

Perceptions of History Student-Teachers on Teaching Practice Supervision

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Abstract

This study examined the perceptions of History student-teachers in the University of Cape Coast. The study sought to find out the perceptions of History student-teachers on teaching practice supervision, the impact of the teaching practice supervision on History student-teachers and the challenges faced by History student-teachers during the teaching practice supervision. The study adopted an interpretive phenomenological methodology using a case study approach. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. The respondents were twelve in all. That is six (6) males and six (6) females. A focus group discussion was used to collect data which were analysed into themes by the researchers. The study revealed that History student-teachers generally were dissatisfied with the teaching practice supervision due to the inconsistencies and discriminations they perceived in it and also the general pedagogy employed. Again, on the issues of impact of the supervision, respondents expressed mixed feelings. Finally, the study revealed that History student-teachers faced a number of difficulties one of which was the difficulty in getting their supervisors to assess them. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the teaching practice unit should see to it that the right strategies for supervision were to be used by supervisors. Regarding the issue of being supervised by non-subject-specialists, the teaching practice unit should ensure that supervisors who are sent for supervisions have enough knowledge of the subject-matter of the field of study of the History.

Keywords: perception, history student-teachers, teaching practice supervision.

1. Introduction

The future of every nation is shaped in its classrooms and it is the teacher who molds that future. It is assumed that of all the professions that are aspired, only teaching is charged with the formidable task of creating the human skills and capacities that will enable societies to survive and succeed in the age of information. Teachers have great duty for shaping the minds and hearts of future students. Few concepts on educational issues have received much attention than issues pertaining to preparation of teachers in educational literatures (Albasheer, Khasawneh, Nabah&Hailat, 2008). Preparation of teachers for both the first and second cycle schools is of much concern especially in a age where higher education institutions worldwide have been under pressure to deliver high quality instruction to their students (Naba'h&Jaber,2009).Teaching practice in schools has been considered the most important programme part of the teacher education and for that matter this field experience needs to be supported by stake holders (Ekiz, 2006). These stake holders include the university supervisor, school principal and co-operating teachers who at point play crucial roles of preparing the student-teacher to perform the duties and responsibilities of the formal teacher (Albasheer et al, 2008).

In Ghana, teacher education also appears not to be bad at all. The preparing of the student-teacher is under the guidance of supervisors or co-operating teachers who facilitate and monitor the growth of the student-teacher. However, just as these supervisors perform their duties during teaching practice, they come under some criticism. These criticisms include the lack of inconsistency in the method use for supervision and the short duration for supervision which to student-teachers, diminished the quality of the teaching practice supervision (Rosemary,Richard&Ngara,2013). These short comings found in the supervision affected the overall quality of the teaching practice supervision. Hence, it was against this background on teaching practice supervision that this research sought to examine the perceptions of History student-teachers on teaching practice supervision.

1.1 Research questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What are the perceptions of History student-teachers on teaching practice supervision?
2. What are the impacts of teaching practice supervision on History student-teachers?
3. What are the challenges faced by History student-teachers during teaching practice supervision?

1.2 Significance of the study

At the end of the study, the information that will be gathered will bring out the perception of History student-teachers on teaching practice supervision.

Again, the study will provide knowledge that will help supervisors in the teaching practice unit of the University of Cape Coast in the improvement of supervision practices and policies during teaching practice.

The study will also add to existing related literature on teaching practice supervision.

1.3 Delimitation to the study

The study was confined to level 400 History student-teachers at the University of Cape Coast because they had been exposed to both On-campus and Off-campus teaching practice. The scope of the problem did not involve teaching practice in general but was limited to the supervision aspect of teaching practice with emphasis on the History student-teachers' perception on the teaching practice supervision. Issues examined included the History student-teachers perception on the teaching practice supervision, the impact of the teaching practice supervision on the History student-teachers and challenges faced by the History student-teachers during the teaching practice supervision.

1.4 Limitation of the study

Since this study is specific to History student-teachers, it is likely that the study could be hindered by the students' unwillingness to reveal requisite information on the scheduled question presented to them. The threat of confidentiality and anonymity on History student-teachers is higher in this study since the sample size is small leading to general assertions by History student-teachers rather specific issues. Again History student-teachers perceptions on teaching practice supervision could be hindered by students' reluctances to give the right information since the scheduled interview carry the same set of questions; History student-teachers might be tempted to provide the same answers which may invalidate the motive behind the study. Aside the reluctance on the part of the History student-teachers, the students' might be tempted to protect their private perception which may invalidate the study.

2. Review of literature

This section looks at the available literature relating to the study. This is to enable the researchers to put the findings in their apt context and relate them to earlier findings.

