

**CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY FINAL YEAR GUIDANCE AND
COUNSELLING STUDENTS DURING TEACHING PRACTICE EXERCISE IN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY**

BY

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

APRIL, 2024

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
EVALUATION AND COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE
BACHELOR OF EDUCATION B.SC (Ed) HONOURS DEGREE IN GUIDANCE
AND COUNSELLING**

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

APRIL, 2024

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned names hereby certify that this research work was carried out by ABUBAKAR MARIAM KPEMOSI with Matriculation Number: EDU1904187 of the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counseling Psychology, Faculty of Education, University Of Benin, Benin City in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Award of Bachelor Degree (B.Sc. Ed) in Guidance and Counselling.

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Date: _____

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to almighty God who has brought me this far and to my parents Rt. MWO Umoru Abubakar and Mrs. Bosede Abubakar, who have been there for me from the very beginning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Almighty for this accomplishment. I am deeply indebted to my project supervisor, Dr. (Mrs.) M. U. Orhuereta, whose wisdom and guidance have steered this project to success.

I express my profound appreciation to my parents, Rt. MWO Umoru Abubakar and Mrs. Bosede Abubakar, whose love and unwavering support have been my pillars. Your sacrifices and encouragement have empowered me to reach this milestone.

I also extend my gratitude to my siblings, Chris, Hassan, Hassana, Aisha, Halima, and Zekeri, for their unwavering care and prayers during my academic tenure at the University of Benin.

I express my heartfelt appreciation to my extraordinary companions, Jessica, Ese, and Destiny, for their profound affection. I am deeply indebted to my cherished friends, Rasheed, Blessing, and Nessie, whose support has been invaluable.

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the challenges faced by final-year guidance and counseling students at the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria, during their teaching practice. Five research questions guided the investigation. The sample comprised 131 final-year guidance and counseling students from the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counseling Psychology. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to analyze the data, and hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 significance level.

Findings revealed no significant gender differences in the challenges encountered by final-year guidance and counseling students during their teaching practice. The study concluded that the challenges faced by these students included a lack of teaching materials, overcrowded classrooms, unsupportive learning environments, and strained student-teacher relationships.

The study suggested that the government ought to assign additional resources to the provision of educational materials, guaranteeing that guidance and counseling students possess the necessary tools for successful teaching practice implementation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Educating is an enthralling and rewarding endeavor, though it can be equally arduous. The act of teaching involves the imparting of knowledge, abilities, and behaviors with the intent of enabling the recipient to comprehend information, perform actions, or conduct themselves in ways that align with the instruction provided. It is for this reason that all aspiring teachers must undergo a refresher course during their teaching practice, as without it, no teacher can claim professional status. The practical knowledge of teaching and the learning process is acquired by student teachers during their teaching practice. Teaching practice is widely recognized for giving student-teachers direct exposure to the practicalities of teaching. It is during this phase that student-teachers have the chance to experiment with the art of teaching before transitioning to the real world of the teaching profession (Binani, 2020).

Teaching practice refers to the teaching conducted by individuals receiving training in the field of education prior to attaining their degree, under the guidance and evaluation of a supervisor. It constitutes a systematic immersion in actual classroom settings for individuals preparing to become educators (Amoko, 2021). Teaching practice enables those training to become educators to apply their acquired theoretical knowledge of teaching in real-world classroom situations. It provides students with an opportunity to

encounter the realities of their chosen career in terms of its requirements, difficulties, and gratifications. It can also be viewed as a time when student teachers are assisted in putting into practice the educational concepts and principles they have studied in class as they engage in the teaching process (Ogonor, 2020).

At the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, the teaching practice exercise is a required course for undergraduates in the penultimate and final years of the Bachelor of Education program. The teaching practice exercise is a six-week program that involves collaboration between the student-teachers and supervisors (typically academic staff members of the Faculty of Education). The teaching practice exercise fulfills a function similar to industrial training in fields such as engineering, the sciences, and other professions. Subjects in curriculum and instructional methods taught in the Bachelor of Education program are intended to prepare student teachers in the teaching methods of specific subjects.

Teaching practice plays a critical role in educational systems, providing student-teachers with the opportunity to acquire practical experience and develop their skills in a real-world classroom environment. However, in Nigeria as well as in many other countries, this phase of teacher preparation often faces several challenges that can negatively impact the learning process and overall effectiveness of future educators.

Poor relationships between student-teachers and teachers at the host schools appear to be one of the primary challenges encountered by final-year guidance and counseling

students during their teaching practice. Teaching practice elicits a mix of anticipation, anxiety, and apprehension in student teachers as they embark on their practical training. A significant portion of the challenges faced in the teaching practice setting stems from the nature of the relationship between student-teachers and the teachers at the host schools where they have been placed for teaching (Omokheni, 2021). The teachers at the host schools assume the critical roles of models and mentors for the student teachers and significantly influence the student teachers' learning experiences. Student-teachers often adopt the practices of their cooperating teachers without question, assuming that they have no alternative. Misunderstandings about each other's roles frequently lead to conflicts between student-teachers and host school teachers, particularly when the latter exhibit authoritarian or dictatorial tendencies while the former display excessive self-consciousness (Alade, 2020).

