

**TEACHING PRACTICE EXPERIENCES OF HOME ECONOMICS STUDENT-TEACHER;  
CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE PANACEA IN FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
(TECHNICAL) OMOKU**

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**Abstract**

*The study examined the teaching practice experiences of home economics student-teacher; challenges and possible panacea in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku, Rivers state, Nigeria. The study was guided by three specific objectives and research questions. Survey design was adopted in this study and the population of the study was made up of 55 final year students of Home Economics Department both at Nigerian Certificate of Education NCE and degree level. The study used the entire population as sample since it was relatively small and manageable. A 21-item Questionnaire was used to gather data in this study and it was structured in four point likert scale rating. The data collected was analyzed using frequency count and mean score rating. Findings revealed that Student teachers acquired the experience of being resourceful through improvisation and understanding the realities of teaching during teaching practice exercise. Students teachers face numerous challenges during teaching practice such as lack of accommodation, lack of co operation from school based teachers, lack of instructional materials and resources in schools, lack of allowances, excess work load and lack of respect for student teachers. It was recommended that allowance should be given to student-teachers during the teaching practice exercise so as to motivate them just like their counterpart in engineering, accounting and the likes.*

**Keywords:** Home Economics, Panacea, Student-Teacher , Teaching Practice

**Introduction**

Every stage in life is faced with its own challenge; some are inherited and is minimized while others are not and have solution but due to man's inability to proof difficulties away in life at one time or the other life is surrounded. The Home Economics students are faced with a number of challenges which affect their contribution during teaching practice exercises. Ruairc (2013) defines teaching practice as an important component of becoming a teacher. Teaching practice grants student - teachers experience in the actual teaching and learning environment. Teaching practice is known to expose student- teachers to the actual practice of teaching. It is during this period that student- teachers are given the opportunity to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of the teaching profession . In view of this, Perry (2012) argues that teaching practice creates a mixture of anticipation, anxiety, excitement and apprehension in the student- teachers as they commence their teaching practice. Thus, this provides student- teachers with the chance to express their personal educational philosophies, theories and understandings. In other words, this creates an opportunity for student- teachers to experiment and test their knowledge and skills in the profession of teaching and learning with an understanding of their personal educational philosophies and theories.

It is needful to note that teaching practice is not a bed of roses for all student- teachers because they experience challenges, which in a way can hamper their ability to derive maximum benefits from the exercise.

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Important part of a student teacher's preparation and training, especially in the developing and underdeveloped worlds where teaching can be disrupted by a range of challenges. Some of these challenges are geographical distance, low and uneven levels of teacher expertise, a wide ranging lack of resources as well as a lack of discipline among a cross-section of learners and educator. It is important that these challenges be addressed, as they may affect the student teachers' performance during teaching practice as well as their perception of the teaching profession in subsequent years. Teaching practice provides the laboratory where a student practicalizes what he/she had learnt concerning effective teaching. Teaching practice is an important factor in preparing students for future teaching assignments. According to National Teacher Institution, teaching Practice manual (2013), the general objectives of teaching practice are to enable the student teachers;

- a. Gain general experience, both academic professional, social and physical related to teaching profession.
- b. Acquire a wealth of practical experience from all staff they are likely to be in contact with through active participation in the school assigned responsibilities.
- c. Bring the student teachers into direct contact with such significant issues as the functions and responsibilities of various categories of school, staff academic and non-academic.
- d. Develop competence in proper lesson preparation delivery and assessment.

To achieve the above objectives, the student- teacher is usually required to undergo at least eight months teaching practice for those in NCE programmes and two months for degree students to enable him/her acquire the expected skills which will position him/her as a competent professional teacher. During this period, the student teacher may be faced with some challenges which include classroom management, attitude of the supervisors towards the student teachers, curriculum development, instruction and environmental challenges.

Osuala (2004) noted that, teaching practice expose the trainee teacher to the realities of effective teaching and help those to try out methods of teaching and gain practical classroom experience under expect supervision. Akpede (2011), study revealed that student teachers faced a lot of challenges including lack of accommodation, lack of co operation from school based teachers, lack of instructional materials and resources in schools, lack of allowances, excess work load and lack of respect for student teachers. In a similar study by Nwanekezi et al.,(2011) carried out at university of Portharcourt, some of the problems identified were: Lack of necessary equipments and materials for student teachers. Poor learning environment in the practicing schools like congested classrooms, poor ventilation. Rejection of student teachers by schools Lack of transportation and inaccessibility of some schools. Ocho (2017) noted that the ways to prevent these problems during teaching practice include: Orientation for teachers practice supervisors, Orientation and monitoring of co-operating teachers, Orientation for students and Provision of incentives for supervisors and co-operating teachers.

It is important that these challenges be addressed, as they may affect the home economics student teachers' performance during teaching practice as well as their perception of the teaching profession.

