

SELECTION AND PREPARATION OF SUITABLE TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES DURING TEACHING PRACTICE: ISSUE IN CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

¹Osuji, Gregory Ekene and ²Anne Mutio Nzau

¹Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education - Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu, Nigeria

²Department of Education – Marist International University College, Karen, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine the challenges student teachers are faced with in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources during their teaching practice in Nairobi, Kenya. Two research objectives guided the study; to identify the criteria student teachers used in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources, and to examine the challenges student teachers are faced with in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources. The study employed the cross-sectional survey design. The study targeted student teachers on teaching practice. Simple random sampling was used to select 50 student teachers. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Proportions and percentages were used to answer the research questions. The findings of the study showed that student teachers considered factors such as: relevance of the resources, appropriateness to learner and the objectives, availability of the resources, and quality of the resources, in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources. The findings also revealed that most student teachers are faced with the challenges of unavailability of teaching and learning resources within the immediate environment, and lack of creative skills to improvise teaching and learning resources. The study concluded that teaching and learning resources are imperative in teaching and learning in this 21st century knowledge society. It therefore recommended that student teachers should be innovative and creative in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources.

Keyword: Educational resources, teaching practice, curriculum implementation, Kenya

Introduction

Adequate selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources is key to enhanced students' academic performance. Teaching and learning resources is always an issue in curriculum implementation. This is because for an enhanced learning outcome, there is need for the utilization of teaching and learning resources in class especially in this 21st century knowledge society. The period of teaching practice enables the student teacher to pay maximum attention to teaching and learning resources used in helping boost the knowledge and skills of learners. The training of teachers for enhanced standard of instruction is schools especially in

teaching and learning is the goal of teacher education (Geduld & Sathorar, 2016). Therefore, for the student teacher to be more effective in class, the adequate selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources that suits the objectives of the lesson and the interest of the learner should be given prominent place.

Teaching practice is a pre-service training provided to help shape the pedagogical horn of the student teacher. Apart from enabling the student teacher to adopt the best pedagogy for their professional training as teachers, it helps them to be creative in the selection, preparation, and utilization of teaching and learning resources for enhanced academic

performance of the learners (Osuji & Oluoch-Suleh, 2017). It is worthy to note that poor performance of students in any standardized examination is as result of not only the poor methodology of the teacher, but also failure to make use of adequate teaching and learning resources in the teaching and learning process (Mahabeer, 2018). Therefore, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and help the learners to be focused in class, there is need for proper selection, preparation, and utilization of teaching and learning resources (Nomlomo & Sosibo, 2016).

Teaching practice is one of the most integral components of teacher training in any educational institution. It grants student teachers experience in the actual teaching and learning environment (Kruger & Muller, 2020). Hence during teaching practice, a student teacher is given the opportunity to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of the teaching profession. Further, student teachers endeavour to inculcate the value of teaching practice and perceive teaching practice as the crux of their preparation for the teaching profession since, it provides for the real interface between student-hood and professional membership (Graham, 2016). It is also an experience that creates a mixture of anticipation, anxiety, excitement and apprehension to the student teachers as they commence their teaching practice (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2013).

In the same vein, Maraias and Meier (2014) asserted that teaching practice represents a range of experiences to which student teachers are exposed to when they work in classrooms and schools. They further argued that teaching practice is a challenging but important part of teacher training, especially in developing countries, where the effectiveness of the teaching practice can be diminished or eroded by a

range of challenges, such as geographical distance, low and uneven levels of teachers expertise, a wide-ranging lack of teaching and learning resources as well as lack of discipline among a wide cross-section of learners and educators. These challenges if not addressed, may affect student teachers performance during teaching practice and may in the long run affect their perception of the teaching profession.

Consequently, teaching practice is meant to provide for the authentic context within which student teachers are exposed to experience the complexities and richness of the reality of being a teacher. This process then gives the student teacher an opportunity to establish whether the right career choice has been made or not. Drawing from this, Osuji and Oluoch-Suleh (2017) considered teaching practice as the starting point in the teaching profession, in which the cooperating teacher and the college supervisor bestow their faith as well as their wisdom in helping the student teacher to become a full pledged teacher. Hence teaching practice is one of the long standing methods of assessing student teachers who wish to become professional teachers. Teaching practice is also an opportunity to familiarize with conditions under which the students will work as trained professionals (Calderhead & Shorrocks, 2015).

