

THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA IN TEACHER EDUCATION TODAY AND THE FUTURE

by

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Abstract

The paper examined the effects of the use of media in teaching, and the types of media that teachers on training used to teach the secondary school students. 50 teachers undergoing the internship and practicum exercise were randomised and observed two times within a period of three weeks. The results of the survey method used indicated that 50 percent of the teachers used media in teaching. 30 percent haphazardly prepared flash cards to explain points to learners, while 20 percent stated in their lesson plan the instructional materials they intend to use, but failed to teach with them. It was suggested that teacher trainers should intensify efforts to produce and use adequately low cost media for instructing teachers.

Introduction

Teacher education today, is faced with so many problems, some of which are; population explosion, unmodified objectives and contents of the curriculum; lack of new methodologies in teaching overcrowded classes; inadequate facilities; knowledge explosion, absence of media in teaching and poverty of teachers. Added to the problems enumerated above is the haphazard closure of many institutions of higher learning. All the above problems are considered responsible for lack of innovation in teaching. Some of them are responsible for total loss of interests by students teachers and their failure to improvise and use very simple instructional materials as enrichment in their teaching at the secondary school levels. Unfortunately, the present day problems and condition under which teachers are trained without reinforcing how to design, produce and use media have consequences for teacher education today and the future.

Akanbi (1989), Agun and Imogie (1988), Imogie (1987), Adeyanju (1986), and several others have confirmed in their different studies that population explosion and increase in enrolment of learners constitute problems for teachers. The involvement of media in teaching-learning process may therefore be a solution to the overcrowded classrooms.

In 1992, the Faculty of Education of the Obafemi Awolowo University in Ile-Ife began a part-time degree study programme for in-service teachers with about eight hundred students. As at 1995, over three thousand students teachers undertook the matriculation oaths of the University. While several other Universities including Colleges of Education also offer in-service training for teachers, but the shortage of facilities, materials and human resources are found lacking to cater for the needs of these teachers. The question that arises is, would this type of education adequately prepare the teachers for challenges in future? Are these crop of teachers not aiming at personal development rather than refinement of teacher education in future? In spite of knowledge explosion which the already developed countries have continued to export into the developing countries, unending political instability and problems of divorcing education from politics have continued to make the programmes of teachers in the instructions of higher learning impossible to attain. Going by the endemic closure and reopening of the institutions of learning; absence of enough skillful teachers, lack of enough relevant textbooks, the unmodified curriculum; absence of new methodolo-

gies of teaching, inadequate teaching materials and facilities and so on, make it become difficult to predict what teacher education will become in future. Since the rigid curriculum has not allowed teachers to test new approaches to the teaching as a result of these problems, perhaps the application and use of media materials would solve some of these problems.

In a recent survey of the opinion poll of the 1995/96 set of the newly admitted regular students of education in Ife, ninety five percent of the instinctively declined taking to teaching in future. Yet these students have registered for the course titled *EDU 101*; An introduction to the teaching profession. This revelation hold problems for teacher education in Nigeria. Certainly the teacher plays a model role, this includes helping the trainees to achieve certification and recognition. There are however some other traditional and cultural expectations which the teacher has to play inspite of the upsurge in the economic needs of the teacher. Will the challenges of modern times allow dedicated teachers to perform their roles? What is responsible for the refusal of ninety five percent of newly admitted undergraduate students of Ife to take to teaching? It is realised that acquisition of teaching skills is slow and tedious and time consuming. Teaching is a noble profession; it is a call, very difficult though but can be made a lot easier, more interesting and less time consuming if knowledge of improvisation and use of media is intensified in teacher education.

