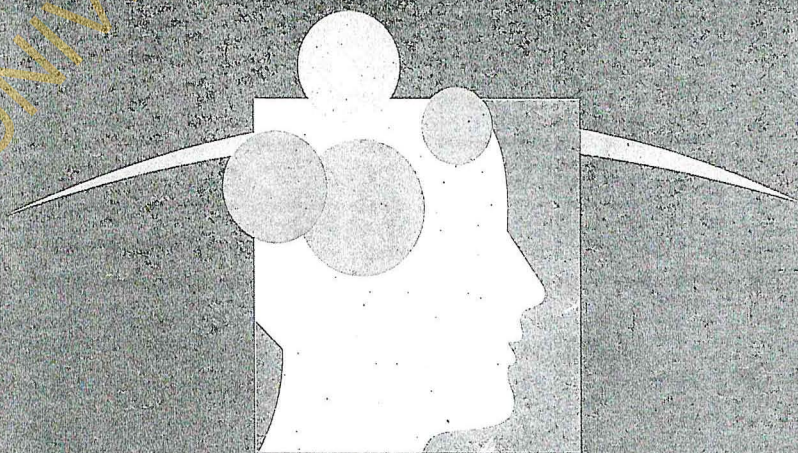
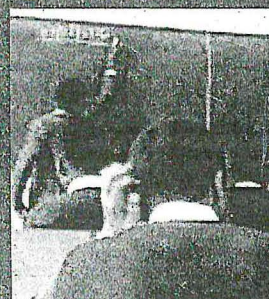
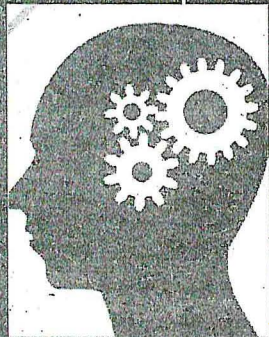




A HANDBOOK ON TEACHING PRACTICE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN



Edited by
Olusegun Kolawole
Bashiru Lawal

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Chapter Nine

PUNCTUALITY AND TEACHING PRACTICE ASSESSMENT

Araromi, M. O. Ph.D

Introduction

In this chapter, one of the ethical issues in teaching practice exercise is critically examined i.e. punctuality during teaching practice. Punctuality during teaching practice is very important and germane to the success of teaching practice exercise. This singular factor can either make or mar the performance of student-teacher during the teaching practice exercise. There is a saying that "Punctuality is the soul of business". Furthermore, the assessment of the teaching performance of students during the teaching practice exercise is also examined in this chapter. It is highly surprising that student-teachers always exhibit ignorance and naivety with regards to the skills they are expected to exhibit during the teaching practice exercise. This chapter describe succinctly the various skills required of the student teachers during teaching practice.

What is Punctuality?

Punctuality, is being able to accomplish a given task at the time specified for doing so. It is being regular and time-conscious. An expression that best describes the term "punctuality is "on time" or "accuracy" In other words, punctuality is a quality or habit of adhering to an appointed time. It could also mean timely and promptness etc. The direct opposite of punctuality is tardiness

which signifies the quality or habit of not adhering to a correct or usual or expected time.

Punctuality can be described in measurable terms. There is certain degree of lateness permissible or acceptable from one culture to the other. In the western culture, a small amount of lateness is acceptable. i.e. about ten or fifteen minutes is acceptable, but there are certain instances where lateness is unacceptable in the western culture i.e. keeping appointment with doctor and delivering school lessons. Some cultures believe that actual deadlines are different from stated deadlines. People deliberately come late to an event having the inclination that the event will not commence at the stipulated time. In cultures where punctuality is held in high esteem, lateness is considered as an act of irresponsibility or insulting which attracts severe punishment or penalties which include ex-communicating the latecomer from the meeting or any other forms of punishment. It is therefore expected that serious students on teaching practice will not be tardy

