

Effects of Teaching Practice in Shaping Prospective Teachers' Professional Identities: Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

Teaching practice gives a chance to prospective teachers to acquire professional skills, teaching methods, and different techniques of teaching. The main objectives of this study were to find out the effect of teaching practice in shaping prospective teachers' professional identities and to compare prospective teachers and cooperative teachers' perceptions about effects of teaching practice on professional identities. Research questions and hypothesis were formulated to achieve the main objectives of the research. Data were collected from 45 cooperative and 80 prospective teachers selected through the purposive random technique. Data were collected through a questionnaire based on six main components of teaching practice contributing to shaping professional identities. Mean score was calculated to answer the research questions and t-test was applied to compare prospective and cooperative teachers' perceptions. It is inferred from the findings that teaching practice plays an important role to overcome future classroom challenges. t-test results show a significant difference between prospective and cooperative teachers' perceptions about teaching practice components. It is recommended that proper evaluation of teaching practice must be done, and prospective teachers' feedback must be considered essential to overcome challenges of the teaching and learning process for future practices.

Keywords: cooperative teachers, prospective teachers, professional identities, teaching practice.

Introduction

Teaching practice is considered one of the important elements for preparing prospective teachers as professionally motivated, and productive teachers. Student teachers' training and teaching practice are considered two sides of a coin in any education program. A study conducted by Badenhorst and Badenhorst (2010) indicates that prospective teachers always prefer supportive and interactive classroom environments with learner-centered teaching approaches. Prospective teachers' perceptions of teaching practice can be evaluated via many factors, including class size, teacher-student relations, and teaching staffs' attitude (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Mutemeri & Chetty, 2011).

Since the establishment of training colleges, teaching practice has always remained an important component to prepare generations of teachers. In Kenya, teaching practice is considered an important element for becoming a teacher. Teaching practice is an organized program in Kenyan universities through which prospective teachers are sent to schools for 13 to 14 weeks to teach students under the supervision of cooperative teachers and school management (Cohen et al., 1996). Samuel (2010) stated that teaching practice is similar to the first model of teacher education called the apprenticeship model. According to this model, novice teachers learn best from behavioral modeling under the guidance of expert teachers. Later on, teaching practice was associated with the experiential apprenticeship model which not only improves professional learning of prospective teachers but also helps mentors with their ongoing professional development (Menter, 1989; Saka, 2006; Wubbels & Korthagen, 1990). Teaching practice supports important teaching competencies, as such, it is important to expand this process because personal and general efficacy of teachers has a direct connection with the improvement of prospective teachers' professional skills (Hayes, 1997). Teaching efficacy is the personal experience of teachers which they experience during the teaching-learning process (Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1999).

Teaching practice is considered as an important component for becoming an effective teacher. It allows prospective teachers to experience the teaching-learning environment in the actual situation of the classroom (Kasanda, 1995; Marais & Meier, 2004; Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003; Perry, 2004;). Despite its importance, sometimes teaching practice becomes a discouraging and frightening experience for prospective teachers (Steyn & Killen, 2001). Many studies have been conducted

to explore the prospective teachers' perceptions about the experiences and anxiety they face during the teaching practice. However, literature indicates that only a few studies have been conducted to find the reasons for the prospective teachers' negative experiences and attitudes toward teaching practice (Marais & Meier, 2004; Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003).

Research Questions

1. What is the prospective teachers' perception about teaching practice components in shaping professional identities?
2. What is the cooperative teachers' perception about teaching practice components in shaping professional identities?

Hypotheses

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference between prospective teachers' and cooperative teachers' perceptions about the preparation component of teaching practice in shaping professional identities.
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference between prospective teachers' and cooperative teachers' perceptions about the teaching component of teaching practice in shaping professional identities.
- H₀₃: There is no significant difference between prospective teachers' and cooperative teachers' perceptions of the classroom management component of teaching practice in shaping professional identities.
- H₀₄: There is no significant difference between prospective teachers' and cooperative teachers' perceptions about the self-management component of teaching practice in shaping professional identities.
- H₀₅: There is no significant difference between prospective teachers' and cooperative teachers' perceptions about the time-management component of teaching practice in shaping professional identities.
- H₀₆: There is no significant difference between prospective teachers' and cooperative teachers' perceptions about the assessment component of teaching practice in shaping professional identities.

