



MICROTEACHING AND 21ST CENTURY TEACHER EDUCATION: DIFFICULTIES AND PERSPECTIVES OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

Preetha George¹ & Prof. Dr. M Jesa²

¹Research Scholar, Farook Training College, Research centre in Education, University of Calicut

²Professor, Farook Training College, Research centre in Education, University of Calicut

Paper Received On: 5 FEBRUARY 2023

Peer Reviewed On: 28 FEBRUARY 2023

Published On: 01 MARCH 2023

Abstract

At the juncture of the goals, objectives and processes of Education being re-defined in terms of courses, outcomes and attributes, the accommodation ladder of teacher career progression calls for a restructuring with a futuristic vision based the strong pillars of pro-active curriculum and professionalism. Planning and 'delivery' of lesson is not an automation process, but needs continuous training, mentoring and nurturing. A calling for mastery over the latest teaching competencies has already been initiated even by the prospective teachers. The scaled down teaching encounter provides prospective teachers safe practice ground for acquiring teaching skills in a progressive manner. In the changed concept of learning, microteaching process also is expected to adapt its strategies and content. The present survey was carried out to investigate the difficulties and perception of student teachers regarding their microteaching sessions in terms of twenty first century teacher requirements. The data collected from 196 prospective teachers from colleges of Teacher Education in Kerala using a questionnaire on prospective teachers' perceived problems in microteaching were analyzed. The findings of the study revealed that practice in outdated skills, unsatisfactory feedback and mentoring process, time consumption in the preparation and presentation, failure in appropriate implementation of the microteaching procedure and artificiality of the sessions cause difficulties in the expected results and the prospective teachers' perspectives highlighted the need for updating microteaching with twenty first century teacher competencies.

Keywords: Microteaching, Teacher education, Teaching skills

Introduction

National Professional Standards for Teachers purposes "all students at all levels of school education are taught by passionate, motivated, highly qualified, professionally trained and

well equipped teachers” (NCTE, p.2). The question is whether all student teachers are trained or educated with a professional approach to an ideal course design based on clearly defined Programme Education Objectives, Graduate Attributes, Programme Learning Outcomes and Course Outcomes. Once ‘achievement’ paves way for ‘performance’, ‘linkage’, ‘outcome’, let’s wonder if the components of curriculum, instruction and assessment in teacher education ensure learning towards professionalization of the nation builders at a woeful juncture of deteriorated standards of teacher development programmes. The planned “empirical analysis of the efficacy of the system” should be treated as the most eminent step towards ‘efficient teaching’ resulting in ‘successful learning’.

In the context of the changed concept of education as the process and product of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, the accommodation ladder of teacher career progression is to be structured with a futuristic vision based on the pillars of pro-active curriculum and pedagogy. The journey is to commence from the ground level and progress in micro steps carefully designed and piloted with commitment, trust and grit. Among the teacher standard, professional practice and competence developed from personal values, professional ethics and knowledge and understanding of the discipline mark the profession. We can be optimistic of the significance of ‘integrated programmes’ for creative teachers for the twenty first century wizards. The other side of the coin is integration of ‘on demand’ skills and competencies in the teacher education programme. Planning and delivery of lessons is not an automation process but a trained, supervised and nurtured outcome. A safe classroom is always the dream of a teacher in the context of inclusion, multilingualism and virtual learning. The major teaching skills needed in this era are humanistic, critical thinking, technology integration, creativity, and content and context specific skills. Teachers as facilitators of the learning process in schools are certainly not only required to have the 21st-century skills but also should be competent to apply these skills to design learning that supports the current digital era.

Background of the Study

There is a call from the side of the prospective teachers as well as teacher educators for mastering the twenty first century teaching skills which could be responded to in the practice ground of microteaching. The prospective teacher should be confronted with contexts of problem based learning to develop his/her HOTs demanded of the profession even from the

very beginning since a teacher always has to address a real world of learners with a feasible set of strategies. Realistic problems are to be encountered through realistic decision making in a working environment. “Micro-teaching is a scaled down teaching encounter in class size and class time” (Allen, 1966). Microteaching is a compulsory training session in the B.Ed programme to be taken before a prospective teacher is allowed to go for the practice teaching. Teacher education traditionally presupposes mastering basic teaching skills. Teacher educators continue to search for ways to equip prospective teachers respond to the demands of real classrooms. Since its emergence in the 1960s, the practice of microteaching has rapidly widespread in different parts of the world. In the present pre-service teacher education programme in Kerala, it makes up about 10% of the total time and grade of all methods of teaching. In the B.Ed programme of Kerala, students have to plan and conduct mini-lessons to their peers. Self-reflection and giving feedback are integral components of the microteaching practices. Unfortunately teacher education curriculum in Kerala still follows the microteaching sessions only on the core teaching skills suggested by D.W Allen of the Stanford University (1969) which has been updated by B K.Passi (1976) with respect to the Indian context.

Researchers recommend searching for and adopting applications and experiences that provide student teachers with opportunities to be involved in exploring pedagogical experiences, self-reflection and critical analysis of teaching (Fernandez, 2010). Micro-teaching may be indeed ineffective as a method of training student teachers with one of the biggest weaknesses being that it does not provide a real condition of the learning process. It is deemed necessary to conduct research aimed at evaluating methods of micro-teaching sessions and providing innovations in this method to be able to adjust to the competency needs of teachers according to the times that have entered the digital era or often been called the industrial revolution era 4.0 (Azrai et al, 2020). Hence, it is vital to investigate the difficulties and prospective of prospective teachers on the microteaching practice sessions.