Scarcity of Instructional Resources Constrains Final Year Guidance and Counseling Student-Teachers

Inadequate instructional materials pose a significant impediment to the effectiveness of teaching practice exercises for final year guidance and counseling students. These indispensable tools, including textbooks, audiovisual aids, case studies, and assessment instruments, facilitate impactful counseling sessions. Their absence undermines the students' ability to provide comprehensive guidance and counseling, hindering their educational growth (Ibrahim, 2020).

Overpopulated Classrooms Hinder Meaningful Connections

Overcrowded classroom sizes present a formidable challenge during teaching practice exercises for final year guidance and counseling students. The sheer number of students makes personalized interactions arduous, impeding the establishment of trust and rapport—a cornerstone of effective guidance and counseling (Adegoke, 2019). Understanding individual student needs becomes challenging in crowded classrooms, compromising the rapport-building skills essential for future educators.

Unfavorable Learning Environments Impede Effective Guidance

Unfavorable learning environments create obstacles for final year guidance and counseling students during teaching practice exercises. Inadequate facilities, cramped spaces, and limited resources hinder the creation of a conducive atmosphere for meaningful interactions (Salisu, 2021). The absence of proper infrastructure impedes effective counseling and restricts the implementation of teaching methodologies that necessitate a well-equipped environment, undermining the overall quality of the teaching practice experience.

Problem Statement

Despite the significance of teaching practice exercises, preliminary observations indicate that obstacles hinder their effectiveness for students in training. These challenges include:

- Tensions between student-teachers and host school teachers due to authoritarian attitudes and neglected mentorship.
- Overcrowded classrooms that prevent personalized interactions and student recognition.
- Limited instructional materials that compromise the quality of teaching and learning.

The researcher aims to investigate these challenges faced by final year guidance and counseling students during teaching practice exercises in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City.

Research Questions

The following inquiries were posed to guide this investigation:

1. To what extent is the absence of instructional materials a hindrance encountered by graduating guidance and counseling students during practicums?
2. To what degree does the excessive size of classes challenge guidance and counseling seniors during practicums?
3. How significantly does an unfavorable learning environment pose difficulties for graduating guidance and counseling students during practicums?

4. To what extent do poor relationships between teacher candidates and host school teachers pose obstacles for guidance and counseling students in their final year practicums?
5. Are there significant variations in the obstacles faced by male and female guidance and counseling students during practicums?

Hypothesis

For research questions 1-4, direct responses were sought. For research question 5, the hypothesis formulated is as follows:

H01: No substantial discrepancies exist in the difficulties experienced by final year guidance and counseling students during practicums based on gender.

Study Objectives

This study's overarching objective is to analyze the obstacles faced by guidance and counseling students in their final year during practicums at the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City. The specific goals of the study are:

- To discern the extent to which a lack of instructional supplies presents an obstacle to guidance and counseling students in their final year during teaching practice.
- To determine how the problem of overcrowded classrooms affects guidance and counseling students in their final year during teaching practice.

- To evaluate how an unwelcoming learning environment poses a challenge to guidance and counseling students in their final year during teaching practice.
- To assess how strained relationships between teacher candidates and teachers in host schools present obstacles for guidance and counseling students during their final year practicums.
- To establish whether there are variations in the obstacles encountered by male and female guidance and counseling students during practicums.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be beneficial to student teachers, school administration, student teacher supervisors, and prospective researchers. Student teachers will benefit from this study because it will increase their awareness of typical obstacles they may encounter during practicums and encourage them to prepare for and overcome these challenges.

This study will inform school administrators about the various difficulties student teachers experience during practicums. Thus, empowering them to create policies that address and alleviate some of these challenges. Student teacher supervisors will gain insight into the obstacles faced by their students during practicums. This will allow them to tailor their instructional supervision to minimize these challenges.

For prospective researchers, this study's findings will provide a valuable reference point, stimulating further investigation into this subject.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The present study focuses solely on the difficulties encountered by final year guidance and counseling students during practicums in the Faculty of Education at the University of Benin, Benin City.

This study is confined to final year guidance and counseling students in the Faculty of Education at the University of Benin, Benin City.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms are defined in the context of this study:

- **Class Size:** Class size refers to the average number of students in a classroom within a school. It is the ratio of students to teachers in a given class.
- **Instructional Materials:** Instructional materials encompass the resources used by teachers to facilitate teaching and enhance the learning experiences of students.
- **Student Teacher:** A student teacher is an individual who is temporarily instructing in a school setting under supervision as a requirement for obtaining teacher certification.

Student-Teacher Relationship: This refers to the bond between student-teachers and their supervising teachers at the schools where they are assigned for practical teaching experiences.

Teaching: An endeavor that aims to facilitate meaningful learning through methods that adhere to ethical and pedagogical standards.

Teaching Practice: Involves hands-on teaching experiences undertaken by individuals training to become educators, guided and assessed by supervisors over a designated period prior to graduation.

