Preservice Methods Students' Perceptions about Being Prepared for the Student Teaching Experience

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Abstract

This research project is about preservice teacher education. Preservice teacher training programs are initial teacher training courses meant to equip teachers with the required skills in the profession. The structure of the practice varies across countries. These preservice training programs are recognized and organized by both public and private sectors to ready future teachers to enter into their profession. The curriculum prepared for the preservice teachers has the capability of honing their ability to cope with different aspects of life while in

the learning environment. Thus, it is a necessity that training should be all-encompassing without overlooking any of the essential elements. The curriculum for the pre-service teacher education conceptualized in various learning institutions not only addresses school teaching practice but also ensure that the pre-service teachers become committed in their profession. Therefore, it is essential to understand the influence this training has on pre-service teachers. It requires a lot of time to be well prepared for student training. Knowledge about the content is required; therefore, professional teachers are in a better position to train pre-service ones. However, it takes more than professionalism to impart some skills on the pre-service teachers. Hence, it is crucial to determine the impact of pre-service teacher training on equipping future teachers with the necessary.

Key Words: **Preservice teacher training, early childhood education, active reflective practitioners**

هذا المشروع البحثي يدور حول تعليم معلمي ما قبل الخدمة للاستعداد لخبرات التدريس في مراحل رياض الأطفال. حيث ان برامج تدريب معلمي ما قبل الخدمة هي دورات تدريبية مبدئية للمعلمين و تهدف إلى تزويد المعلمين بالمهارات المطلوبة في المهنة. بما ان هيكل الممارسة والتدريب يختلف باختلاف البلدان لذلك البرامج التدريبية الخاصة بمعلمي ما قبل الخدمة معروفة ومنظمة من قبل القطاعين العام والخاص لإعداد المعلمين في المستقبل للدخول في مهنتهم. كما هو معروف بأن المناهج الدراسية تعد وتهيء معلمي ما قبل الخدمة حيث ان لديها القدرة على شحذ قدراتهم على التعامل مع جوانب مختلفة من الحياة وكذلك أثناء وجودهم في بيئة التعلم. وبالتالي, فمن الضروري أن يكون التدريب شاملاً دون إغفال أي عنصر من العناصر الأساسية. كما إن منهج تعليم معلمي ما قبل الخدمة يشمل المفاهيم والتصورات في مختلف مؤسسات التعليم ليس فقط اثناء ممارسة التدريس في المدارس فحسب, بل ايضاً ضمان التزام معلمي ما قبل الخدمة في مهنتهم بما يتناسب مع مهاراتهم التي تم اعدادهم لها. لذلك, من الضروري فهم تأثير هذا التدريب على معلمي ما قبل الخدمة وانه يتطلب الكثير من الوقت للاستعداد الجيد لتدريب الطلبة وتأهيلهم. بالتأكيد المعرفة بما في المحتوى مطلوب؛ لذلك, المعلمون المحترفون في وضع تطويري لتدريب معلمي ما قبل الخدمة للحصول على التقدم. ومع ذلك, فإن الأمر يتطلب أكثر من الاحتراف لنقل بعض المهارات إلى معلمي ما قبل الخدمة.   وبالتالي, فمن المهم تحديد تأثير تدريب معلمي ما قبل الخدمة على تأهيل معلمي رياض الاطفال في المستقبل بما يلزم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تدريب معلمي ما قبل الخدمة, التعليم في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة, ممارسي التفكير النشط.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. 1 Background

Preservice teachers' curriculum is critical in honing the ability of teacher-trainees to engage with different aspects within a learning environment. It is hence vital that the training given is all-encompassing to cater to the demands of the classroom. Notably, as the provision of education is a dynamic phenomenon due to changes in various factors, such as culture and teaching dynamics, the concern to ensure that teachers have been trained to acquire the requisite skills and knowledge is valid (Raymont, 2018). The essence of the research is to understand the influence of training and experience on pre-service teachers' ability to carry teaching roles in student teaching.

