

Secondary School Administration and involvement in the implementation of Teaching Practice in Eswatini

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Objectives

After reading through this chapter, the readers or students will be able to ...

- 1. Understand the meaning of secondary school administration and the involvement in teacher preparation programme**
- 2. Explain the concepts of mentoring and mentor-ship during teaching practice in relation to roles of cooperating teachers and principals**
- 3. Understand how well secondary schools truly get involved to implement teaching practice.**
- 4. Understand the concepts of mentorship and mentoring in teaching practice.**
- 5. Appreciate trainee teachers' adjustment needs and coping strategies in unfamiliar environments.**

Introduction

Teaching is a noble profession in most countries of Africa and all over the world. Teachers are seen as role models and also as mirrors of the society. This is as a result of the strict training one must undergo before becoming a teacher. Teaching practice is a form of internship that will qualify one as a certified professional in the field.

The purpose of teaching practice is to provide students with an opportunity to apply their pedagogical knowledge and skills in practice. It enables the student teacher to display those skills of transferring knowledge to his or her pupils while on practice under the supervision of the College or University lecturers and the teachers in the practicing school. According to Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009), teaching practice is an integral component of teacher training. It grants student teachers experience in the actual teaching and learning environment. Teaching practice is a form of work-integrated learning that is described as a period of time when students are working in the relevant industry to receive specific in-service training in order to apply theory in practice (Maphosa, 2007).

In the University of Eswatini, prospective teachers are exposed to teaching practice towards the end of their degree programme. The trainees have to identify the school for practice and be permitted by the administration to do teaching practice there. Usually, the trainee teachers look for schools closer to their home areas solely due to economic reasons, regularity and punctuality purposes. Accommodation for trainee teachers is neither organized by the University nor the practicing school administration but by the trainee teacher. A prior visit to the school helps the trainee teacher to familiarize with the new environment and even observe the dress code of the teaching staff of that school. Once the school is identified, the teaching practice unit of the University approves and provides a duly signed letter of posting.

Secondary school system and administration in teacher preparation programme

According to the Ministry of Education and Training of Eswatini (MoET), the secondary school system is a five (5) year programme divided into three (3) years Junior secondary and two (2) years Senior secondary. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning at the secondary school is done in two forms internal and external. Internal is whereby Head teachers/Principals and Heads of Departments ensure that proper records of assessment are kept and tests meet expectations of the programme of each subject for both the Junior and the senior levels. The administration in the secondary schools of Eswatini consists of the Principals who heads the school, their Deputy Principals or Senior Teachers in some schools, who support them in their duties as well as the Heads of Department who see to all the details in the departments and they are those closely directing and guiding student teachers and thus referred to as the cooperating teachers.

A skilled and well-supported leadership team in schools can help foster a sense of ownership and purpose in the way that teachers approach their job. Conferring professional autonomy to teachers will enhance the attractiveness of the profession as a career choice and will improve the quality of the classroom teaching practice. Teachers who work together in a meaningful and purposeful ways have been found to be more likely to remain in the profession because they feel valued and supported in

their work. (Mulford, 2003). As part of support, the school administration assigns the trainee teachers to duties beyond the classroom to aid in the awareness of total school program. Such duties include leading the morning assemble, supervising cleaning and maintaining hygiene, and other extra-curricular activities like sports. In some schools of Eswatini, the trainees go an extra mile by partaking in other school areas like drama, culture and community development. For instance in 2020, one trainee teacher at Masibekela High School in the Hhohho region of Eswatini led students to collect stones for fixing a community bridge leading to the practicing school. In one of the years at Ngcoseni Central High School, a trainee teacher was allowed to lead an athletic team in its training because he showed much interest in sports. All the above activities provided by the school to the trainee teachers are meant to make them complete and responsible teachers.

