



FACULTY OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**PREPARATION FOR MUSIC TEACHING: CHALLENGES FACED BY
PRACTICUM STUDENTS FROM THE MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAM**

EDU 650

MOHD FARHAN MASHUGI
2005668130

Bachelor of Music Education (Hons.)
MU 220

2009

PREPARATION FOR MUSIC TEACHING: CHALLENGES FACED BY PRACTICUM STUDENTS FROM THE MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

Mohd Farhan Mashugi

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In general, the main objective of teacher training programmes in higher education institutions is to provide the knowledge and training necessary for aspiring teachers. It is also to provide exposure to the actual school environment and situation. This allows the trainee teacher to be familiar with challenging school situations as well as the experience of teaching in the real world.

Various higher education institutions such as the Maktab Perguruan, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) dan Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Shah Alam offer the Music Education program in order to train future music teachers to have the music related knowledge before they are assigned to schools.

As a requirement for all graduates, all trainee teachers are required to undergo a practicum for a period of time. The real teaching experience is to give them a chance to practice what have been learnt during their four years of study in the degree programmes.

The music subject is a mandatory subject for all primary school students. Currently it is offered in selected secondary schools throughout Malaysia. From a few pilot schools in the early 90s, the number of secondary schools offering the music subject has increased today. In order to ensure only trained music teachers are posted to these schools, the ministry assigns new graduates from bachelor degree programmes offered either at UiTM or UPSI.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Trainee teachers from the UiTM's Faculty of Music complete a four year course in music education. The curriculum of this program ensures that the trainee teachers become confident and knowledgeable music teachers who will be able to face the challenges when they become teachers.

Generally, a trainee teacher will face many challenges at school. The challenges are varied and may also depend on how competent or how ready these trainees are to take on the role of teachers. Challenges may come from many quarters, such as students' attitudes, fellow teachers and also the school administration.

As stated by Norhaya Omar (2008), the presence of trainee teachers may be exploited by the school administration. Additional periods of teaching other subjects besides music is a common occurrence for music trainee teachers. This practice causes trainee teachers to focus lose of focus in the teaching of music subject in their effort to accommodate the additional subjects. They usually are given no choice but to take on the additional responsibility because they depend on the school for their evaluation. The

teaching workload, subject amount and other clerical works can effect the teacher's emotional state.

It is important to prepare the trainee teachers physically, mentally and emotionally. All these aspects is important in teaching music. Lack of confidence will make the trainee teacher become less effective in teaching. In addition, trainee teacher may also feel less confident in facing students from different ethnic groups and students from different socioeconomic status.

Hence, this research is conducted in order to analyse the perception of trainee teachers towards their preparation and their ability to teach the music subject in school with the focus on teaching the music theory subject.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this research is to analyse the challenges faced by Music Education trainee teachers during their practicum experience in school.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the challenges that trainee teachers face while teaching music theory in the classroom?
2. What are the methods used by trainee teachers in order to handle the students' misbehaviour during the process of teaching and learning music
3. What are the additional workloads that need to be carried out by the trainee teachers?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Information gathered from the students in the Music Education program could give the information needed by the faculty in order to increase the effectiveness of the curriculum and the students' readiness in facing practicum. Findings from this research will give feedback on the problems faced by the trainee teachers during practicum. In addition, this research will also identify the teacher's weaknesses in teaching subject with the focus on music theory subject.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Its not an easy task to become a quality teacher with good leadership and presentation skills. Students that aspire to become an educator need to work hard in order to prepare themselves with the basic skills and teaching techniques. This is so that they could become effective teachers in the future.

According to Teachout, J (2001),⁷ teaching behavior is so much an expression of teacher's personality that the skills he will use, how he will use them, and their effects on

pupils' achievement are in a large measure dependent upon his personality". More recent research done by Teachout, J (2001) stated that "the teacher's personality is considered by many to have a pivotal effect in the classroom." p.180). With that, the effective teacher is a teacher that masters and has knowledge in the learning theories and human psychology. Armed with knowledge, teachers may be able to carry out their duties more effectively. Effectiveness in teaching depends on the teacher's ability to plan and execute teaching plans. Effective teachers are teachers that is just, democratic, responsive, fair, kind, attractive, lively, responsible, stable, calm and confident.