Literature Review

Teaching Practice: A Teacher-Training Requirement

Many researchers including (Maphosa et al., 2007; Marais & Meier, 2004; Perry, 2004) found teaching practice to be an important component of teacher training. As per Perry (2004) teaching practice is conducted in different forms, based on the institutions' policy. This is so because some schools send prospective teachers to school once a week, while others send them to school 4 days a week. Also, some institutions base teaching practice on the entire semester, while others have this for a short span of four to six weeks. Regardless of the pattern followed by the institutions, teaching practice aims to prepare teachers to be trained professionally before joining the teaching career.

Objectives of the Teaching Practice

Akbar (2002) stated that the main purpose of the teaching practice by any institution is to help students to develop professional competencies, personal characteristics, understanding, knowledge, and skills that are needed in the teaching profession. He argued that every institution designs teaching practice for the following objectives:

1. To provide an opportunity to acclimatize with the school environment, community, and resources.
2. To Exchange prevailing ideas as well as to acquire new concepts and material for the teaching-learning process.
3. To provide an opportunity to prospective teachers to establish an appropriate teacher-student relationship.
4. To establish understanding with teachers, students, parents, and administrators.
5. To provide an opportunity to prospective teachers for self-evaluation and identification of their strengths and weaknesses.

The Strengths of Teaching Practice

Many researchers worked on teaching practice and found that teaching practice has more strengths than weaknesses. The common strengths identified by researchers include:

- To enable prospective teachers to experience the real teaching-learning environment
- To enable teachers to understand the real environment of teaching by facing problems and difficulties of teaching
- To enable prospective teachers to shift from the role of student to the role of the beginning teacher (Marais & Meier, 2004; Perry, 2004).
- To enable prospective teachers to develop their professional and personal competencies (Kasanda, 1995).

Overall teaching practice is known as the combination of anticipation, anxiety, excitement, and recognition among prospective teachers as they enter the teaching profession (Morrison & Werf, 2012; Perry, 2004).

Challenges Faced by Prospective Teachers during Teaching Practice

Marais and Meier (2004) argued that although teaching practice is challenging it is an important part of teacher training, especially in developing countries. However, despite the merits there are some issues faced by prospective teachers during teaching practice. The following challenges have been identified by studies conducted in different countries:

- Inadequate preparation of prospective teachers
- Geographical distance of teaching practice school from home
- Low levels of cooperative teachers' expertise
- Inadequate resources in teaching practice school
- Indiscipline among learners and educators
- Lack of financial and accommodation facilities in teaching practice school
- Less support and trust from cooperative teachers
- Lack of clear policies about teaching practice (Kasanda, 1995; Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2009).

It is also emphasized that if these challenges are not addressed in the future, prospective teachers could face a range of problems which could affect

their perception of teaching practice. Studies also reveal that sometimes university teachers do not regularly visit the schools to meet the academic supervisors of the prospective teachers. This may not only discourage the prospective teachers but they could also face pressure from cooperative teachers and supervisors (Yassin, 2004). Additionally, cooperative teachers may not be well-informed about their responsibilities regarding how to transfer skills to teachers and make them feel comfortable. With all these disadvantages and challenges in some of the schools, the main purpose of the teaching practice becomes a failure and affects the perception of prospective teachers about teaching practice.

Dreyer et al., (2015) emphasized that if prospective teachers spend more time in schools during teaching practice, they will get more opportunities to learn about professional responsibilities. Providing opportunities to teach will enable teachers to practice within a learning environment. Besides all these aspects, some prospective teachers consider teaching practice a traumatic and non-educating experience because of stress of failure, loss of identity, and lack of self-esteem and self-confidence (Bhagava, 2009).

