

The Anxiety in Student Teacher During Training in Teaching Practice

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Abstract Teaching practice is one of the important components in the program of study: Elementary Teacher Education at the Faculty of Education, University: "Xhuvani, A.", Elbasan, Albania. The student teaching experience in teaching practice is a culmination of years of preparation. The goal of the teaching practice is to help student teacher to advance their professional knowledge. Professional training in teaching practice is planned through the continuous structured phases. Practice teaching is filled with difficulties, dilemmas and challenges. For many students teaching experiences are very hard to provoking anxiety in them. The purpose of this study was to determine how the training affected the level of anxiety in students, during the stages of training as a teacher in teaching practice. Experienced students the same level of anxiety during the phases of training as a teacher in teaching practice? TCHA (Parson, 1973) was the scale used to measure teaching anxiety. Measurements were made in the two phases of development of teaching practice. This study found that anxiety in the student teachers changed during training. Training had positive impact to the reduction of anxiety in the student teachers.

Keywords: teaching practice, student teacher, teaching anxiety and training.

1. Introduction

Teaching practice (or more popularly known as the practicum) is recognized as one of the most important aspects of a teacher education (Farrell, 2008). It is considered by student teachers (from the Netherlands and Israel) as the most valuable part in professional training as teachers (Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005). Teaching practices for student teachers is a starting point in the real world of school. It helps these students to integrate in the work environment at school (Ryan, Toohey & Hughes, 1996, p. 373). Student teachers implement into teaching practice theoretical knowledge and practical skills that they have gained during their course. But, the transformation of theoretical knowledge in practice has always been a challenge - learning to learn is a complex process (Solomon, Worthy & Carter as quoted in Farrell, 2002). Many researchers agree that student teachers around the world are concerned about the pedagogical practice (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003).

Groundwater-Smith (1993:137) noted that the practicum experience is one fraught with difficulties, dilemmas and challenges as the student attempts to negotiate his or her way along a hazardous path of competing professional policies and practices. Researchers emphasize that students pass through different stages in their development as a teacher (Maynard and Furlong, 1993). Fuller (1969) identified three stages of concern through which teachers pass in their development: self concerns, task concerns, impact concerns. He has conceptualized the concerns of teachers as a progressive development.

It has been long recognize that many pre-service student teachers experience high levels of anxiety about their teaching practicum (Clement, 1999; Enz, 1997; Sanderson, 2003; Tibble, 1959). Several studies have also looked at the nature of student teacher anxieties related to practice teaching. Some studies indicate that student teachers experience moderate levels of anxiety (Hart, 1987; Wendt & Bain, 1989; Behets, 1990; Capel, 1997; Morton, Vesco, Williams & Awender, 1997) while others show that student teachers report high anxiety levels (Thompson, 1963; Erickson & Russ, 1967; Singh, 1972; Bradley, 1984; Kazu, 2001). However, it has also been noted that anxiety will decrease as knowledge and skills develop during teacher training (Parsons, 1973).

Student teachers (Sinclair & Nicoli, 1981) were interviewed in an attempt to identify common sources of teacher anxiety in classroom situations and the nature of any anxiety that was experienced. High levels of anxiety while teaching were found to be a common occurrence and such anxiety was found to be particularly associated with classroom control problems, with being evaluated by supervisors, with forming relationships with pupils and the cooperating teachers, and with achieving lesson goals.

1.1 Observe, evaluate by Supervisor/Teacher

This is a major issue which causes discomfort to student teachers also called "evaluation anxiety". This refers to anxiety induced by being observed by one's lecturer or teacher of school acting as supervisor. This fear can be greatly exacerbated during field experience where it has been shown that the majority of student teachers are most concerned about evaluation (Capel, 1997; Morton, Vesco, Williams, & Awender, 1997).

A study of Capel, (1997) which included using Hart's questionnaire with a group of students in south of England reported that main cause of anxiety for student teacher was to being observed, evaluated and assessed. Student teachers often complain that they forgot the content matter and feel nervous when teacher sits at the end of classroom and observes. Pressure of doing things correctly and managing classroom activities properly make them tense and apprehensive while teaching. Some of the student's teachers are able to overcome this with a day or two but for others it acts as a barrier to gain full confidence.