2.1 Perceptions of history student-teachers on teaching practice supervision

Studies on student-teachers perceptions on Teaching Practice Supervision (TPS) are limited. However, few literatures have made some contribution on the term supervision (Anderson, 1982 & Slick, 1997). Goldsberry (1988) defines supervision as an organizational responsibility and function focused upon the assessment and refinement of current practices (Cited in Bailey, 2006). Furthermore, Hawkins and Shoet (1989) define supervision from the perspective of student-teachers as a space to explore practice, build theory, feel the atmosphere of teaching, and illustrate how to act while teaching (Cited in Soykurt, 2010). Thus, to Hawkins and Shoet (1989) student-teachers viewed the teaching practice supervision as an avenue not only to demonstrate the theory into practice in the presence of a supervisor but also to seek for clarification and guidance from either the university supervisor or co-operating teacher.

Yaman (2013), in his study carefully examined the perception of student-teachers on teacher education in general. He posited that, student-teachers saw teaching practices supervision as;

- helping pre-service teachers in the process of practicum
- directing teaching experiences
- sharing ideas on the whole teaching process.
- finding solutions to difficulties encountered while teaching.
- observing student-teachers while teaching
- providing feedback on the teaching and
- evaluating student-teachers.

Thus these student-teachers saw teaching practice supervision from the constructivist perspective. To them the supervision serves as an avenue for facilitating student-teachers on learning how to teach.

Ong'ondo and Borg (2011) study on the perception of student-teachers on teaching practice were that, student-teachers viewed the supervision process as brief, un-coordinated and that the feedbacks student-teachers received were mainly evaluative, directive and focused on general, rather than subject-specific pedagogy. Hence, the supervision these student-teachers received were not only directed towards assessment but also lacked one essential element which student-teachers always desired for, that is subject base supervisors to assess student-teachers.

Rosemary, Richard and Ngara (2013) in their study solicited for the perceptions of student-teachers on teaching practice supervision. The findings of their work revealed that student-teachers saw teaching practice supervision as mainly useful in giving them guidance in critical aspect of teaching, motivating them and boosting their confidence to teach which is also similar to the study of Nwaoguo (1980) who opines that student-teachers supervision involves helping, motivating, supporting, advising and stimulating growth in the prospective teachers.

Rosemary, et al. (2013) further in their study looked at the negative aspect of the teaching practice supervision whereby some student-teachers viewed the teaching practice supervision as bias because there was lack of consensus on the part of the supervisors in dealing with similar issues. In addition to that, some student-teachers viewed the TPS as de-motivating. These views given by student-teachers on the teaching practice supervision correspond with the findings of Eya&Chukwu (2012) who says some impediment to effective supervision include favouritism, lack of professional qualities, and lack of motivation.

Caires and Almeida (2007) study also showed that student-teachers viewed teaching practice supervision as an important set for growth in learning. Thus these student-teachers saw the supervision exercise as a drive for development in the teaching field for all student-teachers. These authors further revealed that student-teachers perceived the teaching practice supervision as an important source of emotional support. Hence, student-teachers saw the supervision exercise as helping them overcome fear and insecurities, the feelings of incapability and the how and why of their practices (Smith, 2005). This is similar to the findings of Yaman (2013) who postulated that student-teachers always saw the supervision exercise from the affective side of learning to teach and they expect support from supervisors both from cognitive and affective side. Hence, to student-teachers, teaching practice supervisors should not always look at the cognitive and the psychomotor skills of the student-teacher but rather also do as much as possible to include the affective side of the student-teacher into their action when supervising them. This in a way makes the teaching practice supervision to be seen as holistic (cognitive, affective and psychomotor).

2.2 The impacts of teaching practice supervision on History student-teachers

Researches on the impact of supervision on student-teachers are limited (Badiali, 2002). MacDonald (1965) agreed to this assertion by writing that: "We are left with the still unanswered question of whether supervision has any value at all (p. 161)." Mosher and Purpel (1972) reiterated MacDonald's assertion by saying that: "the inescapable conclusion to be drawn from any review of the literature is that there is virtually no research suggesting that supervision of teaching, however defined or undertaken, makes any difference." (p. 50). Few writers had been able to put forth literature on the impact of supervision on student-teachers.