Responsibilities of a Prospective Teacher during Teaching Practice

Etkina (2010) specifies the following conditions for which prospective teachers must be prepared before going for teaching practice:

- His/her behavior must reflect upon the institution where he/she is performing teaching practice.
- He/she must consider him/herself as a guest in the institution
- He/she must cooperate with the class teacher
- He/she must participate in Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meetings to interact with parents.
- He/she must be able to evaluate one's own learning to overcome the weaknesses in the future.
- He/she must be able to intelligently participate in matters of education programs.
- He/she must participate in staff meetings to know about the institution's policy and rules and regulations.

Teaching Practice and Prospective Teachers' Professional Identities

Professional identity formulation is considered a complex and long process consisting of many challenges and problems. Many factors including personal, social, cultural, political, professional, and global are involved in forming a professional identity of prospective teachers. Sometimes it is also challenged because of the low prestige of the teaching profession in society. It is also observed that only 1% of the parents are willing to see their children as a teacher and it happens because of low salaries and professional stress (Geske et al., 2015). Research conducted by the State Education Quality Service of Latvia, Jarohnovich (2013) evaluated that one-third of the prospective teachers are not willing to go to school for teaching practice. There are also many other stories of prospective teachers on media who are not motivated to work during teaching practice. All this may reduce the motivation of young prospective teachers to enter the teaching profession. It is observed by (Alsop, 2005; Chong et al., 2011) that the development of prospective teachers' identity is a personal process, and universities can play a major role in it.

The process of prospective teachers' professional identity development is long and ongoing, and it takes place in contextual settings. Mikelstone et al. (2014) highlighted that professional identity is based on three main components including:

- Recognition of one's personality as a representative of the profession
- Looking for meaning in the profession
- Professional determination

Day et al. (2007) classified identity into three main categories professional, situated, and personal identity. It is evaluated from the literature that prospective teachers' performance is closely linked to the nature of their work and personal life experiences of their lives (Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996). It is also pointed out by Nias (1989) and Hargreaves (1994) that the development of prospective teachers' identities is not possible only through their classroom management knowledge, it also requires interaction between the teachers and students, social, cultural and institutional environment. Day (2004) emphasized that to become an effective, dedicated, and passionate teacher, prospective teachers must have a positive sense of identity by valuing the subjects they teach, relationships, and roles.

Generally, the teaching profession is connected with certain basic categories of roles including projecting, managing and organizing of learning activities, psycho-educational advising, class management, student-teacher interaction, peer work, life-long learning, participation in the educational process, and school innovations. Teachers are considered an actual combination of social representations and as a result, the professional identity of a teacher and all roles are noticed by the students. Therefore, development of prospective teachers' professional identity is crucial for serving in a positive and formative manner in society (Van-Huizen et al., 2005). Chong et al. (2011) identified that development of a teacher's identity is a personal process, but the university can play a major role in it. Teaching practice reduces the gap between theory and practice by facing the realities of teaching during teaching practice under the supervision of cooperative teachers.

Role of Cooperating Teachers

Without the crucial support of the cooperating teachers, no program for the preparation of teachers could claim success. They play a very important part in the student teaching experience. The value of their regular interactions with student teachers cannot be matched by anyone else in the program. Cooperating instructors are seasoned professionals who are experts in their fields, committed to their students, and passionate about education in general. They recognize the anxieties, pleasures, and excitements that a student teacher feels and provide constant encouragement and criticism (Rechsteiner et al., 2022).

Cooperating teachers must comprehend the University's Education program and assist in achieving the program's objectives in order to fulfill its goal of acquiring the competencies needed to satisfy Pennsylvania state standards. Cooperating teachers must be informed of the program's objectives to meet these goals. They must also take on an administrative, leadership, and supportive role (Nelson & Voithofer, 2022; Rupp & Becker, 2021).