1.2 Discipline and classroom management

Ngidi and Sibaya (2003:18) assert that empirical findings support the view that a high level of anxiety among student teachers may be tied to a variety of negative consequences such as class control problems and classroom disruptions. It is believed that problems with regard to controlling a class can be a huge source of anxiety for both student teachers and teachers alike. Preece (1979:18) found a correlation between student teacher anxiety and class control problems. Hart (1987:16) also reported a positive correlation between student teacher anxiety and classroom disruptions.

1.3 Preparation for teaching, Teaching & Effectiveness

Thompson (1963) found that student teachers are most anxious about mastery of subject, devising lesson plans, pupil response, teacher standards, and inability to answer questions.

1.4 Teaching as a profession

The practicum experiences are a "reality shock" for many student teachers as they become aware of the discrepancy between their preconceived ideas about teaching and the reality of the profession (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; Clifton et al., 1994; Russell et al., 2001). In the literature (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; Murray-Harvey et al., 2000) noted that student teachers' career anxiety is related to their practicum experiences. The preliminary transition into real classrooms through a practicum is probably anxiety-provoking because teaching is, by nature, unpredictable and complex work (Radford, Cashion, & Latchford, 1993).

1.5 Confidence & competencies in teaching

Caires and Almeida (2005) conducted a study of 224 Portuguese student teachers in five areas of experience: professional and institutional socialization, learning and professional development, socio-emotional aspects, support/resources/supervision, and vocational aspects. These dimensions, especially the acquisition of professional competency and vocational features, deal with the confidence of the student teachers to some extent. They established that the higher level of confidence exhibited by the student teachers in their 'vocation' as teachers at the end of the teaching practice is statistically significant. The student teachers also indicated that they felt they were more professionally competent at the conclusion of the teaching practice.

This study was conducted to identify how the training affected the level of anxiety in students, during the stages of training as a teacher in teaching practice. The following research question was addressed: Experienced students the same level of anxiety during the phases of training as a teacher in teaching practice?

2. Method

2.1 Sample

The participants in this study were students of the Faculty Education, "Xhuvani, A." University, Elbasan, Albania. The students registered in the program of study: "Primary Teacher Education" and "Preschool Teacher". Students were from

age 19 to 25 years, mean 22 years. From these 84.6% were female and 15.4% male. Registered in the program of study: "Primary Teacher Education" was 48.7% students and 51.3% students were registered in the program of study: "Preschool Teacher". Students participated voluntarily participated in this study, thus defining the model of random selection of the sample.

2.2 Instrument

The Teacher Anxiety Scale (TCHA) was developed to measure anxiety associated with teaching. The TCHA developed by Parsons (1973) and with their focus on particular aspects of teaching, may be of use with pre-service and in service teachers by helping to identify potential problem areas associated with anxiety. It contains 29 items about ½ of the item is defined negatively.

2.3 Procedures

Measurements were made in the two phases of development of teaching practice. The first phase is the period when the teacher students registered in the program of study: "Primary Teacher Education" and "Preschool Teacher" exercised in teaching practice once a week, 4 hours/day. The second phase is the period when the teacher students are full-intensity exercised in the process of teaching, during teaching practice block, which developed in the sixth semester, every day for 8 weeks.

3. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis was used for data processing based on the most important numerical indicator of localization data, mean. For this analysis, each of following item of TCHA was coded according to a five-point scale: never (1), rarely (2), occasionally (3), often (4), always (5). Item were grouped into 6 categories.

