

# The Mastery Level of Bachelor Degree Practicum Students of Special Education in the State of Perak towards Basic Teaching Skills

Md. Nasir Masran, Rosmanirah Othman, Nur Fittrah Hassan

Faculty of Human Development, Sultan Idris Education University, MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

This study aims to identify the level of mastery of practicum students of special education on 11 basic skills of teaching. This study employs a quantitative method and it is supported by interviews and observation. The study respondents involve 9 practicum students of special education who are undergoing teaching practice in Perak also 9 of their teachers-cum-mentors who are involved in the training. The questionnaire built about questions related to their knowledge and mastery about basic teaching skills. Data were analysed through the descriptive analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) using the mean score and standard deviation, whereas interviews were transcribed to answer the study questions. The outcome of the analysis obtained from the practicum students suggests that the practicum students are at high level of knowledge interpretation and mastery with their respective mean values at 3.64 and 3.65. However, it contradicts the questionnaire analysis involving mentors with regard to their level of knowledge and mastery. The outcome remains at moderate interpretation level with the mean values respectively 3.05 and 2.95. It is also supported by an analysis from the interview transcription. The root cause for the implication on this moderate mastery level needs to be identified because there is a lack of uniformity between the practicum students themselves and their mentors, and the basic skills in teaching. It needs closer inspection and requires further studies.

**Keywords:** Mastery in Basic Teaching Skills, Practicum Students, Special Education

## Introduction

The point of teacher training opens an opportunity for would-be teachers to develop their skills and practical knowledge, receive feedback from experts and professionals and gain experience with students and the school environment that can help them directly in preparing for teaching (Kaufman, 2015).

The quality of practicum students is evaluated based on educational orientation by the professional community that tests and validates graduates. This is related to the statement made by Kalimullin (2014) that the main reason for the implementation of teaching practice in Bachelor Degree program for future teachers would require teachers to spend more time

at school and at the expense of knowledge and activity development for the education at school.

### **Problem Statement**

Our study finds that teachers who are undergoing practicum are always found to have some problems to teach well because they lack the mastery in these basic skills. Teachers who lack the skills in managing their students' behavior often cannot teach as planned because they have to spend their time controlling their students in their teaching session. Teachers cannot explain well, causing their students to lack the understanding and master the lessons delivered by the teacher (Tok, 2010; Ahmed, Majid, Zin, Phulpoto, & Umrani, 2016). Therefore, this study will give an idea about the basic skills of teaching among students undergoing practicum and the factors that cause it to happen, also suggestions on ways to overcome the issue.

### **Study Objective**

The study objectives as follows:

- a) To identify the knowledge of practicum students towards basic skills in teaching.
- b) To identify the mastery of practicum students towards basic teaching skills.
- c) To identify the factors for not mastering basic teaching skills.

### **Study Question**

- a) What is the level of the knowledge of practicum students towards basic skills in teaching?
- b) What is the level of the mastery of practicum students towards basic skills in teaching?
- c) What is the factors for not mastering basic teaching skills?

### **Study Methodology**

#### **Study Limitation**

This study has some limitations. The limitations include the location, the study sample and the factor being studied. The feedback given by the students this study is assumed to have been given honestly and with a sense of responsibility.

### **Study Design**

This study is a survey study. The data is in the form of qualitative and quantitative data. For the former, observation, video recording, interviews, checklist and document analysis are used to see the teaching practicum skills of teaching of. The finding of the data is analyzed using the thematic analysis inductively and it is presented descriptively. Meanwhile, the quantitative data is done through questionnaire that is analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) and is presented in the form of descriptive and inferential data.

### **Sampling**

The study sampling involves all Special Education Bachelor Degree program students who are undergoing practicum in semester 2 session 2017/2018 in Perak. The data gathering process was done on Mac 2018 involving qualitative and quantitative kualitatif dan kuantitative data. For the qualitative data, this study is done in schools where students do their practicum around Perak by conducting occasional observations, video recording, interviews involving mentors, checklist and document analysis.

This study comprises of nine practicum teachers in Perak. Respondents have enrolled in a teaching course, technology and assessment in higher education institutes for six credit hours before undergoing teaching practice in schools decided by Teaching practice Center / Industry. The practicum teacher is guided by mentors serving in Special Education classes. Mentors were also interviewed to strengthen the data of observation and questionnaire that will be analysed in line with the assessment of the practicum teachers' basic skills mastery level. The questionnaire form, observation instrument and interview question have to obtain validation and reliability prior to their distribution to respondents.

