classroom management result from poor introduction where the aim of the lesson and its value is not given to the learners.

Another aspect that is important in lesson introduction as well as lesson development is relating the lesson to the learners' experiences. When a lesson is connected to a student's experiential background, learning is more efficient and meaningful because it builds on the learners' background experiences [1]. This connection is vital because it creates a link between the child's past experiences and the new lesson being presented.

### *6.3 Lesson development*

The 'real' art of teaching is assessed during lesson development. We define lesson development as musical chorus in which the dance is actually performed. This is the period in which the teacher shows his or her understanding of subject content and how best it is delivered to achieve the lesson objectives. In lesson development, the teacher in teaching practice shows that he is able to teach learners competently in particular subjects. Correct content is seen to be delivered. The methods the teacher uses, the strategies and techniques in

teaching to achieve the methods are among key observations lecturers take note of during observation. Lecturers would also want to see that students on teaching practice are able teach learners in sequence, using methods that allow learner participation. They further want to see students' innovativeness in creating learning resources and using such resources appropriately in teaching and learning. Chalk board use, questioning techniques and the quality of questions are considered besides attributes of personality disposition such as confidence, voice projection, effective communication, mannerisms, and appearance, attitude and pupil-teacher relationships among others. The student teacher is also observed in classroom control ability control the class, effective eye contact, use of rewards, and discipline among others.

This study discovered most of students in teaching have knowledge of the content of the subjects in which they were training. This is an important achievement in the training of teachers by the teacher training institutions. There were also superb abilities in most students connecting new lessons to previous lessons, applying the John Dewey theories of teaching from known to unknown. The only concern worthy advising students on this aspect is the adoption of revision questions as an ultimate way of introducing a lesson. The student abilities in voice projection, communication, use of group work, clear board work, well supervised group presentations were outstanding.

However, this study reveals certain traditional practices that continue to deprive the learner's right to learn through a learner centered environment. Though group discussions appeared in higher frequency at CBCE and KBCE, lecture method was the second prominent method used to deliver content to learners. The results show minimal difference in the frequency responses of the use of discussion by students from the two institutions. Student teachers seemed to be more comfortable using the lecture method than any other method because even in the use of discussion, there were a lot of errors in those that used the method than those that used lecture method. Those that used discussion usually could not finish and conclude lessons, had challenges of classroom control and contradictions of stopping learners from discussing taking it as noise. Methods such as practical method, field trip, experimentation, document study and other learner centered were rarely used. This calls for a study to establish why students resort to lecture method yet theoretically they are aware of the disadvantages it has on learners learning and personality development. Lecture methods reduce the learner to a tabula rasa or a white slate on which teachers should write what they know, taking the student as not knowing anything at all and has to be told everything. The method reduces the learner's attention and ability to learn cooperatively, confidently and develop self-esteem skills through inquiry based and participatory methods.

Teaching and learning is more effective when teachers relate the learning points to real life so that learners can easily understand the context in which the taught concept is being presented. However, very few students in this study showed the ability to relate what is in real life to what they teach. This amounts to lack of adequate preparation for lessons in terms of lesson planning, planning teaching and learning aids especially real objects. Common teaching and learning aids students were observed using were charts and work cards. Very few students were observed using real objects. Certain methods such as document study were only used in History. The lack of use of real objects poses questions for further research as to whether it was costly for students to acquire real objects for teaching or not. However, Zambian schools environments are rich with local resources that can be used real objects for teaching. Student creativity to mobilize real objects and make learning more realistic is needed.

#### *6.4 Lesson conclusion*

Lesson conclusion signals the end of the learning for a particular lesson and it should reflect that the learning has taken place. Teachers need wrap up skills. Lessons do not just end hanging or abruptly. Learners need to know what they have learnt and not to be left wondering what they have learnt during the lesson. The height of an activity slows down in a cool down fashion. Lessons conclusion considers review of what the lesson has been about, done either through questions on what has been covered or through a quick written exercise. The teacher is a facilitator and it is his or her responsibility to provide an avenue for enticing the learners to tell what they have learned in a particular lesson through well-tailored questions.