During teaching practice, student teachers are required always to prepare good schemes of work and lesson plans and then select suitable teaching and learning resources that fit in their lesson content and use it in the classroom for optimal classroom instruction. Teaching and learning resources are essential instruments in the teaching and learning process in this 21st century knowledge society. They should be use often in order to reinforce lesson content because they enhance effective teaching and learning (Gandeebo, 2014). In addition, the teaching

and learning resources when integrated well with the lesson content help to make classroom learning interesting and help the learners to participate actively since they are able to interact with the resources. More so, the learners are able to retain what they have learnt in class for a longer time and are able to understand better the lesson content. Hence, the need to have criteria in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources for the good of the learners.

In every activity in which human beings wish to undertake successfully, they must make very good prior preparations. Therefore when it comes to teaching and learning, the teachers are required to prepare themselves very well before going to the classroom. One among the many things they should prepare is the teaching and learning resources which are essential part of the learning process. If these teaching and learning resources are prepared early and planned on how they will be integrated with the lesson content, they add value to the lesson and reinforce learning, thus making the learners to be attentive to every step and participate actively.

When preparing teaching and learning resources, Macharia, Githua and Mboroki (2019) urged student teachers to use some criteria which will help them to prepare suitable teaching and learning resources that meet the needs of the learners. This criterion entails the use of some planning questions which the student teachers should ask themselves when preparing teaching and learning resources. The first question the student teacher should ask himself is whether the teaching and learning resource is needed. If yes, the student teacher should go ahead and look for a relevant teaching resource which satisfies the felt need appropriately and if it is not available the student teacher should use creative skills learnt at school to improvise one. The second planning question which

the student teacher should also put into consideration is how the teaching and learning resource will be used. The student teacher then has to decide on whether the teaching and learning resource is to be used for presenting new information or to describe new skills. In support of this, Patel and Mukwa (2013) argued that the presentation of new information or skills will require a detailed explanation with many examples and practice exercise in order to enhance effective teaching and learning. The third planning question is the type of learners to whom the teaching resource will be needed. This means that the student teacher should have in mind the entry behaviour of the learners they intend to use the teaching resource on. This is because, the student teacher needs to build their ideals on what their learners already know. Finally, when preparing teaching and learning resources, the student teachers should ensure that the teaching and learning resource aims at helping the learners to acquire sustainable knowledge and skills regarding the topic of the day.

In conclusion, when preparing teaching and learning resources Osuji and Oluoch-Suleh (2017) proposed to the student teachers to seek the opinions of their colleagues on the nature and effectiveness of their teaching resource by asking them about their views. For example they could ask questions like: what do you think about the message conveyed by my teaching resource? Is it appealing? Offensive? Boring? Overloaded? Appropriate? Or effective? After getting the views of colleagues, the student teacher should revise the teaching and learning resource once more and then incorporate the good suggestions given by their colleagues.

The selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources is not without some challenges. It has been noted by many researchers that student teachers face

a lot of challenges especially when it comes to preparation of teaching and learning resources. For example, Maraias and Meier (2014) conducted a research on the experiences of student teachers during teaching practice and discovered that, one of those many experiences was on the challenges student teachers encountered in preparing teaching and learning resources. The results of the study revealed that, most schools where the student teachers did their teaching practice did not have enough or no teaching resources to facilitate effective teaching and learning. In the same vein, Gandebo (2014) confirmed the existence of the same challenge in their research on the experiences of teacher trainees in the rural secondary schools in Ghana where the researcher personally observed student teachers frustrated and lamenting about the challenges they encountered with little or no teaching resources to content with. Furthermore, Macharia, Githua and Mboroki (2019) in their research noted that the student teachers faced the challenge of integrating the lesson content with proper teaching resource within the specified period of time and sometimes the message was not well understood by the learners. This implies that, the student teachers lack creative skills on how to integrate and balance between the lesson content and the teaching resource and harmonizing them properly in order to achieve the desired objectives within the specified period of time.

Despite the great importance of teaching and learning resources in the teaching process, research shows that many student teachers are faced with the challenge of scarcity of resources and lack of creative skills in selecting and preparing proper teaching and learning resource that matches with their lesson content, as well as the challenge of integrating it with lesson content within the specified period of time among

many other challenges (Osuji & Oluoch-Suleh, 2017). If these challenges are not addressed, Gandebo (2014) opined that, teaching practice becomes a demoralizing experience. It is against this backdrop that this current study focused on student teachers' selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources that suits the objectives of their lessons and considers the interests of their learners in Nairobi, Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

The 21st century knowledge society has prompted schools to be more creative in instructional service delivery. Teaching and learning resources is an issue in curriculum implementation especially during teaching practice. The selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources is a very important exercise in the preparation of student teachers in becoming professional teachers. This is because it helps the teacher to gain confidence and competence in delivering the lesson content. In addition, the use of teaching and learning resources helps to reinforce and enhance the understanding of the lesson content as well as making learning interesting, and help the learners to recall what they have learnt easily.