Harris and Muijs (2002) state that, “one of the main barriers to teacher leadership concerns the ‘top-down’ leadership model that still dominates in many schools. The possibility of teacher leadership in any school will be dependent upon whether the head and the senior management team within the school relinquishes power to teachers and the extent to which teachers accept the influence of colleagues ... heads will therefore need to become ‘leaders of leaders’ striving to develop a relationship of trust with staff, and encouraging leadership and autonomy throughout the school.” To generate and sustain teacher leadership is seen as requiring not only empowerment but also time and opportunities for continuous professional development.

CRIFPE (2007), study suggested that older principals were more likely to support professional development and personal growth as well as the elaboration of the school’s mission, teacher supervision initiatives, coordinated parent participation, and accountability.

In the professional development, the school administrators offer guidance to the student teacher, provide time to collaborate with peers, offer meaningful evaluations and treat them as professionals.

Supervision

Supervision is direction, guidance and control of working force with a view to see that they are working according to plan and are keeping time schedule. Both the Principals and cooperating teachers take part in supervising the trainee teachers during school operations and classroom lessons. Three phases of operation by the supervisor have been identified in the model proposed by Bouchamma (2005), namely, the pre-observation meeting, the scheduled observation, and the post-observation meeting:

1. During the pre-observation meeting, the supervisor introduces the objectives of the process; both parties then concur on the aspects to be addressed, the observation tools, and the time the observation will take place. The supervisor concludes the meeting by going over the teacher’s preparation.

2. During the in-class observation, the supervisor discreetly observes the teacher's practice according to the elements agreed upon with the latter, and gathers data. Each party concludes by reviewing the observation session which will be further examined during the post-observation meeting.

3. During the post-observation meeting, both parties go over the initial goals and any potential adjustments to be made, and the teacher proceeds with a self-evaluation. The supervisor and supervised trainee teacher then determine the objectives for the next supervision, plan this activity, and go over future support measures if needed (Bouchamma, 2005).

Supervision of trainee teachers by principals

The principals supervise the trainee teachers as they perform their duties assigned to them in the school at the duration of teaching practice. Individual teacher supervision by the school principal is defined as a specific and unique relationship between the supervising principal and the supervised teacher. The Principal ensures that the trainee teacher is punctual every day when reporting for work. When the rest of the staff submits their preparation plans, the trainee teacher is expected to do so and that makes him or her to have the feeling of being part of the school. Principals even go to the extent of doing class room visits whereby the student teacher has to bring the prepared lesson plan prior to going to class for that particular lesson. Then he goes to the class to observe the trainee teacher as he teaches and they come back and discuss what can be improved in the lesson delivery.

Supervision of the trainee teachers by the cooperating teacher

The cooperating teacher who is usually the Head of Department gives the student teacher a timetable with assigned classes to be taken. Commonly, the University expects that the student teacher is trained in both J.C and EGCSE levels. The cooperating teacher and the student teacher agree on the time the supervision may take place so as to allow the assessment to be done. The student teacher renders his or her timetable to the University lecturer or supervisor so that supervision schedules may be planned which usually occurs twice during that particular teaching practice. Then the trainee is given the opportunity to know the school community which includes cooperating teacher, school administrators, students, class room and school routines. At this time the cooperating teacher is responsible for taking the student teacher around the school introducing him or her to the relevant staff members, both teaching members of staff and non-teaching members of staff as well as to the pupils in the classes he is going to be teaching.

Mentoring as a key aspect of teaching practice

Basically, the cooperating teacher is a mentor of the student teacher during Teaching Practice. Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in

