

APPLICATION OF MICRO TEACHING SKILL FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF TEACHERS: EXPLORING OPINION OF TRAINEE TEACHERS

By

KAUSTUVA BANERJEE *

SANTOSHI HALDER **

ABHIJIT GUHA ***

* Assistant Professor, Loreto College, Kolkata, India.

** Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Calcutta, Kolkata, India.

*** Assistant Professor, Ramakrishna Mission Sikshanamandira University, Kolkata, India.

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to understand the opinion of student trainee teachers towards Microteaching skills. In this study, survey method was adopted. The participants of this study were 130 trainee students from four Teacher Training Colleges of West Bengal, India in 2013-14 sessions. The tools used in the study for data collection was a questionnaire comprising of two parts, made by the researcher. Part-A comprises of 6 items and Part-B consists of 15 items. The Microteaching skills have been selected according to the revised B.Ed Calcutta University syllabus. Data were analyzed using Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard deviation). 't' test was performed to determine the differences in opinion towards Microteaching among rural-urban located students, deputed and fresher students and among male and female students. The findings revealed that, the deputed and fresher trainees hold mostly similar opinion towards the different skills of Microteaching and the different components within it. There is a difference in opinion between rural and urban located trainees and overall the respondents have a favorable opinion towards Microteaching skills which would help them to face the real classroom situations. To improve the quality of teachers, it is important to study the usage and applicability of Microteaching skills.

Keywords: Micro-Teaching, Teaching Skills, In-service and Pro-service Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching-learning is a continuous process which restates the fact that teachers should always continue learning and only then the students will learn differently. Teacher education is the process of providing potential teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to teach effectively in a classroom. Increasing the quality and standard of education is a matter of concern in education and are the national priorities for all nations (Rama & Reddy 2013). Microteaching has been proved to be an evidence based strategy and an important innovation in the field of teaching which helps in enhancement of the quality of trainee teachers. Teaching is referred to the activities that are designed and performed to produce change in student (pupil) behavior. Teaching comprises of various complex and simple teaching skills. Thus teaching skills can be defined as a set of interrelated component teaching

behaviors for the realization of specific instructional objectives. Microteaching is an innovative scaled-down teaching technique in teaching which is a process of subjecting samples of human behavior to five R's of 'recording', 'Reviewing', 'Responding', 'Refining', and 'Redoing' which can be applied to both pre-service and in service teachers. Microteaching helps teachers to improve tremendously both in contents and methods of teaching while developing specific teaching skills with immediate feedback combined with the opportunity to practice in a simulated environment. Microteaching reduces the complexities of normal classroom teaching, thus allowing the teacher to concentrate on the acquisition of teaching skills.

The Indian model of Microteaching has been developed by NCERT as an outcome of the research by the Department of Teacher Education and the Centre of

Advanced Study in Education, Baroda in 1975 in order to study the effectiveness of the microteaching skill which was proposed to be used for the training of teacher educators. In the Indian context, Microteaching has the following advantages over the traditional methods of learning. Microteaching approach stimulates techniques which help a training institution to overcome the hardships faced in the task of organizing student teaching. Complex task of teaching is looked upon as a set of simpler skills comprising specific classroom behavior. Thus it helps in reducing the complexities of the normal classroom teaching as it is scaled down by reducing the size and duration of the class. It provides a more appropriate technique of learning the art of teaching than the traditional method. It provides the scope for simulation to practice and focus on training skills and instructional techniques reducing the time, energy and effort of the student pupil. It has provision for immediate, systematic, pin-pointed and objective feedback in behavioral terms. Microteaching also caters to the need of individual differences in the training of teachers.

Research Overview

Researches in Micro-teaching are mostly of experimental nature. Dutta. (1998), found that the traditional teaching technique, the Micro teaching technique and integration training through the additive pattern had a significant and positive effect in developing general teaching competence. Panda, (2004), pointed out that the microteaching lessons were significantly better than other taught traditional techniques on four teaching skills - induction, questioning, explaining and blackboard summary. A Qualitative study conducted by Sen, A. I. (2009). Prospective teachers stated that during the peer microteaching practices, their self-confidence improved, they found the chance to observe themselves while gaining experience. Finally, the participants concluded that practice helped reduce the level of first-time teaching anxiety.

Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, (2011), studied a small-scale, research into lecturer's perceived impact of microteaching within a postgraduate certificate in Higher Education Teaching in Ireland. Participation in

Microteaching has provided a sense of validation for much of what these lecturers do and how they do it, which has resulted in ongoing critical reflection and peer discussion. Although initially it gave rise to anxiety among some participants, Microteaching has led to greater self-awareness and increased confidence in participants. The Microteaching sessions provided an opportunity for the lecturers to gain insights into their teaching role, engage in dialogue and become more reflective about their practice. Ajileye, & Ajibola, M. (2013), studied the effect of Microteaching skills on student teacher's performance on teaching practice in Colleges of Education, North-Central Nigeria. The study employed inductive and deductive research methods and analysis where data were collected and analyzed based on reflective effect of microteaching and field experiences as decided in advance by the researchers. The study revealed that Microteaching contents, resources and materials need to be reviewed for optimum result.

There has been constant and consistent recommendation by the earlier researchers on the line that the in-service teachers training programmes should be continued in future by overcoming the deficiencies in the relevant areas. From the research overview it can be concluded that researches on Microteaching in Education has started recently and huge application was found in medical studies.

Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following questions:

- Which micro-teaching skill is found to be most important by the deputed and fresher trainees?
- Which is the most preferred and least preferred component of skill determined by the opinion of deputed and fresher trainees?
- Whether there is any difference in opinion about Microteaching between deputed and fresher trainees?
- Is there any effect of habitat on the opinion about micro-teaching?
- Whether there is any difference in opinion about micro-teaching between males and female trainees?

Methodology

Operational definition of the terms

Teaching Skills

Teaching skill is a set of teacher behaviors which are especially effective in bringing about the desired changes in pupils. Some of the skills of Microteaching techniques are : Skill of Introducing, Skill of Questioning, Skill of Explaining, Skill of Black-board Writing, and Skill of Achieving Closure.

Skill of Introducing:

The skill of introducing a lesson involves establishing rapport with the learners, promoting their attentions, and exposing them to essential contents.

Skill of Questioning:

Probing questions are those which help the pupils to think in depth about the various aspects of the problem. The components of this skill are Prompting, Seeking Further Information, Refocusing, and Redirecting Questions.

Skill of Explaining:

Skill of explaining is presenting the subject-matter in the simplified form before the pupils and making it acquirable. It involves ability of the teacher to describe logically 'How', 'Why' and 'What' of concept, event etc. Components of this skill are Clear beginning statement, Lack of Irrelevant Statement, Fluency in Language, Connecting Links and Use of Proper Words.

Skill of Black Board Writing:

Blackboards can be used to provide a holistic picture of the lesson. A good blackboard work brings clearness in perception and the concepts being taught, and adds

variety to the lesson. The components of the skill of blackboard writing are legibility, size and alignment, highlighting main points, utilization of the space, blackboard summary, position of the teacher and contact with the pupils.

Skill of Achieving Closure:

Achieving closure is when a student - teacher delivers lecture and sums up properly and in an attractive way.

Sample Selection

In case of sample selection, the researcher took a random sample of 130 B.Ed trainee students from four Teacher-Training Colleges of West Bengal. The Sample split-up is given in Figure 1.

Tool used

Tool for data collection was a well structured questionnaire prepared by the researcher. The questionnaire consists of student teachers' general information and had two parts. Part-A consist of six items and Part-B consist of fifteen items. Part-A questions had to be rated according to their importance, the highest been rated maximum and lowest rated as minimum. Part-B questionnaire was designed on Likert- type scale. Each point on the scale carries a score. Responses indicating the least favorable option is given the least score (1) and the most favorable are given the highest score (5).