1.2 Introduction

Pre-service teacher education curriculum has been planned, conceptualized, and implemented in universities and other centres of tertiary education.

The education programs are not only designed for dealing with rapid technology changes, school practicing, and the constraints of the employer but are also crucial in ensuring that the pre-service teachers evolve into future reflective practitioners with a commitment to teaching as well as social justice. The curriculum is appropriate considering the diversity of learners and the increased complexity of education. There is a need to equip pre-service teachers with the necessary collaborative approaches for taking on the challenges of the multi-faceted role of teaching both in the present and future.

The early childhood pre-service methods' students are required by the curriculum to undertake two ways of block courses to be prepared for the transition from methods to actual student teaching. The primary concern for the research is whether the pre-service training and course experiences prepare students of education effectively. Pre-service teachers are those students who have completed the methods course and are ready to begin student teaching.

1.3 Problem Statement

The Early Childhood Preservice Methods students are required to take two methods of block courses to prepare the students for teaching. The concern is whether the training and experiences of preservice teachers are appropriate for student teaching.

1.4 Purpose of Statement

The Purpose of this qualitative research is to discover whether preservice teachers have enough training and experiences to be prepared for student training. At this point in the study, preservice teachers are those students who have completed methods courses before they go to student teaching.

1.5 Research Question

The primary objective of the research is to determine how the students have been prepared to enter into student teaching by completion of the two method courses. The study also intends to determine whether the program is effective. The research questions posed in this study are:

RQ: How well prepared are the pre-service methods students who have taken both method blocks to teach in student teaching?

SQ1: What are pre-service teachers' perceptions of their preparation for student teaching?

SQ2: What is preservice teachers' perception of the additional training that they need for student teaching?

SQ3: What are pre-service teachers' perceptions of the additional experience that they

need for student teaching?

The findings of this study enable stating appropriate recommendations for improving the methods blocks.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Multiple authors have researched the significance of early childhood teachers having the necessary capability to carry out their roles (Berman, Schultz, & Weber, 2012). Both experience and method are a critical part of pre-service training to

hone the teachers' aptitudes to deal with different scenarios (Forbes, 2013). This section is an overview of the research findings in this selected area. The review seeks to summarize the findings presented in recent research on the significance of transitioning pre-service from methodology-based approach to experience-based approach. The results are essential in widening understanding of the importance of well-structured pre-service training.

Ho and Chen (2013) undertook a focused study in Hong Kong to understand the implications of capacity building among teachers in early childhood education. The authors focused on a preschool in Hong Kong that was involved in a capacity building initiative on a need-based approach (Ho & Chen, 2013). The results indicated that teachers required more experience to handle different actual teaching situations. Furthermore, the findings emphasized the significance of imparting the pre-service student with skills that enhance their ability to cope with teaching issues that would arise (Harvey et al., 2010)

Kasten and McDavis (2015) conducted a study on building capacity for teaching and learning for Florida. The study led to the realization that the standards based on the education reforms, for example, educational systems and curriculum decisions, all have had a positive impact on the teacher training (Sanders, 2017). These curriculums raise the status of the teacher(Im, & Lee, 2003) because the standard based reforms shared an assumption that what happens in the teacher learning institutions to some extent determines what teachers deliver to the students (Barnhart & van Es, 2015).The study also found that the training determines the level of achievement by the teacher (Myconos 2017). Teaching is not a simple task, and it goes beyond basic skills (Siwatu 2011). It includes critical thinking skills, information seeking, technology applications and problem-solving (Stigler& Hiebert, 2017). Thus, to handle all these aspects, teacher training is necessary. The research conducted concluded that a strong capacity building is needed in Florida, failing which there is a possibility of failure

(Kasten & McDavis ,2015). Lastly, the authors stress
that proper preservice training boosts the morale of
the teachers, significantly determining the output
(Korhonen et al., 2017).