Research in the use and effectiveness of media in teaching had been conducted before 1945 in Britain (Copen 1972) but the results appeared inconclusive. Slides and filmstrips for example have been experimented upon by Hallisel (1962) in Copen (1972). The result was that filmstrip compared favourable well with a visit technique. Colbourne (1971) in Copen, found that series of slide were more effective than manipulating models. In addition, Hartley and Fuller (1971) as reported in Copen (1972) also found that the teaching points in a lecture that were supported by slides were less remembered than points made on blackboard. When Copen (1972) researched into the effects of teaching with sound media (tape) with or without visual, it was reported that both have great teaching potential. In Nigeria a review of the literature showed a marked paucity of hard-data studies on the use of media in teacher education at the secondary school. However, some on going developmental studies on the use of media as a teaching strategy have been embarked upon by post graduate students in the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. One of the available works that relate to the present study is reported as follows.

Agun (1986) looked into the use of instructional material by Grade II and students undergoing the Associative Programme of Education in the Obafemi Awolowo University and found that more of the students who possessed the Associateship Certificate in Education could produce a wider variety of media materials than the teachers who had the Grade II Certificate. 87.5 percent of the Associateship group of teachers and 74.55 percent of the Grade II teachers claimed to have been producing reading and number cards. Imogie (1989) supporting the use of media materials for teaching states that one of the areas of emphasis in Education Technology as a subject for teacher Education programme is the design and production of educational materials. It is realised that the use of educational materials holds the key to successful teaching and learning in the teachers various subject areas. Since Practical Teaching is a prerequisite to teacher training and Teachers Education, it is important to look into the objectives of teacher education.

The Objectives of Teacher Education

The objectives of Teacher Education have been outlined on the National Policy on Education (1981, p. 38) some of them are listed as follows:

(i) To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system; (ii) To encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers; and (iii) To

enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession.

The above policy statement is expected to help the teacher fit into system where he is suppose to render services to younger learners without prejudice.

The National Policy statement (1981, p. 41) on the importance of teacher education also states that teachers will be regularly exposed to innovations in their profession, since the methodology and the curriculum are subject to change from time to time.

Judging from the problems of overpopulation of children in school, absence of materials to teach knowledge explosion and so on it is expected that teachers change their methods of instruction either by devising or of teaching aids. By so doing, the complex and tendous nature of teaching will become simplified. To back up this statement (Imogie 1989) puts it that teachers in contemporary educational development necessitates that teachers be helped to update, enrich, modify and innovate their teaching activities. *UNESCO* (1972) also confirm that teachers need special training which will be handed over to future education. Such training includes supervision, coordination, revision of curricula, innovation in teaching materials and many others.

The statement above concerns the teacher, teacher trainees today and teachers in future. It is believed that sound preparation of teachers would not be enough but teachers should also adopt and use forms of media enrichment for their teaching.

What is Educational Media

Eurats (1972) broad concept of educational technology implies, the preparation and use of educational materials; the application of knowledge about teaching and learning; the planning development and application of curricula; and the organization of personnel, resources and teaching activities. The above definition seems applicable to the present study on the importance of media in teacher education today and in the future.

Importance of Media

The importance of educational media in teaching includes the provision of means of extending learners horizon of experience; provides the teacher with interest compelling springboards which can launch students into a wide variety of learning activities, it helps the teacher to overcome physical differences of presenting subject matter to student. And from the learners perspective, the use of media in teaching provide increased interest in learning; holds the learners attention, offer experiences that could lead to learners self activity, they provide learners with opportunities for self learning independently. Some of the listed materials and activities are what the teachers on training should be able to provide in order to make teaching and learning less difficult. They include the following; wall charts; sketch maps, simple handouts, photographic prints, models, flannel boards, realia ,diorama, film charts, magnetic board, games, simulation and many others. (Akanbi 1989; Akinyemi 1989 ; Imogie 1987; Adeyanju 1987) have suggested that low cost materials be used for carrying out the teaching learning process. Student teachers should be able to create impressions by teaching with self created instructional materials.

Objectives

The purpose of this research was to investigate the effects of the use of media in teaching at the secondary school level by teachers undergoing the teaching practice exercise. Secondly the research examined the types of materials that participants used during the teaching learning process.