Analyses

The data were treated statistically using mean and standard deviation. t-tests were done for testing the

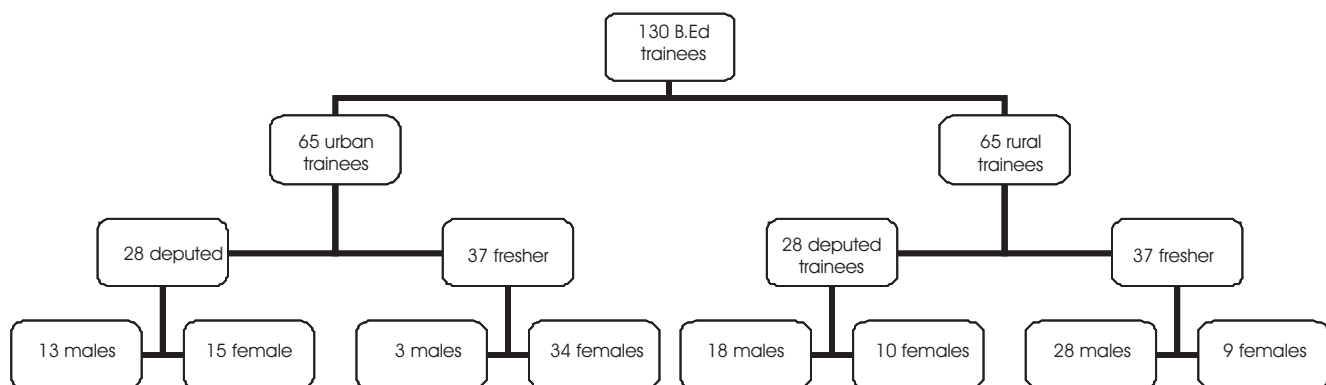


Figure 1. Overview of Sample Selection

hypothesis and finding out the significance of difference between two means.

Findings

This paper intends to find out the opinion of student trainees on Microteaching skills and its components. Each respondent had to complete the questionnaire and thus the following are the findings.

Table 1 represents the demographic characteristics of the selected sample. Of the total 130 respondents, 56 are deputed and 74 are fresher candidates. Equal respondents are taken from rural and urban places and 62 are male and 68 are female respondents.

From Figure 2, it can be well understood that both deputed and fresher trainees consider the skill of explaining and the skill of introducing as the two most important Microteaching skills. Jalkute & Udhav (2012) also found that 25% respondents consider blackboard writing skill as a more difficult skill to achieve.

Skill of Explaining is more or less a traditional skill which generally even a lay person conceives as most important in teaching. If a teacher does not know how to explain a phenomenon properly then he/she can never be a good teacher. The survey shows that both the fresher and deputed trainees had similar opinion and both considered the skill of using blackboard as the least important skill, which might be due to the fact that it is utilized in all the other skills also.

Figure 3 shows the relative importance given to each components of skill of introducing. In the skill of introducing, both fresher and deputed trainees consider securing attention and arousing motivation as the most preferred component and specifying main points as the least preferred component. Securing attention is the most

Sample	Category	N= 130
Residential Status	Urban (U)	65
	Rural (U)	65
Gender	Male (M)	62
	Female (F)	68
Trainee Category	Deputed (D)	56
	Fresher (F)	74

Table 1. Subject's demographic characteristics

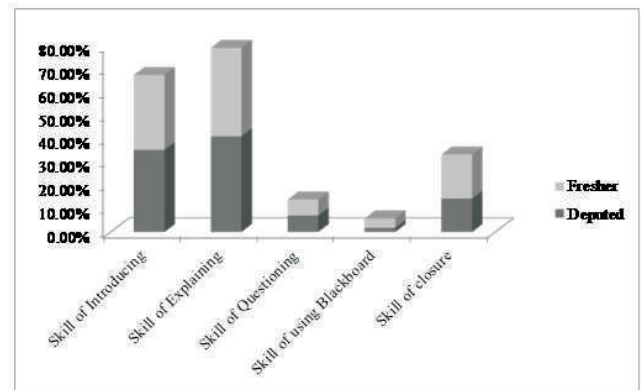


Figure 2. Bar graph showing the most preferred skills

difficult part of this skill and if done properly helps in the conduct of the other components.

The Bar graph shows a similar opinion of deputed and fresher trainees towards the components of Skill of Introducing.

Figure 4 shows the components of skill of explaining. In the skill of explaining, both deputed and fresher trainees consider clarity, precision and continuity of language as the most preferred component and specifying the objectives as the least preferred component.

Using examples to illustrate concepts is a contemporary concept and if not utilized properly may make the classroom conditions boring.