König et al., (2017) have also delved on the
significance of adapting preservice teacher training to
coincide with actual teaching environment. These
researchers advocate the inclusion of subject-based
pedagogy as they affirm that it allows the preservice
teacher to understand the dynamics in an actual
teaching environment (König et al., 2017). Hence, the
findings underscore the importance of shifting from a
method-based approach to skill-oriented. Adopting a
skill-based enables the pre-service teachers to engage
in teaching practice with ease (Stone et al., 2016).

Omdal (2017) in his investigation on the
relevance of continuous empowerment among pre-
service teachers, affirmed that aligning teachers'
output patterns with the learners has been critical in
continually improving quality early childhood
education (Stone et al., 2016).The researcher
demonstrates his stance by using the authentic adult

style, which involves the teacher laying strict class schedule, as the basis for illustrating the importance of guaranteeing that teachers are capacitated to carry out their tasks(Omdal, 2017). The utilization of the technique is advantageous in enhancing the attainment of quality education (Stone et al., 2016). Byrne et al., (2015) holds the same school of thought as they affirm that the inclusion of practical concepts is essential in imparting preservice teacher with ideal practice applicable in teaching (Korhonen et al.,2017).

The investigators focus on the significance of preservice teachers having a typical method on health-related aspects. Notably, similar elements will require the teacher to continually practice to enable them to sharpen their skills (Byrne et al., 2015). Although the knowledge would increase their comprehension, understanding of how to apply similar skill is more important. Thus, these findings would complement the research as they illustrate recommended aspects that can be included in preservice teacher training to enhance the ability of

student teachers to undertake their assigned roles (Akerson et al., 2017).

Britto, Engle, and Super (2013) focus on the topic from a global perspective. The authors posit that early childhood development is critical in the improvement of global literacy levels. Empowerment among preschool teachers through the utilization of evidence-based approaches is emphasized in improving the quality of education delivery Increasing engagement in skills among the preservice widens their understanding of how they can utilize different teaching skills in a classroom setting (Akerson et al., 2017). The correlation illustrates the importance of integrating method and skill approach to improving on enhanced education delivery (Paulick et al., 2016). Additionally, the initiation of structured assessment approaches is another element that the authors seek to demonstrate to be crucial in enhancing teachers' abilities to engage the students in education-related aspects (Britto, Engle, & Super, 2013).

O'Neill, & Stephenson, (2012) conducted a
study to determine whether completion of
coursework during preservice teacher training results
in feelings of preparedness and confidence amongst
student teachers (Korhonen et al., 2017). The study
reports willingness in the management of specific
behavioural problems for final year pre-service
teachers, some of who had completed and others who
had not completed the pre-service training units
(O'Neill, & Stephenson, 2012). According to the
study, course completion significantly raised the level
of perceived preparedness, confidence, and
familiarity (O'Neill, & Stephenson, 2012). However,
the perception was not the same for the whole
sample. A part of the sample only felt somewhat
prepared to handle misbehaviour.

Hanson (2013) researched whether training
programs prepare teachers with skills to teach
disengaged students. These students have apathetic
attitude towards learning which readily helps identify
these kinds of students. Based on this, Hanson
investigated whether the teacher preservice training

equips teachers with the ability to handle such cases. The study indicated that student disengagement is a seriously growing concern in Australia with most teachers finding it hard to adapt to the re-engagement programs and to respond to the needs of such students. At the policy level, it was found that in the pre-service training, teachers are armed with skills of identifying and catering to individual learning needs of students, understanding student diversity and supporting student well-being. Also, a teacher training program consists of a series of units dealing with the handling of different students within an educational set up. Catering to disengaged students is one such unit. Though the training program is comprehensive, there are differences in the mode of application.

The findings of the study by Hanson (2013) indicated that the completion of the classroom course resulted in the sense of preparedness. Secondly, the inability to complete the coursework resulted in decreased levels of confidence and willingness to enter into the actual student teaching. Thirdly,

completion of the coursework increased the number of strategies for dealing with any misbehaviour. Lastly, course completion increases the number of models known by the pre-service teachers resulting in increased confidence. The study concludes by offering appropriate recommendations to enhance pre-service teacher training to ensure that the end of the coursework fully prepares them.