Six categories	Before practice		After practice		The difference before and after practice	
	Mean	t	Mean	t	Mean	t
1. Observe, evaluate by Supervisor/Teacher	3,66	18,46	3,52	15,5	0,14	2,96
2. Discipline & classroom management	3,36	15,34	3,19	13,07	0,17	2,27
3. Preparation for teaching	3,35	22,31	3,19	15,22	0,16	7,09
4. Teaching as a profession	3,22	14,98	3,08	12,67	0,14	2,31
5. Teaching & Effectiveness	3,24	18,02	3,05	15,55	0,19	2,47
6. Confidence & competencies in teaching	3,15	21,26	3	15,93	0,15	5,33
Total	3,33	18,44	3,17	14,65	0,16	3,79

Data regarding the level of teaching anxiety in to student teacher (table 1), based on the mean before and after practice indicated a difference for 0.16. Besides the mean was used and t-test which showed a significant differences between the mean ratings of before and after practice ($t = 3.79$). The data showed that the level of anxiety was lower after intensive practice 8-week.

Following, each of the 6 categories of teaching anxiety in student teacher are examined individually by presenting mean. The categories are listed (table 2-7) based on mean of data from those causing more anxiety in the least. The first category corresponds to the Observe, evaluate by Supervisor/Teacher (Table 2). The survey by Supervisor/Teacher/parents was one factor which causes a high level of anxiety in student teacher. In the three items on mean is: 3.5. Noted that after intensive practice, have a mean decrease with 0.14.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Before practice Mean</i>	<i>After practice Mean</i>	<i>The difference before and after practice</i>
• I feel nervous when I am being observed by my college supervisor.	3,80	3,62	0,18
• I would feel anxious if principal informed me he was coming to my class to observe.	3,68	3,52	0,16
• I would feel calm and collected if a student's parent observed in my classroom.	3,52	3,42	0,10
Total	3,66	3,52	0,14

Another source of anxiety to student teachers was discipline and classroom management. Lack of relationship with students, lack of safety to student teachers whether they would be able to make the difference between students or to hold classroom control were a source of anxiety to student teachers. By referring means before and after practice for the item relating to the discipline and management in the classroom (Table 3), was found that mean decrease with 0.13.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Before practice Mean</i>	<i>After practice Mean</i>	<i>The difference before and after practice</i>
• Lack of rapport with my student (will be) is one of my biggest worries.	3,64	3,48	0,16
• I'm uncertain whether I (will be able to) can tell the difference between really seriously disturbed students and those who are merely "goofing off" in class	3,38	3,24	0,14
• I feel secure with regard to my ability to keep a class under control.	3,22	3,12	0,10
• I feel students will follow my instructions.	3,20	3,08	0,12
Total	3,36	3,23	0,13

The preparation for teaching was another area that requires dedication to student teachers. They must plan teaching activities that should realize the results of learning for each student. The decision about how will be presented information in classroom, make the student teacher to experience high levels of anxiety (mean 3.38). Attitudes of student teachers regarding the reparation for teaching (Table 4) after 8-week intensive practice indicate a difference of 0.16.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Before practice Mean</i>	<i>After practice Mean</i>	<i>The difference before and after practice</i>
• Deciding how to present information in classroom (would make) makes me feel uncertain.	3,38	3,24	0,14
• I (would feel) feel calm (if I were) when I am preparing lessons.	3,32	3,14	0,18
Total	3,35	3,19	0,16

Attitudes of student teachers on the choice of teaching as a profession based on the mean (3.22) showed that students experience anxiety (tabela5). Item: "I am less happy teaching, than I thought I'd be" creates more anxiety in student teacher (mean 3.52). The average difference was 0.13 after practice.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Before practice Mean</i>	<i>After practice Mean</i>	<i>The difference before and after practice</i>
• I am less happy teaching, than I thought I'd be	3,52	3,36	0,16
• I am worried whether I can be a good teacher	3,42	3,28	0,14
• I feel anxious because I don't know yet whether I really want to be teacher	3,00	2,88	0,12
• I feel sure I will find teaching a satisfying profession	2,96	2,82	0,14
Total	3,22	3,08	0,13