Unconducive Learning Environment: Refers to conditions that hinder effective teaching and learning processes.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, reviewed literature related to this study are organized into the following sub-headings:

- Theoretical Framework
- Guidance and Counselling Profession
- Concept of Teaching Practice
- Challenges of Teaching Practice
- Summary of Reviewed Literature

Theoretical Framework

The study draws inspiration from Jean Piaget's Constructivist Theory, a pivotal theory in education that emphasizes the active role of learners in constructing knowledge and understanding through meaningful experiences, interactions, and reflections. Within the context of teaching practice exercises, constructivism gains particular significance. It suggests that individuals, particularly student-teachers, derive the greatest learning benefits from authentic teaching experiences that enable them to engage actively in the teaching-learning process. This theory challenges traditional notions of passive learning, positing instead that learners actively construct knowledge rather than passively receive

information. In the context of teaching practice exercises, it implies that student-teachers significantly benefit from being immersed in real classroom environments, where they can navigate the complexities of teaching, adapt their strategies based on student responses, and refine their understanding of effective teaching methods. This active engagement not only provides student-teachers with practical experience but also fosters a deeper appreciation for the intricacies of classroom dynamics and student interactions.

Furthermore, constructivist theory underscores the significance of social interactions and collaboration in the learning process. Student-teachers flourish in environments that facilitate meaningful dialogue with mentors, peers, and students, enabling them to exchange perspectives, share experiences, and co-construct knowledge. Through collaborative interactions, student-teachers glean valuable insights into diverse instructional approaches, receive constructive feedback on their teaching practices, and develop a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of the teaching profession.

However, implementing constructivist principles in teaching practice exercises also unveils challenges that student-teachers may encounter, particularly concerning the availability of instructional resources and the suitability of learning environments. Inadequate resources and facilities can pose significant barriers to student-teachers' efforts to create engaging and effective learning experiences for their students. Without access to essential materials such as textbooks, teaching aids, or technology, student-teachers may struggle to design meaningful learning activities that cater to diverse

learning needs and interests. Additionally, an uncondusive learning environment characterized by factors such as overcrowded classrooms, noise distractions, or inadequate infrastructure can severely impede student-teachers' capacity to foster a supportive and engaging learning atmosphere. Limited physical space and resources may restrict opportunities for active learning and collaboration, hindering student-teachers' efforts to implement constructivist approaches effectively. Furthermore, an environment lacking in safety and comfort can undermine students' motivation and engagement, diminishing their ability to construct knowledge and meaning effectively.

This theory finds relevance in the study as it offers critical insights into the dynamics of teaching practice exercises, highlighting the active role of student-teachers in constructing knowledge and understanding through authentic experiences and social interactions. Nonetheless, challenges such as the lack of instructional materials and uncondusive learning environments underscore the need to address systemic factors that support the effective implementation of constructivist principles in teacher education programs. By acknowledging and mitigating these challenges, educators can cultivate more meaningful and impactful learning experiences for student-teachers, equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to become reflective practitioners capable of facilitating meaningful learning experiences for their future students.

Guidance and Counseling Profession

Guidance and counseling are interconnected concepts, mutually supporting each other's availability and effectiveness. Guidance encompasses a vast range of educational services and activities that empower individual students to comprehend themselves and navigate school life. Counseling, on the other hand, entails an interactive dialogue between a client (counselee) and a counselor. The counselor leverages their training, skills, and experience to assist the client in overcoming obstacles that hinder their personal growth and interpersonal relationships. In essence, counseling is a supportive relationship that provides face-to-face assistance (Makinde, 2021).

As a profession, guidance and counseling involve services and processes that aim to empower individuals, both within and outside the educational setting, to reach their full potential in various areas, such as emotional, moral, social, academic, and vocational development. Thus, guidance and counseling professionals work with individuals to help them overcome challenges in academics, careers, and general life situations (Umoh, 2021). Counseling involves an interactive relationship between the counselor and the client, during which the counselor assesses the client's concerns and assists in finding solutions to the best of their ability.

Guidance and counseling, as an educational service, facilitate the implementation of educational policies, the achievement of educational goals, and the enhancement of educational system effectiveness. One of the objectives of educational services is to

enrich learning experiences for students, particularly those in secondary schools, enabling them to excel in their academic pursuits and performance.

Guidance and counseling professionals are tasked with helping students navigate various challenges and obstacles, as well as improve their academic performance in schools. According to Ahmad (2022), these professionals create avenues for students to thrive and empower them to maximize their abilities. Guidance is a program of activities that addresses prevailing issues in the technologically advanced عصر present era (Okorodudu, 2020). Eyo (2021) views guidance as a program tailored to individual needs and influenced by environmental factors. Counseling is a personal connection in which one individual seeks to support another in understanding and resolving their educational, vocational, and social difficulties (Egbochukwu, 2021). As per Ebizie (2020), counseling is a learning journey where individuals develop self-awareness, comprehend their surroundings, and make informed choices that foster their growth and advancement in educational, vocational, and social endeavors. Guidance and counseling refer to the actions and procedures involved in assisting individuals in achieving their emotional, moral, social, academic, and vocational objectives both within the educational system and society (Okobiah, 2020).

Scholars have used the terms "guidance" and "counseling" interchangeably and synonymously. Many texts utilize the terms guidance and counseling interchangeably. In everyday language, guidance denotes personalized assistance offered to an individual,

aiming to guide them in determining their aspirations, plans, and optimal approaches for achieving their objectives. Guidance aids individuals in resolving life's challenges. Counselors provide direct support to students in their academic pursuits to cultivate interpersonal skills and academic success (Omokheni, 2020). Counseling departments emphasize the importance of developing the whole student, encompassing their social, emotional, intellectual, and physical well-being. Counseling services are accessible to all students and their families.