Giallo & Little (2003), did research that shows that classroom behaviour is the primary source of anxiety and feelings of unpreparedness for both experienced and pre-service teachers. Such actions include calling out, noncompliance and disturbance. Also, any other behaviour that interferes with a child's learning ability, as well as the teacher's effectiveness, was discussed in the research. The authors urge educators to lay emphasis on training pre-service teacher on how to handle such behaviours before they begin student teaching.

Byrum & Cashman (1993) examined preservice teachers' perceptions of the roles and use of computer in education. Moreover, the teacher's

readiness to use computers for teaching was

analyzed.It is essential that teachers have exposure to

technology in the classroom.

A comprehensive and reliable preservice

education curriculum needs planning,

conceptualization, and implementation at all centres

of learning. As a result, pre-service imparts student

with experiences that enhance their ability to cope

with teaching issues that would arise. According to

Forbes (2013), knowledge and method are critical

components of pre-service training used to enhance

the teachers' aptitudes dealing with varied issues that

arise from different teaching environments. Thus, the

utilization of the technique is advantageous in

improving the attainment of quality education.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Area

The research did involve students who take

the Play course in the early childhood undergraduate

course at the university. The focus of this section will

facilitate the collection of primary data to be used in the paper.

3.2 Research Design

The current study uses a qualitative design to understand the underlying aspects of training and experiences gained during the course work. Qualitative research design in early childhood education research has been cited in guaranteeing effective manipulation of the relevant variables (Mukherji & Albon, 2018).

3.3 Sample Size

The research used a sample of five students teaching in the spring who were expected to have completed the methods block of coursework.

3.4 Data Collection

To acquire the data required for the study, a survey was conducted through the use of questionnaires. This primary data collection method demanded the meeting with the respondents and requesting them to fill the questionnaires and authenticate it by providing their consent via a

signature. For clarity during data collection, I had to provide an explanation for a clear understanding of the questions where necessary.

The method of data collection was chosen due to its aspect of practicality. It is also a cost-effective method with quick results. The process also allowed the participant's anonymity which encouraged them to participate in the research as it provided the comfort of answering (Forbes, 2013). Lastly, the questionnaire was comprehensive as it carried a sufficient number of questions covering all the aspects of the curriculum.

3.5 Data Analysis

Qualitative methods were employed in the analysis of the data. Importantly, the use of thematic analysis and coding did take precedence in the endeavour of analysing the data. The methodology was anticipated to enhance understanding of different aspects related to the research.

3.6 Sampling

The study sample consisted of five participants. The whole sample was made up of students taking the play course in early childhood methods block at the university.

3.7 Research Design

The research relied on qualitative research design to understand the aspects of training and pre-service teaching. The qualitative research design was used due to its reliability and accuracy in the development of clear conclusions in research. Data collection employed the method of survey. Questionnaires containing ten questions constructed by the investigator were issued to each one of the five students. The feedback received was used in data analysis.

3.8 Questionnaire

The questionnaire issued to the participants is listed below.

Questionnaire

1. **How would you describe your methods' blocks experiences?**

2. **How would you describe the learning materials that you have used in methods?**

3. **Have you been taught how to develop a teaching schedule based on students' learning needs? Explain.**

4. **Based on the knowledge that you have gained in your methods' classes, what are the factors that you would take into student teaching?**

5. **Explain the practical teaching environment you have experienced?**

6. **What teaching methods from the current methods block will you use in student teaching? Explain.**

7. **What organization skills that you acquired in the methods classes will you use in student teaching?**

8. **What practice would you use when engaging with bilingual students with special needs in the student teaching classroom? Explain.**

9. Are you prepared to deal with different behaviours within a teaching environment? Explain.

10. Based on your knowledge of assessment, what have you acquired from the training in the methods' blocks that you will use in student teaching? Explain how you would informally assess children.