Cooperating Teacher as Colleague

Creating a supportive environment will make the transition from "student" to "teacher" easier for the student teacher. This is a two-way process wherein the student teachers should be treated with respect and, in turn, the student teachers should conduct themselves professionally at all times. To achieve success, the

following actions should be performed by a collaborating teacher in a collegial setting:

- Introduce the student teachers to the social dynamics of the school. However, be conscious that student teachers should not get engaged in internal school politics.
- Familiarize the student teachers with the location and use of equipment such as copy machines, AV equipment, educational materials, and computer areas.
- Introduce the student teachers to the support staff and explain how they affect the operation of the school.
- Actively and critically listen. Be aware that the student teachers will develop incrementally, gradually, and uniquely.
- Give your student teachers the chance to try new techniques in a secure environment. Increase your student teachers' range of alternatives by openly suggesting approaches, strategies, and materials. If well-planned, allow your student teachers to try out novel approaches and techniques.
- Respect your student teachers like valuable faculty members. Allow them to speak with parents, administrators, and other teachers.
- Encourage the student teachers to frequently discuss successes and challenges experienced in the classroom (Rechsteiner et al., 2022; VanLone et al., 2022).

Cooperating Teacher as Mentor

The development and enhancement of student teachers' necessary skills depends heavily on ongoing feedback. The cooperating teacher is required to evaluate the student teachers by observing them, speaking with them, and taking notes. The student teachers' ability to evaluate and better themselves should be aided by ongoing feedback. The following actions should be taken to contribute to successful mentorship:

- Lesson plans should be reviewed, improved, and signed at least three days before the student teacher is scheduled to conduct the lesson. The signature certifies that the lesson plan can be used for instruction. The student teacher

should not be permitted to teach the lesson because of weak or no planning on their part.

- Attention should be given to the student teacher's lessons. Following the observation, discuss each aspect of the lesson with him or her. The collaborating teacher has the chance to provide the student teacher with insightful criticism regarding his or her performance during this discussion. This is the time to highlight the lesson's strengths, criticize its weaknesses, and raise questions about any segments that the students may not have fully comprehended.
- Evaluate the performance of the student teacher.
 - Finish at least four Student Teacher Observation Forms with a single lesson as the emphasis.
 - Finish a midterm assessment with a focus on overall performance.
 - Complete the final assessment, concentrating on general performance.
- Initially, the student teacher should be assigned teaching duties for just one course, with the option for the collaborating teacher and university supervisor to add more in the future. The culmination of this should be at least three weeks of full-time instruction.
- The student teacher should be given responsibilities outside of the classroom to help them become more aware of the entire curriculum (Doornkamp et al., 2022; Martin-Kerr et al., 2022; Santos & Castro, 2021; VanLone et al., 2022).

Teaching practice for any teacher training program is its backbone because the main objective is to prepare prospective teachers to perform teaching learning activities effectively in future teaching practices. Teaching practice prepares prospective teachers to bring theory into practice by experiencing the teaching practicum in real classroom situations under the supervision of cooperative teachers. The Government of Pakistan (2003) highlighted the importance of teacher education programs and teaching practicum to produce efficient classroom teachers for all levels of the educational system. Teachers must be properly trained both in academic and practical aspects of teaching with effective personalities and professional identities. Keeping in view the previous literature and findings of the study, the present study was designed to find out the prospective and cooperative

teachers' perceptions about the effect of teaching practice on shaping professional identities of prospective teachers.

Research Methodology

The study was descriptive in nature and a survey method was used to collect the data. The sample of the study consisted of 45 cooperative teachers and 80 prospective teachers. Both prospective and cooperative teachers were selected through the purposive random sampling technique. All prospective teachers were selected from the education department of International Islamic University whereas cooperative teachers were purposively selected from the schools and colleges of Islamabad where prospective teachers were practicing teaching practice. Two questionnaires, i.e., one for prospective teachers and one for cooperative teachers, were developed to collect the data from the selected sample. Questionnaires were constructed on six main components of teaching practices including preparation, classroom teaching, classroom management, self-management, time-management, and assessment. Statements and main components of the questionnaires were the same for prospective and cooperative teachers. Data were collected by personal visits of the researcher to prospective and cooperative teachers through questionnaire. Collected data were analyzed by calculating the mean for each statement and the cumulative mean for each theme of the questionnaire. Mean values were interpreted according to objectives of the study by the researcher showing a cut-point with interpretation in the table below. *t*-test was used to compare the prospective and cooperative teachers' perceptions.