Concept of Teaching Practice

The practice of teaching is a crucial component of teacher training in Nigeria. It entails placing trainees in schools to acquire practical teaching skills. This practice aims to provide trainees with the necessary proficiency, knowledge, and experience to excel as effective teachers (Dawene, 2020). The practice is essential as it allows trainees to implement theoretical knowledge from classrooms into real-world scenarios. Within teacher education programs, this practice involves student-teachers applying and experiencing their teaching principles in authentic classroom settings. It presents an opportunity for them to confront the practicalities, challenges, and rewards of their chosen profession.

Teaching practice refers to the structured exposure of teacher candidates to actual classroom environments. It entails regular supervision and assessment by experienced educators known as supervisors (Amoko, 2021). As part of teacher education, this

practice allows student-teachers to implement their theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings. Additionally, it encompasses periods where student-teachers apply classroom-learned theories and principles of education through practical teaching experiences. This practice facilitates their understanding of the practical elements of teaching and learning. During this phase, student-teachers have the opportunity to explore the intricacies of teaching before fully entering the profession (Binani, 2020).

At the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, teaching practice is a mandatory course for penultimate and final-year Bachelor of Education students. Spanning six weeks, this cooperative program involves student-teachers and supervisors collaborating. The practice is analogous to industrial training for fields like Engineering and Sciences. The Faculty of Education's curriculum and teaching methods within the Bachelor of Education program are designed to equip student-teachers with pedagogical skills in specific subjects.

In final year education programs, teaching practice holds significant importance. It is an indispensable element of teacher education and plays a pivotal role in shaping professional teachers (Atunusha, 2020). Its paramount importance cannot be understated. Teaching practice marks a foundational opportunity for student-teachers to engage in real-world teaching activities. It is recognized as a structured teaching experience where student-teachers progressively assume responsibility for leading a group of students for a specified duration.

Ubong (2021) describes teaching practice as the spectrum of experiences gained by student-teachers in classroom and school environments. He emphasizes its challenging but crucial nature, particularly in developing countries like South Africa. Factors such as geographical distance, disparities in teacher expertise, resource constraints, and discipline issues can hinder teaching practice effectiveness.

Teaching practice is an integral aspect of teacher development. It provides student-teachers with firsthand experience in the authentic teaching and learning environment (Ndidi, 2020). This practice enables them to delve into the practicalities of teaching before entering the profession. Student-teachers recognize the value of teaching practice, perceiving it as the cornerstone of their teacher preparation. It offers the "true bridge" between their student status and their future profession. Consequently, teaching practice elicits a blend of anticipation, anxiety, excitement, and apprehension among student-teachers as they embark on this transformative journey.

Teaching as a Profession

Comparable to other professions, teaching entails prescribed services to society. Consequently, aspiring educators must acquire essential skills and knowledge. Student teaching forms a critical component of teacher preparation.

Student Teaching

Student teaching constitutes an integral facet of teacher education, wherein teacher candidates embark on a practical experience under the guidance of seasoned educators. This phase necessitates successful completion of both theoretical and practical coursework, culminating in certification. Proficiency in teaching practice qualifies individuals for a passing grade, as it offers opportunities to navigate the practical realities of their career. The experience aids candidates in confronting and resolving teaching challenges, fostering a versatile approach to education (Edeki, 2020).

Challenges of Student Teaching

Teaching practice poses challenges, including a scarcity of instructional materials, excessive class sizes, unsupportive learning environments, and strained relationships between student teachers and host school staff.

Lack of Instructional Materials

Inadequate instructional resources are a significant hurdle for student teachers, particularly in guidance and counseling. This deficiency presents obstacles to impactful teaching and learning experiences. Instructional materials, such as textbooks, audiovisual aids, and assessment tools, are essential for effective guidance and counseling. Their absence hinders students' ability to provide comprehensive counseling sessions, undermining their educational objectives (Ibrahim, 2020).

The consequences of insufficient instructional materials manifest in compromised teaching quality. Student teachers in guidance and counseling require diverse resources to illustrate concepts, facilitate discussions, and engage in practical scenarios. Without these aids, they may struggle to convey information effectively, diminishing the learning experience for both students and those seeking guidance (Awofala, 2020). Moreover, limited instructional materials restrict teaching methodologies, hindering the exploration of innovative approaches and undermining the depth and value of the teaching practice experience (Ogundokun, 2022).

Effective teaching practice in guidance and counseling requires the practical application of theoretical knowledge. A shortage of essential resources challenges students' ability to create realistic simulations and role-playing exercises. This gap between theory and practice affects their skill development and preparation for real-world counseling scenarios (Adekunle, 2021). Furthermore, limited case studies and practical tools impede students' application of concepts to diverse counseling situations, impacting their readiness for professional practice. The lack of instructional materials also hinders the development of a comprehensive understanding of counseling processes. Practical application reinforces theoretical learning, bridging the gap between abstract concepts and practical outcomes. Without adequate resources, students may struggle to translate theoretical knowledge into practical skills, diminishing the efficacy of their teaching practice experiences in guidance and counseling (Kalu, 2019).