4. 0 FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The responses from the participants in the study have been attached as appendices. Four out of the five participants found the methods course experience informative and helpful. However, one participant stated that the methods block that she is currently in is quite stressful. The main problem highlighted in her response is the lack of proper coordination from the professors. The participant fails to retain the information received in class due to the disorganized mode of presentation.

All five participants found the learning materials offered during the experience helpful. The documents were textbooks and articles. The

participant in sample 4, however, disapproves the use of dictation in class. Only one participant affirmed that he had been taught how to develop a schedule based on the students' learning needs. The remaining four participants had not yet been instructed on how to prepare one. This was because four of the participants had not yet completed the two method courses offered. Some of the students had taken the initiative to learn how to develop the schedule on their own.

The elements that the participants intend to incorporate into their actual teaching in the future varied from one participant to the other. Some of the elements included the importance of differentiating learners based on their needs and maximum use of resources. The experience indicated that the participants had equipped themselves with various organizational skills and methods that they would like to implement in classrooms after completing the course. The practical teaching environments experienced by the participants included; private, public, urban and suburban schools. These

environments however only involved early childhood education and middle school. The question of general preparedness to enter into student teaching received various perceptions from the participants, and it stood out that they are fully prepared. Only one participant showed confidence. Three out of the five honestly admitted the feeling of unpreparedness. One of them was ready to deal with a few behaviours but not all of them.

According to the responses received, it is evident that the pre-service curriculum is useful in preparing the students. Majority of the responses were positive. However, the study also highlighted some problems present in the methods courses. The resources provided by the methods courses are not sufficient according to some of the responses. At the level they were in, the participants should have acquired knowledge on how to develop a schedule based on their needs. Only one student has attended a class on the same. With a few improvements in the areas that the participants do not feel confident

about, the training will be successful in turning pre-
service teachers into practical student teachers.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the participants in this study
provided insight into what the pre-service teachers
need to know to be active reflective practitioners. The
study was important as it shows what needs to be
done in order to model the pre-service teachers to be
expressive in a classroom. It also presents the need
for consistency between spoken ideas and behaviour.
With the recommendations of this study, pre-service
teachers will acquire the ability to respond
compassionately and sensitively to student teaching.
The findings of this study also support the current
literature that advocates for moulding the pre-service
teachers into active and reflective practitioners.

It takes time and experience to be prepared for student teaching. It requires knowledge about the content of the curriculum. It would seem that professional teachers are in a better position to train pre-service ones. However, it takes more than professionalism to impart some skills on the pre-service teachers. They should be familiarised with other skills that will prepare them for more than the classroom expectations. Therefore, it is important for the pre-service teachers to be exposed to internships and mentoring to enhance preparedness. Meaningful relationships and connections are also important at this point in learning.

5.2 Recommendations

Apart from the knowledge acquired through class attendance, the pre-service teachers should be trained on the importance of reflecting with peers and colleagues. Pre-service teachers can gain a lot from their teaching and discussions with their fellows. They should be encouraged to form

communities amongst themselves to resolve the challenges discovered in the study. This will enhance the retention of the content taught in the methods courses.

Educators should also strive to develop a democratic classroom. Such an environment will promote honesty such that when a pre-service teacher fails to understand a concept, he /she will not be afraid to raise it to the educator (Lewis, 2015). The pre-service teachers can also express their opinions on how to conduct the class in a manner they can relate to, for instance, the problem posed by one student in the sample who was dissatisfied with the organization of the method block course. Through such an environment, the pre-service teacher will benefit from the level of preparedness and confidence increasing through such activities.

The method block courses should emphasize essential skills. There exist various skills that are essential for teaching. They include questioning and listening skills. Questioning is critical for enabling pre-service teachers to discover their values of how

questions are asked influences how a response is received. If the method courses incorporate these skills, the pre-service teachers can implement them in a classroom when they eventually venture into actual student teaching. Teachers must also listen to their students to construct learning experiences. These set of skills will enhance the pre-service level of preparedness as they will be equipped better to deal with different classroom behaviours.