order that they maximize their potentials, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be. Mentorship is an exchange of the best practice between the experienced mentor (cooperating teachers) and the aspiring mentee (trainee teacher) to achieve common goals, interests and aspirations. Mentorship puts interns and those coming into the teaching profession at the centre of this approach. Once the interns develop their skills through a continuous 1-2-1 support provided by an experienced mentor, they in turn, become a mentor for the next intern. It can also take the form of inspiring thousands or millions of young people where the mentor becomes a positive role model. Mentoring does not only take place between individuals but also between agencies (University or a teacher training institution and secondary or primary schools) as the case may be. To be proficient as a teacher, a trainee must undergo mentoring which is usually during the mandatory teaching practice session organized by an institution for the training of teachers. In the teaching-learning process, so many actors are involved here to ensure that the mentorship is well directed for the purposes meant. Best practices should be cascaded across the board to reach out to as many beneficiaries as possible in a short period of time in which the mentees then become mentors to other mentees. It is an unending process of training. However, we should not lose sight that both the mentors and the mentees (interns) are beneficiaries from this programme. The mentor benefits as much as the mentee (intern) in terms of gaining additional experience which enables him/her to move into the next ladder. The mentor and the mentee should be able to impart knowledge through appropriate teaching by going from known to the unknown. Teaching is a preconceived idea and the urge on what to teach or how it is to be done is usually premeditated. The act of teaching cannot be spontaneous as it requires prior planning and sequencing. A good teacher must have previously been a good learner and it is by so doing that he/she can now teach to impart knowledge on what he/she knows. As the saying goes **“you can only give what you have”**.

Continuous feedback by cooperating teacher is crucial for student teacher's improvement and refinement of necessary skills. He/she will be expected to provide feedbacks by observing, conferring with, and assessing the student teacher. The continuous feedbacks should facilitate self-evaluation and self-improvement by the student teacher. At times, the cooperating teacher teaches in the presence of the student teacher while observing. He or she guides and teaches the student teacher on how to prepare lesson plans and comments before it is presented to class. Cooperating teacher is also expected to expose student teachers to all other skills in teaching. He/she have to even coach the student teacher on how to manage allocated lesson time so that the teaching is effective.

Cooperating teacher can be an effective mentor by doing the following:

- Review, suggest improvements for, and sign lesson plans at least three days prior to the student teacher's implementing the lesson. The signature indicates that the plan is

acceptable to use for teaching. No planning or poor planning by the student teacher means that the lesson will not be taught.

- Observe the teaching style of the student teacher. Confer with him or her soon after the observation. This conference gives the cooperating teacher an opportunity to give valuable feedback to the student teacher about his or her performance. This is the time to indicate the strong points of the lesson, to point out the weak points of the lesson, and to question segments of the lesson that were not clearly taught or understood by the students. Gives specific suggestions about performance in the classroom.
- Assess the student teacher's performance and fill the assessment forms dispatched by the University.
- Assign the student teacher to teaching responsibilities beginning with a single course, with more eventually being added at the discretion of the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. This should culminate in a minimum of at least three weeks of full-time teaching.
- Assign the student teacher to duties beyond the classroom to aid in the awareness of the total school program.

The cooperating teacher should be available for discussions during the university supervisor's announced visits. She/he should warn the student teacher of unprofessional behaviors before they become habitual and contact the university supervisor immediately if the student teacher has displayed behaviors or habits of concern.

The following are recommended as a guide to prepare for the student teacher before going into the classroom:

- Inform students and staff members of the arrival of the student teacher.
- Familiarize oneself with the student teaching practice program of University of Eswatini by attending an orientation session on campus and reviewing the Handbook.
- Making copies of the class roster, daily schedule, and school policies and rules for the student teachers.
- Provide the student teacher with a desk or table to serve as a work space.
- Acquainting the student teacher with important individuals within the practising school, as well as the sites and its facilities.

Trainee teachers' adjustment needs and coping strategies in unfamiliar environments in the context of Eswatini

Trainee teachers must reckon with adapting to certain demands when they are posted to schools for teaching practice. Some of these demands, if not addressed timely,

manifest themselves in the behavior, the physical and psychological exhaustion of the trainee. This section addresses some of the adjustment needs and the coping strategies trainee teachers develop in the context of Eswatini. The adjustment needs include induction and mentoring, developing competences and confidence, trainee teacher stress, lack of support from other teachers and administrations, working in unfamiliar environments due to geographical location of practicing school and climate differences, for which trainees develop coping strategies.