A. Significance of Punctuality During Teaching Practice

The concept of punctuality during teaching practice is an ethical issue. Jacques (2003) refers to lack of adherence to professional ethics as a violation of the ethical requirements of the teaching profession. Lack of such qualities may impact negatively on the students learning. The code of ethics in the teaching profession in Nigeria is fashioned after the UNESCO/ ILO recommended codes of conduct. One of the ethics reveals that teachers should be disciplined and there should be sanctions and penalties for misbehaviour. To this end a Teacher Disciplinary Committee and a Teacher Investigating Panel had been provided for TRCN (The Teacher Code of Conduct, 2004). Nigerian Government has saddled the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) with the responsibility of repositioning teaching profession as a noble profession and sanitizes the profession. The move to reposition teaching profession and sanitise the profession should

begin with pre-service teachers before their entry into the teaching profession and this could best be done during the teaching practice exercise. Lateness to school, classes and other official functions during teaching practice exercise should be sanctioned and penalised according to the codified ethics of teaching profession as enshrined in the code of conduct of the Teachers Registration of Nigeria (TRCN).

The way and manner in which teachers portray themselves in the public is of prime importance because teaching is a noble profession. Apart from the fact that lateness to school will have a significant negative effect on the learning outcomes of the learners, the reputation of the teacher as a public figure and a notable professional would be dampened. A student-teacher on teaching practice exercise should imbibe the culture of punctuality before entry into the teaching profession because punctuality is an habitual act. The supervision of teaching practice over the years has focused more attention on the competence and performance of the student-teacher as well the methodology adopted in the teaching and learning process to the total neglect of the conduct, behavior and comportment of student-teacher such as punctuality during the teaching practice.

Failure to adhere strictly to the ethic of punctuality will have negative effect on the image of the teacher, the school, the teaching profession as well as the country concerned. Student-teacher who lacks the quality of punctuality is a type who is not committed to the values and ideals of teaching profession and lack sense of duty and commitment. This bad quality will definitely affect the quality of service delivery and the status of the schools where such teachers are found. Parents seek admission to schools where teachers combine competence with professional ethics and conduct that will help inculcate good values and virtues in the children. Character and learning are good educational ethos that are inseparable.

B. Various Levels of Punctuality During Teaching Practice

Punctuality during teaching practice can be categorized into three main groups:

- (a) **Punctuality to the school of practice:** Student- teachers are expected to resume on time in their school of practice precisely at 7:20 am. Timely arrival in the school gives the student teacher the opportunity to attend to some left over assignments or duties such as assessment of homework, assignments or term paper, adequate preparation of teaching aids, lesson notes and marking of attendance register and scrutinising other educational books that are available in the school. The external or internal supervisor often requests for the attendance register whenever they visit the schools of practice with the intention of ascertaining whether the student teacher is a perpetual late comer or a punctual student-teacher.

The sense of responsibility and professional conduct of the teacher is being challenged whenever he or she is found wanting in the area of punctuality. Moreover, attendance at the assembly ground is also very crucial for the student – teacher. The student – teacher cannot be totally exonerated from participating in all the school activities including conducting the assembly. Teaching practice coordinators always emphasize active participation in the school activities during the six-week duration of the teaching practice. Punctuality to the assembly ground is the function of the timely arrival of the student – teacher in the school on a daily basis.

- (b) **Punctuality to official functions in the school of practice;** Student teachers are expected to attend staff meetings as much as possible if they are invited. It is during these meetings that important issues pertaining to the school activities are discussed. Attending staff meetings will keep the student

teacher to be abreast of the activities going on in the school which may invariably affect positively or negatively the smooth running of the school. Student –teacher should not come to staff meetings half way into the end of the meeting. It is an act of irresponsibility and ethical or professional misconduct to do so. Teachers are required to be role models and custodian of moral values and epitome of good behaviour. Student teachers are ambassadors and representatives of their various institutions. It is not good to tarnish the image of the institutions by displaying character that falls below moral standards.