The pre-service teachers should be trained on recognition of diversity within a classroom. The findings of the study showed difficulty in the participant's ability to deal with bilingual students in a class. Most of the recommendations they offered would be reasonably useful in a diverse classroom. The methods' play course should involve practical sessions where the pre-service teachers get to present to an audience acting a potential class. They could use the diversity of their colleagues to prepare for diverse environments.

Incorporation of behavioural skills training is another recommendation that will enhance

preparedness among pre-service teachers. The training will prepare them to deal with various classroom behaviours especially in early childhood education where behaviours can be a little challenging to deal with (Byrum & Cashman, 2003). The introduction of role play could do this. Not only will the pre-service teachers gain knowledge from the course content but they will also acquire skills that will be useful in the field after course completion. Apart from role play, pre-service teachers can practice providing feedback. This strategy can be beneficial as it presents learning opportunities to pre-service teachers.

The curriculum should develop assessment techniques to measure preparedness. It might seem impossible as confidence and level of readiness is an emotional aspect. However, there exist various factors that can act as indicators of preparedness. The curriculum only focuses on the assessment of the student's ability to retain the content taught in class. Retention of material is not the ultimate goal of pre-service training. Experience is essential as well as

organizational and social skills (Jung, 2007).
Internships and attachments are also other methods
of determining the level of preparedness. Feedback
from the employer or the supervisor who the pre-
service teacher is attached to goes a long way in
indicating how prepared the student is. Positive
feedback from the potential employer could be in the
form of a recommendation letter. Pre-service
teachers should also be encouraged to write reports
to explain their experiences to the providers of the
program.

5.3 Limitations of the study

The study was time-consuming. Preparing
questionnaires and waiting for feedback from the
participants took much time. Secondly, the
interpretation of the data was limited because of the
fact that personal experiences and knowledge of the
participants influence the observations and
conclusions that relate to the research question. The
small number of students was also a limitation as the
sample size is not an appropriate representation of

the whole population. Another drawback experienced during the study is that there was no method of result verification. All the questions in the questionnaire issued were open-ended. Therefore, it gave the participant maximum control over the content of the data collected. Future research will have to look into more than just survey questions, reflective methods, and observations to achieve better results.

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9.0 APPENDICES

Table 9.1 Emerging Themes

Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4	Sample 5
Unprepared ness to deal with behavior.	**A bit prepared to deal with different behaviors.**	**Not prepared**	**Prepared**	**Prepared**
Sufficient provision of learning materials.	**Resources provided; textbooks.**	**Materials provided were helpful; textbooks and articles**	**Sufficient provision of materials.**	**Resources Provided textbooks.**
Differentiati on of students based on their learning needs.	**Use of pictures and writing on the board to deal with bilingual students.**	**Necessary support for bilingual students.**	**Use of simple vocabulary and giving bilingual students more time with the material.**	**Necessary support for bilingual students.**
Setting up the classroom as an organization al skill.	**No organizatio nal skills.**	**No organizatio nal skills learnt**	**Classroom set up as an organizatio nal skill**	**Setting up the classroom as an organizatio nal skill.**

Informal assessment; observation, taking notes, conversations.	Informal assessment; observation and reflective questions.	Observation, note taking and keeping checklists.	Observation and use of questions.	Observation and use of questions.

Appendix 1

Sample 1. The student describes the methods' block experience as informative. He/she intends to implement the lessons taught by the experience in a classroom in the future. The learning materials provided were helpful. According to the student, these materials are necessary, and every teacher should learn how to use them to enhance the relationship between them and students. Through the experience, the knowledge and the importance of differentiating students based on their needs were acquired. One factor that the student would like to put into consideration in future is the differentiation of students who are academically advanced from those with special needs. as this will provide accommodation for all.