Data Analysis

Table 1

Interpretation of Mean values

Mean Value	Interpretation
1 – 1.99	Rarely
2 – 2.99	Sometimes
3 – 3.99	Often
4	Always

Table 2*Cooperative and Prospective Teachers' Perception about "Preparation" Component of Teaching Practice*

Statements		Always %	Often %	Sometimes %	Rarely %	Mean	Remarks
Theme 1: Preparation							
Prospective teachers design proper lesson plan while teaching replacement classes.	Prospective Teachers	51%	49%	0%	0%	3.51	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	100%	0%	0%	0%	4.00	Always
Prospective teachers prepare the lesson plan according to the objectives of the lesson.	Prospective Teachers	14%	71%	15%	0%	2.99	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	53%	36%	11%	0%	3.42	Often
Prospective teachers state clear and specific objectives according to the lesson.	Prospective Teachers	14%	65%	21%	0%	2.93	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	47%	40%	9%	5%	3.29	Often
Prospective teachers select the Audio-visual Aids and materials according to the objectives of the lesson.	Prospective Teachers	41%	59%	0%	0%	3.41	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	44%	36%	16%	4%	3.20	Often
Prospective teachers plan the time and activities according to the objectives of the lesson.	Prospective Teachers	32%	65%	3%	0%	3.30	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	69%	27%	4%	0%	3.64	Often
Prospective teachers include all the important concepts related to the lesson in the lesson plan.	Prospective Teachers	26%	50%	24%	0%	3.03	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	78%	20%	2%	0%	3.76	Often
Prospective teachers create a detailed and sequential lesson plan.	Prospective Teachers	26%	44%	30%	0%	2.96	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	83%	16%	2%	0%	3.80	Often
Prospective teachers create an innovative and engaging lesson plan.	Prospective Teachers	26%	61%	12%	0%	3.14	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	0%	60%	38%	2%	2.58	Sometimes
Cumulative Mean	Prospective Teachers			25.27			
	Cooperative Teachers			27.69			

Table 2 represents a mean-wise analysis of the preparation component of teaching practice. For statements no. 4, 5, and 6 cooperative and prospective teachers were of the same view that prospective teachers plan all activities according to the objectives and concepts by using proper Audio-visual Aids and materials whereas for statements 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8 statement cooperative and prospective teachers were of the different view that prospective teachers design proper, detailed and sequential lesson plan with clear and specific objectives to create an innovative and engaging lesson plan.

Table 3

Cooperative and Prospective Teachers' perception about "Classroom Teaching" component of teaching practice

Statements		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely		
Theme 2: Classroom Teaching		%	%	%	%	Mean	Remarks
Prospective teachers use the teaching techniques according to the objectives of the lesson.	Prospective Teachers	56%	42%	2%	0%	3.54	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	43%	58%	0%	0%	3.42	Often
Prospective teachers use effective verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills during teaching the lesson.	Prospective Teachers	28%	51%	21%	0%	3.06	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	22%	65%	14%	0%	3.09	Often
Prospective teachers design effective introduction, transitions, and closings of the lesson.	Prospective Teachers	24%	47%	29%	0%	2.95	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	16%	49%	7%	9%	2.71	Sometimes
Prospective teachers use effective questioning and facilitating skills	Prospective Teachers	22%	64%	14%	0%	3.58	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	31%	47%	18%	4%	3.04	Often
Prospective teachers give clear, accurate, and complete instructions to the students.	Prospective Teachers	58%	42%	0%	0%	3.58	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	78%	9%	11%	2%	3.62	Often
Prospective teachers meet the learners' need for concept clarity.	Prospective Teachers	58%	42%	0%	0%	3.58	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	9%	44%	33%	14%	2.49	Sometimes
Prospective teachers use teaching methods according to the nature of the topic/lesson.	Prospective Teachers	36%	41%	22%	0%	3.14	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	49%	49%	2%	0%	3.47	Often
Prospective teachers prefer learner-centered teaching.	Prospective Teachers	75%	25%	0%	0%	3.75	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	80%	20%	0%	0%	3.80	Often
Prospective teachers follow the rules and regulations advised by cooperative teachers.	Prospective Teachers	40%	60%	0%	0%	3.40	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	67%	33%	0%	0%	3.67	Often
Prospective teachers have the ability to bring new ideas and creativity to your institution.	Prospective Teachers	53%	47%	0%	0%	3.53	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	0%	42%	45%	13%	2.29	Sometimes
Cumulative Mean	Prospective Teachers			33.6			
	Cooperative Teachers			31.6			

