

**Appraisal of Problems Faced by Early Childhood Care Education Pre-Service Caregivers on Teaching Practice in Jema'a Lga, Kaduna State**

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**Abstract**

*Instruction exercise is an aspect of the student-teacher professional training curriculum and important slice of any teacher tutoring programme in Nigeria. Early Childhood Care and Education programme provides pre-service caregivers opportunity to acquire necessary professional skills through teaching practice. Initial infant care and schooling programme is a double major programme at the Nigeria Certificate in Education, in College of Education, Gidan-Waya. Pre-service caregivers faced personal, supervision and cooperating school problems during their practical teaching experience which is the interest of the study. Four research questions were raised and two hypotheses tested by chi-square and t-test statistics. Five cooperating schools in Gidan-Waya and Kafanchan towns and forty pre-service caregivers in the Department of Early Childhood Care and Education of the college in the 2022/2023 academic session were randomly selected. A Finding from the study showed a correlation between personal and school related problems, cal.  $\chi^2$  2.837 with p. value 0.004 at 0.05 level of significance. Another finding was that the cal. t-value exceed the crit. t, thus a difference exists between problems of supervision being faced by male and female caregivers on teaching practice in Jema'a Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The pre-service caregivers faced inadequate and ineffective used of teaching aids, unfriendly nature or approach of supervisors and inadequate teaching or play facilities while on their practical teaching experience. These problems were personal, supervision and cooperating school related. In view of this, the study recommended that pre-service caregivers should have robust orientation that will highlights these problems, before embarking on teaching practice exercise.*

**Keywords:** Teaching practice, Pre-service caregivers, Cooperating school, Supervision.

**Introduction**

Students in the Early Children Care and Education (ECCE) Programme at the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) in College of Education (COE), Teaching Practice (TP) is a core course (EDU 311) with a compulsory status. It is a facet of the student trainer specialist on training programme in which they are bare to actual school and class-room affairs in demanding for them to develop skills on the process of teaching and care for the child Jacob & Samuel, 2020; & Amadi, 2013). TP is an important feature of Teacher Instruction that give student teachers chance to acquire the necessary specialized skills through practical experience. Okobia, Ogumogu, & Osagie, (2011) explained that TP is time in which student-caregivers

engage in practical experience of topics and principles of education taught in the classroom while in college, as they provide care and education to pupils in the cooperating schools. Therefore, the ECCE pre-service caregivers at the NCE, in COE, Gidan-Waya are not exceptional.

The ECCE pre-service caregivers and teachers are specially trained to provide care and teach children in early years (0-5) which is a period that is crucial for the development of an individual. These caregivers, who are also teachers, are expected at the end of their NCE programme, should teach nutritional, social, emotional, physical, and cognitive as well as health desires of the child. Also, caregivers should relate the knowledge and skills acquired in appropriate situations (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2020). After two years of exposure to contents of the ECCE curriculum and school observation at the college, ECCE pre-service caregivers are prepared and posted to cooperating school with the college, for their practical experiences. This exercise takes the whole of first semester in their third year. There could be a deviation from this norm by trainees' teachers due to the student-teacher's personal problems of not willing to teach at the Centers or inadequate trained teachers (mentors) in co-operating schools, as they go for the actual exercise. When this happens inadequate implementation of ECCE programmes in Nigeria is the result (Jacob & Samuel, 2020).

Chibuzor (2013) and Ofoego, (2020) identified the following tasks of ECCE pre-service caregivers on TP as follows: organizing and supervising extracurricular activities, use of indoor and outdoor games and plays, administrative relationship, furthering and supervising extracurricular activities, supervising classroom programme to ensure orderliness and professional staff growth. Student-teachers are likely to face problems of trying to acquaint themselves with some of these responsibilities in the various cooperating schools they were posted for their TP. Also, some of the challenges may emanate from their teaching practice supervisors, who are their Lecturers from the college, in carrying out their responsibilities. Some of the college supervisors' duties are taking time to observe the development of the lesson as planned by ECCE pre-service caregivers with the view of providing support; making sure that observations and corrections are effected on subsequent visits; providing a link between the ECCE pre-service caregivers and trained classroom teachers as well as the school administration. Supervisors are expected to note complain(s) or observations raised by pre-service educators and make a valid assessment by award of score or evaluation to them but some often do not have time to execute these responsibilities. They are often in haste to assess and evaluate the students without feedbacks.