Studies have analyzed the elements that affect trainee teachers in incorporating into their unfamiliar environments. The aim of such analyses is for enacting early career support in order to retain teachers in the profession and to avoid teacher burn out. In this section, the coping strategies will be aligned to the Eswatini context.

1.1.1 Induction and Mentoring

Studies conducted in different social contexts highlight the importance of induction in teacher education as one the adjustment needs for trainee teachers. Sharplin et.al (2011) posits that induction is a strategy that supports teacher development. The study further illustrates that teachers who are inducted into the teaching profession are less likely to experience feelings of inadequacies in the skills. Information from this study also reveals that inducted teachers show more commitment to the teaching career and exhibit reduced attrition rates while also being content with their professional roles. Harmsen et.al (2018) investigated the relationships between beginning teachers' perceived stress causes, stress responses, observed teaching behaviour and attrition. One of the findings include that there was no correlation between negative emotions and attrition. The authors postulate that an induction programme and the time span might have mitigated this relationship. While studies have discussed the importance of acculturating teachers into the new professional career, there is still a gap in knowledge, in how this process takes place in the secondary schools in Eswatini. The absence of any documented policy on how secondary schools should conduct an induction programme for trainee teachers in Eswatini contributes to low retention and teacher stress. This important initiative is left to the discretion of an individual class teacher where a trainee will practice. The absence of a mandatory, systematic, well defined and formal induction leaves the need for induction, as indicated by teachers in the studies cited, unattended to, yet so important. Kearney (2014, p13) emphasizes this by stating that 'Only when these programs are policy directed, compulsory, and conceptualized as part of a larger framework of learning, can the professionalization and standardization of the teaching professional be upheld.'

The absence of a policy driven mentorship programme and defined training for mentors result in in-service teachers being selected to mentor trainees. The head teacher decides on who mentors the trainees, regardless of the teacher' comprehension of the

mentorship roles he has to perform. This practice leaves the trainee teacher at the mercy of the assigned teacher whether she will get the desired support or not. When new subjects are introduced into the curriculum, the department of in-service training offers induction workshops for teachers. Teacher Training Colleges rely on the in-service teachers to induct the trainees on how to teach the new subject. A mentor, who has been randomly selected to become one, may not adequately assist the trainee to gain experience in teaching the subject. Therefore it is of paramount importance that mentors are trained for the responsibility so that there is no gap between what the trainee expects from the mentor and what they get.

Literature advocates induction and mentoring as vital to the success and development of trainee teachers. Trainee teachers have wealth of experience and knowledge from pre-service training that informs their teaching but still need mentoring as part of their adaptation to the new teaching environment. This process is defined differently by authors, some of whom believe that, it is a planned teacher preparation opportunity meant to offer to the beginning teacher, peer supporting in order to adequately cope with the daily challenges they stand to encounter in teaching (Ibebuike and Ebe 2014). Also, Mckimns (2003) defined it as guidelines given to an individual in order to enable him or her grow in the profession.

In Eswatini, mentoring has many affordances for the trainee teacher, which includes developing teaching effectiveness and efficiency. Trainees learn how to best prepare a lesson plan, teaching and learning materials, including how to present a lesson and manage the class. Through mentoring, trainee teachers' level of expertise and content knowledge is developed. They learn to apply and practice the principles of teaching and learning in a classroom context, with mentors coaching them on the best practice. The assertions are also found in Amedeker (2018); Alabi (2017) and Bukari (2015) who generally state that trainees referred to as interns in Amedeker, learn about effective teaching methods, adequate teaching preparation and classroom management skills, from their mentors. They also learn professional skills such as keeping all school records up to date and get to understand the value of keeping records straight. However, such affordances may only be limited to trainee teachers who find teachers who are willing to mentor them.