Ong'ondo and Borg (2011) in their study sought to examine the impact of supervision on student-teachers. In their findings they revealed that, the primary impact of supervision in student-teachers was the production of fear on student-teachers. Thus student-teachers' practices during supervision were consequently powerful and constrained by a perceived need to please the supervisors. Perhaps the most powerful impact of supervision was that it motivated student-teachers to remain vigilant at all times: the fear of receiving a poor assessment meant they had to be prepared for unannounced visits. Ong'ondo and Borg (2011) captured this clearly from the assertion of Caro who posited that "Supervision keeps you on your toes, you know; you have to work hard to earn your marks. But when the supervisors are through, you also relax, like my last supervisor told me the four times they had assessed me were enough. So I also relaxed; I was not writing the lesson plans any more ... I wasn't now using the teaching aids, but earlier, I was even using a radio in class, charts and such things, but now the chalkboard was my only teaching aid ... I stopped because they were just cumbersome." (p.520)

Thus fear of supervision was always the sentiments shared by some student-teachers during their teaching practice. These fears were often based on stories student-teachers heard from friends who had been on the course before them. Ong'ondo&Borg (2011) captured this clearly from the assertion of Ann who posited that "I am quite scared of them [supervisors], according to the experience from my friends, they can give you a grade that is below average, your life will depend on what they will write on the assessment sheet ... Am not being pessimistic but anything can happen! You can really prepare well and not impress the assessor. There are some people who are never impressive ... I know this from the experience from my friends ... past TP teachers ... they prepared well but they told us they were given very low grades."(p.520)

Another reason for this fear of supervision was the fact that the student-teachers were not quite clear of

what the supervisors would be assessing. All the student teachers stated that they were not briefed about supervision or any other issues regarding teaching practice (Ong'ondo & Borg, 2011).

Further studies done by educational scholars on supervision revealed that, supervision always made student-teachers alert and prepared them for any subsequent supervision (Charles, Kimutai & Zachariah 2012; Ong'ondo & Borg 2011). Thus student-teachers who were exposed to unannounced supervisory visits were always on the guard for supervision with their various resources during supervision at their disposal. For instance these student-teachers always prepared their lesson in order to please their supervisor as much as possible.

Fayn (2007) study also revealed that one impact teaching practice supervision had on student-teachers was the improvement in performance by student-teachers in their subsequent lesson. To Fayn, student-teachers were able to see growth in their teaching during the practicum since they had a supervisor to guide them.

2.3 The challenges faced by history student teachers during teaching practice supervision

Teaching practice to some extent goes beyond just knowing what to teach and how to teach it all out. Rosemary, Richard, & Ngara, (2013) supports this assertion by stating that the purpose of teaching practice is to develop several competencies in the student-teacher which include; interpersonal, pedagogical, intercultural and psychological competencies. However, despite the thorough preparation, student-teachers go through during teaching practice, student-teachers face some challenges which significantly affects their ability to derive maximum benefits from the teaching practice programme (Ranjan, 2013).

Okobia, Augustine and Osagie (2013) admits the study of Rajan by saying that the main challenges faced by student-teachers during teaching practice supervision were the short duration for supervision, and the poor relations between student-teachers and supervisors. Thus to Okobia et al. (2013) there were poor relations among student-teachers and supervisors. Supervisors by their roles are to be guide, counsel and be friends to the student-teacher. However, as a result of the unfriendly nature of supervisors to student-teachers, the student-teachers feel uncomfortable when teaching in their presence. Hence, Okobia et al. (2013) study revealed that student-teachers saw the lack of teaching materials and the unfriendly nature of supervisors as challenge during the teaching practice supervision.

Zindi, Nyota and Batidzirai (1996) study revealed that student-teachers main challenge on teaching practice supervision was the differences in methodology or strategies meted out to them during their practicum. These finding of Zindi et al. (1996) is also similar to findings done by Rome and Moss (1990) who postulated that the lack of uniformity in supervision was a challenge to student-teachers during his study. Thus student-teachers were of the view that a standardized method of supervision was what they really wanted but their inability to receive or be exposed to a standardized system of teaching practice supervision place them under a state of dilemma as they really did not know what to do in their subsequent practice.

Koran (1969) also identified in his study that the short time spent by supervisors during supervision was a challenge many student-teachers complained on. To these student-teachers, their supervisors spent only limited time when supervising them. Other student-teachers also raised the concern that the supervisors were always on the run to supervise other student-teachers after their lessons (as a result receive little attention from their supervisor).

The low frequency in supervision by supervisors was another challenge faced by some student teachers according to Gautam (2010). Some student-teachers saw the teaching practice supervision as an opportunity to have their teaching evaluated and constructively criticized (Gower & Walter 1987). However, the supervisors who were to supervise them according to the findings of Gautam (2010) were inconsistent in their supervision in term of appearance. Majority of the student-teachers were not able to get their maximum supervision of three from their supervisors while others were able to get it. Thus the student-teachers concern on teaching practice supervision was that it lacked uniformity in its operation.

