



BRIDGING THE GAP: UNDERSTANDING CHALLENGES FACED BY NOVICE EDUCATORS IN THE PRACTICAL TEACHING PHASE

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: These articles delve into the often-overlooked hurdles encountered by new teachers during their practical teaching phase. This study investigates the diverse array of challenges faced by novice educators as they transition from theory to practice, aiming to provide insights into the support mechanisms necessary for their successful integration into the teaching profession. Through a qualitative exploration of novice teachers' experiences, this research uncovers the multifaceted nature of these challenges and offers recommendations for mentorship, professional development, and systemic support to facilitate their growth and development.

INTRODUCTION

The journey from aspiring educator to proficient teacher is a transformative odyssey marked by numerous milestones, challenges, and opportunities for growth. Among these pivotal stages is the practical teaching phase, wherein novice educators' transition from the theoretical realm of teacher preparation programs to the dynamic realities of the classroom. This phase represents a critical juncture in the professional development of educators, as they grapple with the complexities of translating pedagogical knowledge into effective instructional practices.

"Bridging the Gap: Understanding Challenges Faced by Novice Educators in the Practical Teaching Phase" seeks to illuminate the often-overlooked obstacles encountered by new teachers during this formative period. While teacher preparation programs provide aspiring educators with foundational knowledge and pedagogical strategies, the practical teaching phase exposes them to the nuanced intricacies of classroom management, student engagement, and instructional differentiation. As novice educators navigate these uncharted waters, they confront a myriad of challenges that may impact their confidence, efficacy, and sense of professional identity.

This study endeavors to shed light on the diverse array of challenges faced by novice educators during the practical teaching phase, drawing upon qualitative research methods to explore their experiences, perceptions, and reflections. By delving into the lived experiences of novice teachers, we aim to uncover the underlying factors contributing to these challenges and identify potential strategies for mitigating their impact.

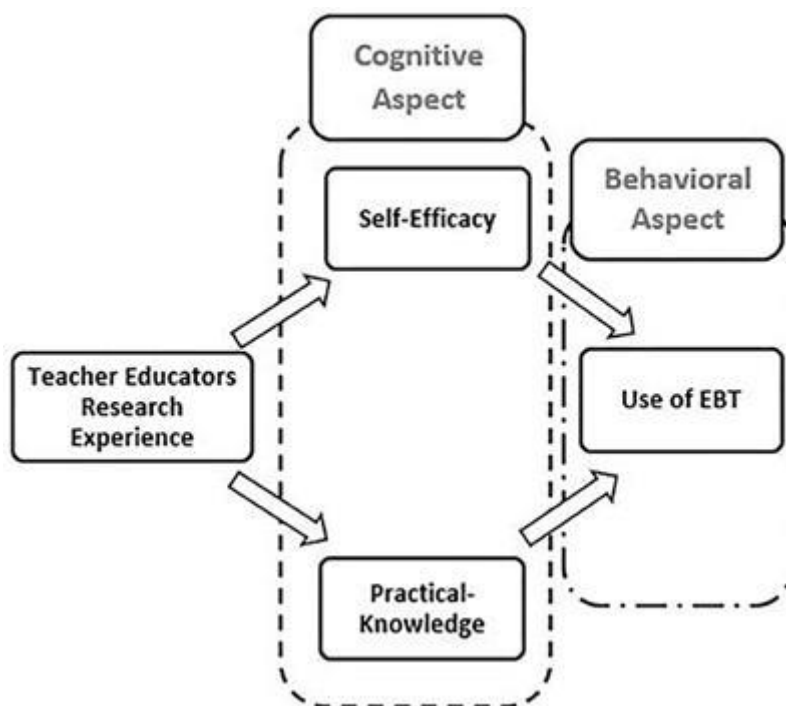
The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform the development of targeted support mechanisms and interventions designed to facilitate the successful integration of novice educators into the teaching profession. By understanding the unique needs and challenges faced by new teachers during the practical teaching phase, educational stakeholders can work collaboratively to foster a supportive ecosystem that nurtures their growth, fosters their development, and empowers them to thrive as educators.