A study by Serliana, Utami, and Kamil, (2021) and Ogonor, and Badmus, (2006) found some constraints and personal problems that could confront students while on TP as pressure of period, failure for schools' authorities to provide educational resources adequate supervision by experienced teachers of partnership schools. Chibuzor (2013) Aguh and Olutola (2023) identified other factors that will make the performance of pre-service caregivers and teachers effective or ineffective during teaching practice including adequate orientation and

participation in micro teaching, which is an aspect of the operation of early child-hood care and education syllabus. These include: availability or adequate facilities like laboratories for basic science activities; playground for play or recess time, physical development; spacious classroom for adequate use of different classroom sitting arrangement for effective play, and learning activities. In a different study, Massod and Khadija (2022) found a minor equal of tests of readiness of instructional materials from liaising school, class size and availability of furniture TP.

Again, it is the expectations for effective mentorship, that the cooperation of the principal and staff of participating school is needed for the student caregiver and teacher on teaching practice to succeed. They are to pay attention on their supervisory role of ensuring that the right orientation is provided the students for adequate training in the teaching profession.

Furthermore, time and duration of pre-service teachers on TP should not be less than eight weeks or more (Massod, & Khadija, 2022). This fact of time pressure was supported (Onyekwelu, 2023), as one of the major problem student-teachers in the University faced on TP. On their part, students at the NCE spent the whole of first semester in third year on TP (EDU 311) and during the period, the National Commission for College of Education (NCCE) in the Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Early Childhood Education” (FRN, 2020, P. 20) mandated that:

The minimum standards for supervision of teaching pre-service teachers on TP by NCE awarding institutions. That these institutions should assign to student Caregivers and teachers in ECCE and PED supervisors based on their areas of Specialization in ECCEE or PED. This is to ensure that the supervision on these specialized students is focused, well-informed and based on the supervisor’s practical professional skills and knowledge in ECCE or PED.

This NCE minimum standard should be observed by the college authorities while assigning supervisors to ECCE pre-service teacher on TP in Kaduna State.

Thus, the thrust of this paper is an appraisal of issues by ECCE caregivers and teachers, in COE, Gidan-Waya while on teaching practice in Kaduna State. Only pre-service caregivers and teachers on TP in the area of study, were involved in the study. There has been dirt of literature in the area of ECCE in Jema’a LGA. Thus, this study will make for the gap of the few literature available. Although pre-service caregivers and teachers faced many challenges, this study focused only on those that are personal, supervision and school related. It is hopeful that findings of the study would be helpful to the prospective pre-service caregivers and teachers that will be going on teaching practice to note major personal, supervisor and school problems been faced by caregivers and teachers during TP. Also, the specialist lecturers in ECCE that will be assigned as supervisors to the pre-service caregivers and teachers that are on their practical experience exercise, could benefit from findings of the study. Besides, the college administration and co-operating schools might tend to use the findings as feedback on

challenges students face during teaching practice, with the hope of providing solutions for subsequent student trainees on TP.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the recent research is to determine the contests faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers in college of education Gidan-Waya on TP in the study area. Thus, the subsequent main objectives of the paper are to:

1. Find out the main problems faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers on TP in Jema'a LGA;
2. Identify those challenges that are personal and associated to the ECCE pre-service caregivers and teachers while on Teaching Practice in Jema'a LGA;
3. determine ECCE pre-service caregivers and teachers' challenges resulting from the supervisors during Teaching Practice in Jema'a LGA;
4. ascertain challenges of ECCE pre-service caregivers and teachers resulting from the cooperating school while on Teaching Practice.