### Statement of the Problem

Teaching practice is a period when home economics student teachers are given opportunity to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of teaching profession. Inspite of the observed relevance and purpose of the teaching practice exercise in teacher preparatory programme, a number of challenges appear to hamper the optimum realization of its objectives in the professional growth of students in training. Many home economics student teachers get agitated about entering the classrooms to take up teaching tasks in unfamiliar environment. According to Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009) such mixed feelings can contribute to the making or discouraging of a home economics student teacher. Hence the focus of this study is to investigate the various challenges faced by home economics student teachers during teaching practice exercise and also proffer solutions.

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### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the teaching practice experiences of home economics student-teachers challenges and possible panacea in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku. The specific objectives of this study include the following:

1. To find out the teaching practice experiences acquired by the home economics student-teachers in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku
2. To find out the difficulties faced by the home economics students-teachers during teaching practice exercise in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku.
3. To find out possible solution to the difficulties faced by home economics student-teachers during teaching practice exercise in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions;

1. What are the teaching practice experiences acquired by the home economics student-teachers in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku?
2. What are the difficulties faced by the home economics student-teachers during teaching practice exercise in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku>.
3. What are the possible solutions to the difficulties faced by home economics student-teachers during teaching practice exercise in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku?

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The design for this study is survey. A survey research design is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. It was adopted to collect data from the Home economics students on the teaching practice experiences of home economics student-teachers challenges and possible solution in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku , Rivers state , Nigeria

#### **Area of the Study**

The study was restricted to Home-Economics Education Department in the School of Vocational Education of Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku, Rivers State.

#### **Population of the Study**

The target population for the study consisted of all the final year Home economics education students in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku, Rivers State. The total population of Home economics education students are 20 in NCE and 35 in degree programme in 2019/2020 session. Therefore the total population of the study is 55.

#### **Sample/sampling Technique**

Since the total population of the study was relatively small and manageable, there was no need for sampling and sampling technique. Therefore the entire population of 55 students were used in this study as sample.

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### Research Instrument

A structure questionnaire was developed by the researcher for collecting data from the respondents. The questionnaire was titled” Teaching Practice Experiences of Home Economics Student-Teachers Challenges and Possible Panacea Questionnaire (TPEHEPTCPSQ). The questionnaire consist of 20 items. The response categories of the instrument was on four point likert rating assigned values as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point

### Validation of the Instrument

The instrument for data collection (questionnaire) was presented to the project supervisor for face validity. The lecturer made necessary corrections and suggestions on the instrument, the input of the supervisor was considered before drawing up the final copy of the instrument to be distributed to the respondents.

### Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument for this study was subjected to test-retest reliability. It was administered to 10 Home economics education students in Rivers State University of Science and Technology Port-Harcourt which is outside the area of study. The instrument was administered on the same people twice, at the interval of three weeks, and the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Formula was used to establish the error variance of the instrument after which the Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula was used to obtain the reliability co-efficient which was 0.75 indicating a high degree of internal consistency.

### Method of Data Collection

Copies of the instrument for this study were administered to the students in the Department of Home economics education programme in the area of study that completed the instrument. The collection was done physically after one week interval. This ensured the recovery of the copies of questionnaire administered to the respondents.

### Method of Data Analysis

Data collected for this study was analyzed using frequency count and mean score method. The decision making in respect of the research questions was 2.50 and above for acceptance while below 2.5 was for rejection connoting disagreement .

### Results

**Research Question One:** What are the teaching practice experiences acquired by the home economics student-teachers in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku?

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**Table 1: Teaching practice experiences acquired by the home economics student-teachers**

S/N	Experiences acquired during teaching practice	SA	A	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$	Decision
1.	Teaching practice provides students opportunity to be resourceful through improvisation	30	20	2	3	55	3.90	Agreed
2.	TP provides experiences to beginning teachers to become socialized into the profession	20	32	1	2	55	3.60	Agreed
3.	practice teaching provide experiences for predicting the future success of the teacher	25	15	10	5	55	3.34	Agreed
4.	Students-teachers feel themselves grow through experience acquired and begin to link to a culture of teaching	40	10	4	1	55	3.93	Agreed
5.	teaching practice expose the trainee teacher to the realities of effective teaching	30	10	10	5	55	3.46	Agreed
6	Teaching practice afford opportunity of practicalising theories and learns from them on actuality	42	8	5	0	55	3.96	Agreed
	Grand mean score						3.82	Agreed

Findings presented in Table 1 showed that all the items were accepted with mean score of 2.50 and above. This result revealed that the respondents agreed that home economics student-teachers acquired experiences during their teaching practice exercise as indicated by the grand mean score of 3.82.

**Research Question two:** What are the difficulties faced by the home economics student-teachers during teaching practice exercise in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku?