Odibo (2018)

A study by Odibo (2018) investigated the impact of resource scarcity on student teaching experiences within Delta State University, Abraka. This study aimed to ascertain how a lack of resources affects student teaching practices. Five key research questions guided the investigation. A correlational design was employed, and data was gathered via structured questionnaires. The study included 300 participants. Analysis of the collected data utilized mean scores and standard deviations. The findings indicated that resource availability significantly influences student teaching experiences. Additionally, it was discovered that access to adequate instructional materials and tools empowers student teachers to plan and execute lessons effectively, leading to enhanced confidence in classroom settings.

Akasi (2018)

Akasi (2018) conducted a study exploring the role of resource scarcity as a limiting factor in student teaching practices within the University of Uyo, Nigeria. The researcher aimed to examine resource scarcity as an inhibitory factor for student teachers at this institution. Six research questions and a null hypothesis guided the inquiry, which employed a descriptive survey design. Quantitative and qualitative methods were utilized for data collection: questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The results revealed that a lack of resources significantly impedes student teaching practices for students within the University of Uyo. Furthermore, resource availability was found to directly impact

student teachers' ability to design innovative lessons that cater to diverse learning styles and abilities.

Overcrowded Class Size

Overcrowded classrooms pose a notable challenge for final year guidance and counseling students during their teaching practice. The sheer number of students in such settings hinders the establishment of meaningful connections between teachers and individuals, disrupting the development of supportive and trusting relationships that are crucial for effective guidance and counseling (Adegoke, 2019).

In crowded classrooms, understanding the unique needs of each learner becomes challenging due to limited personal interactions. As a result, guidance and counseling students struggle to build rapport, a fundamental skill for their future roles as educators. Additionally, addressing diverse learning styles and individual needs is hindered by the large class sizes. These students aim to provide personalized support tailored to each student's requirements, but extensive class sizes limit their ability to do so effectively (Ani, 2020). Students with varying academic abilities and emotional needs might not receive the attention and guidance essential for their growth, thereby affecting the development of comprehensive counseling skills. This challenge underscores the importance of manageable class sizes for guidance and counseling students, as it directly impacts their capacity to refine and adapt counseling techniques to meet the diverse needs of students (Efoghe, 2022).

The effects of overcrowded classrooms extend beyond the immediate interactions between guidance and counseling students and their pupils. The resultant stressful environment affects both students and teachers, impacting the overall learning atmosphere. For guidance and counseling students, fostering a conducive environment is crucial for the successful implementation of therapeutic interventions. However, overcrowded spaces often lead to noise, chaos, and a general lack of tranquility, conditions that are not conducive to open communication and effective counseling (Obanya, 2021). Thus, the challenge posed by overcrowded classrooms transcends the individual level and extends to the broader educational context.

Ebubedike (2019)

Ebubedike (2019) conducted a study exploring the relationship between overcrowded classrooms and student teaching experiences within Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria. The researcher aimed to determine the association between these two factors. Random sampling was employed to select 200 participants. Hypotheses were tested using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient at a 0.05 significance level. Data was analyzed through mean scores and frequency distribution. The findings revealed a significant relationship between overcrowded classrooms and student teaching experiences, suggesting that overcrowding negatively impacts the effectiveness of teaching practices.

Unconducive Learning Environment:

Challenging learning conditions hinder guidance and counseling students during practical teaching experiences (Onyishi, 2019). Inadequate physical facilities, crowded classrooms, and lacking resources disrupt counseling sessions and hinder the implementation of effective teaching methods (Salisu, 2021). These constraints limit the delivery of counseling services and the development of necessary teaching skills.

Psychological factors also impact the learning environment. Constant interruptions, noise, and lack of discipline impair concentration and create an unfavorable atmosphere for counseling (Oshikoya, 2020). This hinders the cultivation of essential qualities such as patience, empathy, and composure, compromising the efficacy of guidance and counseling practices.

Furthermore, inconducive learning environments reflect a lack of administrative support and recognition for guidance services. Skepticism and indifference from school authorities undermine the value of counseling and limit opportunities for students to demonstrate their skills (Ukeje, 2021). This integration into the educational framework is crucial for the well-being of students.

Ikhueni's (2021) study in Enugu State University, Nigeria, investigated the impact of unconducive learning environments on practical teaching. The findings revealed that insecurity and compromised learning can arise when environments lack safety, stimulation, and resources. In contrast, a positive learning space enables students to focus and acquire effective teaching skills.

Poor Student-Teacher Relationships:

Student-teacher relationships during practical teaching can pose challenges. The interaction between student-teachers and host school teachers plays a significant role in the learning experience. However, conflicts may arise due to misunderstandings about roles, particularly when cooperating teachers are overly authoritative and student-teachers are self-conscious (Alade, 2020).

Interpersonal difficulties between student-teachers and faculty mentors in host schools present a significant barrier to effective guidance and counseling during practicum experiences. A primary factor contributing to these challenges is a prevailing communication divide, often stemming from misaligned expectations and limited feedback mechanisms (Igwe, 2019). This disconnect can lead to confusion regarding teaching methods, goals, and assessment criteria, leaving student-teachers uncertain about their mentor teachers' expectations. The quality of feedback received is crucial for the professional growth of these students, and when this feedback is insufficient, it hinders their ability to refine their skills and apply effective guidance and counseling techniques (Okwori, 2020).

