

A STUDY ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER-TRAINEES TOWARDS MICROTEACHING AND THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH MICROTEACHING IN B. ED COLLEGES OF KAMRUP (M) ASSAM.

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Abstract: The complexity of today's classroom has led to introduction of many teacher-training techniques, such as microteaching. This research work is an attempt to find out far has this technique benefited the teacher-training institutes in Kamrup (Metro) Assam. The results demonstrated that the inclusion of microteaching in teacher training programs is viewed to have satisfactory impact on teacher-trainees. The overall perception of teacher-trainees towards microteaching can be considered positive. A significant result highlighted teacher-trainees concerns about the usage of technology. The findings stressed the need for a more technologically-advanced approach towards the subject. The researcher feels that the four weeks assigned for practice teaching in schools (in two subjects) is a good initiative, as it will allow the teacher-trainees to have a greater exposure to real classroom teaching and apply what is taught in microteaching more effectively. This will also enable the teacher-educators to discuss in details the core teaching skills, which are very important part of any classroom teaching-learning situations.

Index Terms: microteaching, pedagogical skills, teacher-educator, teacher-trainee

I. Introduction

The traditional pattern of teacher training program has resulted in producing ineffective classroom teachers. This situation led to some alternative measures and techniques to bring improvement in the student teaching program. Microteaching is one of such innovation and techniques that was introduced on the map of teacher education to enhance the teacher training programs.

The term microteaching was coined by Allen and his associates at Stanford (Allen and Ryan, 1969). This program had as its main objective the identification of specific teaching behaviors which could be isolated as observable skills, as well as the development and testing of appraisal instruments to measure attainment of these skills. Micro lessons are great opportunities to present sample "snapshots" of what/how you teach and to get some feedback from colleagues about how it was received. Micro-lesson study as an aspect of micro-teaching which according to (Fernandez & Robinson, 2006) is a cooperative learning experience which intends to challenge prospective teachers' thinking about teaching and learning, and to encourage their connection between theory and practice.

II. Relevance of the Study

A lot of problems occur while conducting a microteaching classes, such as good infrastructure, technological issues, lack of efficient supervision, gap between theoretical and practical aspects, etc. So, the researcher thought it worthwhile to undertake the present study entitled "A Study on the Perception of the teacher-trainees on Microteaching and the Problems Associated with Microteaching in B.Ed. Colleges of Kamrup (M) Assam." The findings of this study is expected to be of some assistance to course instructors so that they can review the program wherever necessary and meet the teacher-trainees' needs and expectations.

III. Sampling:

The target group comprised teacher-trainees of seven B. Ed colleges of Kamrup (Metro) Assam, during the academic session 2017-2019. The researcher randomly selected 50 teacher-trainees from each college out of a total 100 teacher-trainees, and 5 teacher-educators from each college. So the total population comprised 350 teacher-trainees and 35 teacher-educators from the 7 B. Ed colleges.

IV. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The study was descriptive in nature and survey method was used for collecting data. A questionnaire comprising 27 items was prepared and administered to 280 teacher-trainees of teacher training institutes of Kamrup (Metro). The data was collected, arranged and analyzed. Simple percentages were used as the standard measure of statistics.

Table 1. list of the B.Ed. colleges in Kamrup (M) and the sample size of teacher-trainees

S. No	Name of the Colleges	Total No. of Students	No. of Samples Taken
1	Axom Shishak Prashikshan Mahavidyalaya	100	40
2	College of Education	100	40
3	Dakshin Guwahati B.Ed College	100	40
4	Dr Anita Baruah Sarmah College of Education	100	40
5	Govt. Banikanta College of Teacher Education	100	40
6	National Institute for Teacher Education	100	40
7	West Guwahati College of Education	100	40

Table 2: teacher-trainees' (n=280) response: teaching practice competence and awareness

S. No	Variables	No. of YES	Percentage	No. of NO	Percentage
Microteaching :					
1	helped me develop awareness of my teaching competence.	280	100	0	0
2	helped me develop all the teaching skills I will need later.	180	64.3	100	35.7
3	gave me an opportunity to learn by observing teacher-educators and teacher-trainees.	280	100	0	0
4	made me aware of what makes a good teacher.	280	100	0	0

5	gave me a valuable opportunity to apply my teaching skills.	280	100	0	0
6	encouraged me to develop autonomy.	265	94.6	15	5.4
7	helped me discover my teaching strength and strategies.	280	100	0	0

- 100% teacher-trainees agreed that microteaching helped them develop awareness of their teaching competence.
- 64.3% agreed that microteaching enabled them to develop all the teaching skills they will need later in real classroom teaching, while 35.7% disagreed.
- 100% overwhelmingly said that got the valuable opportunity to learn by observing the teacher-educators and teacher-trainees.
- 100% concurred with each other that they became aware of what makes a good teacher.
- 100% agreed that they got opportunity to apply their teaching skills during microteaching session.
- 94.6% felt encouraged to develop their autonomy, while 5.4% didn't feel the same.
- 100% asserted that microteaching offered them real opportunities to discover their teaching strength and strategies.