### Study Instrument

This study is use quantitative survey, thus the questionnaire form is used as the main instrument because it is easier and more effective (Najib, 2003); (Galdeano, Ahmed, Fati, Rehan, & Ahmed, 2019) The questionnaire used in the study is divided into 3 sections, which are sections A, B, and C. Section A covers the general information of the background of the respondents in the purpose of obtaining information about the background of the respondents and its relation to teaching skill. The questionnaire built about questions related to their knowledge and mastery about basic teaching skills. Interviews were transcribed to answer the study questions about factors not mastering teaching skill .

### Study Finding

#### Section I: The Knowledge of Practicum students towards Basic Skills in Teaching

In Section I in this questionnaire instrument, it answers the first objective of this study which is the aspect of level of knowledge of practicum students towards teaching skills.

Knowledge	Practicum students Questionnaire Analysis		Teacher- mentor Questionnaire Analysis	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.64</b>	<b>1.07</b>	<b>3.05</b>	<b>0.62</b>

The Table of Mean Score and Standard Deviation of the Knowledge of Practicum students towards Basic teaching skills

Based on the table above, all in all the mean for the knowledge level analysis for practicum students towards basic teaching skills stays at high level with the mean value 3.64 and standard deviation 1.07. The outcome of the analysis shows that the level of knowledge for practicum students in basic teaching skills is high in every basic teaching skill.

Next, for the data obtained from the questionnaire analysis distributed to the mentors, it can be seen that there is a moderate interpretation level with overall mean value 3.05 and standard deviation 0.62.

## Section II: The Mastery of Practicum Students Towards Basic Teaching Skills

In Section II in the questionnaire instrument, it answers the first objective of this study which is the aspect of mastery of practicum students towards their teaching skills.

11 Types of Basic Teaching Skills	Practicum students Questionnaire Analysis		Mentor Questionnaire Analysis		Observer Questionnaire Analysis	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>1.36</b>

Table of Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Knowledge of Practicum students On Basic teaching skills

From the aspect of mastery, the questionnaire data analysis for the practicum students has the mean value 3.65 and standard deviation 0.92. It shows that practicum students have high mastery basic teaching skills when undergoing practicum. Based on the table, the mean score in the mentor questionnaire analysis shows that practicum students are still at moderate level with the mean value 2.95 and standard deviation 0.70 while the mean score in the observer questionnaire analysis shows that it is close to the value with the mentor questionnaire where the mean value is 2.91 and standard deviation 1.36. The mean score and standard deviation contradict the data analyses that have been distributed.

## Section III: Factors For Not Mastering Basic Teaching Skills

The objective of the study is to analyse the factor that causes the students to not master basic teaching skills. The study tool is interview. In an interview done to the mentors, several factors have led to students failing to master teaching skills. All in all, factors causing practicum students to not master basic teaching skills come from the students' own attitude. It is also easy for them to be influenced by experienced teachers at school and not mastering the pedagogy fully causing to lack the understanding during the process of teaching and learning. The dependency on the teaching materials and their nonchalance in teaching and learning are the causes for them to fail to master fully the basic teaching skills.

## Conclusion for the Study Outcome

Based on this statement, mentors propose that practicum students should do more practice during their studies before they actually start working in school. More practice can be done in their coursework after they are exposed to the theory and pedagogy. This is to help them prepare well before they teach students with real special needs.

Next, ROS program is an early school exposure for trainees from the perspective of a teacher. This program aims to give an opportunity to practicum teachers to understand school as an educational institution and the role of the teachers in the classroom. Through ROS, practicum teachers get to understand students' behavior, school management and classroom management in integrating the theory and practice in the context of teaching and learning. Thus, these respondents have proposed that practicum students need to undergo ROS beforehand before they are sent to teaching practice at secondary schools with special education program. In this context, it facilitates their preparation in terms of the acceptance and early exposure in the actual special education setting.

Future teachers or Special Education Bachelor Degree students should follow pedagogical courses more frequently and effectively. This is seen based on their delivery method as they enter the class. In this issue, respondents state that future teachers must increase their teaching knowledge so that they are ready to go to school, especially to teach students with special needs in Special Education classroom.

Other than that, practicum students need to make a discussion among themselves before they undergo practicum. It can be done by making an early preparation in terms of the BBM, teaching notes and methods that can be applied during the teaching practice. Practicum teachers can also conduct group discussion online by establishing a WhatsApp group to swap ideas and RPH throughout their teaching practice.

### Corresponding Author

Associate Professor Dr. Md Nasir bin Masran, Faculty of Human Development, Sultan Idris Education University, 35900 Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia.

Email: md.nasir@fpm.upsi.edu.my

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