Table 3 shows a mean-wise analysis of the classroom teaching component of teaching practice. Data shows that for statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9 cooperative and prospective teachers were of the same view that cooperative teachers deliver the lesson plan effectively by using proper teaching techniques, effective questioning skills, and accurate instructions by following rules and regulations of the institution, whereas for statement 6 and 10 cooperative and prospective teachers were of a different view that prospective teachers do lack capacity in meeting the learners need and producing the creativity in the institution.

Table 4*Cooperative and Prospective Teachers' perception about "Classroom Management" component of teaching practice*

Statements		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely		
Theme 3: Classroom Management		%	%	%	%	Mean	Remarks
Prospective teachers have the ability to deal with classroom problems.	Prospective Teachers	24%	51%	25%	0%	2.99	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	36%	64%	0%	0%	3.36	Often
Prospective teachers use effective classroom management skills.	Prospective Teachers	36%	51%	12%	0%	3.24	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	47%	54%	0%	0%	3.47	Often
Prospective teachers create a supportive and respectful learning environment.	Prospective Teachers	40%	26%	34%	0%	3.06	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	40%	33%	27%	0%	3.13	Often
Prospective teachers have the skills to solve the occasional problems of institutions while performing duties.	Prospective Teachers	36%	39%	25%	0%	3.11	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	33%	56%	11%	0%	3.22	Often
Prospective teachers have the ability to deal with the occasional problems related to classroom management.	Prospective Teachers	15%	30%	55%	0%	2.60	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	33%	44%	22%	0%	3.11	Often
Prospective teachers have the ability to maintain discipline during assigned activities by the institution or cooperative teachers.	Prospective Teachers	15%	73%	12%	0%	3.03	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	51%	49%	0%	0%	3.51	Often
Prospective teachers maintain a creative and supportive environment in the institution.	Prospective Teachers	19%	39%	42%	0%	2.76	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	31%	69%	0%	0%	3.31	Often
Prospective teachers are able to manage the students during assigned activities.	Prospective Teachers	19%	60%	21%	0%	2.98	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	64%	36%	0%	0%	3.64	Often
Cumulative Mean	Prospective Teachers			23.8			
	Cooperative Teachers			26.8			

Table 4 shows a mean-wise analysis of the classroom management component of teaching practice. According to the data for statements 2, 3, 4, and 6, cooperative and prospective teachers were of the same view that prospective teachers use effective classroom management skills to create a supportive and respectful learning environment and they maintain discipline within the institution to handle the occasional problems. For statements 1, 5, 7 and 8 cooperative and prospective teachers were of different views about dealing with classroom management problems and they lack in maintaining creating a learning environment.

Table 5

Cooperative and Prospective Teachers' perception about "Self-Management" component of teaching practice

Statements		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely		
Theme 4: Self-Management		%	%	%	%	Mean	Remarks
Prospective teachers are friendly and respectful to the students.	Prospective Teachers	19%	39%	42%	0%	2.76	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	40%	49%	11%	0%	3.29	Often
Prospective teachers use body language, gestures, and emotions according to the needs of the classroom.	Prospective Teachers	15%	63%	21%	0%	2.94	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	40%	49%	11%	0%	3.29	Often
Prospective teachers follow Islamic ethical values while teaching.	Prospective Teachers	33%	46%	21%	0%	3.11	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	40%	49%	11%	0%	3.29	Often
Prospective teachers have command of the central concepts of the subject.	Prospective Teachers	4%	50%	46%	0%	2.58	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	18%	82%	0%	0%	3.18	Often
Prospective teachers are ready for teaching and administrative duties.	Prospective Teachers	1%	51%	48%	0%	2.54	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	18%	82%	0%	0%	3.18	Often
Prospective teachers have the skills to conduct a new activity assigned by the cooperative teacher.	Prospective Teachers	24%	30%	46%	0%	2.78	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	18%	82%	0%	0%	3.18	Often
Prospective teachers are confident in all duties assigned by the cooperative teacher.	Prospective Teachers	40%	25%	35%	0%	3.05	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	26%	47%	26%	0%	3.00	Often
Prospective teachers consider the feedback provided by cooperative teachers.	Prospective Teachers	40%	29%	21%	0%	3.19	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	26%	47%	26%	0%	3.00	Often
Cumulative Mean	Prospective Teachers			22.9			
	Cooperative Teachers			25.4			