1.1.2 Development of competence and confidence

In Eswatini, Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) have well-structured programmes which are designed to offer a platform for developing and evaluating aspiring teachers' competence in actual classroom within school settings. During this period, trainee teachers are required to adapt to teaching in multicultural classrooms, teach learners with special needs, who have been integrated into the mainstream and in some schools, they are required to use technology when they teach, so that their teaching is effective. For them to adjust to these demands, they need to develop competences and confidence in order that they function relevantly. The competences needed are those

that will make them a fit for teaching in the 21st century. Teaching competences include knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes to function effectively in a given situation. Trainee teachers need to develop their knowledge of the content or subject matter for them to adjust to the new environment. When a trainee has a grasp of the subject information, he is able to impart knowledge effectively and with confidence whilst also developing learners' communication and critical thinking skills. Learners will understand the content quickly because the trainee explains clearly and in detail than when less knowledgeable. The value of content knowledge during teaching practice is stated in (Kamamia, Ngugi and Thinguri, 2014: p 644) when asserting that 'the teacher with good knowledge of the subject matter is able to plan and teach the lesson by way of highlighting the main points of the lesson to the learner while clarifying the knowledge misconceptions.' Subject knowledge culminates to the trainee using instructional material that will make the learners motivated, interested and wanting to explore the concepts learnt.

Developing competences for teaching builds confidence in the trainee. A confident trainee is not afraid to try new techniques for teaching. He tries new ideas and activities with the class. His attitude is always positive and there is no challenge he views as insurmountable. Therefore, in a new environment, trainees need to adjust by developing competences and confidence in order to thrive.

1.1.3 Trainee Teacher Stress

Stress is another inescapable element trainee teachers need to adjust to, in their new environments. The nature of the teaching profession demands imparting knowledge to learners at the same time, understanding and performing administrative duties. For a trainee, such can be an overwhelming expectation which results in stress. Mapfumo, Chitsiko and Chireshe (2012) state that the teaching profession is generally ranked a high stress occupation with teachers reporting high levels of stress due to the intrinsic factors in the nature of the job.

Domestic and international literatures have dedicated numerous approaches and frameworks to delve into the causes of stress for trainee teachers during the teaching practicum. Tok (2010); Mapfumo, Chitsiko and Chileshe (2012); Eksi and Yakisik (2016); Mahmoudi and Özkan (2016) and Panigrahi (2018) brought out the following determinants: lack of effective implementation of educational and instructional activities and time management as other stressors; as discipline issues, finances, workload and shortage of resources; being evaluated; dealing with disruptive students, un-notified visits, and classroom management problems; large classes and time management; study of text-books and other materials, role demand, interpersonal relations, physical environment of the institute journey, family income and personality factors ; working with controlling, strict or autocratic mentors. It is not within the scope of this study to examine the causes of stress listed but to highlight their prevalence.

Trainee teachers in Eswatini experience these stresses. They report a disconnection

between the college curriculum and the actual pedagogical expectations during the teaching practice exercise. This is found in Tok (2010) and Tsikati and Nsingwane (2019) who recommended that a match between the student teachers' needs for teaching practice during the preparation of the teachers and those of the teaching practice school should be established because in the context of this chapter, such needs if unattended to, may cause stress to the teacher. This means that there should be a correlation between the course content and its practical application in real classroom situations. On the contrary, a study conducted by Gule, Farinde and Ngcamphalala (2019) established that a number of student teachers responded positively to having sufficient knowledge of the subject matter to be taught, (54.1%). While the findings of these studies may seem to be divergent, the bottom line is that trainee students experience stress which is caused by the differences between subject matter knowledge and pedagogical expectations.

1.1.4 Lack of Support from other teachers

Institutions of higher learning rely on the practicing schools and the class teachers to offer professional support to the trainee teachers during teaching practice. Student teachers look up to the class teacher for guidance throughout the duration of the exercise. Training institutions mandate the cooperating teachers to award a mark which is also included in the final score of the student teacher. This is based on the premise that teachers sit in class and observe trainees while teaching, so that feedback on how a trainee is imparting knowledge to the learners, managing the class, using instructional materials and assessing the learners can be given timely.