Figure 5 explains the components of the skill of questioning, deputed trainees consider encouraging student queries as the most preferred component whereas fresher trainees consider linking with specific objectives as the most preferred component. In this skill, the opinion of fresher and deputed trainees has differed.

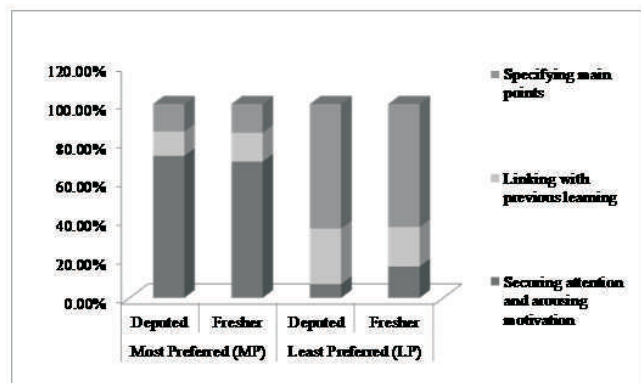


Figure 3. Bar graph showing most preferred and least preferred components

Encouraging student queries and open ended questions are not easy ways of teaching and are needed to be well acquainted before applying in the classroom.

Figure 6 shows the components of the skill of using blackboard. Both deputed and fresher trainee considered clarity of purpose as the most preferred component and organization of space as the least preferred component. As a skill this has not been given much importance by the respondents.

Figure 7 explains the components of the skill of closure. Consolidation by linking with real life is the most preferred component by both the deputed and fresher trainees. Whereas the deputed trainees consider evaluation, the freshers consider investigative and open ended assignments as the least preferred component.

Thus it can be summed up that deputed and fresher trainees have a similar opinion towards the Micro-teaching skills and their individual components. Thus the trainees hold a favorable attitude towards Microteaching skills. This has also been found by Saban & Coklar (2013) that all pre service teachers who participated in the research think that

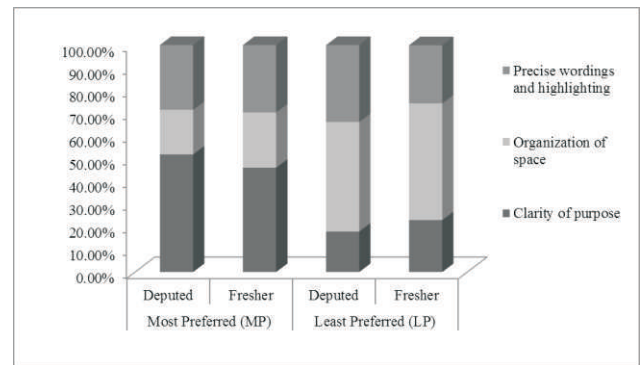


Figure 6. Bar graph showing most preferred and least preferred components

the Microteaching method of watching themselves and their friends objectively, seeing their mistakes and correcting them which is useful for their future lectures. This is also in line with Ping (2013) that Microteaching practice affects both female and male pre service teachers' competency levels positively.

Opinion towards Microteaching and Trainee Category (Deputed and Fresher)

Assuming equal variance, t-test was performed to examine the differences in opinion among deputed and fresher trainees. Table 2 presents findings on the scale prepared by the researcher with respect to training category.

Although the mean score (Table 2) of the deputed trainee students (M = 56.38) indicates high score than fresher trainee students (M = 55.99), the 't' test result indicates no significant difference ($t=0.48, p>0.05$) in the opinion of trainee students towards Microteaching.

Opinion towards Microteaching and Gender (male and female)