Instrumentation

From a list that was prepared by the teaching practice committee, a self design evaluation sheet was made. Three columns were created to accommodate the name, number and discipline of the student teacher. In addition, the student teachers lesson note served as research instrument from where information pertaining to tapes of media used were culled.

Methodology

The subjects of study were 50 randomly selected part III and IV undergraduate students of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. Participants belong to the 1995 set of education students who were on a three weeks practice teaching exercise.

Tasks and Procedure

Subjects of study were directly to enter their names registration number, topics to be taught and discipline inside the appropriate column. The materials they intend to use for teaching their lessons was not required on the information sheet. The researcher however collected the lesson plan, supervised each participants directly and rated their performance. Only five students were observed for about thirty-five minutes each day. The investigator at the end of lessons taught, discussed, gave advise and corrected participants where necessary. The same set of students were observed the second time a week after the first supervision.

Results and Analysis

Table 1
Participants that used Instructional Materials for Teaching their Lessons

(N=50)	N	Percent
Used Materials	25	50.00
Haphazardly used prepared Materials	15	30.00
Indicated, but did not use Materials	10	20.00
Total	50	100.00

Table 2
Types of Media equipment and Instructional Materials used by Students Teachers; First and Second Observations.

N=50	First Observation			Second Observation		
	N	F	%	N	F	%
Media types						
- Programmed Instruction	NIL	NIL	0.00	NIL	NIL	0.00
- Audio Tapes	NIL	NIL	0.00	NIL	NIL	0.00
- Projectors (films, slide, OHP etc)	NIL	NIL	0.00	NIL	NIL	0.00
- Photographic (prints)	NIL	NIL	0.00	01	01	2.00
- Models	02	02	4.00	0.3	0.3	6.00

N-50	First Observation			Second Observation		
- Wall Charts	04	04	8.00	05	05	10.00
- Sketch Maps	NIL	NIL	0.00	NIL	NIL	0.00
- Flash cards	03	03	6.00	12	12	24.00
- Flannel Graphs	NIL	NIL	0.00	NIL	NIL	0.00
- Flip Charts	01	01	2.00	02	02	4.00
- Realia	01	01	2.00	02	02	4.00
- Diorama	NIL	NIL	0.00	NIL	NIL	0.00
- Magnetic board	NIL	NIL	0.00	NIL	NIL	0.00
- Portable board/ Chalk board	38	38	76.00	46	46	92.00

As observed from Table 2, 24 percent of subjects for the study who all failed to use the chalk board on first observation, used other media efficiently to explain points. Those who eventually left the chalk board unused were engaged on out door practical activities like in Fine Arts, Physical Education and Nature study. They however used other forms of media.

Although student teachers wrote their lesson plans stating types of materials they intend to use 20 percent failed to use them. Participants however used some forms of flash cards to teach, having realised that media made their lessons easier to teach. 50 percent of subjects of study made use of relevant, well prepared materials to teach.

Discussions

In compliance with the need to involve media materials in teaching, the student teachers who were investigated used forms of media to teach their lessons. This is a pointer to the fact that media plays an important role in the teaching and learning process. Most of the media types used are however, classified as non-projected. None used sound media the type recorder, radio or record player inspite of the potency they have in making teaching easy (Agun et al 1988). The discipline of Languages and Fine Arts should make sound media attractive to teachers on training. The practices of today is a pointer to what may continue to happen in the future.

Recommendation

It was suggested that training in the use of media be made compulsory for all education students. Here, pre-service and in service students teacher should be encouraged to design, produce, and use media materials for teaching in their different disciplines. Efforts should continue in ensuring that all grades of teachers are adequately supervised especially in the use of projected sound media.

Realising the difficulty of finding the production of expensive media should be supported by the Federal Government. Government should purchase new equipments and replace parts so that trainers could use media to influence the trainee. If this practice is adopted today, teachers of the future are likely to continue with the tradition of teaching with the media.

Conclusion

The use of instructional media in teaching have the potency of increasing acquisition of students teachers skills, competence and change of attitudes. To this end credit should be given to those who can improvise for materials that could lead to adequate mastery of subject matter.

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