Another way of winding up a lesson is through display of learners work. Display of learners' work helps to motivate and appreciate learners input in the learning process and encouraging those that may not have done as expected. It provides feedback to the learners and an avenue to either reteach a particular lesson or not. This study revealed serious discrepancy in students' abilities to conclude lessons in time as well as failing to highlight key points learned during the lessons. Students could not even state what the next lesson would be to learners so as to let the learners know and prepare for the next lesson. Learners would have a sense of responsibility by giving them hints on what the next lesson would be. The teacher can state briefly what would be taught in the next lesson and give an activity in form of homework for learners to go and inquire about the next lesson. Learners can as well be given homework based on what has been learnt during the day.

#### *6.5 The quality of guidance provided by lecturers*

Teaching practice provides an opportunity for students to be guided appropriately in natural settings. There are several areas students need guidance on beyond lesson presentation. Pedagogical guidance goes beyond the lesson presentation. But this study showed that there was more concentration on guiding students in lesson presentation. The pre and post lesson pedagogical aspects that require comments on were neglected.

#### *6.6 Lesson preparation*

Lesson preparation is a very important pedagogical practice for teachers. Whether a teacher is trained or is on teaching practice, there is serious emphasis that planning is done well in advance. The plan of how a lesson would be delivered is called a lesson plan. According to [6], the purpose of a lesson plan is to guide the memory of a busy teacher by reminding the teacher to follow each step so that the objectives are eventually achieved. The lesson plan should be readable at glance because it is simply a teacher's guide. Lesson preparation is the actual breakdown of the national curriculum into comprehensible units.

In teaching practice, students are required to prepare lesson plans well in advance before they teach. The lesson plans are required to be checked by the School Head of Department (HOD) or Section (HOS) or any other qualified established member of staff specialized to provide guidance to the student teachers. The lesson plan is required to be date stamped and signed by the student guide. When lecturers go to observe students on teaching practice, they are required to first have a check on the lesson plan the student has prepared before the student teaches.

In this study, students prepared lessons well in advance but some students did not lesson plans checked by guides. Some lecturers made comments on this aspect guiding students to have lesson plans checked and approved. The differences in the instruments used between the two institutions could have allowed for such disparities.

#### *6.7 Observing experienced teachers before students start teaching in teaching practice*

Though the assessment of student pedagogy is assessed by lecturers, student teachers have a lot to learn from teachers who are already established in schools. Students are advised to observe experienced teachers in the first two weeks before they start teaching. This is meant to acquaint the student with the practices in the classroom and accord them a chance to preview the experiences they are likely to face in practice. This does not mean that the practices used by experienced teachers are ultimately correct but the student should reflect on how best and different they would present lessons. Reflective students would during the first weeks while observing experienced teachers have a quick analysis of how different they would present lessons.

#### *6.8 Pre-checking of lesson plans by HODS/HOS*

This study revealed that though students prepared lessons, very few lecturers had time to look at the filed lesson plans for students. There was only one comment recorded on this part meaning lecturers did not consider this as important. Comments can be positive or guiding. Having a lesson plan checked allows the student to be guided by the experienced teacher before they get to class. It helps to build the student confidence so that they do not go to class and make mistakes in front of learners. The difference in instruments used for observation could have been the reason not many lecturers commented on lesson plans. Students can be guided on the lesson lay out, objectives, methods, order of content and making lesson conclusions. The idea is that lecturers need to be sure that students are able to apply what they have learnt in lesson preparation as well as its delivery. The lesson plan used during observation signed by the HOD/HOS is also signed by the lecturer at the end of observation to act as reference for the student teacher in their professional development path.

#### *6.9 The student teaching practice file*

The teaching practice file is a collection of professional documents for a teacher including long and short term plans, student progress records, registers, timetables, samples of marked scripts, action plans, evaluations and other relevant documents arranged in some orderly manner. This study reveals that students' files were not one of the main assessments for students in teaching practice. Only CBCE showed in its teaching practice observation instrument that lecturers should look at the students' teaching file first, make comments, award marks and guide the students. CBCE allocated marks to the file. The Kabwe Based College of Education only had the comments sheet and no marks award guide, meaning that the award of marks was highly subjective.