- (c) **Punctuality to the class:** Punctuality to the classroom is the most important aspect of teaching practice exercise. The main purpose of embarking on teaching practice exercise is to deliver lessons continually for the period of six weeks. The operation of the time-table system in the school has made it easy for lessons to be organised or scheduled according to the time allotted to each subject. The duration of each lesson varies from school to school. The most common time allotted to each lesson is between thirty-five to forty minutes. It is fact that “time” is different from “duration”. The time of the lesson signifies the time the lesson is expected to commence while the duration is the length of time the lesson will last. It behooves the student teacher to be conscious of the time his or her lesson will commence and the duration. It is an aberration and professional misconduct for students to go to the staff room to call teachers whenever they have lessons. It will send wrong signal to the students about the personality and conduct of the teacher concerned. In addition, a lesson that is well planned by the student–teacher may not be effectively delivered because of lack of punctuality to the classroom. A student–teacher who has already planned his or her lesson by allotting time to every teaching and learning activity may fail

to realise the instructional objectives because of lateness to the classroom. This will jeopardise the appropriate schedule of time aimed at orchestrating smooth and effective delivery of the lesson. Therefore, lateness to class during teaching practice could have negative effect on the performance of the student-teacher as well as the students who are always at the receiving end.

(d) Assessment of Teaching Practice Performance

Teaching practice is an aspect of teacher education programme that is very important. It is a link between theory and practice. The student teachers have been taught various teaching methodologies, psychology of learning, philosophy of education, sociology of education, principles of curriculum and practice, history of education and principles of classroom management and control as foundational courses that will equip them with all necessary skills useful during the teaching practice. The prospective supervisor would be interested in certain skills which include the following among others: plan of lesson, the use of teaching aids and devices, conduct of the lesson, knowledge of subject matter, class management and teacher's personality (Oluwatayo and Adebule, 2012). Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan designed a rating scale named "Teaching Performance Assessment Sheet" which is used by the supervisors to assess the performance of the student-teacher in a classroom situation during teaching practice exercise. Student- teachers are rated based on certain criteria which include: preparation, making learners ready, grading, progression, communication, teacher – pupil interaction, praise and rewards, classroom atmosphere, instructional materials, subject mastery, assignments and teacher demeanour. We would quickly consider the criteria for teaching performance assessment under the criteria earlier mentioned.

1. **Preparations:** If one fails to prepare, then one is preparing to fail. Preparation for teaching exercise begins with the writing of comprehensive lesson notes in which behavioral objectives are clearly stated in measurable terms. The steps should be logically sequenced and related and technique of evaluation should be pre- determined before the delivery of the lesson.
2. **Making learners ready:** The teaching efforts of the teacher should be predicated on the learners' readiness to learn. Learners are not hypothetically " a tabula rasa " most especially at this knowledge- driven era when the world has been reduced to a global village. Therefore, the teacher should commence his or her teaching with questioning technique starting from known to unknown. This will prepare the mind of the learners to learn new concepts and ideas.
3. **Grading:** The content of the teaching should be commensurate with level of the learners. The teacher should make reference as much as possible to the curriculum handed down by the Ministry of Education and the activities lined up there- in. The materials to be learnt should be well sequenced.
4. **Progression:** The teacher should make his or her lesson progress logically so that one idea leads to another. Teaching must progress from simple to complex, concrete to abstract, known to unknown until conclusion. The learners should not lose focus or attention at any stage of the lesson.
5. **Communication:** Ineffective communication in the teaching- learning process is a clog in the wheel of knowledge acquisition. The teacher should be able to reach his or her students through the choice of appropriate words that match the age and intellectual ability of the learners. There should be a synergy between language competence and subject mastery.

The two qualities are complementary and inter-related. There should be an advocacy for the two merits in teaching learning process.