Ong'ondo and Borg (2011) study revealed that one challenge facing student-teachers with respect to supervision was the time for supervision (late arrival of supervisors during teaching practice supervision). The findings of their work showed that student-teachers were sometimes assessed at 'odd times'. For instance, some supervising visits took place after official class hours (in such cases the student teacher or on occasion the head teacher would persuade the learners to stay at school longer so that the lesson could be held); there were also cases when supervisors visited student-teachers very late in the term when the learners were sitting for exams. This was indeed a challenge some student-teacher were exposed to during their supervision and the words of one the interviewee interviewed by Ong'ondo and Borg (2011) explain this clearly "the last supervisor came at a very odd time; first it was very late in the term, in fact the students were doing exams; secondly, the lecturer came after 5pm ... and she was so rigid ... I told her that it was not good to assess me during that time but she was very rude and she was claiming that it was our mistake, that we did not inform the zone coordinator that the students were doing exams, she didn't care. She just said 'you have to teach or else I will just say that you refused to be assessed.' She couldn't understand. The students cooperated very much but I felt very bad." (p.515).

Another challenge encountered by student-teachers according to Ong'ondo & Borg (2011) during their

teaching practice supervision was that, student-teachers were supervised by supervisors who were not subject specialist in the subject they were teaching. Student-teachers were thus generally deprived of feedback on the subject of their teaching. This finding is similar to that of the findings of Opong (2013) who postulated that some history student-teachers were keen on subject specialist to supervise them since they have an in-depth understanding of the subject matter.

From the forgoing, it is clear that the short duration for supervision, low frequency in supervision, the lack of uniformity in supervision methodology and supervision by non-subject specialist had been the main challenges faced by student-teachers during teaching practice supervision.

3.0 Methodology

The qualitative survey design was adopted for this study because it gives insight about the nature of a particular phenomenon (Babbie&Mouto, 2001). This study adopted an interpretive methodology using a case study approach. The intention and adoption of this approach was to gain insight into the views of respondents and to describe their perceptions and reactions to a certain phenomenon (Fraenkel&Wallen, 2006). The target population for the research was the final year Bachelor of Education students of the University of Cape Coast since they have all gone through teaching practice and have had similar experiences. The accessible population was limited to Bachelor of Education Arts History major students since the study focuses on the History student-teachers perception on teaching practice supervision. The participants for the study consisted of twelve (12) Bachelor of Education (Arts) History major students. The purpose sampling technique was adopted to arrive at the sample for the study because of the central phenomenon underlying the study (Creswell, 2008). The twelve (12) consisted of six (6) males and six (6) females. The instrument used for collecting the data was the discussion guide. The discussion guide was structured according to the research questions. The method of analysing data was adopted from Marais and Meier (2004). The analysis of the data was approached in two stages. The first stage focused on segmenting the data into categories and counting of responses. The categories were merged into themes. The second stage focused on comparing the themes related to students' perception, the impact of supervision and the challenges they faced with supervision during teaching practice respectively (Opong, 2013). Similarities and differences with regards to the main themes were presented and inferences were drawn from the literature to support the findings.

4.0 Results and Discussions

4.1 Perception of History student-teachers on teaching practice supervision

Perception of student-teachers on educational issues has always been seen as varying; however literature on perception has revealed that perception is an experiential sensation: that is a phenomenal impression resulting functionally from certain inputs or things one is exposed to (Fiandt, 1966; Forgas, 1966). Given this background, the study sought to find out the various views of History student-teachers on teaching practice supervision.

For that reason, objective one of the study solicited for the perception of History student-teachers on teaching practice supervision. Under this section, the issues examined include the good aspects History student-teachers saw in their teaching practice supervision and the defects History student-teachers saw in their teaching practice supervision.

In the focus group discussion, discussants were unanimous in their views that teaching practice supervision is necessary. The entire respondents perceived the teaching practice as useful when it comes to any meaningful practice. This is seen in the assertion of one of the respondent who posited that "... if you go for a teaching practice and there is no supervision how would you know you are doing the right thing, then it wouldn't be necessary going for the field experience at all." This confirms the study of Hawkins and Shoet (1989) that supervision create space to explore practice, build theory, feel the atmosphere of teaching and illustrate how to act while teaching under the coaching of a supervisor. This indicates that supervision is an important aspect in the field of preparing teachers for every nation. Teaching practice without supervision in a way downplays the credibility of the student-teacher since no person in authority could testify about the student-teacher classroom practices.