The teaching file is a professional compilation of key documents that show that teacher is a planner, a record keeper and implementer of his or her pedagogical experiences. In an ideal teaching practice observation, before observing the student in teaching, the file should be checked. The file is given to the lecturer when he or she begins work at the school where the student is practicing teaching. The lesson for the day is expected to be seen on the file. If the file is well indexed, the lecturer does not need to be shown where to find a particular document.

This is a skill students need to be prepared for as well. The teaching file reveals the student teachers' commitment to work and professional ethics in the absence of observation. It reveals the student teachers' commitment to their career. A representative number of lesson plans needs to be seen on the file as evidence of the teacher's daily teaching load. Through the teaching file, lecturers can assess whether the student evaluates lessons and makes follow ups to failed lessons. This helps to see whether the teacher is able to review progress. Teachers should be able to gauge their weaknesses and make improvements in their career. For example, on student files for CBCE, one of the prominent comments lecturers observed was students did not evaluate lessons fully and students were guided to consider looking at the achievement of the lesson objectives, the methods used, the teaching and learning aids etc. The teacher may make adjustments towards improvement in future lessons based on lesson evaluations. Lesson evaluations provide the basis for continuity. A teacher can decide to reteach a lesson whose objectives were not achieved. This professional behavior is a product of lesson evaluation and the informant for observers is the teaching practice file.

Teaching files also show whether the teacher is connecting the lessons to the syllabus and the national curriculum and whether the teacher is moving ahead to accomplish curriculum goals.

Filing assessment records for learners informs the teacher about the progress his or her learners are making, what remedial measures they put in place for learners that have challenges making progress in learning. The register also helps establish whether learner poor performance is a result of absenteeism from lessons. Teachers are at times called upon to answer questions from parents why a child may not be doing well. A responsible teacher who keeps a register and assessment records would easily guide the child and parents based on the evidence he or she has.

#### *6.10 The Observation Instruments*

The strength of observation instruments helps in assessing students on teaching practice holistically. From the instruments collected from the two institutions, Copper belt Based College of Education provides the comments sheet and an evaluation form. The comments sheet is divided into major comment areas namely positive comments about the lesson, negative comments about the lesson and recommended areas for improvement. The Kabwe Based College of Education provides only the comments form without the evaluation form. The comments sheet only had general information pertaining to the student, the institution and the school and class taught. Without the evaluation form, lecturers at KBCE were awarding marks subjectively. This also means that students that graduated from the two institutions have totally different qualities yet the target for training teachers is the same.

#### *6.11 Observing inclusive practices by students on teaching practice*

Both colleges did not show any comments on inclusive practices. Lecturers made no comments on learners with disabilities and how they were treated during teaching and learning. The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational and Early Childhood Education emphasizes inclusive education. Students need guidance on how to handle and help learners with mild and moderate disabilities included in the mainstream school.

#### *6.12 Tips for lecturers when observing students in teaching practice*



- Check the student file, see how much the student has prepared since commencement of teaching practice and deduce his or her seriousness towards the profession. On the teaching file, observe the number of lesson plans filed, whether they are checked by the HODs and if they are evaluated. See the nature of evaluations done on lessons taught and comment on file lessons to guide the student. Follow up should be seen on lessons that did not succeed; for example, remedial work marks of students who don't perform well and measures such as the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in place. You can also check the order of filing, and other necessary documents required on the file as well as the students' ability to match lessons to schemes of work.
- Check the lesson plan before you observe the student in teaching. See the objectives of the lesson, the rationale, teaching and learning resources planned, the methods and strategies to be used and the conclusion.
- Look out for pseudo lessons. Some students have a tendency of presenting a lesson that was already taught. You can only see this from the teaching file schemes, records and lessons taught. Pseudo lessons show student unpreparedness, and this act is against professional ethics.
- Make comments on each of the key parts to the lesson during presentation to advise and guide the student on what best they did and did not and suggest better ways for students to try out during teaching practice.
- Check on the levels of confidence of the students in teaching practice and knowledge of subject in which they are training.
- Advise students on tactics that make a lesson successful such as change of strategies and use of different techniques. The use motivational techniques to enhance interest and participation in the lesson should be commended. This depends on the personality disposition of the teacher, his or her manner of speaking, the amount of enthusiasm when teaching, voice projection, rewards, tokens and their appropriate use.
- Guide students on how to conclude lessons and how to manage time. This study revealed a challenge in this area.
- Have lesson post-mortem discussion with your students after observation and highlight key observations and explain them so that the student makes strides to improve.