The practical teaching environment that was experienced by the participant is in a suburban school. Integration of all subjects into one book has been recommended by the participant to make teaching easier. During the program, the student also exhibited one important organizational skill which involves setting up centers across the classroom. On the practices suitable for bilingual students, the participant intends to give them the help they need so that they can start communicating well in English. In addition, the student feels that the experience has fully prepared him/her to deal with various student behaviors in the future. Lastly, based on the internship, the participant acquired some knowledge of assessment methods. He/ she will use observation, taking notes and conversation with students as a way of informal assessment.

Appendix 2

Sample 2. The participant describes the method's block experience as educative, and he/she thinks that it will be useful in the future when applied

in a classroom. In this sample, the student is quite specific. The learning materials used were textbooks, and they offered the necessary information. However, according to the participant, some of them were difficult to understand therefore requiring more time to read through. Other than the textbooks the participant did not have other learning materials at her disposal. Throughout the course, the student has not been taught how to develop a learning schedule for students with special needs. Nonetheless, the participant suggests a consistent schedule for those with special needs.

Based on the knowledge gained during the classes, the participant recommends that teachers should do extensive planning before entering a classroom. The student has experienced various practical teaching environments. However, one that stood out was a two-year-old classroom. He/she intends to use books with animation and a teaching

method as young children can easily relate to animation. The organizational skills learnt include categorizing things into files and folders. The participant considers the use of pictures and writing on the board as an appropriate way of dealing with bilingual students. The participant is not fully prepared to deal with different student behaviors; however, with time he/she thinks that she will be prepared. Observations and reflective questions are the teaching methods that the student learnt from the experience.

Appendix 3

Sample 3. The participant describes the methods' block experience as informative as it helped gain a lot of knowledge. This knowledge can be used in the future. The materials used were mainly

textbooks and articles provided by the teachers. He/ she have not been taught how to develop a teaching schedule for students with special needs. Resources, feedback, and knowledge on lesson planning received from the professors are the factors that the participant intends to put into consideration as he/she prepares to get into teaching. The participant has experienced various practical teaching environments. They include childcare, elementary, public and private school settings. The participant has not answered which methods learnt during the experience will be implemented in the future. In the method classes, the participant has not gone through any organizational skills that could be useful in teaching. The sample recommends the use of necessary support to ensure that bilingual students

receive the help they need. Like in sample 2, this participant is not fully prepared to deal with various student behaviors. Observations note taking and keeping checklists are the methods that the participant has learnt and intends to use to assess students informally.

Appendix 4

Sample 4. The methods' block was informative

and helped the participant understand the importance of best practices when it comes to teaching. The participant describes the learning materials provided as helpful. The participant outlines that he/she has not been taught how to develop a learning schedule for students with special needs. Based on the knowledge gained during the experience, wide use of resources is one factor that

the participant intends to put into consideration in the future. Private and public school settings are the two working environments experienced by the participant. During the experience the participant acquired some knowledge on organizational skills; one of them is the classroom set up. The participant in this sample clearly explains the methods he/she would use to deal with bilingual students. They include; using simple vocabulary, giving the students more time with the material and offering readings that can be found in their native language. The participant is quite prepared to deal with different behaviors in a classroom as the experience has taught what to expect. Formative and reflective assessments are the informal methods of assessment that the participant intends to put to use.

Appendix 5

Sample 5. The participant describes the methods' block experience as informative. According to the participant, the materials provided during the classes are helpful. He/she compares them to those used by other universities. The methods class has not yet covered the learning schedule based on student's needs. Based on the knowledge acquired, the participant has not outlined the factors to consider in the future. However, he/she intends to use the concepts learnt in mathematics and science as they are the most important areas of study. The participant is not really specific about the practical environments experienced, but they are in suburban schools. Literacy method is what the student intends to incorporate into teaching in the future.