With regard to History student-teachers perception on the good aspect of teaching practice supervision, respondents' views were different. Some of the respondent indicated that it guided them to certain aspect of teaching. The participants asserted that the supervision directed them to the selection of certain materials in teaching, the method in teaching and even the selection of the exact topic to teach. On the issue of supervision guiding student-teachers in the selection of materials for teaching, one of the respondents posited that "in my first supervision my supervisor told me my teaching and learning material (TLM) was not enough to enable the students to understand the topic. So the next time I had the supervision, I chose the appropriate teaching and learning material (TLM) to support my teaching". Also on the issue of method of teaching, the respondents indicated that supervision guided them in the selection of teaching techniques. Hence, in the words of one of the respondent, "in my first supervision I taught using the lecture method, so my supervisor drew my attention to the

fact that the discussion method of teaching should be used more so as to engage the students in the lesson.”; “... I remember there was one particular topic I taught under the rise of states and kingdom. The sub-topic I chose for that day was very complex and the instructional method I used was not illustrative enough so my supervisor suggested that any time I teach that topic I should make it more illustrative...” another respondent asserted. This finding confirms Rosemary, et al. (2013) findings where student-teachers perceived the teaching practice supervision as a guide in critical aspect of teaching. In a similar sense the participants responses implied that the supervision was a medium of direction whereby certain things they found difficult while teaching were addressed by supervisors which in a way aided effective teaching and learning in the classroom. Thus, History student-teachers observed the teaching practice supervision as finding solutions to difficulties encountered while teaching and also directing teacher experiences in the classroom (Yaman, 2013).

Regarding the issues of History student-teachers perceptions on the defects in the teaching practice supervision, respondents' views were indifferent. Almost all the respondents expressed similar views on the defects in the teaching practice supervision. Respondents cited elements of inconsistency in supervision, supervision gearing towards discrimination and lastly, teaching practice supervision lacking subject specialist in the area of assessment.

With respect to inconsistency in the teaching practice supervision, participants stipulated that just as they heard about the inconsistency in supervisory strategies, they also experienced it during their field experience. They attributed this to the fact that teaching practice supervision is not objective because of the different approaches (disagreement on pertinent issues while teaching) used by supervisors when assessing student-teachers even on similar issues. This was a bit disturbing to the extent that even the medium (supervision) by which student-teachers were assessed before grades were awarded was under strict criticism by most of the respondents. In the words of one of the respondents; “in the area of lesson notes preparation, I wrote a detailed lesson note during one of my instructions, one supervisor came and complained that my lesson note was too detailed and so I should reduce it. Another supervisor came and also told me that my lesson note was not detailed. So after this encounter I did not know what to do to my lesson note since the supervisors themselves did not agree on how I presented my lesson note”.

Aside the area of inconsistency in lesson notes preparation, other respondents attested that supervisors disagreed even on the medium of instructions. This was captured by the response of one of the participant who postulated that: “the student I thought during my field experience really did not understand the English language... sometimes to find out whether they understood what I was communicating to them; I asked them do you understand? Few students responded yes. But if I ask them; “mutiase?”(do you understand), the whole class responded madam “debee” (no),...so I ask them again “akom?” (do you get it)... and one supervisor said I shouldn't use the words “akom” and “mutiase” because it is too local . Another supervisor encouraged me to use those words since it gives me the feedback as to whether the students understood what I was teaching. Thus I was in a dilemma since both supervisors disagreed on how I communicated to the students in the classroom”.

This response confirms the findings of Rosemary, et al. (2013) study, that student-teachers perceive teaching practice supervision as inconsistent and subjective. This in a way affects History student-teachers pattern of delivery in the classroom. History student-teachers resort to trial and error teaching as a result of supervisors inconsistency in their strategies used during supervision. Oppong (2013) study further corroborates the findings of this study whereby History student-teachers became dissatisfied as a result of the inconsistency in teaching practice supervision.

Again, History student-teachers pointed out the element of discrimination in the supervision exercise. The discussants indicated that the supervisors were bias during the supervision process. Even though discussants earlier indicated that supervision has always been the major medium that proves their certification as qualified History teachers, yet participants still posited that the teaching practice supervision exhibited elements of discrimination during the field experience. For instance one of the discussants postulated that: “In my school I had some subject specific lecturers coming to supervise their own students. Whenever they came for supervision they were looking for their own students to supervise and not any other student-teacher. So it was after they had done supervising their own students that they created theroom for me to be supervised... and my last supervision almost entered into the exams week because they gave their entire slot to their students”.