#### *6.13 Tips for students on teaching practice*

- Know your subject. It is better to be tutored on how to present what you already know than on your specialized area.
- Prepare for every lesson. No matter how talented you are, each lesson or even the same lesson may have different ways of being presented. It is preparation that makes your learners have confidence in you. Making unnecessary mistakes will make your learners lose respect for your specialization.
- Be confident. Teach confidently; do not doubt your abilities, teaching practice is not meant to appease an observer. Observations are intended to see what happens in the natural settings and provide appropriate guidance.
- Do not teach pseudo lessons, i.e. lessons that have been taught before for the sake of better performance. You do not learn from such a lesson because learners will act artificially.

## **7. Recommendations**

## Recommendations for teacher training institutions and Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Childhood Education

- Teacher training institutions should devise uniform standard instruments for teaching practice observation. This can be made possible through having an authority for standards.
- Devise instruments that adequately assess students on teaching practice.
- Provide enough orientation to students before going for actual teaching practice
- Provide enough pre teaching practice orientation
- Provide enough time for teaching practice, e.g. twice in the course duration.
- Minimize large numbers of students supervised per lecturer.
- Provide lecturers enough days for observation of students
- Some subjects should be supervised by specialist lecturers, e.g. those in the science faculties.
- Interchange lecturers in colleges and universities in observation
- Train lecturers in teaching practice observation
- Equip schools with modern technology to enhance effective teaching practice for student teachers
- Both lecturers and students need orientation on strategies used in inclusive learning.

## References

1. A.J. Koenig & C. M. Holbrown. "Instructional Strategies for Teaching Children and Youths with Visual Impairments". *Foundations of Education*, 2nd ed., Vol. USA. AFB Press, 2000, pp. 219-220.
2. C.P. Chishimba. "Accreditation of Qualifications in Higher Education Institutions by the University of Zambia". *Zambia Journal of Education*, Vol 2 Number 1, pp. 44. December. (2008).
3. E.O. Okobia. et al "An Analysis of the Perceived Challenges Faced by Student-Teachers during Teaching Practice Exercise". *Journal of Education and Practice*. [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org) ISSN 2222-1735 (Paper) ISSN 2222-288X (Online) Vol.4, No.11, 2013. 2013. pp1-6.
4. G. Butt. *Lesson Planning*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group. (2006).pp. 66.
5. K.K.Muzata. *Teaching the Hearing Impaired HIV/AIDS: Pedagogical Experiences*. Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing. 2013. PP 65-66.
6. K.P. Kasambira. *Lesson Planning and Class Management*. London: Longman. (1986).
7. L.D. Ball and F.M. Forzani. "The Work of Teaching and the Challenge for Teacher Education". *Journal of Teacher Education*. 60; 497. (2009). Available at: <http://jte.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/60/5/497>. Accessed on 24 December 2013.
8. M.O. Adekunle. "The role of Teaching Practice in Preparation of Social Studies Teachers. Forum Academia". *A Multi-Disciplinary Journal of Education*. Nigeria: Kaduna State College of Education. 2000). pp. 81-92. Accessed 25/12/2013.
9. Ministry of Education. *Community, Health, and Nutrition, Gender and education support 2 (CHANGES 2) SPRINT, teachers 'guide*. Lusaka: New Horizon Printing Press, (2007).
10. P.M. Monyatsi. "Challenges in the Grading of Teaching Practice at the University of Botswana". <https://www.academia.edu/4067061/> (2010). pp. 1-11. Accessed 25/12/2013.
11. S.O.Afolabi. "Assessment of Students on Teaching Practice: A case Study of College of Education Ilorin". Llorin: Kwara State College of Education.