

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF MICROTEACHING IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN ENUGU STATE

BY

**OGBU NKIRU
ENUGU STATE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ,
ENUGU**

Abstract

This study guided by two research questions and one hypothesis aimed to determine the perceptions of students of tertiary institutions on microteaching in the second semester of 2011/2012 academic session. The study determined whether there are any differences between male and female students on how they perceive microteaching. The population for the study consisted of 291 students (200 females and 91 males) chosen randomly from the four tertiary institutions in Enugu State. To achieve the study objectives, the researcher built a 30-item questionnaire to elicit information from the respondents. The study revealed that gender has no significant effect on students' perceptions towards microteaching and the students' perceptions were positive (very high). In the light of the study results, it was recommended that coordinators of microteaching in tertiary institutions should be trained themselves and be skilled so that they can help these students improve wherever. Also textbooks on microteaching should be introduced for the course, and basics of microteaching practice should be included in order to enable students to acquire the basic components of microteaching.

Introduction

Microteaching is an integral part of teacher-training programme which provides an opportunity for students' practical training. It is designed in such a way that it formed part of education curriculum, and indeed a requirement for graduation from NCE to B.Ed in Nigeria. Microteaching practical in B.Ed. for instance is the first step towards teaching field in future for the trainees. This indicates the importance of microteaching which is to prepare the

future teacher-trainee to teach in schools.

The term 'micro' simply means small-sized, little or very minimal which indicates that it is associated with a very small number of students. Wallace (2000) defined microteaching as a training content in which a teaching situation has been reduced in scope and or simplified in some systematic way. Accordingly, teaching encounter is scaled down, the task is shortened, and the size of the class is reduced.

Yesuf (2006) defined microteaching as

the practical teaching technique which gives the students and the teachers the opportunity to master the skills inherent in teaching a laboratory experience. Microteaching is always associated with a very small number of students. This is to allow students practice their teaching skills under observation of a supervisor. As suggested by McGarvey and Swallow (2006) the main aim of a supervisor is to help the students for 'self-discovery' by encouraging the development of the skills of perception and interpretation of significant event encounters. Manis (2003) remarked that microteaching implies condensed and simplified teaching situation which gives prospective teachers opportunities to systematically study and practise specific teaching behaviour in a simulated environment. Manis further maintained that microteaching model commonly consists of four basic phases. First, the trainee attempt to apply the skills in a five to ten minute lesson, taught to three or seven students. Secondly, he receives feedbacks from a supervisor about the quality of his performance, written evaluation from the students to whom the lesson was taught, audio or visual recording of the lesson, or a combination of the sources. The third phase is to re-plan and re-teach the lesson, trying to

improve the quality of his performance to the same group of students.

Rosenstein (2002) noted that videotape in microteaching may be used for performance assessment feedback, interactional assessment feedback and situational assessment feedback. Johnson (2000) in a study investigated in a Nigerian setting whether the use of videotape recordings is an effective method of teacher education. Two groups of students were used for study. The first group was allowed to practise the skill through microteaching with the aid of video recording equipment. The second group practised their own skills through microteaching but without the aid of video-recording equipment. At the end of the study, it was discovered that the group which used the video recording equipment had more significant progress in the mastery of teaching skills.

Brain (1998) pointed out that if someone aims to become a better teacher, there are four essential qualities that distinguished exceptional teachers, namely; knowledge, skills, communication, interest and respect for students. These qualities if taken seriously can be used for preparing effective and reflective teachers and particularly for creating excellent teachers. The application of microteaching does not need a great deal

of elucidation as it had been used to train teaching assistants, soft skill presentation and interpersonal skills. Although Butler (2001) had queried and debated its usefulness, Yesuf (2006) was of the opinion that the merits of microteaching cannot be overemphasized. Amobi and Irwin (2007) added that microteaching provides skilled supervision with an opportunity to get constructive feedbacks. It promotes understanding in classroom teaching and ultimately increases the confidence of the teacher-learner.

The foregoing attributes help to improve the perceptions of students in tertiary institutions in Enugu State towards microteaching as a course in teacher-education. Perception is conceived as a process intervening between stimuli and responses. As such, it can be viewed as a concept whose properties may be delimited by converging operations (Wikipedia, 2009). Again, Alu (2005) defined perception as the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information, that is, the process by which an individual selects, organizes and interprets stimuli into meaningful and coherent picture of the world. Accordingly, perception of microteaching by students in tertiary

institutions implies the way the students are aware or understand microteaching. Most students have different perceptions towards microteaching. In a research carried out by Haziah (2003) about students' perceptions towards microteaching, most of the respondents agreed that their perceptions towards microteaching changed after taking microteaching as a course. According to them, they are more interested in teaching and became more confident.