This implies that some of the supervisors who embarked on the teaching practice supervision were favouring student-teachers in their field of teaching and the likelihood of inflating scores to the advantage of their students was possibly high. This concurs with Eya&Chukwu's(2012) view that one impediment to effective supervision is favouritism or discrimination. This means that, successful supervision should employ the act of impartiality in its operation so as to be devoid of any criticism by its consumers who in this case are the student-teachers. However, any supervision that employs the act of favouritism is likely to be subjective and may not achieve its intended purpose.

General supervision rather than subject-specific supervision was addressed as another defect History student-teachers perceived in the teaching practice supervision. Most discussants were passionate about this.

They expressed worry of the whole supervision process not providing subject-specialist supervisors. They further indicated that they were deprived of any meaningful feedback in history and the feedback given by some supervisors indicated that they had no knowledge in history. The comments of discussants are demonstrative on this issue: "... I was teaching the 'Peopling of Ghana' and on my comment sheet my supervisor wrote that 'even common people you cannot spell'. Meanwhile the topic I was teaching was the 'Peopling of Ghana'. So since he did not know that we have the 'Peopling of Ghana' in the history syllabus, he wrote it in my comment sheet that I should check my spelling since to him there is no word like peopling...just as I had finished teaching, my supervisor asked me whether I was giving the correct fact to the students in the class and this was because the supervisor had no history background".

This confirms the findings of Ong'ondo & Borg (2011) that supervision aside being brief and un-coordinated, the feedback provided is general rather than subject-specific pedagogy. As a follow-up to probe the reasons why the respondent perceived the teaching practice supervision as not based on subject-specific supervisors, they indicated that their supervisors always gave general remarks on their teaching and neglected the crucial aspect relating to the subject they were teaching. The comment of one of the discussants is illustrative: "yes, in fact none of them was a specialist in History. Though, they had academic qualifications such as Ph.D., I'm talking about qualification in History and in education too. They were not versed in History but rather doctors and professors in other fields... hardly did they give any comment on the subject matter. The comments they gave were on the general aspects don't use your hand to clean the board, write the date and those basic things".

This implies that History student-teachers were not supervised by subject specialist. Thus, the feedbacks they received from their supervisors were on general pedagogical knowledge which to them was not constructive. They looked forward to supervision based on subject-specialists, since to them the specialist can identify the mistakes in their content and methodology and provide alternative ways and techniques of solving the mistake (Munemo & Tom, 2013).

The results discussed under the perceptions of History student-teachers on teaching practice supervision are summarised. There were a range of views identified on supervision as it was seen as guidance and sharing of ideas on the whole teaching process. Again on the issue of defects, student-teachers pointed out the element of discrimination, inconsistency and lack of subject-specialist during supervision. It is clear from the responses given by participants in the study that the supervision process has a lot of defects as compared to the good side. The views of the respondents on the teaching practice supervision tells the need for a careful drawing of program for all stake holders during the supervision process so as to clarify what is expected of them during supervision.

4.2 The impacts of teaching practice supervision on History student-teachers

Another focus of this study was to find out the effects of teaching practice supervision on History student-teachers. With this objective in mind, a focus group discussion was conducted with History student-teachers to illicit responses from them concerning the said objective. Under this, issues such as how the teaching practice supervision improve student-teachers performance, how student-teachers were influenced by supervision and the over-all gain teaching practice supervision had on History student-teachers were examined.

Information gathered under this section shows that the teaching practice supervision to a large extent influenced the History student-teachers during their field experience and presently. According to them (History student-teachers), the teaching practice supervision improved their performance level, instilled a level of discipline in them and lastly, others also said the teaching practice supervision imbibed in them fear and hatred.

With regard to whether teaching practice supervision improved the performance of History student-teachers, respondents' views were indifferent. Respondents' views were that the teaching practice supervision developed their teaching skills and also boosted their confidence as teachers. The comments of the discussants are demonstrated on this issue, "it helped me improve my methods of teaching and in the selection and use of teaching and learning resources (TLRs) ... in my first lesson I committed some mistakes but when these mistakes were pointed out to me I factored them in my subsequent lessons. This enabled me to do much better in my subsequent supervisions. Another respondent asserted that, "... to talk about the supervision itself I will say it has given me some kind of confidence because it is like being in a school where you have the head going round checking on teachers... so now I do not fear being in a school where district supervisors may visit to look at what am doing because I have gotten that boldness and confidence...". This shows that teaching practice supervision enhanced student-teachers lesson delivery. Aside that it also made student-teachers assertive wherever they find themselves. These responses confirm the findings of Fayn (2007) that the impact of teaching practice supervision has on student-teachers is the improvement in performance in their subsequent lesson.