Furthermore, the hierarchical nature of the teacher-student relationship can exacerbate the challenges faced by student-teachers in guidance and counseling. The traditional power dynamic within educational settings often creates a one-sided mentor-mentee relationship, where student-teachers may feel apprehensive about expressing their ideas or challenging

established practices. This imbalance prevents the creation of a collaborative and supportive learning environment, stunting the overall development of student-teachers in guidance and counseling (Okeke, 2020). Breaking down these hierarchical barriers is essential for student-teachers to feel comfortable engaging in open dialogue with their mentors, fostering an environment that promotes mutual growth and the exchange of innovative ideas.

Ibobo (2022) conducted a study on the impact of strained student-teacher relationships with host school faculty on students' perspectives of practicum experiences at the University of Port Harcourt. The study was guided by four research questions and two null hypotheses and employed a descriptive survey design. A sample of 150 undergraduate students from four tertiary institutions in River State participated in the study. A structured questionnaire was used to gather data on the influence of poor student-teacher relationships with host school faculty on students' perceptions of practicum experiences. Mean and standard deviation were used to address the research questions, while t-test statistics were applied to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. The study findings revealed, among other things, a significant impact of poor student-teacher relationships with host school faculty on students' perceptions of practicum experiences at the University of Port Harcourt.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature review thoroughly examined the constructivism theory in the context of practicum experiences. The theory was relevant to the study as it provided valuable insights into the dynamics of practicum experiences, emphasizing the active role of student-teachers in building knowledge and understanding through real-world experiences and social interactions.

The conceptual framework for the study included the concepts of guidance and counseling profession and practicum. Guidance and counseling as a profession encompasses activities related to helping individuals within and outside of the school environment reach their full potential in emotional, moral, social, academic, and vocational aspects of their development. Practicum, on the other hand, refers to teaching experiences undertaken by individuals training to become teachers or work in education before graduating, conducted under the supervision of an experienced educator.

The literature review highlighted several challenges faced by student-teachers during practicum experiences, including a lack of instructional materials, overcrowded classrooms, an unfavorable learning environment, and strained student-teacher relationships with host school faculty.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, information about the research methodology adopted for the study are discussed under the following sub-headings:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Instrument for Data Collection
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Design of the Study

The study utilized a descriptive survey research design, which involves observing and gathering data on a specific topic without manipulating variables. This design was considered appropriate for this study as it facilitated the collection of data on the challenges encountered by final year guidance and counseling students during practicum experiences in the Faculty of Education at the University of Benin, Benin City.

Population of the Study

The research subjects comprised all 131 final year Guidance and Counseling students enrolled in the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counseling Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City. (Source: Department Head, 2024).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for the study included all 131 final year Guidance and Counseling students from the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counseling Psychology. All students participated in the study as no exclusions were made due to the manageable population size.

Instrument for Data Collection

Data was collected via a structured questionnaire titled "Challenges Encountered by Final Year Guidance and Counseling Students during Teaching Practice Exercise Questionnaire (CEGCSTPEQ)." The questionnaire was structured with two sections: Section A collected demographic information, while Section B addressed the research

objectives. The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert scale with response options ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD).

Validity of the Instrument

The constructed questionnaire was reviewed by the project supervisor for content validity. Feedback and revisions were incorporated into the final version used for data collection.

Reliability of the Instrument

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was employed to determine the instrument's reliability. The questionnaire was administered to a group of 20 respondents outside the study sample. The Cronbach coefficient obtained was .805, indicating the instrument's reliability.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally distributed and collected the questionnaires from the respondents. All questionnaires were collected promptly to ensure a high response rate.

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis utilized mean and standard deviation to address the research questions posed in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this chapter, the results of the data that were collected from field and the discussion of findings are presented.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does lack of Instructional Materials constitute a Challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students' during Teaching Practice Exercise?

Table 1: Description of lack of Instructional Materials as a Challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students' during Teaching Practice Exercise

Variable	N	Sum	Mean	SD	Scale mean	Decision
Lack of Instructional						

Materials	131	1504	11.48	2.87	7.5	High Extent
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Table 1 above shows that, out of the 131 respondents, a mean value of 11.48 and a standard deviation of 2.87 were obtained with a scale mean of 7.5. From the result, the mean value (11.48) is greater than the scale mean (7.5) which indicates a high extent. Consequently, lack of instructional materials constitute a challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students' during teaching practice exercise.

Research Question 2: To what extent does Overcrowded Class Size constitute the Challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students' during Teaching Practice Exercise?

Table 2: Description of Overcrowded Class Size as a Challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students' during Teaching Practice Exercise

Variable	N	Sum	Mean	SD	Scale mean	Decision
Overcrowded Class Size Extent	131	1490	11.37	2.89	7.5	High

Table 2 above shows that of the 131 respondents, a mean value of 11.37 and standard deviation of 2.89 were obtained with a scale mean of 7.5. From the result, the

mean value (11.37) is greater than the scale mean (7.5) which indicates a high extent. Consequently, overcrowded class size constitute a challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students' during teaching practice exercise.

Research Question 3: To what extent does Unconducive Learning Environment constitute the Challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students' during Teaching Practice Exercise?