**Research Questions** The following research questions were answered:

1. What are the personal problems faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers on Teaching Practice
2. What are the supervisor's problems faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers on Teaching Practice
3. What are the main problems as related to co-operating schools ECCE pre-service caregivers faced on Teaching Practice

**Research Hypotheses** The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant association among personal and school issues faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers on Teaching Practice.
2. There is no significant variance among problems of supervision faced by male and female ECCE pre-service caregivers on Teaching Practice.

### **Methodology**

A Survey design was adopted for this paper. Population of the paper entailed of ECCE pre-service in College of Education, Gidan-Waya, those on TP in the 2022/2023 session in ECCE Department were the target population from which a random sample of forty (40) pre-service caregivers and teachers was obtained. Also, five public ECCE centres (schools) were selected as the co-operating schools in Gidan-Waya and Kafanchan towns. These schools were KSCOEC ECCE Center, Gidan-Waya, Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) Primary school, Mile One, Gidan-Waya and LGEA, primary school, Gidan- Waya while in Kafanchan town were, Model primary school, Garaje Agban, Demonstration Staff School and Practising Primary school, Garaje. A researcher designed questionnaire "Problems Faced by Pre-service Caregivers on Teaching Practice Questionnaire (PFPTPQ)", consisting 15 items, five items each, on personal, supervisor and cooperating school problems faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers on TP. The tool was authorized by a professional, each in educational Psychology and Measurement and Evaluation units of the University of Jos. The instrument was subjected

to split-half correlation to obtain internal consistency reliability, a reliability value of 0.78 was obtained using the product moment correlation analysis. The value was considered adequate in validate the used of the instrument to collect information for the study. Data collected was analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics. The frequency and percentages were used to answer the questions raised in for the study. Chi-square statistic was used to define relationships while t-test, to ascertain the differences within variable of the study.

**Results and Discussion**

The research questions were responded to and hypotheses ascertained in this section. Results and analysis are presented in Table 1-3.

**Table 1: Highest personal, supervisor’s and school related problems faced by ECCE Caregivers on Teaching Practice**

S/NO	CHALLENGES	SA	A	D	SD	TOT	%
<b>A. Personal Challenges</b>							
1	Inadequate/ineffective use of teaching aids	6	7	1	-	14	<b>35.00</b>
2	No good orientation on teaching practice	2	3	3	1	9	<b>22.50</b>
3	Difficulty in managing and control of classroom	5	4		1	10	<b>25.00</b>
4	Problems of planning the lesson	2	2	-	-	4	<b>10.00</b>
5	Poor method of teaching	2	1	-	-	3	<b>7.50</b>
	<b>Total</b>	17 (42.50%)	17 (42.50%)	4 (10.90%)	2 (5%)	40	<b>100.00</b>
<b>B. Supervision Challenges</b>							
6	Inferiority complex caused by supervisor during supervision	3	3	1	1	8	<b>20.00</b>
7	Unfriendly nature or approach of supervisors	4	6	-	-	10	<b>25.00</b>
8	Interruption caused by the supervisor during lesson	4	5	-	-	9	<b>22.50</b>
9	Manner of correction by the supervisor during lesson	2	1	3	1	7	<b>17.50</b>
10	Comments of supervisors after the lesson supervision	2	1	3	1	6	<b>15.00</b>
	<b>Total</b>	14 (35%)	16 (40%)	7 (17.50%)	3 (7.50%)	40	<b>100.00</b>

<b>C.Co-operating School Challenges</b>							
11	Attitudes of pupils towards the pre-service teachers	1	1	2	1	5	12.50
12	Lack of incentives	3	3	1	-	7	17.50
13	Lack of cooperation from experience teachers	3	4	1	-	8	20.00
14	Problems of accommodation	4	3	1	1	9	22.50
15	Inadequate teaching/play facilities	5	6	-	-	11	27.50
<b>Total</b>		<b>16(40%)</b>	<b>17(42.50%)</b>	<b>5(12.50%)</b>	<b>(5.00%)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Research Question 1:** What are the personal issues faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers on Teaching Practice?