Trainee teachers need professional support from classroom teachers on how they are teaching the subject, using instructional materials, managing their time and managing the class. This is because these are key areas they are assessed in, by their training institutions. Trainees look up to the teachers to demonstrate effective teaching strategies they can emulate when they start teaching. They require meaningful, useful, specific and frequent feedback from teachers, with specific suggestions on how they can improve how they conduct their lessons. Trainees also look up to the cooperating teachers to assist them access resources that are available for their utilization when conducting lessons.

How this need is accommodated by cooperating teachers is dependent upon the conceptualization of their role in working with trainees. Some trainees reported receiving supports from the supervisor teacher, while others do not have that privilege. In the former, teachers have scheduled meetings with the trainees when they give feedback. The feedback is well structured and written so that the trainee can refer to it later. There are scenarios when this need is not met for example, teachers would abandon the class to the complete care of the trainee. They are not readily available to offer assistance to the trainees. Some have no grasp at all, of the mentor role as they do not give assistance to trainees regarding the use of teaching-learning materials,

particularly those they do not use. At times cooperating teachers pass comments that are not collegiate, an act which is unprofessional and discourages trainees.

The facts above resonate with findings from several studies dedicated to establishing the relationships and roles between trainee teachers and cooperating teachers. Atputhasamy (2005) explored the expectations of the student teachers from their cooperating teachers and the type or level of help they received from their cooperating teachers during the practicum. In a Singaporean context, two important findings were revealed. The first, 80% of the teacher trainees considered evaluation feedback on their teaching subject content effectively and classroom management as important and that student teachers perceived cooperating teachers not to have adjusted to accommodating the added responsibility of student teacher mentoring. The value of feedback attached by trainee teachers and the lack of it is also stated in Mahmoudi and Ozkan (2016) when reporting that student teachers related their stressful experience of teaching practice to supervisors and mentors giving insufficient feedback or no feedback at all.

Evidence for the lack of support from mentors to trainee teachers is also stated in Gokce and Demirhan (2005) who found that cooperating teachers did not sufficiently help student teachers in developing materials. Basturk (2016) in a quantitative study to examine pre-service teachers' perspectives on teaching practice courses further found that mentors did not trust pre-service teachers' teaching and are not aware of their responsibilities as mentors. This is in line with the comments in-service teachers make regarding the performance of trainee teachers.

Eswatini needs a clear and well-structured protocol on how to provide mentorship assistance to trainee teachers. There should be guidelines of how to select mentors and provide training for them in order to be inaugurated into their responsibilities. Mentor teachers should have certain character traits in order to be selected for the responsibility. These may include being teachers who possess the skills of being trainers, being able to provide a good experience of the classroom to the trainee, allowing the trainee to implement and not imposing to him.

2.0 Coping strategies

The significance of developing strategies to deal with adjustments needs emanates from the understanding that if left unattended, they impact negatively on the relationship the trainee has with the new environment. Slee (2000); Murray-Harvey, Slee, Lawson, Silins, Banfield and Russell (2000); Mahmoudi and Özkan (2016); Lindqvist, Weurlander, Wernerson and Thornberg (2017) when discussing adjustment needs posit that it 'reduces classroom effectiveness, particularly in relation to effects of lower pupil/teacher rapport, reduced pupil achievement and increased levels of pupil anxiety.' Most importantly, exposing these strategies ameliorates the effects of stress.

2.1 Perseverance

Perseverance is one coping strategy trainee teacher's use in adapting to the unfamiliar environments. Sharplin, O'Neill and Chapman (2011) discuss perseverance as key in

teacher adaptation to new environments. The study shows that teachers who devised coping strategies early in their new work stations and depersonalizing their experiences integrated successfully. Mansfield, Beltman, Price and McConney (2012) advance understanding of how perseverance is important, when stating that teachers who possess characteristics of resilient individuals are more likely to persevere in adverse situations. The study illuminates that teacher resilience can be attributed to 'dynamic processes that are the result of interaction over time between a person and the environment and is evidenced by how individuals respond to challenging or adverse situations and that resilient individuals possess personal strengths, including particular characteristics, attributes, assets or competencies.'(p7). It can be concluded that resilience, a trait of perseverance, contributes to trainees coping in new environments. Worth noting is that resilience is developed over time and is interlinked to other personal attributes such as motivation.