Despite the great importance of selecting, preparing, and using teaching and learning resources in the process of teaching and learning, many student teachers fail to select proper teaching and learning resources for classroom teaching and learning. Many a time, they lack creativity on what to select, prepare, or improvise for the class. This makes their class boring, and impede positive learning outcomes in the learners. It is against this background that this current study determined the challenges student teachers are faced with in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources during their teaching practice

in the 21st century knowledge society of Nairobi, Kenya.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the challenges student teachers are faced with in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources during their teaching practice in Nairobi, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify the criteria student teachers used in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources.
2. Examine the challenges student teachers are faced with in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources.

Method

The study adopted a quantitative paradigm, specifically, the cross-sectional survey design. The design allowed the researchers to gather information at once from the sampled population, summarise, present and interpret the data (Osuji & Oluoch-Suleh, 2022). The study was conducted in secondary schools in Nairobi Kenya. The target population was student teachers from Marist International University College, Karen, Nairobi, Kenya, who were on teaching practice. Out of the 75 student teachers on teaching practice, the researchers conveniently selected 50 through simple random sampling.

Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections. The first section dealt with demographic information of the student teachers which included the gender, age, subject combination, period and area within which the student teachers had their teaching practice. The second section sought to find out the criteria student teachers use when selecting and preparing teaching and learning resources. Then, section three examined the

challenges student teachers are faced with when selecting and preparing teaching and learning resources.

The instrument was subjected to face validation by two specialists; one in curriculum studies, and the other in research and evaluation. The specialists made comments based on the purpose of the study, and the specific objectives presented. The researchers effected the corrections made. The instrument was also subjected to reliability test. Test-retest was used on a population outside the sampled population for the study. To be precise, it was used on students of a different institution of higher education who were also involved in teaching practice in Kisumu County, Kenya. The population had the same characteristics. Cronbach Alpha was used to test the reliability of the instrument. The overall coefficient consistency was 0.7. This signified that the instrument was positive and strong. Therefore, very reliable for data collection.

Regarding data collection, the researchers personally administered the questionnaire to the student teachers after following the ethics of research. After the respondents had finished answering the questions, the researchers collected the questionnaire at the spot and kept ready for data analysis and interpretation. The data collected were coded in the computer using statistical package of social sciences (SPSS, IBM Version 21). The study used descriptive statistics in answering the research questions. That is, frequencies and percentages were used. This method enabled the researchers to give meaning to the data so collected. Tables, graphs, and pie-charts were used to present the data. Ethically, the consent of the respondents was sought and they freely appended their signatures to be part of the study.