In essence, "Bridging the Gap" invites educators, policymakers, and researchers to embark on a journey of exploration and discovery—a journey that transcends disciplinary boundaries and embraces the collective responsibility of nurturing the next generation of educators. Through our collective efforts, we can bridge the gap between theory and practice, support the professional growth of novice educators, and cultivate a vibrant and inclusive educational landscape grounded in excellence, equity, and innovation.

METHOD

The research process for "Bridging the Gap: Understanding Challenges Faced by Novice Educators in the Practical Teaching Phase" involved several key steps to gather and analyze data effectively. Initially, a thorough review of existing literature on the topic was conducted to inform the study's design and identify relevant themes and research gaps. Drawing upon this foundation, the research team developed a qualitative approach centered on semi-structured interviews with novice educators undergoing or having recently completed their practical teaching phase.

Participants were recruited using purposive sampling to ensure diverse perspectives from various educational settings and experiences. Through careful selection, a cohort of novice educators was assembled, reflecting a range of backgrounds, contexts, and challenges. Prior to data collection, ethical considerations were paramount, with informed consent obtained from all participants, and assurances provided regarding confidentiality and anonymity.

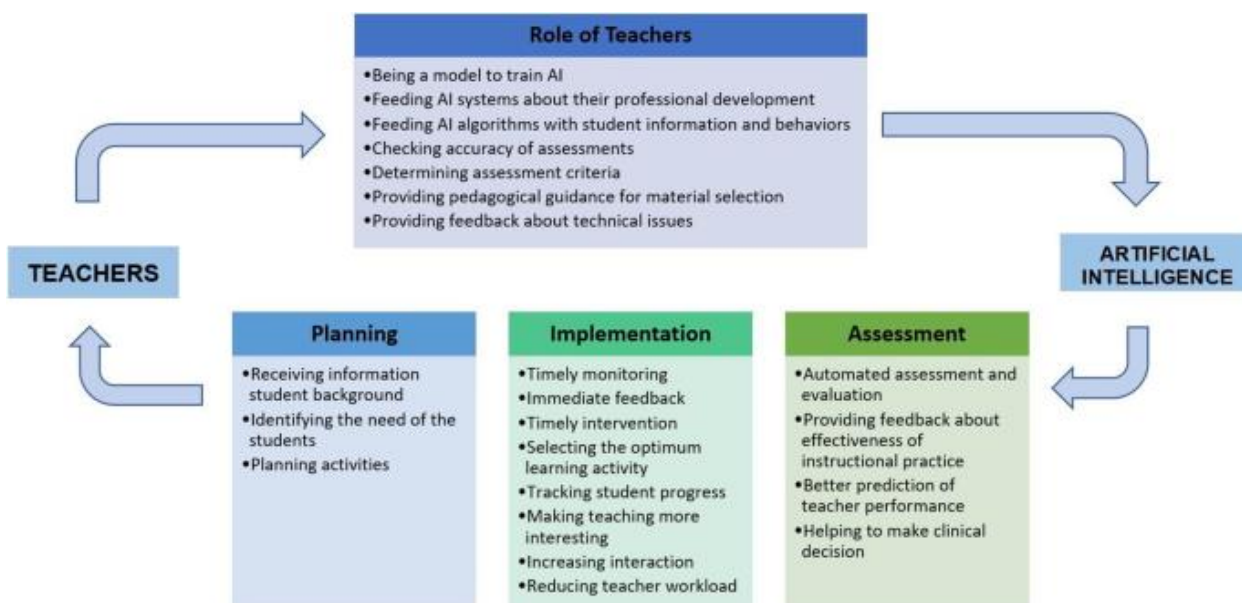


Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with each participant, guided by a set of open-ended questions designed to explore their experiences, perceptions, and reflections on the practical teaching phase. These interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to preserve accuracy and detail for subsequent analysis.