Table 3: teacher-trainees' (n=280) response: preparation and management

S. No	Variables	No. of YES	Percentage	No. of NO	Percentage
Microteaching:					
1	helped me to organize my time.	275	98.2	5	1.8
2	helped me learn how to manage my class.	280	100	0	0
3	offered me practical opportunity to teach a lesson.	280	100	0	0
4	gave me an opportunity to improve my lesson planning.	280	100	0	0
5	helped me write good performance objectives.	275	98.2	5	1.8
6	encouraged me to develop teaching activities and materials.	280	100	0	0
7	helped me learn how to predict classroom problems.	270	96.4	10	3.6
8	allowed me to apply ideas I learned from different courses.	278	99.3	2	0.7

9	helped me to use technology adequately.	10	3.5	270	96.4
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- 98.2% felt that microteaching was a useful tool for organizing time, 1.8% did not felt the same.
- 100% agreed that it helped them in learning how to manage class.
- 100% agreed that it offered them practical opportunity to teach a lesson.
- 100% also agreed that it gave them an opportunity to write better lesson plans.
- While 98.2% found it helpful to write good performance objectives, rest 1.8% did not find it helpful.
- 100% said that they found it useful to develop teaching materials.
- 96.4% agreed that microteaching helped them to predict classroom problems, while 3.6% did not agree.
- 99.3% said that it allowed them to apply ideas that they learned from different courses, while 0.7% did not felt the same.
- Only 3.5% found it helpful to use technology. Rest 96.4% did not find it helpful at all.

Table 4: teacher-trainees' (n=280) response: perception and personal Feelings:

S. No	Variables	No. of YES	Percentage	No. of NO	Percentage
1	Microteaching is an effective method in pre-service stage of teacher training.	280	100	0	0
2	Microteaching consumed a lot of my time.	0	0	280	100
3	Felt bored during microteaching classes.	0	0	280	100
4	Microteaching is similar to actual classroom teaching.	190	67.8	90	32.1
5	It made me feel embarrassed when teaching my colleagues.	272	97.1	8	2.9
6	The feedbacks provided are manipulated.	0	0	280	100
7	The microteaching classes are technologically equipped.	1	0.4	279	99.6

- 100% agreed that microteaching is an effective method in pre-service stage of teacher training.
- 0% did not find it time consuming, ie 100% agreed that the time was utilized properly during microteaching classes..
- 0% did not felt bored during microteaching classes, ie. 100% found the classes interesting.
- 67.8% felt that it was similar to actual classroom teaching, while 32.1% did not agree to it.
- 97.1% felt little embarrassed while peer teaching, 2.9% were confident.
- 100% were of the opinion that feedback provided were genuine.

- 99.6% did not think that the microteaching classes were technologically equipped. Only 0.2% thought the classes were equipped.

Table 5: teacher-trainees' response (n=280): technological equipments used during microteaching:

S. No	Equipments used	No. of Yes	Percentage
1	Microteaching videos	85	30.4
2	Online video database	0	0
3	Tape recorders	227	81
4	Cameras	198	70.7

- 30.4% said that microteaching videos were used.
- No online video database was used.
- 81% shared that tape recorders were used during microteaching classes.
- 70.7 % said cameras were used.

Table 6: teacher-trainees (n=280) response regarding the teaching skills that are taught during microteaching classes:

S. No	Skills	No. of Yes	Percentage
1	Writing instructional objectives	280	100
2	Introducing a lesson	280	100
3	Illustrating with examples	280	100
4	Fluency in questioning	210	75
5	Probing questions	87	31
6	Use of black board	280	100
7	Stimulus variation	140	50
8	Audio-visual teaching aids	227	81
9	Silence and non-verbal cues	210	75
10	Promoting pupil participation	200	71
11	Reinforcement	210	75
12	Achieving closure	280	100

- 100% said that they were taught to write instructional objectives

- 100% said they were taught to introduce a lesson properly.
- 100% agreed that they were taught to illustrate a topic with examples.
- 75% said that fluency in questioning was taught.
- 31% said probing questioning was discussed.
- 100% said they were taught to make the best use of the blackboard.
- 50% said stimulus variation was taught.
- 81% said they were taught to use audio-visual teaching aids properly.
- 75% said that the skill of silence and non-verbal cues was taught and discussed.
- 71% said that skill to promote pupil participation was taught.
- 75% said that reinforcement was taught.
- 100% said that achieving closure of a lesson was discussed thoroughly.

V. Findings

- **Table 2** revealed that most of the teacher-trainees felt that microteaching experiences assisted them to develop their teaching competence and making them aware of their pedagogical skills. Scores of 100% clearly demonstrates that microteaching experience was an enjoyable experience as it offered them opportunity to apply their teaching skills, develop their own autonomy and made them aware of the qualities of a good teacher. However, the teacher-trainees shared that during the time allotted for microteaching classes they did not get the chance to learn all the teaching skills equally. Some skills were given more importance and taught in more detail than others.