2.2 Direct –action strategies

In order to streamline the coping strategies used by trainee teachers in adapting to new environments, studies have categorized these into direct- action and palliative components. The former, attempts to eradicate the source of stress. In this strategy, trainees identify and confront the problem directly. They become aware that if they do not confront the issue, it can have negative effects on their effectiveness as teacher trainees. They envision the repercussions that will emerge if the adjustment need is not attended to.

While trainees adjust to the new environment, they are confronted by a plethora of needs that should be attended to. Some may be personal while others, professional. The socio-economic disposition of an individual trainee may also impose some of these needs. Some trainees find the school environment demanding the direct-action strategies.

The socio-economic status of a trainee may be the cause that demands direct-action strategies for them to adjust to the new environment. For example, trainees have to purchase some necessities for them to be able to present lessons effectively. Sometimes the school may not provide everything a trainee needs, hence the need to buy. The trainee is driven by the desire to excel when he is assessed therefore the urge to purchase what the school cannot provide comes in. For example a teacher may be teaching a lesson that demands him to bring a particular item which the school cannot readily provide yet such an item is available in the shops; a trainee may want to buy it but due to his financial constraints may fail to do so. A trainee should then find means of adjusting to this need before it becomes a constraint.

A trainee may not understand the culture of the school where he is doing his practice. Different schools have different cultures a trainee needs to adjust to. Some of these cultures may elude the trainees' grasp because they are not obvious to him. While a trainee may not be aware of the culture, failure to adjust to it may result in strained relationships with the other teachers including the school administration. Some school

cultures limit any innovation a trainee may want to implement. Lindqvist (2019. 549) observed that 'teachers were inhibited by school policies and

Curricula that needed to be followed and therefore the innovative practices were not pursued. When the school culture do not support freedom of trainees to put into practice some skills they have acquired, such leads to the need for adjustment. A trainee is then forced to use direct-action strategies to combat this.

Trainees may need assistance in teaching certain topics in the syllabus. The need may be due to that he is not conversant with the contents of that particular topic. Direct-action strategies in this case may include asking the mentor teacher to assist. Sometimes when this is not possible, the trainee may need to seek assistance from his fellow colleagues. At times, trainees resort to using technology to search for the information they need in order to deliver an effective lesson. Trainees who practice in private schools have to quickly adjust to using technology when teaching. Their inadequacies in using the available resources forces them to use direct-action strategies like asking for assistance from the ICT teacher and taking lessons on how to use the gadgets, during their spare time.

Self-management skills also help trainees cope in the new environment. These skills include time management, planning, preparation and organizational strategies. A trainee needs to develop a routine that would help manage time. This is inclusive for in the classroom and out of the classroom activities. A trainee applies the skills of time management acquired from the college courses. The trainee plans in advance how to spend the available time to perform the required duties plans where to get the materials to help deliver an effective lesson, prepares lessons in advance to know what are needed and communicates these to the mentor teacher. In addition, organizes and assembles all requirements so that when the time comes to utilize the gadgets for example, they will be readily available. This makes the trainee to cope and not be frustrated when the needs to present lessons arise.

Trainees use direct-action strategies to cope with the demands of attaining an emotional balance as they adjust to the teaching environment. They have to use self-regulatory skills to leverage their emotions as they begin the exercise. Teaching is a demanding profession, therefore trainees must derive means of dealing with the different emotions such as feeling inadequate, feeling not tailored for the teaching profession and helplessness. A trainee has to find a sounding board where he/she will voice feelings and get assistance to cope with.