6. **Teacher – pupils' interaction:** Teaching involves interaction between the teacher and the learners. The level of involvement of the learners in the classroom activities is the function of the leadership style adopted by the teacher. The leadership style of the teacher will determine whether the learners are active participants or passive recipients of knowledge. The teacher should use appropriate questioning technique to make the learners actively involved in the teaching and learning activities.
7. **Praise and Rewards:** Praising and rewarding good performance engenders the re-occurrence of such behaviour but if good performance is not well appraised, it could lead to extinction of such behaviour. Teacher should design an appropriate measure to reinforce good performance among learners and encourage the slow learners to measure up to expectation because learners have different learning styles and intellectual ability.
8. **Classroom atmosphere:** Effective teaching and learning can only take place in a conducive atmosphere. The atmosphere in this sense could either be physical and psychological. Classroom control and management at all stages of the lesson delivery is of prime importance. The physical arrangement of the classroom and the control and management of human and material resources in the classroom will either make or mar effective teaching and learning.

9. **Instructional materials:** Teaching resources are supportive materials that could help to complement teachers' efforts in the teaching and learning situation. The use of instructional materials during teaching practice exercise is a rule but not an exception. There is an erroneous belief that some topics do not lend themselves to the use of instructional materials. This is not correct because it is borne out of laziness. Teachers should not underestimate the value of instructional materials during their lesson delivery because they make the lesson more comprehensible.
10. **Subject Mastery:** There is no gainsaying the fact that one cannot give what one does not have. The knowledge of the subject matter should be the priority of all teachers because that is what draws a line between the teacher and the students. The knowledge of the teaching methodology and the subject matter are two sides of the same coin. The teachers should know what to teach and how to teach and should update their knowledge from time to time because knowledge is not static but dynamic. During teaching practice exercise, the supervisor always looks for the ability of the student-teacher to demonstrate the knowledge of the subject matter irrespective of the area of specialisation of the supervisor.
11. **Assignment:** The teacher should give assignments regularly to the students based on the topics taught. This will keep the students on their toes and as well serve as a measure of evaluating the topics earlier taught. Teachers should endeavour to mark the assignments given to students and give them feedback on their areas of weakness and strength.
12. **Teacher Demeanor:** Teacher's demeanor has to do with the conduct and mannerism of the teacher. The teacher should conduct himself or herself in a morally acceptable manner.

The mannerism, conduct, appearance and use of language should portray the teacher as a responsible and respectable individual before the students. The teacher should dress neatly and simply and avoid distractive mannerism as much as possible.

However, the supervisor assesses the performance of the student teacher based on the criteria listed above. The assessment format that will be used by the supervisor to assess the student teacher spells out in details a list of skills expected of the student teacher. The supervisor is obliged to give verbal corrective feedback to the student teacher on measures to be taken to improve on his or her areas of weakness and commendation will be made on area of strength. The supervisor will comment on the lesson notes to show evidence of supervision. It is not mandatory that scores should be awarded on the first visit of the supervisor to school of practice but on subsequent visits.

Measures to be taken to maximize the scores of student teachers

1. The student teacher should prepare an up-to-date and comprehensive lesson note with evidence of assessment and scrutiny by the cooperative teacher.
2. The student teacher should be well dressed and show desirable comportment and mannerism.
3. The student teacher should use appropriate instructional materials during lesson delivery.
4. Student teacher should ensure that he or she manages and controls the class effectively well.
5. Student teacher should demonstrate adequate knowledge of the subject matter.
6. The student teacher must ensure maximum participation of the students in classroom activities.

Conclusion

The concept of punctuality during teaching practice has been examined in this study. It was affirmed that punctuality is a quality every student teacher on teaching practice should imbibe if he or she would record success in the exercise. Student teachers are expected to exhibit certain skills during teaching practice which include knowledge of subject matter, communication skills, use of appropriate teaching methodology, classroom management and control and so on.

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