Observing peer teachers and teacher-educators was also considered a valuable experience by all of them because they got to learn from each other, provided them real opportunities to discover their strength and weaknesses, generated serious discussions that helped in promoting effective teaching strategies.

- Results from **Table 3**, indicate that the teacher-trainees felt that microteaching training assisted them to enhance both managerial and preparation skills. The scores of 100% demonstrated the positive impact of microteaching on teacher-trainees' views about their teaching competency – be it in writing the lesson plans, writing performance objectives, predicting classroom problems, etc. They felt that conducting a mini lesson provided them with valuable experiences to learn to write comprehensible lesson plans and performance outcomes.

The results, however, clearly showed that an overwhelming number of students (96.4%) said that they when it came to use of technology in the microteaching classes, they were not satisfied.

- **Table 4** highlights the teacher-trainees' positive views about microteaching applications in their program of study. All the students asserted that they did not find microteaching classes boring or time consuming. The prospective teachers highly appreciate incorporating microteaching into pre-service teacher training programs and that the feedback provided by the teachers are helpful and genuine. They did share that at times they felt embarrassed to teach in front of their colleagues. 32.1% of the teacher-trainees shared that they thought there is a gap between actual classroom teaching and microteaching classes.

- Results from **Table 5**, reveal that technology is yet to be utilized to its optimum level. Eighty-one per cent said that tape recorders were used and 30.4 % shared that few microteaching videos were shown for reference. These results revealed that the colleges are yet to make the microteaching classes technologically efficient. The teacher-trainees are disappointed that the classes were not technologically equipped and that the teacher-educators did not avail off much of the latest technology that could be used during the classes.
- **Table 6** demonstrates skills such as writing instructional objectives, introducing a lesson, illustrating with examples, usage of blackboard, and achieving closure are given much importance and taught properly. The teacher-trainees are quite confident regarding these skills.

The responses obtained from teacher-trainees regarding fluency in questioning, proper usage of audio-visual aids, silence and non-verbal cues, promoting pupil participation, and reinforcement are satisfactory, though not 100%. But the teacher-trainees seem to be dissatisfied regarding inadequate knowledge of acquisition of stimulus variation and probing questions skills.

VI. Recommendations

- Microteaching lessons and classes should be videotaped or recorded more often so as to emphasize more valid procedure that can be used to give more valuable feedback.
- In today's digital world, it is only expected that education make optimum use of technology. The researcher suggests that microteaching laboratory should be designed and it should be equipped with the requisite latest technological devices that are prerequisite for microteaching classes. The teacher-educators should show the videos from online database so that teacher-trainees get a fair idea of the different ways in which microteaching classes are conducted across the globe. Feedbacks can be recorded, including feedbacks shared by experts of the subject. These can be further be shown during the class, so that the teacher-trainees get to know the areas they need to work upon, the evaluation criteria, experts' opinion, etc.
- Another implication is that if teacher-educators (including academic supervisors) are the concerned person for improving the use of microteaching, then it is crucial that they too must be given proper training to improve their skills, with the assistance of professionals when required. Teacher-educators should be abreast with the usage of the required technology so that they can confidently make use of them during the class.
- It was seen from the data collected that not all the teaching skills are taught or addressed equally. Some of the skills are just touched upon in haste, such probing questions and stimulus variations. This is due to the lack of allotted time, as expressed by the teacher-educators in a face-to-face interview session. Hence, it is recommended that if a few more classes are allotted, then probably this problem can be dealt with easily.
- The researcher also suggests Link practice session to explicitly link the aspects of theory and practice. Such recommendation is based on many studies that recommend the use of 'Linking Theory to Practice' (Ghanaguru, Nair, &Yong, 2103), wherein the trainees are given the chance of teaching school pupils. This would first involve identification of the theory or theories to be used in a particular lesson that the teacher-trainee plan to teach. After that the teacher-trainees are required to elaborate on the application of the theories in the specific lessons. This is to ensure that they are able to reflect critically on the use of appropriate theories or models of teaching and learning.

VII. Conclusions

Microteaching is a compulsory part of any teacher's training program that is to be taken before a teacher-trainee is allowed to go for the practice teaching. The overall results of this study demonstrated that the inclusion of microteaching in teacher training programs is viewed to have satisfactory impact on teacher-trainees. The perception of teacher-trainees towards can be considered positive. A significant result highlighted students' concerns about the usage of technology. The findings stressed the need for a more technologically-advanced approach towards the subject. The colleges can seek support from the non-governmental organizations, such as the private sectors, individuals and industries to finance adequate educational facilities for establishment of state-of-art microteaching laboratories, etc.

This research work emphasizes the need to connect content knowledge with practicalities in the classroom. This will prepare the teachers to face teaching challenges confidently. The researcher feels that the four weeks assigned for practice teaching in schools (in two subjects) is a good initiative, as it will allow the teacher-trainees to have a greater exposure to real classroom teaching and will also enable the teacher-educators to discuss in details the core teaching skills, which are very important part of any classroom teaching-learning situations.

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