Objectives of the study

- 1) To identify the difficulties of prospective teachers in microteaching sessions
- 2) To collect prospective teachers’ perspectives on microteaching sessions in terms of 21st century teacher qualifications

Method

The present study is a quantitative and descriptive one, involving normative survey technique.

Sample

A total of 196 Prospective teachers of secondary level from the B.Ed colleges of different universities in Kerala constituted the sample.

Tool used

Questionnaire on prospective teachers' perceived problems in microteaching is used to collect data. The questionnaire was prepared by the investigators.

Statistical technique used

Percentage analysis was used to analyse the collected data.

Analysis and Discussion

On the survey, participants were asked to list out the difficulties and challenges they may encounter in their microteaching sessions and the results are shown as Table 01.

Table No.01: Difficulties felt by prospective teachers in microteaching sessions

Sl. No	Difficulties	Percentage of responses
1	Lack of understanding of the theoretical aspects	41.33
2	Time consuming	65.31
3	Difficulty in writing lesson plans	52.04
4	Problems of artificiality	62.24
5	Fear of appearing in real classrooms	42.34
6	Low mastery level with respect to the skills practiced	47.45
7	Stress and strain during microteaching sessions	56.63
8	Lack appropriateness of implementation	60.20
9	Difficulty in self reflection	32.65
10	No satisfactory feedback and evaluation	84.69
11	Skills in Microteaching sessions are outdated	60.20
12	No focus on content and context specific skills	69.39
13	Less focus on techno-pedagogical skills	97.96

The prospective teachers (97.96%) are not satisfied with the selection of micro skills for practice since due importance is not give to latest techno-pedagogic skills. Most of the skills being practiced are appropriate only for traditional classroom teaching process

(60.20%).Content and context specific skills are not focused, in the opinion of 69.39% of the sample. Time factor was pointed out as a major barrier affecting the meaningful practice session, by 65.31% of them. The manner of implementation in the opinion of 62.24%, was artificial in nature. For 60.20%, the sessions failed in proper implementation of the theoretical principles of instantaneous feedback, self evaluation and mastering the skill.

It is clear from the table that the major difficulties in micro teaching sessions of prospective teachers in Kerala are focus on the outdated skills, unsatisfactory feedback and evaluation process, time consumption in the preparation and presentation, failure in appropriate implementation of the microteaching cycle, artificiality of the sessions, unexpected stress and strain during teaching when they were conscious of the fact that their performance is being rated every second and the difficulty in planning lessons.

The second objective of the study is to collect prospective teachers' perspectives on microteaching sessions in terms of 21st century teacher qualifications and the open ended questions in the questionnaire revealed the perspectives of prospective teachers on their micro-teaching sessions. The respondents stressed the need to update the micro teaching sessions with respect to the twenty first century classroom requirements. Some of the prospective teachers are of the opinion that micro teaching is an unnecessary practice in the modern age and nobody can evaluate a person based on his/her performance which is strictly bounded with the limited time. Majority of the prospective teachers are on the view that the skills are needed to be trained and practiced but the classes are taken in a way that it is too artificial and more overacting need to be changed into realistic demonstrations. The new technologies made to be used and the core teaching skills to be modified.

Educational Implications

Microteaching has been widely used in pre-service teacher education programmes to enhance prospective teachers' instructional experiences. Within Teacher Education programme, the use of microteaching offers valuable opportunities for trainee-teachers to develop effective teaching strategies. Understanding the perceptions and concerns of student teachers is crucial for promoting teacher education programme outcomes. Microteaching is still needed to be carried out as a method of training prospective teacher students, although several things need to be changed and updated to suit the competency needs of teachers at present. Factors that need to be considered for updating the micro-teaching practices include: classroom

conditions that are made as real as possible with the conditions of the class at school, provision of content specific technology based skills that emphasize innovative authentic learning to support planning the learning process and providing learning experiences that practice effective communication skills.

Conclusion

The envisaged pre-requisites for the meaningful implementation of the theory of microteaching should be ensured in every teacher education institution. In the context of advanced infrastructure facilities made available during online teaching and learning, it will be quite feasible. The teaching skills demanded by such a context also should be focused so that the prospective teachers would be confident to address high tech classrooms. Systematic mentoring and reflection will assure competency and professionalism in teaching.

References

- Allen, D. W. (1966). *Micro-teaching is a scaled down teaching encounter in class size and class time.* *The High School Journal*, 49(8), 355-362.
- Azrai, E. P., Rini, D. S., & Suryanda, A. (2020). *Micro-teaching in the Digital Industrial Era 4.0: Necessary or not.* *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(4A), 23-30.
- Bush, R. N., & Allen, D. W. (1968). *Microteaching.* Dayton: I/D/E/A.
- Fernandez, M. L. (2010). *Investigating how and what prospective teachers learn through microteaching lesson study.* *Teaching and Teacher Education* 26(2), 351–362.
- National Professional Standards - ncte.gov.in. (2021, November 17) p.2. https://ncte.gov.in/WebAdminFiles/PublicNotice/Hindi_0_17_11_2021_637727482281976435.pdf
- Passi, B. K. (1976). *Becoming better teacher: Microteaching approach.* Sahitya Mudranalaya.