Self-Efficacy Theory

The research by Bandura (1994) suggested that there are positive relations between self efficacy and achievement. Furthermore, his study has shown that confidence is observable in a self-efficacious person. It can be concluded that being confident is important in the education field.

Strong willpower can make sure we achieve according to our expectations. In the music subject, the knowledge factor is not enough for us to become a good teacher. This means that having the knowledge alone will not guarantee that they will be good teachers. In this context, the element of confidence is very important in ensuring the teacher could fulfill his objectives and help the students to learn what needs to be taught.

According to Bandura (1994, p. 2), "people's beliefs about their efficacy can be developed by four main sources of influence. The most effective way of creating a strong sense of efficacy is through mastery experiences. Successes build a robust belief in one's personal efficacy. Failures undermine it, especially if failures occur before a sense of efficacy is firmly established". This is very important for a trainee teacher as they should have high confidence level in order to face the challenges in school.

Bandura (1994) also said that, "high academic self-efficacy is shown to be a very strong predictor of academic achievement. Increased self-efficacy is accompanied by enhanced intrinsic motivation, the ability to sustain levels of motivation and achievement-oriented behaviors, persistence in the face of difficulties, and better problem solving (p. 200). Important aspects such as teaching preparation, teaching approach and the teacher self is the most basic skills needed to be acquired by the trainee teachers. If these aspects are not given priority, it will affect the students when they teach later.

Student teaching experience

Norhaya Omar (2008) in her thesis suggested that the main objective of teacher training is to give the future teachers an experience and exposure related to the teaching world. Here they will analyse and apply what they have learnt related to teaching and learning. During the training, they will be monitored and guided by their lecturer. They will also be supervised by the principal and their mentor in their school.

According to Abu Hassan & Meor Ibrahim (1997) "a trained teacher must have a good knowledge, appropriate skills and teaching techniques, and having a good personality. These aspects are important in creating an excellent teacher" (p. 5). Teachers need to have an in-depth knowledge of the subject he is going to teach. A teacher that has less

knowledge will cause the students to trust the teacher less. During the teacher training, the teacher's role will transmit from a student to a teacher. This role transmitting needs a strong awareness and maturity in order to ensure the whole experience will give good outcomes.

Testing and Evaluation

Teachers must be skillful in asking questions with specific objectives in mind. Some of the reason of asking questions are to get information, to test understanding, to get attention, to give answers and to strengthen understanding. Provocative questions that are thought-provoking can stimulate and motivate students to think constructively and innovatively. Questions can be direct, structured or open ended. Questions can be created with consideration of the concepts of Bloom's taxonomy which are knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Classroom management

Famous psychologist B.F Skinner stressed on the approach of reward and punishment. positive and negative reinforcement are one of the most effective used in teaching and learning. Control in classroom is the most important factor in teaching. When the classroom is in control, the students will be able to give their attention to what is being taught. Psychological approach can help trainee teachers handle problematic students. Generally the effectiveness of classroom teaching usually depends the ability of the teacher to control their students.

According to Santrock (2008), "in educational circles, it is commonly said that no one pays any attention to good classroom management until it is missing. If classrooms are effectively managed, they run smoothly and students are actively engaged in learning" (p. 488). Teachers need to employ a wide variety of methods to convey the lesson in theory and practical. Teachers need to adjust their strategy and think of suitable teaching methods for the subject. This will help maximize children's learning opportunities (Santrock. 2008)

The effectiveness of teaching has a big influence on the classroom management. For example seating arrangement may help promote discipline in the classroom, giving it a more conducive environment for learning. Once this is achieved, the teacher can plan their teaching well and the lessons can be effective.

A teacher is considered to be effective when his teaching gives positive outcomes to their students. A good teacher needs to be accountable in the classroom. The clarity and the explanation of the lesson will make the lesson understandable and interesting. Hence, a clear and easily understood lesson will make the students more interested. Abd. Rahim Abd. Rashid (1999) stated that teachers should use easy language, clear explanations and discuss at the level of the students. Teachers need to avoid using complicated language and difficult explanations and bombastic words. This means the approach and presentation between primary school and secondary school, smart and slow learners, and normal with special students are different. A clear explanation will make it easy for the students to accept and understand the lesson presented by the teacher and it will increase the students' performance.