Unfortunately, the experience has not equipped the student with any organizational skills. Provision of necessary resources is the best method of dealing with bilingual students according to this sample. The student is not prepared to handle the behavior of students between the first and third grade; however, he /she feels prepared to handle the rest of the grades. Use of questions and observations are the informal methods of assessment recommended in this sample. Questionnaire to be Issued to the Research Participants

1. How would you describe your methods' blocks experiences?

2. How would you describe the learning materials that you have used in methods?

3. **Have you been taught how to develop a teaching schedule based on students' learning needs? Explain.**

4. **Based on the knowledge that you have gained in your methods' classes, what are the factors that you would take into student teaching?**

5. **Explain the practical teaching environment you have experienced?**

6. **What teaching methods from the current methods block will you use in student teaching? Explain.**

7. **What have class organization skills you acquired in the methods classes that will you use in student teaching?**

8. **What practice would you use when engaging with bilingual students who have special needs in the teaching classroom? Explain.**

9. **Are you prepared to deal with different behaviors within a teaching environment? Explain.**

10. **Based on your knowledge of assessment, what have you acquired from the training in the methods' blocks that you will use in student teaching? Explain how you would informally assess children?**

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Preservice Methods Students' Perceptions about Being Prepared for the Student Teaching Experience

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Introduction & Problem Statement

Introduction: The early childhood pre-service methods' students are required by the curriculum to undertake two methods block courses in order to be prepared for the transition from methods to actual student teaching. Pre-service training and course experiences prepare students for teaching. Meanwhile, pre-service teachers, are those students who have completed the methods course and are ready to begin student teaching.

Problem: The Early Childhood Preservice Methods students are required to take two methods block courses to prepare the students for moving from methods to student teaching. The concern is whether the training and experiences do preservice teachers for the student teaching.

Review of Literature

Experience and method are critical part of pre-service training to hone the teachers' aptitudes to deal with different scenarios (Forbes, 2013). Tutors require experience to handle different teaching situations and cope with emerging issues.

Empowerment in preschool is attained through the utilization of evidence-based approaches is essential in improving the quality of education delivery (Lewis, 2015). It increases engagement in skills among the pre-service by widening teachers' understanding on how they can utilize different teaching skills in a classroom setting.

O'Neill and Stephenson (2012) indicate that course completion significantly raised the level of perceived preparedness, confidence, and familiarity. However, the perception was not the same for the whole sample

Purpose & Research Questions

Purpose: To discover whether the preservice have enough training and experiences to be prepared for student training.

RQ: In what ways are the pre-service methods students who have taken both two method blocks prepared to teach in student teaching?

SQ1: What are pre-service teachers' perceptions of their preparation for student teaching?

SQ2: What is preservice teachers' perception of the additional training that they need for student teaching?

SQ3: What are pre-service teachers' perceptions of the additional experience that they need for student teaching?

Methodology & Methods

Participants: Five preservice teachers taking the Play course in early childhood methods at the university who have completed both methods blocks.

Data Collection: Questionnaire. The researcher issued the questionnaire in class, convinced participants to participate, explained the purpose of study, and collected the filled questions through email.
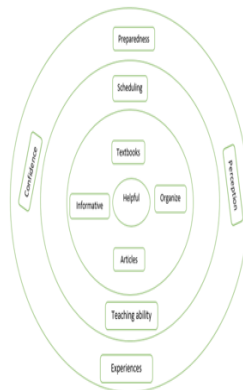
Setting: The University classroom.

Findings

Figure 1. Important factors in preservice

Conclusions

RQ: What are pre-service teachers' perceptions of their preparation for student teaching?

Most students consider the instruction, the textbook and articles, and course organization as highly informative. It enhances their scheduling and teaching ability, particularly when they have high levels of confidence. The study affirms that experiences and methods of pre-service training are essential in improvement of teachers' aptitudes to deal with different scenarios (Forbes, 2013).

Recommendations

Future study needs to include a large sample to allow generalization. It also needs to utilize several data collection techniques to eliminate the shortfalls of questionnaire.

The pre-service teachers should be trained on the importance of reflecting with peers and colleagues apart from the knowledge acquired through class attendance. Incorporation of behavioral skills training will enhance preparedness among pre-service teachers. The training will prepare them to deal with various classroom behaviors especially in early childhood education.

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Figure 9.1 Important Factors in Preservice