Table 3: Description of Unconducive Learning Environment as a Challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students' during Teaching Practice Exercise

Variable	N	Sum	Mean	SD	Scale mean	Decision
Unconducive Learning Environment Extent	131	1521	11.61	3.64	7.5	High

Table 3 above shows that of the 131 respondents, a mean value of 11.61, standard deviation of 3.64 were obtained with a scale mean of 7.5. From the result, the mean value (11.61) is greater than the scale mean (7.5) which indicates a high extent. Consequently,

unconducive learning environment constitute a challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students’ during teaching practice exercise.

Research Question 4: To what extent does Poor Students – Teachers Relationship constitute the Challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students’ during Teaching Practice Exercise?

Table 4: Description of Poor Students – Teachers Relationship as a Challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students’ during Teaching Practice Exercise

Variable	N	Sum	Mean	SD	Scale mean	Decision
Poor Students-Teachers Relationship Extent	131	1354	10.33	3.85	7.5	High

Table 4 above shows that of the 131 respondents, a mean value of 10.33, standard deviation of 3.85 were obtained with a scale mean of 7.5. From the result, the mean value (10.33) is greater than the scale mean (7.5) which indicates a high extent. Consequently, poor students–teachers relationship constitute a challenge encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students’ during teaching practice exercise.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the Challenges encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students’ during Teaching Practice Exercise by Sex.

Table 5: t-Test of Difference between Male and Female Students in the Challenges encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students’ during Teaching Practice Exercise

N	Mean	Sd	Mean Diff.	t-val	df	Sig.(2 tailed)
---	------	----	------------	-------	----	----------------

Male	32	45.62	12.36				
				1.089	0.437	129	0.663
Female	99	44.53	12.31				

$\alpha = 0.05$

Table 5 above shows an independent sample t-test value of 0.437 and a p-value of 0.663 testing at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is greater than the alpha level ($p > 0.05$). Therefore the null hypothesis which states that ‘There is no significant difference in the Challenges encountered by final year Guidance and Counselling Students’ during Teaching Practice Exercise by Sex.’ is retained. Consequently, there is a no significant difference between male and female final year Guidance and Counselling Students’ in the Challenges encountered by them during Teaching Practice Exercise.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question One

Insufficient instructional materials impede the effectiveness of final-year Guidance and Counselling students' teaching practice. Supporting this, Ibrahim (2020) noted that material scarcity hinders students' ability to provide comprehensive and impactful counseling sessions. Akasi (2018) similarly found that resource limitations hinder student-teachers' capacity to develop innovative lessons that address diverse learning styles.

Research Question Two

Overcrowded classrooms pose a significant challenge for final-year Guidance and Counselling students during teaching practice. Adegoke (2019) aligned with this finding, highlighting the challenges overcrowded classes create for students. Ebubedike (2019) further established the link between overcrowded classrooms and teaching practice challenges.

Research Question Three

An uncondusive learning environment poses another obstacle for final-year Guidance and Counselling students during teaching practice. Onyishi (2019) affirmed this, emphasizing the negative impact of an unfavorable educational setting on students' practice experiences. Ikhueni (2021) corroborated this, noting that students struggle to learn effectively and develop teaching skills in such environments.

Research Question Four

Poor student-teacher relationships hinder the success of final-year Guidance and Counselling students during teaching practice. Omokheni (2021) found that relationship dynamics between student-teachers and supervising teachers in host schools significantly impact students' challenges. Ibobo (2022) added that a poor student-teacher relationship influences students' perception of teaching practice.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter dealt with the summary of the study, the conclusions drawn, results obtained and recommendations offered.

Summary

The study investigated the challenges encountered by final year guidance and counselling students during teaching practice exercise in Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City. To achieve the purpose of the study, five research questions were raised and examined. The sample size for the study was made up of all the 131 final year

Guidance and Counselling students from the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology. All the students were included in the study as census. This is because the population is not large.

The instrument that was used for the data collection is a structured questionnaire titled “Challenges Encountered by Final Year Guidance and Counselling Students during Teaching Practice Exercise Questionnaire (CEGCSTPEQ)”. The questionnaire consisted of 4-point Likert scale response of Strongly agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). The constructed questionnaire for the study was presented to the project supervisor to confirm for content validity. Necessary corrections were made and after which it was re-written before it was administered by the researcher. The questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. An analysis of data was done using mean score and standard deviation while the hypothesis was tested using the t-test analysis.

The investigation uncovered the following insights:

- The absence of instructional aids posed challenges for final year guidance and counseling students during their teaching practice.
- Overcrowded classrooms presented obstacles for final year guidance and counseling students during their teaching practice.

- An inadequate learning environment posed difficulties for final year guidance and counseling students during their teaching practice.
- Poor relationships between students and teachers posed challenges for final year guidance and counseling students during their teaching practice.
- No notable disparity existed between male and female final year guidance and counseling students in the challenges they encountered during their teaching practice.

Conclusion

The investigation explored the challenges faced by final year guidance and counseling students during their teaching practice in the Faculty of Education at the University of Benin. The findings revealed that a lack of instructional materials, overcrowded classrooms, an unfavorable learning environment, and strained student-teacher relationships were the primary challenges encountered by students during their teaching practice.