Studies have discussed different direct-action coping strategies from different contexts. Notably, the strategies are not unique to the contexts in which they were studied, they are general. Han and Tulgar (2019) discuss strategies used to cope with anxiety in classroom management, establishing a rapport with learners and being afraid of making mistakes. Trainee teachers reported using a strategy of practicing the lesson ahead of presenting it to the class and sharing ideas with colleagues. Kebbi and Al-Hroub (2018) found that teachers proposed improving their personal and professional

skills by attending seminars and workshops was strategic in coping with the needs to adjust in their environment. Lindqvist (2019) investigated how student teachers cope with difficult situation during their teaching practice and established that they used three coping strategies, change advocacy, collective sharing and responsibility reduction. The first, involves initiating efforts that will bring a positive change to the encountered situation. Collective sharing on the other hand involves sharing obstacles with colleagues and seeking help from other members of the group while responsibility reduction involves letting go of stressful encounters and redefining the role of the student teacher. These coping strategies are intertwined and therefore, while they cannot eradicate the adjustment needs, they provide a platform for working around them.

These strategies are necessary to provide an enabling mechanism for trainee teachers to execute their responsibilities with minimal hindrances. Most importantly engaging the coping strategies are necessary because trainees develop adaptive means of dealing with their adjustment needs.

2.3 Palliative strategies

Palliative coping strategies are directed to reducing a stressful encounter but do not completely eradicate it. A trainee identifies a stressor before it comes and devises means of reducing it. This approach is necessary in order that a potential stressor may be identified early and direct-action strategies are used to combat the problem. Palliative strategies are those a trainee will use in order to evade possible causes of stress.

Findings from Lindqvist (2019) include that trainees used the strategy of change advocacy to distance themselves from the teachers' negative attitudes portrayed towards the learners. Teachers would talk about their learners' families, background and poor living conditions. Trainees viewed this as a potential stressor that needed one to use palliative strategies to deal with. A trainee would have to avoid engaging in the discussion about the learners because such may influence his own attitude towards them which will not foster a positive relationship with the learners.

Similarly, trainees with affiliations to certain social groups should avoid drawing examples from or relating the contents they are teaching, to their associations. Learners report to their parents and therefore parents may find the teacher's action as discriminatory. Such would cause stress to the trainee as parents may order that the teacher is removed from the school. An example would be when the trainee uses religious beliefs to derogate those that may be shared by the class. Such may cause uproar and the trainee teacher cannot afford this during the tenure of teaching practice. It would be interesting to study coping strategies trainees will use as they respond to the crisis brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.0 Conclusion and recommendations

Teaching is a profession and for one to be truly certified, a trainee must be involved in an internship programme which is the teaching practice. It is a major requirement in teacher preparation programme in all teacher training institutions all over the world. A good teacher must have previously been a good learner. No wonder teachers combine two attributes of a teacher and a trainer. Teachers are bedrocks to every profession on earth and the saying '**better trained trainers train better**' aptly fit. Being a teacher demands so much understanding and resilience and not a professional training for the dregs. To impart knowledge for the benefits of mankind a teacher has to go through five stages viz; read about the subject matter, understand the subject matter, extract information about the subject matter, impart knowledge through appropriate teaching techniques and going from known to the unknown; and, learn techniques to assess for performance. As a trainee teacher, one must learn and develop interest to exhibit comfort in front of people, knowledge of the subject matter, experience, a passion for learning, interest in people etc. Teaching practice starts with the eligibility and readiness on the part of the trainee. There must be the receiving school for the practice, readiness on part of the trainees in terms of minimal comfort and welfare as well as the enthusiasm expected from them. Mentorship is a major aspect of the teaching practice as this prepares the trainees for the challenges ahead. Trainee teachers must reckon with adapting to certain demands when they are posted to schools for teaching practice as these will help them greatly in discharging their duties effectively.

However, some recommendations are suggested for Eswatini context:

1. Appropriate induction at the practice schools for the trainees.
2. Development of a policy driven mentorship programme and defined training for mentors by using qualified and better trained mentors to guide the trainee teachers.
3. Early career support to trainee teachers by school counsellors.

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