Assuming equal variance, t-test was performed to examine

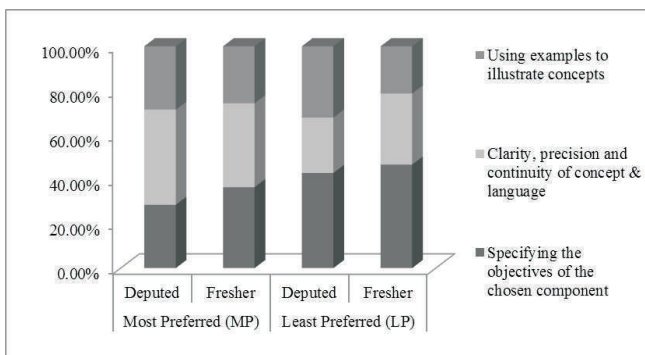


Figure 4. Bar graph showing most preferred and least preferred components

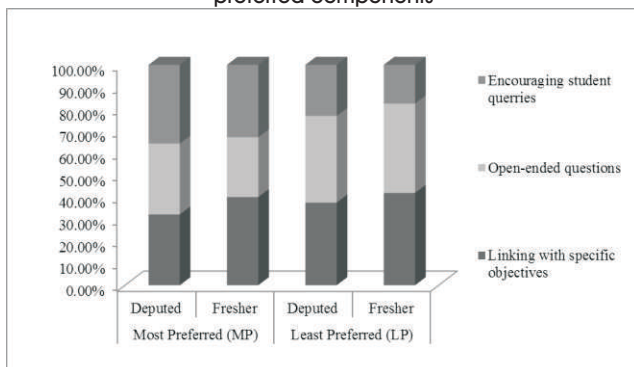


Figure 5. Bar graph showing most preferred and least preferred components

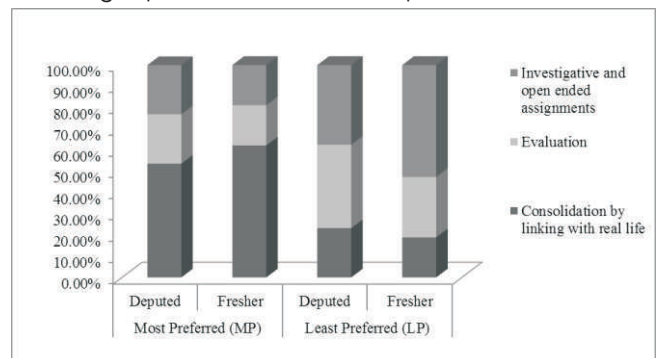


Figure 7. Bar graph showing most preferred and least preferred components

the differences in opinion among deputed and fresher trainees. Table 3 presents the findings on the scale prepared by the researcher with respect to gender (male and female).

Although the mean score (Table 3) of the female trainee students (M = 56.79) indicates high score than male trainee students (M = 55.45), the 't' test result indicates no significant difference (t=1.68, p>0.05) in the opinion of trainee students towards Microteaching. Rama & Reddy (2013) also found no difference in the opinion towards Microteaching with respect to gender, class nature and class size.

Opinion towards Microteaching and Habitat (rural and urban)

Assuming equal variance, t-test was performed to examine the differences in opinion among rural and urban trainees. Table 4 presents the findings on the scale prepared by the researcher with respect to habitat (rural and urban).

Rural and urban category has been divided following the trainees place of residence. Thus this test was conducted to find out whether there is any effect of residence on the opinion towards Microteaching of the B.Ed trainees. The 't' test results (t=2.299, p<0.01) indicate (Table 4) significant differences in the Mean scores of rural and urban trainee students towards people Microteaching. Mean score of Urban students (M = 57.06) indicated more positive attitudes towards Microteaching when compared with the rural students (M = 55.25). Thus significant differences were observed in the attitudes of B.Ed trainee student with

Variables	Mean	Variance	Observation	df	t-stat	P(T<=t) two-tail	t-critical two-tail
Fresher	55.99	20.31	74	128	0.48	P>0.05	1.99
Deputed	56.38	22.06	56				

NS=Not Significant

Table 2. t-tests results for differences in opinion towards Microteaching between Fresher and Deputed trainees (assuming equal variances)

Variables	Mean	Variance	Observation	df	t-stat	P(T<=t) two-tail	t-critical two-tail
Males	55.45	24.42	62	128	1.68	P>0.05	1.98
Females	56.79	17.21	68				

NS=Not Significant

Table 3. t-tests results showing differences in opinion towards Microteaching between Male and Female trainees (assuming equal variances)

Residential status	Mean	Variance	Observation	df	t-stat	P(T<=t) two-tail	t-critical two-tail
Rural	55.25	21.97	65	128	2.299*	P>0.05*	1.98
Urban	57.06	18.56	65				

*= Significant at 0.05 level

Table 4. t-tests results showing differences in opinion towards Microteaching between rural and urban located trainees (assuming equal variances)

respect to habitat (rural and urban). Thus urban students were more open to Microteaching techniques than the rural students and the possible reasons may be urban people's exposures to varied people of various cultures, ethnicity and differences.