Table 1 Highlight key personal problems faced by ECCE caregivers on TP in Jema'a Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Personal problems faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers most was inadequate/ineffective used of teaching aids, indicated by 14 (35.00%) of the 40 respondents of the study. This was followed by difficulty in managing and control of classroom which had 10 (25%) respondents while the least problem was method of teaching, 3 (7.50%) respondents. Therefore, the responses in Table 1 revealed that of the 40 student ECCE pre-service caregivers' respondents, 34 (85%) revealed the problems they faced on TP were personal while 6 (15%) indicated these were not.

**Research Question 2:** What are the supervisor's problems faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers on Teaching Practice?

Again, of the 40 students ECCE pre-service caregiver respondents, 10 (25%) revealed that unfriendly nature or approach of supervisors was the first main problem; followed by interruption caused by supervisors during lesson, 9 (22.50%) respondents; and the least problem was comments of supervisors after the supervision lesson presentation by the student-teacher, 6 (15.00%) respondents. Hence, of the 40 student caregiver and teachers respondents, 30 (75%) responded that challenges they faced during teaching practice were related to supervision, while 10 (25%) respondents did not.

**Research Question 3:** What are the main problems as related to co-operating schools ECCE pre-service caregivers faced on Teaching Practice?

Also, Table 1 indicates that of the 40 respondents, 11 (27.50) responded that the first main challenge they faced, as related to co-operating school, while on their teaching practice

was inadequate teaching and play facilities; followed by problems of accommodation, 9 (22.50%); and the least was attitudes of pupils towards ECCE pre-service caregivers. Hence, of the 40-student caregiver/teachers' respondents, 33 (82.50%) indicated that they faced cooperating school related challenges while 7 (17.5%) of the respondent that they did not. Generally, of the 40 respondents, a high percentage, 80.83% of them agreed that the main challenges posed pre-service caregivers and teachers during teaching practice were personal, supervision and cooperating schools related.

**Research Hypothesis 1:** There no significant association among personal and school issues faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers on Teaching Practice?

To establish the relationship that exist among these variables, the  $\chi^2$  of independence samples were used to ascertain the degree of relationship in Table 2.

**Table 2: Chi-square analysis of the relationship that exist between personal problems and School problems faced by ECCE pre-service caregivers on TP.**

Type of Problem	SA	A	D	SD	TOT	df	Cal. $\chi^2$	P. value
<b>Personal problems</b>	17 (16.50)	17 (17.00)	4 (4.50)	2 (2.00)	40			
<b>School problems</b>	16 (16.50)	17 (17.00)	5 (4.50)	2 (2.00)	40	19	2.837	.004
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>80</b>			

*Significance level =  $p < 0.05$*

The analysis in Table 2 indicate cal.  $\chi^2$  2.837 and the p. value .004, thus the results is not significant at  $p < .05$ . Thus, the finding is that the relationship between personal problem and school problems is not significant. Therefore, hypothesis one is accepted that personal problems are correlated with cooperating school problems met by pre-service caregivers and teachers in teaching exercise.

**Research Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant variance among problems of supervision faced by male and female ECCE pre-service caregivers on TP.

To obtain the degree of difference that exist, t-test statistic was employed for that purpose, and the result is in Table 3.

**Table 3: t-test results of difference between problems of supervision faced by male and female ECCE pre-service caregivers on TP..**

Respondents	N	M	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit
Male	20	5.50	2.37	38	2.84	2.02
Female	20	3.65	1.69			

Significance level =  $p < 0.05$

Table 3 indicates significant difference in problems of supervision faced by male and female ECCE pre-service caregivers on TP. Since the calculated t-value exceeded the critical t, it implies the means are significantly different and hypothesis 2 was rejected. Thus, a significant difference exists between problems of supervision faced by male and female ECCE pre-service caregivers on TP in Jema'a LGA.

### Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study showed that personal problems are the most prevalent ECCE pre-service caregivers faced on teaching practice, followed by supervision, then school related problems. This could be due to lack of adequate time to prepare for their actual lessons, new roles and environment they found themselves (Massod, & Khadija (2022). Also, it could be ECCE pre-service caregivers' inability to skillfully incorporate adequate and effective use of teaching aids in lesson delivery. Another reason given by Aguh and Olutola (2023) is inadequate orientation and participation in micro teaching, which is an aspect of the application of early childhood care syllabus while in college. Some ECCE pre-service caregivers skipped participation in micro teaching, a course taught in the second semester, second year. This course was meant to provide skills and simulation practical classroom experience on teaching practice. Supervisors that are on supervision and evaluation visits, should help point gaps they observed and how to overcome some of these gaps by the pre-service caregivers and teachers. Jacob and Samuel (2020) revealed that adequate implementation and supervision of early childhood programmes, including TP, can bridge these gaps.

Again, a finding of the study was a correlation between personal and school problems face by ECCE pre-service caregivers on TP. Chibuzor (2013); Dube, (2020); and Jacob, & Samuel, O. (2020), identified some factors that should be taken care of by schools if ECCE pre-service caregivers are to succeed on teaching practice. The implication of this finding is that ECCE pre-service caregivers faced both personal and school problems on TP and would need to be assisted and guided to handle, for effective their performance as well as to promote their profession. In another finding, Massod and Khadija (2023) found pre-service teachers are faced by moderate problems on TP. Added to this, supervisors should discuss some of these

problems with the school administration and staff to provide conducive environment and support to the students during supervision and evaluation visits.

Furthermore, the t-test result revealed a difference in the problem faced by male and female ECCE pre-service caregivers and teachers in favour of female trainees, facing less problems compared to their male counterpart. This could be associated to their commitment to the task at hand and possibly support given them by parents. This is for them to avoid negative influence by the environment, as regards good accommodation, feelings and incentives like money, to keep them focus on their TP. Moreover, most female students are committed to any task assigned to them, especially care for children. In the Nigerian culture and major religions consider them special or weaker beings compared to men, thus some cushion effects are provided by their female teachers in the school and relations. Cooperating schools should make concerted efforts to help the pre-service trainees in need, while on teaching practice in their schools. By so doing trainees would be able to handle challenges that may affect their performance (Dube, 2020). This effort when provided will promote the teaching profession as well as make these students embrace teaching profession.

### **Conclusion**

The study established that ECCE pre-service caregivers do faced problems while on TP. The types of problems identified are personal, supervision and school related in Jema'a Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The task at hand is for the College of Education Gidan-Waya to provide programme appropriate orientation at the end of second semester, year two, before embarking on teaching practice exercise. Likewise, students should be made to participate in micro-teaching required by NCCE minimum standard and provided feedback of their lesson presentation twice and assessed as qualified, to proceed for TP. Management of the college should give a percentage of money for support of teaching practice exercise by TETFund, to pre-service caregivers and teachers while on TP. The money will motivate and encourage the trainees' caregivers and teachers to be committed to their work at school. Again, specialist supervisors be assigned to ECCE pre-service caregivers and teachers. This is to help provide critical friendship support on evaluation visits to student-teachers in their practising schools. The schools should provide necessary co-operation for pre-service caregivers and teachers to experience stimulation of actual teaching after graduation. Efforts to ameliorate the contests faced by pre-service caregivers and teachers during TP in Jema'a LGA are worth it and should be given the full support from all quarters.

### **Recommendations**

Teaching practice is tri-dimensional involving the College that supervises for a feedback, the cooperating school that has the mandate of mentorship and promoting the profession, as well as the pre-service trainees' caregivers and teachers who are to put to practice contents taught and gained from what obtains in the teaching profession. All stake-holders in the teaching practice should ensure that they play their part religiously to support the students to succeed. The following recommendations are proffered:

1. Students, especially those in ECCE, should be provided with on-the-hands production of instructional materials and improvisation where cooperating schools do not have.
2. Students should be taught classroom management and control during their micro-teaching sessions and provide with feedbacks of their performance. This is to deal with the challenge during actual teaching as found in this study.
3. Supervisors should be given proper orientation on their roles as critical friends to students not bosses, while on supervision visits.
4. Schools should improvise, using less costly local or indigenous materials, for play and other activities in their facilities.
5. The college should observe strictly NCCE minimum standard for only specialist ECCE lecturer is assigned to supervise students in ECCE during TP.

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