Result

Demographic Information of the Respondents

Distribution of Respondents by Gender

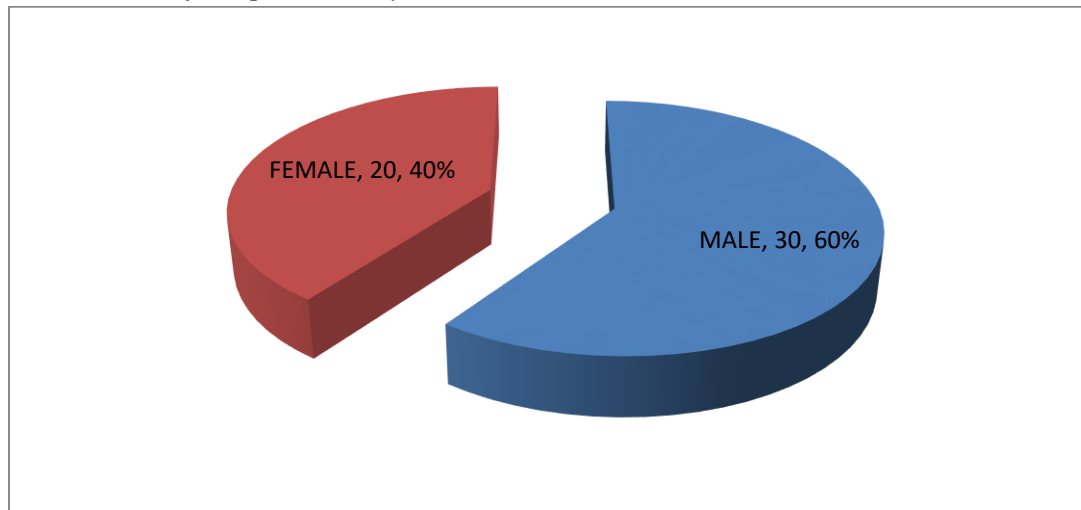


Figure 1: Gender of the Respondents

Figure 1 shows the number of male and female student teachers who participated in the study. From the analysis it was found that out of 50 respondents, 30 (60%) were males while 20 (40%) were females. This implies that majority of the respondents were males thus showing a gender imbalance. This could have been due to the fact that majority of the respondents were religious Brothers. The inclusion of gender in this study was therefore important because it ensured that there was a good percentage representation of both male and female student teachers thus making the data rich and valid.

Distribution of Respondents by the Duration of Teaching Practice

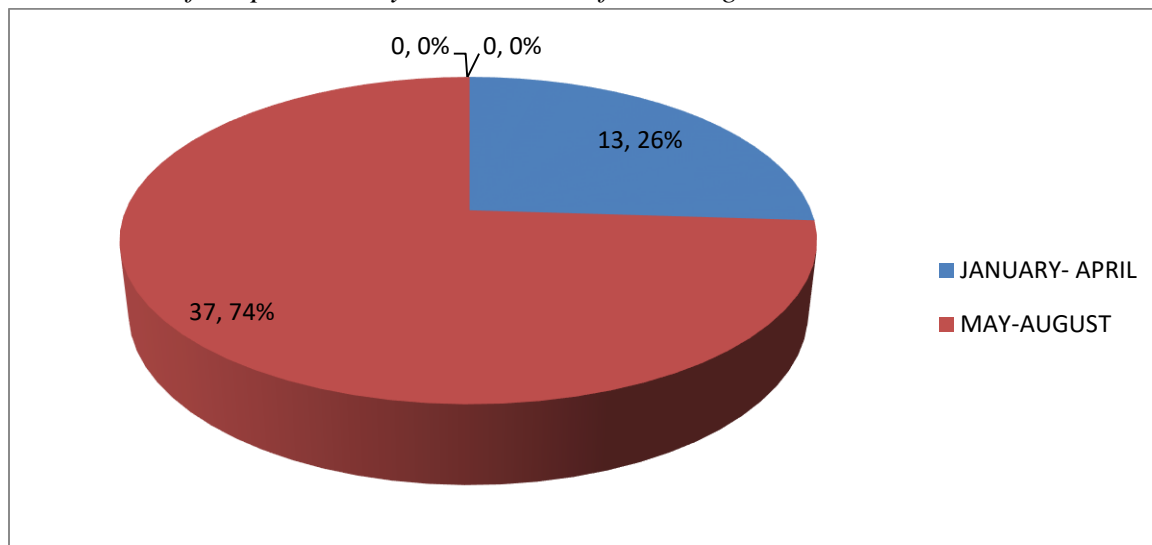


Figure 2: Duration of Teaching Practice

The figure 2 shows that, 13 (26%) of the student teachers who participated in the study went for their teaching practice between January-April and the rest 37 (74%) did their teaching practice between the month of May-August. It is then a clear indication that majority of the student teachers did their teaching practice between the month of May-August of which many universities and teacher training colleges in Kenya consider it being the best time to go for teaching practice. It also reveals that the teaching practice was conducted for a period of 3 months which the Ministry of Education in Kenya considers it to be sufficient period to expose student teachers to

- How will the teaching and learning resource be used?
- For which group of learners will the teaching and learning resource be used?
- Will the teaching and learning resource help the learners to understand the topic better?

Table 1 and Figure 3 display the frequency with which the above planning questions were put into considerations when the student teachers were preparing their teaching and learning resources.

Table 1
Frequency at which the Planning Questions were

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Very often	15	30.0
Often	25	50.0
Very rare	6	12.0
Rare	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

the practical and actual teaching in order to build their confidence and exercise their professional competence before they are confirmed as professional teachers.