Given that microteaching enhances proficiency in teaching, and given that proficiency enhances productivity and consequently enhances professionalism, it is the view of the researcher that microteaching has the potential to enhance the professionalism of students as potential teachers. It is against this background that the researcher sought to determine the perceptions of students on microteaching as a course in teacher education.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study emanated from the poor participation of students in tertiary institutions in teaching and learning activities. Therefore, this research work was motivated by lack of effort and responsibility towards

microteaching. From observation, it was clear that many of the undergraduate students were not adequately prepared for their teaching practice; they usually did it for the sake of completing their academic work load. They did not show much effort and initiative to make their teaching lively and interesting.

The reason for lack of effort was not clear, but the researcher thought it might be because emphasis was not placed on the subject by the coordinators of microteaching or that the students could not give full commitment towards the subject since they had six or seven other subjects to attend to. Also, some students did not really see the significance of microteaching. This somehow made them unmotivated to give full commitment towards microteaching.

Purpose of the Study

Generally, the purpose of this study was to determine the students' perceptions towards microteaching as a course in teacher-education. Furthermore, the study will determine whether there were any differences between male and female students on how they perceived microteaching.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the mean perception scores of students in tertiary institutions regarding microteaching practice?
2. What are the mean perception ratings of male and female students regarding microteaching practice?

Research Hypothesis: This following hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students in tertiary institutions on their perceptions of microteaching.

Method

Survey research method was adopted for this research. A survey research method is a non-experimental, descriptive research method which can be used when a researcher wants to collect data on phenomena that cannot be directly observed (The Microsoft Encarta Dictionary, 2011). This type of research method is appropriate for this study of this nature that involves a large population of respondents with common characteristics. From the above definition, the study used a representative

sample to determine the students' perceptions of microteaching in tertiary institutions. With purposive sampling technique, the researcher selected a size of 291 of a population of 702 final year students in four tertiary institutions which include University of Nigeria, Nsukka,(UNN), Enugu State College of Education,(Technical), College of Education, Eha Amufu and Enugu State University of Science and Technology, (Esut). In order to collect the data for the research the researcher used questionnaire and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was used to elicit information relevant for answering the two research questions that guided the study.

Before the instrument was administered it underwent validation by three experts, and reliability test and the internal consistency of the item using Cronbach

Alpha. The questionnaire was administered to 30 students of Ebonyi State University. The data collected was used to compute co-efficient of reliability and the value obtained was 0.95 which was an indication that the instrument was reliable.

The analysis of data involved the application of mean to answer the two research questions that guided the study, while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis formulated in the study at 0.05 level of significance. Results were presented in line with mean and t-test in the tables below. The point of decision is that items with value above 2.50 were considered very high. The estimation value range from very high to very low. The questionnaire had a return rate of 100%, that is, the entire 291 questionnaire were returned.

Table 1 Distribution of Students' Sample according to Independent Variable.

Variable	Level of Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	91	31.3%
	Female	200	68.7%
	TOTAL	291	100%

Research Question 1 What are the mean perception scores of students on Microteaching?

Mean scores of respondents on perceptions of microteaching

S/N	Items	N=291	x	SD	Estimation
					Level
1.	Microteaching will help me to become a better teacher		3.52	0.80	Very high
2.	I see microteaching as a field-based teaching experience.		3.42	0.67	Very high
3.	Microteaching is a basic connection for integrating theory and practice		3.39	0.80	Very high
4.	Microteaching helps me to bring a whole range of theoretical issues to real life situation teaching.		3.51	0.75	Very high
5.	I hate microteaching		2.48	0.71	Low
6.	Effective teaching is nurtured through microteaching.		3.62	0.59	Very high
7.	Microteaching helps me to master the skills inherent in teaching.		3.70	0.74	Very high
8.	It is vital to pave the way to possible self-improvement.		3.66	0.66	Very high
9.	Microteaching is seen as a practical course that is useful for teacher education		3.50	0.84	Very high
10.	It provides me with knowledge and skills necessary for teaching and learning activities.		3.45	0.61	Very high
11.	Video-taped proceedings are important		3.44	0.67	Very high
12.	The credit hours allotted to microteaching course is not sufficient.		3.50	0.83	Very high

13.	More credit hours should be allotted to microteaching.	3.23	0.79	Very high
14.	There is no rationale underscoring the use of microteaching.	3.47	0.89	Very high
15.	Microteaching is incapable of attaining the goal in teacher-education.	3.52	0.80	Very high
16.	Microteaching increases the frequency of use of appropriate teaching strategy.	2.42	0.72	Low
17.	Microteaching is completely irrelevant to teacher-education.	2.87	1.20	Low
18.	Microteaching is a helpful experience for acquiring and practicing professional skills	3.73	0.60	Very high
19.	Microteaching is uninteresting because relevant gadget and facilities such as video tapes, audiotapes are absent.	1.41	0.77	Low
20.	Microteaching improves ability to conduct class management to the full.	3.72	0.56	Very high
21.	Microteaching is very beneficial.	3.58	0.81	Very high
22.	I see the versatility of microteaching as a strategic process for helping students.	3.70	0.58	Very high
23.	It makes me feel more at home in the teaching process.	3.39	1.05	Very high
24.	Microteaching leads to positive and long-term effects in the skills of teaching.	3.60	0.73	Very high
25.	Microteaching helps to improve teacher-education	3.90	0.46	Very high