Regarding the issue of teaching practice supervision instilling discipline in student-teachers, majority of the participants professed to the fact that supervision made them discipline. They indicated that the teaching practice supervision always made them prepared. As a probe to find out why they think the supervision made them always prepared, they indicated that since most of the supervisors came unannounced they were always

prepared. The respondents' words further clarify this assertion: "Supervision influenced my preparation for teaching in that I always sort for appropriate methods of teaching and preparation of my lesson notes. Gradually, it became my habit because in my school for instance we had surprise supervision. Supervision helped me to become punctual...I was always focused, well prepared and organized... it was good in the sense that once I enter into the teaching profession after school, I may not know when the district and regional directors will be coming to my class".

The enumerated benefits of the teaching practice supervision stated above are confirmed by the study of Kimutai, et al.(2012) which revealed that supervision made student-teachers alert and prepared them for their subsequent lesson since most supervisors came impromptu. The supervision had massive impact on student-teachers as found in the study of Ong'ondo& Borg (2011) which revealed that student-teachers are motivated to remain vigilant at all times as a result of fear of getting unannounced supervision. In addition, some History student-teachers stated that they wanted to please their supervisors so they adopted the attitude of getting all the resources needed during instructional time. This implies that whether good or bad, the teaching practice supervision had a significant impact on History student-teachers. History student-teachers were able to put on the attitude of a professional teacher who even in the absence of district or regional directors are always prepared to meet and address any challenge before them.

There were other respondents who expressed the opinion that they did not benefit from the teaching practice supervision. Some of the opinions expressed include:"it had a negative impact on me. I have developed some kind of hatred for the supervisor who said common people I cannot spell. I get angry anytime I see him on campus." "It made me nervous and uncomfortable." The root of their submission was as a result of getting unannounced supervision and also supervisors who were quick to pass comments on their delivery without finding out from them (History student-teachers) why they acted or wrote that in their lesson notes. This in a way imbibed in them fear and hatred. This confirms the findings in Ong'ondo&Borg's (2011) study that the primary impact of the supervision in student-teachers is the production of fear.

In summary, it is established that, in spite of the fear and hatred developed in History student-teachers, the teaching practice supervision had tremendous impact on student-teachers as it is evidenced in their responses. It improved the performance level of the student-teachers and also developed in them a level of discipline wherever they found themselves.

4.3 Challenges faced by History student-teachers during the teaching practice supervision

The final objective of this study addressed the challenges faced by the History student-teachers during their teaching practice supervision. It was formulated to obtain respondents challenges encountered during their teaching practice supervision. In addressing this objective, data from focus group discussion was synthesized. Specifically, the issues addressed include the arrival of the supervisors, the period for supervision, length of supervision and lastly, difficulties associated in getting supervisors to supervise student-teachers.

Regarding the arrival of the supervisors, respondents were asked when their supervisors arrived. On this issue, majority of the respondent posited that their supervisors arrived late and also did not inform them on their arrival. Some of the comments of the respondents are instructive on this issue, "Some of my supervisors came in the middle of my teaching, others also came late and it even distracted my teaching. My supervisor came just as I was teaching, immediately she sat done I became confused and nervous; my stuffs was not coming and my content got lost in my head. ... at a point I was at a financial institution when I had a call from my colleague student-teachers that my supervisor was around. I had to rush and prepare my students because I did not have any lesson on that day".

The late arrival of supervisors and the unannounced supervision experienced by History student-teachers were seen as a consequence for their inability to give their best during supervisions. Thus, for effective and successful supervision it is important that supervisors sensitize student-teachers on their arrival so as to bring the best out of them.

With respect to the period of supervision, participants were asked when they were supervised. Some of the respondents claimed they were supervised at odd times. The comments of the discussants are illustrative on this issue, "school was not in session but my supervisor asked me to organize a class... ", "my students were going for sports but my supervisor insisted I teach for five minutes so that he can assess me." This confirms the findings of Ong'ondo and Borg (2011) study that some student teachers complained of being supervised at odd time.

Another challenge respondent faced during the teaching practice supervision was on the duration for supervision. Majority of the respondent indicated that most of their supervisors did not observe their full lesson. They posited that most of the supervisors who came to supervise them spent limited time in their class. They indicated that some of the supervisors only wanted to supervise some specific number of students in a day. Thus in their bid of doing that, they only spent limited time with them. This disturbed the respondents because they did not know how the supervisors assessed their lesson since they did not observe their full lesson. The words of

the discussants are instructive on this issue; “there were only few instances where my supervisors observed my entire lesson. But in all, some came and supervised me for five minutes and left. I realized that in a day if we have one supervisor he structured his time table in way to meet all of us at least for five minutes. This type of supervision was not good for me at all. ...some supervisors stepped into my class and within the next five minutes they had finished scoring me on their forms... they just sit behind the class and stare at me meanwhile they had finished scoring me on their forms”.