Criteria Student Teachers used in the Selection and Preparation of Teaching and Learning Resources

The researchers sought to find out whether the student teachers put the following criteria in place as they were selecting and preparing teaching and learning resources for the class. These criteria/planning questions were:

- Is the teaching and learning resource needed?

put into Consideration

Figure 3: Frequency at which the Planning Questions were Considered

The data shows that 15 (30%) of the student teachers very often put into consideration the above planning questions while 25 (50%) often considered them, 6 (12%) very rarely considered them and 4 (8%) rarely considered them. From the results, it is clear that majority of the student teachers (80%) put into considerations the four planning questions. This implies that the student teachers were prepared well by their respective lecturers during the course on “methods of teaching and learning” and micro-teaching sessions on the factors they should put into

considerations when preparing teaching and learning resources. Hence, they were able to put into practice what they learnt.

Challenges Student Teachers are faced with in the Selection and Preparation of Teaching and Learning Resources

Unavailability of Teaching and Learning Resources within the Immediate Environment

The researchers sought to find out whether unavailability of teaching and learning resource

within the immediate environment constituted a challenge. The figure 4 shows that 15 (30%) of the student teachers very often faced the challenge of unavailability of teaching and learning resources within the immediate environment while 29 (58%) often faced the challenge, 2 (4%) very rarely faced the challenge, 3 (6%) rarely faced the challenge, and 1 (2%) never faced the challenge.

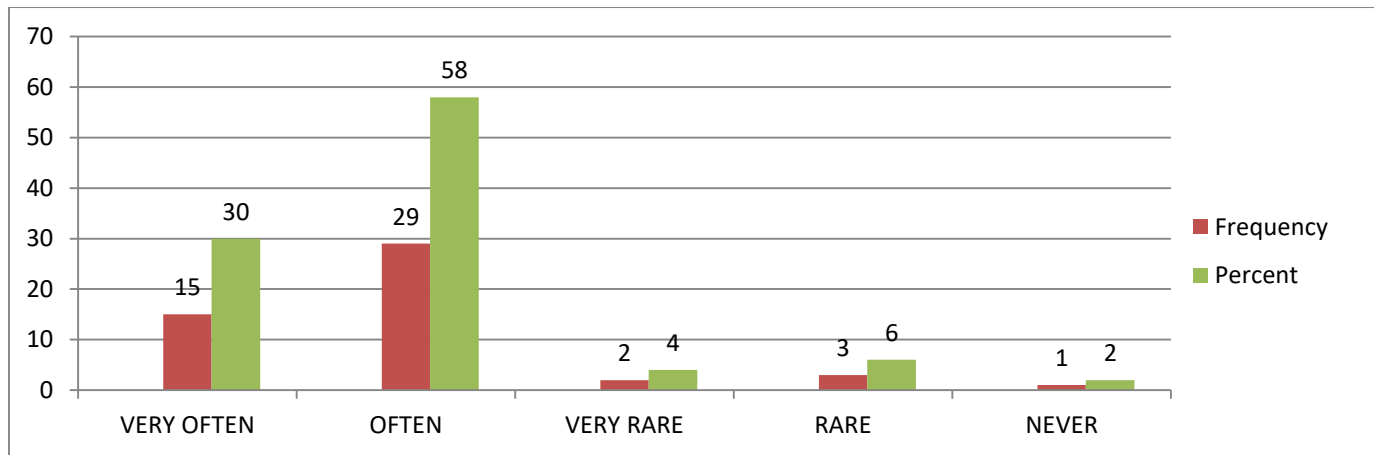


Figure 4: The Frequency with which Unavailability of Teaching and Learning Resources within the Immediate Environment Constituted a Challenge

Lack of Creative Skills to Improvise a Teaching and Learning Resource that Suits the Lesson Content