Teaching is a complex process. Students teachers during the teaching not only worry about how to face with teaching situations (answers to the questions of students, information that will give students), but also for the learning of students (using the test to show how effectively students are learning, how able is to keep the students interested). Attitudes of student teachers about teaching and effectiveness showed that the level of anxiety after 8-week intensive practice changes (Table 6) and the tendency was decreasing.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Before practice Mean</i>	<i>After practice Mean</i>	<i>The difference before and after practice</i>
• I (would feel) feel panicky when a student asks me a question I (couldn't) can't answer.	3,76	3,54	0,22
• I (would find) it easy to admit to class that I don't know the answer to a question a student ask.	3,5	3,28	0,22
• I'm concerned about how to use my testing of student as a useful indication of how effectively I'm teaching them.	3,32	3,1	0,22
• If I am trouble answering a student's question I (will find) find difficult to concentrate on questions that follow.	3,32	3,08	0,24
• I worry about being able to keep the student interested in what I (will teach) teach them.	3,3	3,14	0,16
• I am certain that my own personal "hangs-ups" (will not)do not hinder my teaching effectiveness	3,08	2,94	0,14
• I'm worried	2,96	2,8	0,16
• I feel I will have good recall of the things I know when I am in front of the class.	2,74	2,58	0,16
Total	3,24	3,05	0,19

Confidence and competencies in teaching had a direct impact on the achievement of teaching goals. The fact that the student teacher will speak to teachers/parents/staff, affects the experience of anxiety to them. Based on the item relating to the teaching competencies (Table 7), notice that their means are higher (3.68 to 3.34) than the means of item related to confidence (3.24 to 2.66). Average reference before and after practice for the item related to confidence and competencies in teaching can be seen that there is a difference which is 0.15.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Before practice Mean</i>	<i>After practice Mean</i>	<i>The difference before and after practice</i>
• I feel calm and collected when I think about holding parent-teacher conference	3,68	3,6	0,08
• I (would find) find it easy to speak up in the staff room	3,36	3,22	0,14

• I feel uncomfortable when I speak before a group	3,34	3,22	0,12
• I feel other teachers (will think) think I'm very competent	3,24	3,08	0,16
• I feel confident about my ability to improvise in the classroom	3,06	2,9	0,16
• I feel inferior to other pre-service teacher in my preparation program	2,94	2,8	0,14
• I feel better prepared for teaching than other pre-service teacher in my preparation program	2,92	2,7	0,22
• I feel (I will be) am as competent in the classroom as other pre-service teacher in my preparation program	2,66	2,52	0,14
Total	3,15	3,00	0,15

4. Conclusions

This study aimed to examine how impacted training the level of anxiety to students, during the phases of training as a teacher in teaching practice. Results indicate that students experience anxiety during the teaching practice. Observe, evaluate by Supervisor/Teacher; Discipline & classroom management; Preparation for teaching; Teaching as a profession; Teaching & Effectiveness; Confidence & competencies in teaching were factors affecting the birth of anxiety to teacher students. These found support in studies conducted by Sinclair & Nicoli, 1981; Hart, 1987; Morton LL, Vesco R, Williams N.H. & Awender M.A, 1997.

Supervision of teaching was one of the sources that caused more anxiety to student teachers. After 8-week intensive practice, the level of anxiety triggered by supervision of teaching was high. Anxiety incurred by supervision of teaching and the choice of teaching as profession was factors that changing with the smallest difference before and after practice. Teaching and effectiveness was the factor that had greater difference before and after practice changing. The level of anxiety to student teachers decreased after exercise in 8-week practice. Anxiety decreased as a result of the development of knowledge and skills during training as a teacher (Parsons, 1973). Training had positive impact to the reduction of anxiety in the student teachers. Although the level of anxiety was reduced after training should be noted that anxiety existed after teaching practice on student teacher.

5. Further Research

In this study it was found that anxiety levels decreased as a result of teaching practice but again it exists to students. Studies should be conducted through interviews and observations with student teachers to determine strategies that help reduce the anxiety of teaching during teaching practice.

Since supervision of teaching trigger high levels of anxiety to student teacher, should be made studies how supervisor/teacher / school principals / help with their support in reducing level of the anxiety to student teachings.

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