Thematic analysis served as the primary methodological approach for data analysis. This involved a systematic process of coding, categorizing, and interpreting the interview data to identify recurring patterns, themes, and categories related to the challenges faced by novice educators. Through iterative rounds of coding and thematic refinement, overarching themes emerged, capturing the essence of the experiences shared by participants.

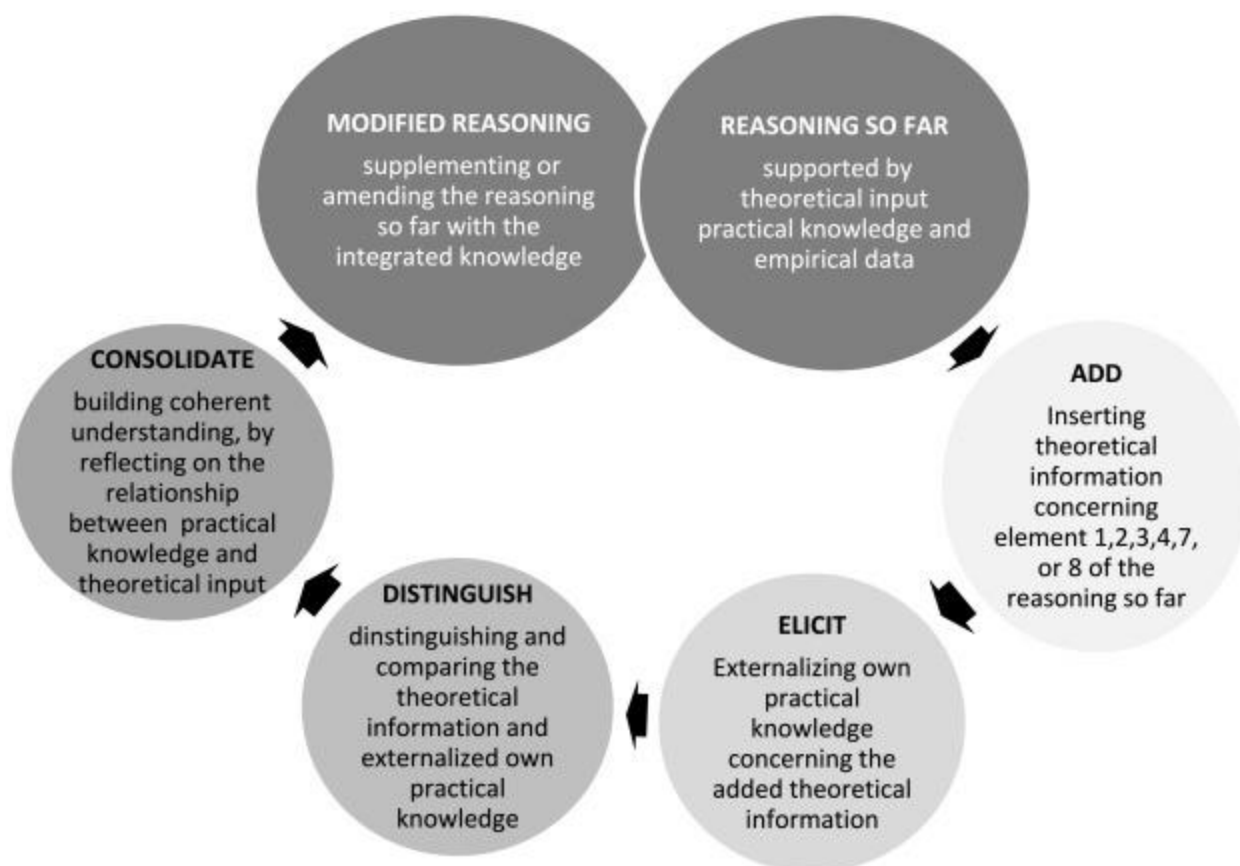
A purposive sampling technique was utilized to recruit novice educators who were currently undergoing their practical teaching phase or had recently completed it. Participants were selected from diverse educational settings, including primary, secondary, and higher education, to ensure a breadth of perspectives and experiences.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant to elicit rich and nuanced insights into their experiences as novice educators. Interview questions were designed to explore a range of topics, including challenges encountered, support mechanisms utilized, and strategies employed to navigate the practical teaching phase. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to facilitate data analysis.



Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns, themes, and categories within the interview data. This involved a systematic process of coding, categorizing, and interpreting the data to uncover underlying meanings and insights. Initial codes were generated through open coding, followed by axial coding to identify relationships between codes and themes. Through an iterative process of reflection and refinement, overarching themes emerged, capturing the essence of the challenges faced by novice educators.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, several measures were employed, including member checking, peer debriefing, and reflexivity. Member checking involved sharing preliminary findings with participants to verify the accuracy and relevance of the interpretations. Peer debriefing involved consulting with colleagues to ensure rigor and credibility in the analysis process. Reflexivity was maintained through ongoing reflection on the researcher's biases, assumptions, and preconceptions throughout the research process.



Ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects were strictly adhered to throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and measures were taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussion.

While every effort was made to ensure the rigor and credibility of the study, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The findings are context-specific and may not be generalizable to all novice educators or educational settings. Additionally, the subjective nature of qualitative research introduces the potential for researcher bias and interpretation.

Despite these limitations, the insights gleaned from this study provide valuable contributions to our understanding of the challenges faced by novice educators during the practical teaching phase, informing the development of targeted support mechanisms and interventions to facilitate their successful integration into the teaching profession.

RESULTS

The thematic analysis of the interviews revealed several key challenges faced by novice educators during the practical teaching phase. One prominent theme was classroom management difficulties, including issues with behavior management, establishing routines, and managing time effectively. Many participants expressed feeling overwhelmed by the demands of maintaining order and creating a conducive learning environment.

Another significant challenge identified was instructional planning and delivery. Novice educators reported struggles with lesson planning, adapting curriculum to meet diverse student needs, and delivering engaging and effective instruction. Many felt unprepared to address the wide range of abilities and learning styles present in their classrooms.

Additionally, participants highlighted challenges related to assessment and feedback. Many expressed uncertainties about how to assess student learning effectively, provide meaningful feedback, and use assessment data to inform instruction. Some felt overwhelmed by the sheer volume of grading and assessment tasks, leading to feelings of stress and burnout.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study underscore the complex and multifaceted nature of the challenges faced by novice educators during the practical teaching phase. Classroom management, instructional planning and delivery, and assessment and feedback emerged as prominent areas of concern, highlighting the need for targeted support and professional development in these areas.

One possible explanation for these challenges is the gap between theory and practice in teacher preparation programs. While novice educators may have acquired theoretical knowledge and pedagogical strategies during their training, they may lack the practical experience and skills necessary to apply this knowledge effectively in real-world classroom settings.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that novice educators may benefit from ongoing mentorship and support from more experienced colleagues. Mentorship programs and peer coaching initiatives could provide valuable guidance and support to novice educators as they navigate the challenges of the practical teaching phase.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, "Bridging the Gap: Understanding Challenges Faced by Novice Educators in the Practical Teaching Phase" sheds light on the myriad challenges encountered by novice educators as they transition from theory to practice. By identifying key areas of concern, this research informs the development of targeted support mechanisms and interventions aimed at facilitating the successful integration of novice educators into the teaching profession.

Moving forward, it is essential for teacher preparation programs, schools, and educational stakeholders to prioritize the needs of novice educators and provide the support and resources necessary for their growth and development. By addressing the challenges identified in this study, we can bridge the gap between theory and practice, support the professionalization of the teaching profession, and ultimately improve educational outcomes for all students.

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