Recommendations

Building on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Authorities should allocate ample resources to the provision of instructional materials, ensuring that guidance and counseling students have access to crucial resources for effective teaching practice.
- Authorities should implement policies that aim to reduce class sizes, as smaller classes facilitate improved student-teacher interaction and create a more favorable learning environment.
- The University of Benin's academic leadership should collaborate with school leaders to enhance learning environments by addressing concerns related to classroom infrastructure, hygiene, and safety.
- The Faculty of Education at the University of Benin should establish workshops or training programs designed to foster communication and relationship-building skills among guidance and counseling students.

Suggestions for Future Studies

This investigation focused solely on the challenges faced by final year guidance and counseling students during their teaching practice in the Faculty of Education at the University of Benin. Similar studies can be conducted in other higher education institutions across the nation to broaden the generalizability of the findings

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APPENDIX A

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION AND COUNSELING
PSYCHOLOGY**

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

Dear Respondent,

I am a final year student of the above named department and institution. I am carrying out a research project on the **Challenges Encountered by Guidance and Counselling Final Students during Teaching Practice Exercise in Faculty of Education, University Of Benin, Benin City.**

The research is purely for academic purposes, any information received by you would be treated with utmost confidentiality. I would appreciate if you can help by filling this questionnaire accurately with sincerity. Thank you for your cooperation.

Section A: Demographic Data

Sex: Male () Female ()

Section B: Data on Questionnaire

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Key: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1.	The unavailability of instructional materials often lead to frustration and stress for student-teachers which can negatively impact on their overall teaching experience				
2.	Lack of instructional materials often makes it difficult for student-teachers to arouse and sustain the interest of students in their classroom				
3.	Lack of instructional materials makes it difficult for student-teachers to realize instructional objectives of classroom lessons				
4.	Lack of instructional materials often makes it difficult for student-teachers to effectively explain complex concepts to their students				
5.	Lack of instructional materials often makes it difficult for student-teachers to transformed students in their classroom from passive recipient of knowledge to active participants				
6.	Overcrowded classroom often make it difficult for student-teachers to provide individualized attention to each students in their classroom				
7.	Large class size often makes it difficult for student-teachers to have effective control of their classroom				
8.	Overcrowded classroom often make it difficult for student-teachers to tailor their lessons to address the diverse needs of students				
9.	Large class size often make it difficult for student-teachers to identify the strength and weakness of individual students in their classroom				

10.	Learning and teaching activities often becomes difficult for student-teachers when the classroom is overcrowded in nature				
11.	Unconducive learning environment can pose physical and emotional risks for student-teachers				
12.	Unconducive learning environment could deteriorate the health condition of student-teachers thus affecting their performance in teaching practice				
13.	Old school building that lack adequate lighting, good roof and adequate space often act as a constraints for student-teachers				
14.	Constant disruption such as noise and poor ventilation can hinder effective teaching practice experience of student-teachers				
15.	Poorly maintained and outdated school facilities often make teaching practice a boring exercise for student-teachers				
16.	Poor communication between student-teachers and teachers of host schools often make teaching practice exercise very difficult for students				
17.	The authoritative nature of some teachers of host schools makes teaching practice a tedious exercise				
18.	Some host teachers give excessive workload to students				
19.	Poor relationship between student-teachers and teachers of host schools may result to ineffective teaching practice that could negatively impact on the teaching styles of student-teachers				
20.	Poor relationship between student-teachers and teachers of host schools can negatively affects student-teachers' confidence and performance in the classroom				

APPENDIX B

Reliability

RELIABILITY

/VARIABLES=A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 A6 A7 A8 A9 A10 A11 A12 A13 A14 A15 A16 A17 A18 A19 A20

/SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL

/MODEL=ALPHA.

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	20	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	20	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.805	20

APPENDIX C

Frequencies

FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=SEX

/ORDER=ANALYSIS.

Statistics
SEX

N	Valid	131
	Missing	0

SEX					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	32	24.4	24.4	24.4
	FEMALE	99	75.6	75.6	100.0
	Total	131	100.0	100.0	

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=InstruMaterials

/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX.

Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
InstruMaterials	131	5.00	19.00	1504.00	11.4809	2.85913
Valid N (listwise)	131					

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=OverCrdedClaSize

/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX.

Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
OverCrdedClaSize	131	5.00	20.00	1490.00	11.3740	2.89120
Valid N (listwise)	131					

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=LearnEnvrment

/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX.

Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
LearnEnvrment	131	5.00	20.00	1521.00	11.6107	3.64496
Valid N (listwise)	131					

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=PoorTSRship

/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX.

Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PoorTSRship	131	5.00	19.00	1354.00	10.3359	3.85628
Valid N (listwise)	131					

T-TEST GROUPS=SEX(1 2)

/MISSING=ANALYSIS

/VARIABLES=Challenges

/CRITERIA=CI(.95).

T-Test

SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Challenges MALE	32	45.6250	12.36997	2.18672
FEMALE	99	44.5354	12.31267	1.22742

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	df
Challenges	Equal variances assumed	.066	.798	.437	129
	Equal variances not assumed			.435	51.979

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Challenges	Equal variances assumed	.663	1.08965	2.49116
	Equal variances not assumed	.666	1.08965	2.50765

Independent Samples Test	
	t-test for Equality of Means

		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Lower	Upper
Challenges	Equal variances assumed	-3.83918	6.01848
	Equal variances not assumed	-3.94237	6.12166