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**Table 2: Mean Analysis of difficulties faced by the home economics student-teachers during teaching practice**

S/N	Difficulties during TP	SA	A	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$	decision
11	Student teachers were faced with poor learning environment and overcrowded classrooms	40	10	2	3	55	3.57	Agreed
12	Time for the Teaching Practice exercise is short	30	5	20	0	55	3.65	Agreed
13	Lack of co-operation from the subject teachers or school based supervisors	20	20	10	5	55	3.11	Agreed
14	Lack of accommodation during the teaching practice programme.	40	5	5	5	55	3.30	Agreed
15	Lack of Instructional materials and resources in schools	30	10	15	0	55	3.85	Agreed
16	No allowances for student teachers during teaching practice exercise	50	2	1	2	55	3.98	Agreed
17	Inadequate teaching practice orientation before the commencement of teaching practice exercise	35	15	1	4	55	3.45	Agreed
18	Poor interpersonal relationship between faculty supervisor and student-teachers during supervision	49	3	1	2	55	3.85	Agreed
19	Too much workload or responsibility for student teachers in schools	25	25	2	3	55	3.69	Agreed
20	Lack of respect for student teachers in the schools posted.	45	5	4	1	55	3.86	Agreed
	Grand mean score						3.80	Agreed

Findings presented in Table 2 showed that all the ten items were accepted which is since their mean was above 2.50. This result revealed that all the items listed were actually the challenges faced by the home economics student-teachers during teaching practice exercise. This was agreed by the respondents with grand mean score of 3.80 respectively.

**Research Question three:** What are the possible solutions to the difficulties faced by home economics student-teachers during teaching practice exercise in Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku?

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**Table 3:Mean Analysis of possible solutions to the difficulties faced by home economics student-teachers during teaching practice**

S/N	Possible solutions	SA	A	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$	Decision
21	The government should pay student-teachers allowances for their up keep.	50	4	1	0	55	3.98	Agreed
22.	Co-operation of school principals and permanent teachers to help student-teachers in their areas of difficulties	52	2	0	1	55	3.99	Agreed
23.	Teaching facilities should be provided for the student(such as current textbooks	50	3	2	0	55	3.96	Agreed
24.	Adequate orientation, seminars, workshops should be organized for both student teacher and supervisors	40	10	5		55	3.85	Agreed
25.	Provision of accommodations for student-teachers	50	3	2	0	55	3.96	Agreed
Grand mean score							3.94	Agreed

Table 3 showed that all the items were considered as possible solution to the challenges faced by home economics student-teachers during teaching practice exercise since their mean score was above 2.50.

### Discussion of findings

Findings from research question one revealed that home economics student teachers acquired numerous experiences during their teaching practice exercises. These experiences as revealed from the findings included being resourceful through improvisation and understanding the realities of teaching. This finding is in agreement with Osuala (2004) who noted that, teaching practice expose the trainee teacher to the realities of effective teaching and help those to try out methods of teaching and gain practical classroom experience under expert supervision. The findings of this study revealed that majority of the student teachers indicated that the ten items listed were considered challenges faced during the teaching practice exercise. These findings are in agreement with the findings of Akpede (2011), whose study revealed that student teachers faced a lot of challenges including lack of accommodation, lack of co operation from school based teachers, lack of instructional materials and resources in schools, lack of allowances, excess work load and lack of respect for student teachers. In a similar study by Nwanekezi et al.,(2011) carried out at university of Portharcourt, some of the problems identified were: Lack of necessary equipments and materials for student teachers. Poor learning environment in the practicing schools like congested classrooms, poor ventilation. Rejection of student teachers by schools, lack of transportation and inaccessibility of some schools.

Finally, the findings of the study from research question showed the possible solution to the challenges faced by the students teaches during teaching practice exercise. It was discovered that that payment of allowances to the students teachers is one of such solution. Other solutions identified include provision of accommodation to student teachers and proper orientation. This finding is in line with Ocho (2017) who noted that the ways to

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prevent these problems during teaching practice include: Orientation for teachers practice supervisors, Orientation and monitoring of co-operating teachers, Orientation for students and Provision of incentives for supervisors and co-operating teachers.

### Conclusion

This study indicated that student teachers faced a lot of challenges during their teaching practice programme. Majority of the perceived challenges identified in this study were ranked by student teachers as major challenges. Therefore, teaching practice exercise should take place in an environment where the student teachers are comfortable by way of accommodation and teaching resources.

### Recommendations

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are made

1. Appropriate arrangement should be made with schools that will be used for the teaching practice exercise, so as to enable the committee on teaching practice know exactly how many students are to be posted to schools and also the subject area where there is dire need.
2. Allowance should be given to student-teachers during the teaching practice exercise so as to motivate them just like their counterpart in engineering, accounting and the likes.
3. Government should provide adequate instructional materials and resources to public schools, so as to enhance teaching in schools. This will also give student teachers opportunity to practice the use of instructional materials during pre-service training.
4. There is need for good relationship between student teachers and permanent teachers in schools so as to enable student teachers achieved the desired outcomes from the teaching practice exercise.
5. Schools where student-teachers are posted to should try as much as possible to provide accommodation for the student-teacher, but if this is not possible it should be monetized for them so as to reduce the financial burden on the student teachers.

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