26. Microteaching promotes effective and reflective teaching.		3.62	0.77	Very high
27. It is an assessment tool for teacher-education.		3.54	0.88	Very high
28. I am not comfortable with the supervisors during microteaching.		3.11	0.87	Very high
29. Microteaching is costly in terms of hardware that may be used and the amount of time it absorbs		3.70	0.74	Very high
30. The educational advantages of microteaching are enormous.		3.67	0.80	Very high
	3.38		0.50	Very high

As seen in Table 2, findings reveal that the students' perceptions were positive (very high) since the mean was 3.38, and the mean of the students' responses ranged between 3.70 and 2.90, the statement "microteaching" helps to improve teacher-education programme ranked first with a mean of 3.90, whereas the statement "microteaching" is completely irrelevant to teacher education ranked last with a mean of 1.44. The students believe that microteaching is vital to pave the way to possible self-

appropriate teaching strategy and that it provides them with skills necessary for teaching and learning activities such results might be explained by the idea that the learners, as a result of using microteaching, enjoyed teaching micro lessons which gave them a good opportunity to bring together a whole range of theoretical issues learned in 401, (teaching practise) 0061(microteaching) Edu431(teaching practise 11) and 063 (microteaching) and apply them to a real life situation. Such application has been

Research Question 2 What are the female students regarding mean perception ratings of male and microteaching?

Table 3.

Mean perception ratings of male and female students

S/no	Item	MALE N=91			FEMALE N= 200		
		X	SD	Estimation level	X	SD	Estimation level
1.	Microteaching will help me become a better teacher.	3.26	0.67	High	3.25	1.07	High
2.	I see microteaching as a field based teaching experience.	3.74	0.61	High	3.60	0.76	High
3.	Microteaching is a base connection for integrating theory and practice	3.62	0.69	High	3.70	0.76	High
4.	Microteaching helps me to bring a whole range of theoretical issues	3.51	0.78	High	3.80	0.56	High
5.	I hate microteaching	2.07	0.80	Low	2.43	0.93	Low
6.	Effective teaching is nurtured through micro teaching	3.07	0.64	High	3.06	0.93	High
7.	Microteaching helps me to master the skills inherent in teaching	3.41	0.98	High	3.01	1.04	High
8.	It is vital to pave the way to possible self-improvement	3.30	0.97	High	3.53	0.05	High
9.	Microteaching is seen as a practical course that is useful for teacher education	3.52	0.89	High	3.78	0.58	High
10.	It provides knowledge	3.20	1.00	High	3.20	1.00	High

14.	There is no rational underscoring the use of microteaching	3.42	0.93	High	3.84	0.52	High
15.	Microteaching is incapable of attaining the goal in teacher-education	2.13	0.97	Low	1.60	0.85	Low
16.	Microteaching increases the frequency of appropriate teaching strategy	3.63	0.75	High	3.51	0.72	High
17.	It is completely irrelevant to teacher-education	1.74	1.16	Low	1.61	0.85	Low
18.	Microteaching is a helpful experience for acquiring and practising professional skill	3.70	0.62	High	3.70	0.60	High
19.	Microteaching is uninteresting because relevant gadget and facilities such as video tape, audio tapes e.t.c are mostly absent	2.15	1.05	Low	1.90	1.04	High
20.	It improves my ability to conduct classes to the full	3.70	0.74	High	3.74	0.51	High
21.	Microteaching is very beneficial to me	3.71	0.73	High	3.92	0.38	High
22.	I see the versatility of microteaching as a strategic process for helping students attain the skill for teaching effectively	3.60	0.81	High	3.60	0.77	High
23.	It makes me feel more at home in the teaching process	3.80	0.54	High	3.82	0.52	High
24.	Microteaching leads to positive and long term effects in the skill of teaching	3.74	0.78	High	3.49	0.95	High
25.	Microteaching helps to improve teacher-education programme	3.80	0.51	High	3.70	0.76	High
26.	It promotes effective and reflective teaching	3.90	0.40	High	3.71	0.70	High
27.	Microteaching is an essential tool for teacher education	3.80	0.60	High	3.72	0.74	High
28.	I am not comfortable with the presence of supervisors during microteaching	2.62	1.24	Low	1.45	0.89	Low
29.	Microteaching is costly in terms of hardware that may be used	3.70	0.63	Low	1.45	0.91	Low
29.	Microteaching is costly in terms of hardware that may be used and the amount of time it takes	3.70	0.63	Low	1.45	0.91	Low
30.	The educational advantages of microteaching are enormous	3.70	0.63	High	3.80	0.63	High
	Grand mean	3.39	0.60		3.27	0.82	