Table 5 presents a mean-wise analysis of the self-management component of teaching practice. It is shown that for statements 3, 7, and 8 cooperative and prospective teachers were of the same view that prospective teachers are confident in performing all duties by following the Islamic ethical values and do consider the feedback of cooperative teachers for their improvement. For statements 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 cooperative and prospective teachers of different views that prospective teachers may lack in using proper body language and gestures during teaching, and sometimes they are not ready for administrative duties and don't have command of the concepts.

Table 6

Cooperative and Prospective Teachers' perception about "Time-Management" component of teaching practice

Statements		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely		
Theme 5: Time-Management		%	%	%	%	Mean	Remarks
Prospective teachers are punctual during internships.	Prospective Teachers	24%	64%	12%	0%	3.11	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	26%	47%	26%	0%	3.00	Often
Prospective teachers have the ability to well- manage the assigned tasks by cooperative teachers/ school administration.	Prospective Teachers	24%	64%	12%	0%	3.11	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	26%	47%	26%	0%	3.00	Often
Cumulative Mean	Prospective Teachers			6.03			
	Cooperative Teachers			6.00			

According to a mean-wise analysis for the time management component of teaching practice in table 6, cooperative and prospective teachers were of the same view for all statements about the punctuality and well-management ability of the prospective teachers.

Table 7

Cooperative and Prospective Teachers' perception about "Assessment" component teaching practice

Statements		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely		
Theme 6: Assessment		%	%	%	%	Mean	Remarks
Prospective teachers give proper and timely feedback for assigned activities.	Prospective Teachers	2%	63%	34%	0%	2.69	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	16%	84%	0%	0%	3.16	Often
Prospective teachers provide timely feedback to the students.	Prospective Teachers	2%	38%	60%	0%	2.43	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	16%	84%	0%	0%	3.16	Often
Prospective teachers use proper assessment techniques according to the objectives of the lesson.	Prospective Teachers	20%	68%	12%	0%	3.08	Often
	Cooperative Teachers	16%	84%	0%	0%	3.16	Often
Prospective teachers assess students by using multiple assessment strategies.	Prospective Teachers	15%	39%	46%	0%	2.69	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	26%	47%	27%	0%	3.00	Often
Prospective teachers have command of the good use of planned classroom assessment tools.	Prospective Teachers	15%	60%	25%	0%	2.90	Sometimes
	Cooperative Teachers	27%	47%	26%	0%	3.00	Often
Cumulative Mean	Prospective Teachers			13.8			
	Cooperative Teachers			15.5			

Mean-wise analysis of the assessment component of teaching practice concludes that for statement 3 cooperative and prospective teachers were of the same view about the use of proper assessment techniques by prospective teachers. Statements 1, 2, 4, and 5 they were of the different view that prospective teachers may lack in providing proper feedback to students and don't have enough command on the planned assessment tools.

Table 8

Comparison of Prospective and Co-operative Teachers' perception about teaching practice components

Theme	Groups	N	Mean	t-value	df	p-value
Preparation	Cooperative teachers	45	27.69	5.141	123	0.000
	Prospective Teachers	80	25.27			
Teaching	Cooperative teachers	45	31.60	6.028	123	0.000
	Prospective Teachers	80	33.60			
Classroom Management	Cooperative teachers	45	26.8	6.400	123	0.000
	Prospective Teachers	80	23.8			
Self-Management	Cooperative teachers	45	25.4	0.929	123	0.355
	Prospective Teachers	80	23.0			
Time Management	Cooperative teachers	45	6.0	3.335	123	0.001
	Prospective Teachers	80	6.3			
Assessment	Cooperative teachers	45	15.5	4.141	123	0.000
	Prospective Teachers	80	13.8			

Table 8 represents the comparative analysis of cooperative and prospective teachers' perceptions of teaching practice themes. Results with a t-value (5.141) and p-value (.000) for "preparation theme" revealed that a significant difference exists between the perceptions of prospective and cooperative teachers about teaching practice so the null hypothesis for this theme is rejected.