As a follow-up to probe the reasons why History student-teachers think the limited time of supervision was a challenge to them, they indicated that they were not happy because they felt the supervisors did not enjoy their class. Other History student-teachers stated that the supervisors were not objective because they thought the supervisors were to assign marks at each stage of their teaching. That is from introduction to the conclusion but this time everything was done within five minutes while they were still teaching. Therefore, it is obvious that some supervisors conjured marks for student-teachers which may not accurately reflect the actual scores of student-teachers. The findings from the respondents confirm the findings of Okobia, et al.(2013) and Rosemary, et al (2013). In both studies student-teachers saw the short duration of supervision and limited time spent with supervisors during discussion as a challenge to them. From these responses it is obvious History student-teachers wished that supervisors observed their full lesson. Copper (1971) suggests that there should be a lengthy period of time for supervision in order to capture all that transpired in the classroom.

Other challenges History student-teachers faced during their teaching practice supervision was the difficulties associated with getting supervisors to supervise them. Some of the respondents said that they had to call their supervisors before they came to supervise them. Some even said that they realized that some supervisors were not even interested to come to supervise them as a result of their location. The comments of the respondents are illustrative on this; “the challenge I had was getting the supervisors to come to my school of practice. At the orientation we were told to get at least six supervisions but I had only four supervisions as at the time my students were writing examination. So I called one of my supervisors to come and supervise me. When she came she told me that if I had told her my school was on a hill she would not have come. She totally did not enjoy the class. She said she was tired and I have made her toe nails break because of the hills she climbed. I had to beg one lecturer to come and supervise me... after he came he dissolved my class and asked me to bring my lesson note to his office for him to assess me and I did that”.

As a follow-up to probe the reasons why they took the pain of calling their supervisors, they indicated that they wanted to get the maximum supervision of six. Thus, the same condition the participants found themselves in was also the same findings Gautam (2010) posited in his study that the low frequency in supervision was one of the concerns of student-teachers. From Gautam’s finding majority of the student-teachers were not able to get their maximum supervision because their supervisors were not coming to supervise them. Hence, there was no uniformity in the supervision, just as some had exceeded their maximum others were also lacking behind. This implies that the grades awarded to History student-teachers should not only be looked from the total average but also careful considerations should also be given to student-teachers who were not able to get their maximum supervision.

From the forgoing it is clear that all the respondents faced diverse challenges during the teaching practice supervision. The challenges they faced included late arrival of some supervisors, the period for supervision, length of supervision and lastly, the difficulty associated with getting supervisors to supervise.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

History student teachers had more negative perception on the teaching practice supervision. History student-teachers were not enthused about the teaching practice supervision they experienced. Such an orientation could have negative effects on them if other professional in-service training programmes are not given to them as practicing teachers after school. History student-teachers developed the attitude of professional teachers. Supervisors should not be allowed to supervise their own students so as to ensure fairness. The teaching practice unit should organize compulsory orientations for supervisors on supervision strategies to ensure uniformity in supervising student-teachers. Finally, the teaching practice unit should ensure that supervisors who are sent for supervision have enough knowledge of the subject-matter of the field of study of the respondents, knowledge about subject specific methodology which will enable them to provide useful feedback.

Also, the teaching practice supervision had positive and negative impacts on History student-teachers. Just as some History student-teachers viewed the supervision as instilling a level of discipline in them others also saw it as infusing fear and hatred in them due to the fact that they were not appreciated by their supervisors and also their supervisors came incognito and some impromptu. As a result of this, we recommend that supervisors should inform student-teachers of their arrival since it will make student-teachers less nervous and anxious.

Finally, the late arrival of supervisors, the odd time for supervision, the short duration for supervision and lastly, the difficulties associated with getting supervisors for supervision were the challenges encountered by History student-teachers. Supervisors should visit schools of supervision on time so as to have a full view of the

lesson delivery of the respondents and also to prevent the situation of organizing class at odd times. Also, supervisors should observe full lesson so as to have accurate view on the whole lesson presentation of the respondents. Lastly, Zonal Coordinators should visit all practicing schools in their zones to find out the progress of teaching practice supervision.

5.1 Areas for further research

The findings in this study are too small to permit generalization. However, teacher educators and researchers should look beyond the perceptions of History student-teachers on teaching practice supervision to cover deeper analysis of the teaching practice supervision done by subject- specialists to that of non- subject specialist.

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