Discussion

Teaching is an important innovation of Educational Technology. Gupta (2012) commented that technology helps us in making efforts for equalizing educational opportunities. From the present study it has been found that the trainee teachers consider Microteaching as an important part of the teacher training program. It was found that, skill of explaining and skill of introducing are the most important skills. It is probably, because all lessons needs to be properly introduced so that students can relate their knowledge with what they previously know and skill of explaining helps the content to be well illustrated. As the skill of using blackboard and questioning is relatively difficult to achieve, they have been rated as least preferred skills. Gore (2011) found that pupil teacher concentrates on each micro- skill with equal weightage and every criterion is more important in each and every skill. In the present study, there do not exist significant differences in opinion between male and female trainees, deputed and fresher trainees towards Microteaching. Similar findings are also found by Sarsani & Ananthula (2008). Microteaching skills helps to develop self confidence and the trainees uniformly hold a positive attitude towards Microteaching. Ajilleye, & Ajibola (2013) stated that, the student teachers trained in Microteaching gained self confidence and learned to provide constructive criticism on their fellow student's lessons. Hussain & Masrur (2011) found positive results of selected Microteaching skills on the performance of the trained in-service primary school teachers. Ghafoor, Kiam A & Kayani S (2012) found that, the respondents of both groups supported that Microteaching was sequential and

encouraged reasoning for choosing a topic. The deputed and fresher trainees hold mostly similar opinion towards the different skills of Microteaching and the different components within it. It might be the result of differences in exposure between the two locations. Thus the importance of Microteaching to enhance the self confidence of the trainee teachers is well understood from the present study. The study tried to understand the importance of Microteaching in the light of the change in syllabus. Thus its importance has been recognized by the trainee teachers.

This study has confirmed the findings of the previous researches which accept the benefits of Microteaching. From the above findings, it can be concluded that Microteaching has been considered uniformly important by all the different categories of B.Ed trainees. The deputed and fresher trainees hold mostly similar opinion towards the different skills of Microteaching and the different components within it. Locations do cause a difference in opinion towards Microteaching as revealed in the present study. The study thus highlights the importance of Microteaching as an important step towards the process of formation of a technically sound teacher. Teachers are born and not made and Microteaching helps in understanding the teaching techniques in a better way.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Kaustava Banerjee is Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and B.Ed, Loreto College, Kolkata. She graduated from Presidency (College) University and also continued her post-graduation in the same institute with specialization in Advanced Cartography and Geoinformatics. She then completed post graduate diploma in Remote Sensing and GIS from Jadavpur University. She was awarded UGC, NET (Junior Research Fellowship) in Geography in the year 2008. She has currently completed her Master's in Education (M.Ed) from Calcutta University and has also cleared UGC NET in Education. Her areas of interest are social issues, rural health and education. She has presented papers in various State and National Level seminars.



Dr. Santoshi Halder is Assistant Professor at Department of Education, University of Calcutta. Dr Halder has an M.A in Education with Specialization in Special Education and Educational Technology and a Ph.D in Applied Psychology. She has more than 12 years Research experience in Educational Technology, Educational psychology and Special Education. She has been selected as Fulbright Nehru Senior Research Fellow in 2011-2012 for research on the service delivery for the people with disabilities and exploring the socio-cultural barriers associated with disabilities in USA. She had received Governor's Medal from the Governor of West Bengal, India -Viren J. Shah, for her contribution towards community and its people. She has completed International Project at Indiana University exploring the support services for people with disabilities (2011-2012). At present she is pursuing two major research funded by University Grant Commission (UGC) and Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). Recently she has also been selected as Endeavour Australia India Education Research Council Fellow 2015.



Dr Abhijit is Assistant Professor (Reader), Ramakrishna Mission Sikshanamandira University, Kolkata, India. Dr Guha is much acclaimed as a Researcher and as an academican. His work is evident by his presentations and publications in the International and National fronts.