Generally, there is no much difference between these responses. They tend to have identical estimation levels; however, they had different responses in item 29 which regards microteaching as costly in terms of hardware that may be used, and the amount of time it absorbs. This may be due to the fact that the female students know how to use improvised facilities for their microteaching practice while the male students bring the aids themselves. It could be traceable to the fact that the female students choose

topics that may not require expensive facilities/teaching aids.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female in public tertiary institution on perception of microteaching

Table 4

t-test of difference between mean scores of male and female students on perception of microteaching

Perception of microteaching	X	SD	(N)	DF	T-calculated	T-table or t-critical	Decision
Male	3.40	0.60	91	2.89	0.66	± 1.96	Do not reject
Female	3.30	0.82	200	2.89	0.66	± 1.96	

Significant at $p < .05$, $DF = 289$, critical t-value = 1.96

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value (t-cal) is 0.66 while the table value is 1.96 at .05 level of confidence. Bearing the decision rule in mind, the calculated t value (0.66) is less than the critical t-value (1.96) therefore the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean score of male and female students in tertiary institutions on

their perception of microteaching is hereby not rejected. This means that regardless their gender; students had similar perception towards microteaching which might be explained by the idea that the students had benefited nearly the same from the techniques and procedures used throughout the application of microteachings.

Analysis of open questions is as follows:

1. It is found that 35% respondents said that blackboard writing skill is more difficult to conduct and 40% students said that explanation skill is difficult to conduct and 25% said that stimuli variation is difficult to conduct.
2. The study revealed that it is not possible to explain the content with examples with five or seven minutes.
3. They clearly indicated that there are problems related to the time management, lesson note and explaining the content.
4. More respondents have agreed to extend the time limit of every micro skill.
5. They are not perfect in writing on the blackboard. They need lots of guidance in developing blackboard writing.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of microteaching practice by students in tertiary institutions and to determine the mean perceptions scores of male and female students regarding microteaching.

The findings of the research showed that the students perceived microteaching as important (Amobi and Irvin, 2007) have positive perception towards their microteaching course. Therefore microteaching can be considered as an

important subject to prepare these students for teaching practice, which indicates that the students in tertiary institutions should work harder to exploit the best of microteaching session, students will be able to learn how to plan a lesson properly, deliver their lessons more effectively and be able to attract the students' attention in class.

Recommendations

- 1 .Based on the researcher's personal observation, micro lessons are better video-taped or recorded so as to emphasize a more valid procedure that can be used to give more valuable feedback. Such recommendation is based on many studies that recommended the use of video-tape techniques to provide needed feedback in micro teaching.(Rosenstein 2000), (Johnson 2000).

2. The coordinators of micro teaching in tertiary institutions who are responsible for the improvement of micro teaching should be trained themselves and be skilled so that they can help these students to improve whenever.
3. Also textbooks on micro teaching should be introduced for the course and basics of micro teaching should be included in order to enable students acquire the basic concepts and components of micro teaching.

References

- Alu, A.A. (2005). Microteaching Experience: Student Perspective. Online at www.findarticle.com.
- Amobi, F & Irwin, E. (2007). Implementing on-campus microteaching to elicit Pre-service teacher's reflection on teaching actions. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 9.(1), pg 18-23 January, 2007.
- Author, M.F. (2005). Preservice teachers' reflectivity on the sequence and consequences of teaching action in a microteaching experience *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 6(2) pg 13-23
- Brain, M.A. (1998). What is good teaching? <http://www.bygpub.com/eot/eot/htm>, 1998 BYG Publishing. Inc.
- Butler, A. (2001). Microteaching. A program of teaching skills. Massachusetts Addison Wesley.
- Johnson, B.O. (2000). Improving microteaching. London: Goom Helm.
- Manis, .D. (2003). An examination of the research on the effectiveness of microteaching as a teacher training methodology. Washington University, ERIC EDO83 227.
- McGarvey, A. and Swallow, F. (2006). Improving the Practicum: The Professional Development Needs of lecturers, Associate Teachers and Students Teacher. Australian Teacher Education.
- Noor, N.B. (2003). Students reaction to microteaching. Cambridge University press.
- Rosenstein, P. (2002). Microteaching. Advantages and Disadvantages. *Journal Postgraduate Education*, London.
- Wallace, N. (2000) How effective is microteaching? *Journal of Research and Studies*. London.
- Yesuf, M.A. (2006). Microteaching. Motivational Strategies in the classroom *Teacher education quarterly*. 32 (1) 115-130.