Results with a t-value (6.028) and p-value (.000) for "teaching theme" indicate that there is a significant difference between the prospective and cooperative teachers' perception of the teaching methodology theme of teaching practice, so the null hypothesis for this theme is rejected.

Results with a t-value (6.400) and p-value (.000) for "classroom management theme" show that a significant difference exists between cooperative and prospective teachers' perceptions of classroom management. The null hypothesis for this theme is rejected.

Results for "self-management" with p-value (0.929) and t-value (.355) conclude that there is no significant difference between prospective and cooperative teachers' perceptions, so the null hypothesis for this theme is accepted.

Results with a t-value (3.335) and p-value (.001) for “time-management theme” show that a significant difference exists between cooperative and prospective teachers’ perceptions of time management. The null hypothesis for this theme is rejected.

Results with a t-value (4.141) and p-value (.000) for “assessment theme” show that a significant difference exists between cooperative and prospective teachers’ perception of assessment so the null hypothesis for this theme is rejected.

The overall analysis for all themes shows a significant difference between cooperative and prospective teachers’ perceptions of teaching practice performance. The mean difference between cooperative and prospective teachers indicates that cooperative teachers are mostly satisfied with the performance of the prospective teachers.

Discussion

Teaching practice is considered an essential component in any teacher training program but some of the findings of the current study showed that some prospective teachers did not consider teaching practice as an important component of their teaching training. A possible reason for this could be the lack of coordination between training institutions and teaching practice schools. The Government of Pakistan (2003) emphasized that quality education demands skilled, competent, and motivated teachers for primary, secondary, and higher levels of education. It is found from the data that sometimes cooperative teachers did not provide proper feedback and guidance to prospective teachers. The possible reasons for this could be work overload and insufficient facilities provided to the cooperative teachers from departments/institutions. This finding is in line with studies conducted by Issani and Virk (2004) and Nelson and Voithofer (2022) which indicate that because of the lack of proper training, the cooperative teachers are not able to properly train the prospective teachers for professional competencies. Due to this reason, teacher training is currently facing numerous issues. Murtaza (2005) and Santos and Castro (2021) highlight that most of teaching practice schools follow the lecture method to deliver the knowledge. It is imperative to comprehend that the quality of teaching practice can be improved by providing proper physical resources with special consideration for the practical components of the teacher training program to produce quality teachers.

Conclusion and Recommendation

On the basis of findings, it is concluded that teaching practice is an important activity that has a major role in training teachers to overcome future challenges in classroom teaching. It is considered an effective activity for the educational system of every nation for shaping professional identities among prospective teachers. Time teaching practice is considered as fuel in the endless professional journey to develop personality, professional skills, and knowledge. It is also inferred from the findings that within the teaching practice, prospective teachers also face some problems related to classroom management, curriculum instruction, supervision, and resources for effective teaching. The major findings of the study indicate that most of the time prospective teachers prepared proper and detailed lesson plans, including objectives and activities reflecting the topic. Cooperative teachers regularly provide feedback to prospective teachers to overcome their weaknesses in the future. It is concluded from this research as well as from literature that it is the responsibility of teacher educators and teaching practice schools to make teaching practice an effective and endless process through their cooperation.

1. Rules and regulations must be defined by the teaching practice schools before the prospective teachers go for teaching practice.
2. Specific teachers might be appointed by the head of the practicing school to observe the performance of prospective teachers during the teaching practice.
3. Proper evaluation should be carried out for the time period of the teaching practice.
4. Feedback from prospective teachers about the problems they faced should be collected to find better solutions for the future.

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