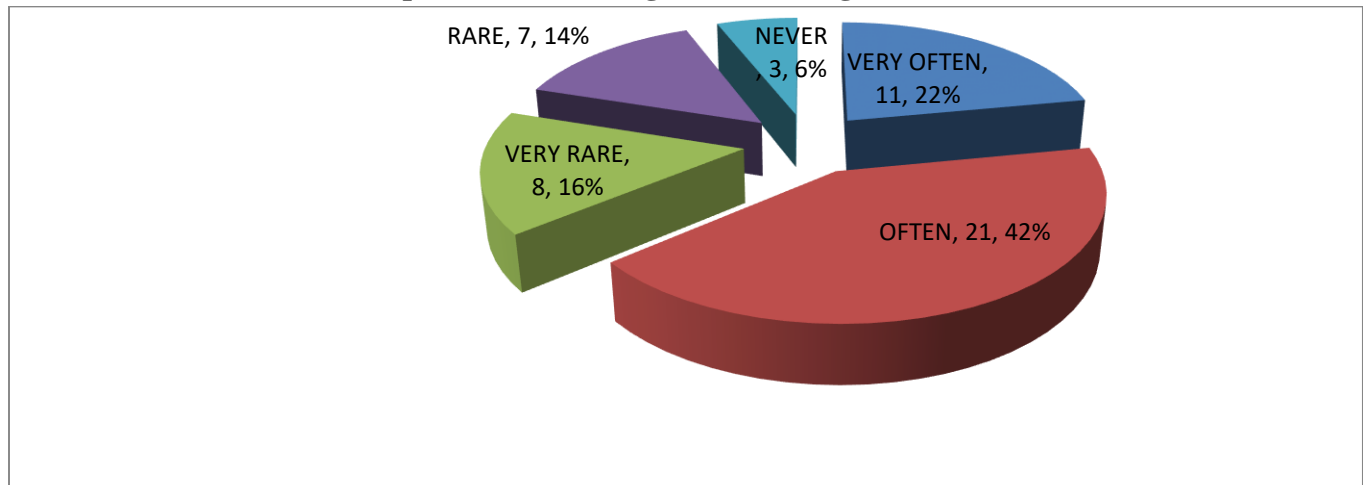


Figure 5: The Frequency with which Lack of Creative Skills to Improvise a Teaching and Learning Resource that Suits the Lesson Content was a Challenge

The data presented in figure 5 shows that out of 50 student teachers, 11 (22%) very often faced the challenge of “lack of creative skills to improvise a teaching and learning resource that suits the lesson content” while 21 (42%) often faced the challenge, 8 (16%) very rarely faced the challenge, 7 (14%) rarely faced the challenge and 3 (6%) never faced the challenge. This implies that majority (64%) of the student teachers lacked creative skills to improvise a teaching and learning resource that suits the lesson content and this could be due to lack of competence and seriousness with their work.

Discussion of the Findings

From the findings, it is crystal clear that teaching and learning resources are so imperative in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, adequate and proper selection and preparation of these resources enhance learning outcomes. In research question one, it was identified that some criteria were necessary to put in place as the student teacher selects and prepares teaching and learning resources. Ukle (2020) supports this idea by emphasizing that when selecting and preparing teaching and learning resources, a teacher who is professionally trained should put into consideration some planning questions which should act as a guide in order to effectively prepare a well-integrated teaching and learning resource that enhance teaching and learning.

Regarding the challenges inherent in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources, the study found that majority of the student teachers (88%) faced the challenge of unavailability of teaching and learning resources within the immediate

environment. This findings concur with the study of Maraias and Meier (2014) that student teachers on teaching practice did not have enough or no teaching resources. The supervisor on teacher practice also confirmed this. A teaching practice supervisor had this to say: “student teachers are not very resourceful in manipulating the immediate environment” (Teaching Practice Supervisor 2023, personal communication, 10th July). This shows that the student teachers faced the challenge of unavailability of teaching and learning resources within the immediate environment because some were not skilled and creative enough in manipulating the locally available resources.

It was also found that most student teachers always want to rush through the lesson and deliver the content without much prior preparation whereas creativity spirit requires time of which many of the student teachers find it too tasking. This makes them to find it difficult to select and prepare suitable teaching and learning resources that meet the needs of the learners. This goes contrary to the submissions of Gandebo (2014) that an effective teacher always have at the ‘back’ of their mind the nature and the needs of each learner when selecting and preparing teaching and learning resources.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Teaching practice is an important component in the teacher preparation programme, and it is very important in the professionalization of teachers. It prepares the student teachers holistically to the actual teaching, and enables them to perform different tasks with the learner at the centre of all the undertakings. One of the major tasks of a teacher is to prepare teaching and learning resources that help them to enhance learning outcomes. In the education enterprise, teaching and learning resources are key

issues in curriculum implementation. In this 21st century knowledge society for example, the need for the proper and adequate selection and preparation of teaching and learning resources cannot be overemphasized. The study has been able to identify some criteria in the selection and preparation of teaching and learning materials. It also examined some of the challenges inherent in doing this.

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers make the following recommendations:

1. The student teachers should be innovative and creative in improvising teaching and learning resources from the locally available materials.
2. Student teachers should create time and be enthusiastic in selecting and preparing teaching and learning resources for their classes.
3. Student teachers should endeavour to use teaching and learning resources all the time while implementing the curriculum.

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