

Research Article

# Exploring Teaching Practice Supervisors Perceptions and Experiences: A Case Study of One Public University in Kenya

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## Abstract

Teaching practice is an important aspect of teacher education which provides students with an opportunity to actualize theories and principles learnt under the supervision of competent supervisors in actual school and classroom setting. The aim of the study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of teaching practice supervisors in reference to preparation, management and pedagogical practices. The research used descriptive and case study research design with a target population of 100 internal teaching practice supervisors drawn from the Faculties of Education, Agriculture, Arts and Social Sciences, Science and Technology. Using purposive sampling technique 46 out of 100 supervisors participated in the study. Open and closed ended questionnaires was used to collect data from TP supervisors. The questionnaires was uploaded in the google platform and the link shared with the TP supervisors through emails and what's up. Data from 46 questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics, content and thematic analysis. Analysed data was presented using tables, pie charts, frequencies, percentages and key themes. Findings reveal that 97.8% of teaching practice supervisors had attended induction sessions. While 63% of the supervisors expressed their satisfaction with the posting, 87% reported that the job card was friendly in terms of distribution and geographical sub-zoning of teaching practice schools. In addition, 73.9% of supervisors noted that zone coordinators dispatched soft copies of teaching practice materials on time. Most supervisors prefer soft copy materials because they are flexible, friendly, convenient, easy to handle, share, manage, store, traceable and consistence. On pedagogical issues, 73.9% of supervisors reported that most of the students had their schemes of work ready, while 58.7% and 63% noted that lesson plans had detailed content with appropriate teaching methods. 89.1% of teaching practice supervisors hold debrief sessions, in addition to submitting soft copies of the assessment reports and lesson plans to zone coordinator. On teaching practice facilitation funds, 82.6% and 69.6% of the supervisors noted that the funds are not dispatched on time and they are not adequate. Since teaching practice supervision is a key pedagogical process which molds and mentor student to become competent professional teachers, there is need to improve on the preparation, management and pedagogical practices to make the process more effective and efficient.

## Keywords

Teaching Practice, Supervisor, Induction Session, Experiences, Perceptions, Zone Coordinator, Pedagogical Practices, Job Card

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## 1. Introduction

Teaching practice (TP) sometimes referred to as practice teaching, student teaching, field studies, infield experience, practicum, induction, school-based experience or internship is an integral part of teacher education training program. TP is one of the most important components of teacher education [1]. Teacher education is meant to help prospective teachers to acquire prerequisite knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, this facilitates quality education which is part of sustainable development goals [2, 3]. As a temporary period, TP is the time when students are assigned to schools to practice how to plan and teach under a qualified and competent supervisor or lecturer [2, 4, 5]. TP entails practical use of teaching methods, principles, strategies and techniques by pre-service teachers in real classroom setting in order to enhance teaching competences. Apart from teaching, students, as future teachers are involved in other school activities which enable them to practice and understand the realities of teaching [2].

TP is an aspect of professional training process where students are exposed to the reality of the classroom in addition, they are expected to acquire practical experiences and skills in the art of teaching, while getting adapted or acquainted to schools' settings [6, 7]. Further, students get an opportunity to socialise with the learners, teachers, parents and the community. TP is designed to give students an opportunity to put into practice theories related to principles of education in order to sharpen them, while evaluating the extent to which quality of professional skills has taken place in the classroom [6, 8, 9]. Overall, TP is the period when students practice pedagogical strategies, principles and techniques in an actual school setting [5].

Consequently, TP is a compulsory and a culminating experience in teacher training programs where a student cannot graduate without passing it. There are a number of key TP players; universities, colleges, TP unit, cooperating teachers, school-based mentors, coordinators, supervisors, teaching partners (peers) and students [7, 8, 10]. The aim of this study was to explore, analyse and discuss the perceptions and experiences of TP supervisors based on the preparation, management and pedagogical practices from one public university in Kenya. It is important to note that the overall competency of a student teacher largely depends on supervisors' professional experiences, knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes.

## 2. Teaching Practice Supervision in the 21st Century

TP supervision, a key aspect of pedagogical TP process entails giving direction, making suggestions, providing feedback, overseeing and guiding student to achieve the expected standards by helping them to acquire better and effective competencies and skills. TP entails use of different experiences and

expertise with the aim of improving teaching and learning activities in schools through oversight activities, evaluation and coordination [6, 11]. Effective TP supervision requires collaboration between teacher educators, supervisors and student teachers in order to develop essential teaching competencies [12] since as [13] stated it is central to professional development and growth of future teachers.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century TP supervisor is one who is knowledgeable and competent professional teacher usually versed in performance expectation for students and overall teacher education. TP supervisors are primarily responsible for assessing and evaluating student-teachers. The role of the TP supervisor is to prepare the student to become a professional teacher, thus the supervisor is expected to serve as an adviser, resource person, role model, assessor, evaluator and interpreter of feedback where they share knowledge and philosophy of teaching with the students [2, 9, 10, 13]. Therefore, the central task of the 21<sup>st</sup> TP supervisor is to observe students, while providing constructive comments or immediate feedback based on different pedagogical practices, thus enhances their professional competencies and skills [7, 9]. Although supervisors are a source of support, assistance and knowledge provision for students, they serve as liaison between universities, teacher training colleges, TP units, schools and students [13]. In addition, supervisors are responsible for helping student teachers connect theory to classroom practice while confirming that they possess essential teaching qualities [12].

## 3. Literature Review on Teaching Practice Supervision

A number of studies on TP supervision have been done at different levels of education; universities, teacher training colleges and secondary schools in South Africa [9, 13], Central Africa in Zimbabwe [14]; Cameroon [7], Zambia [12]; West Africa in Nigeria [6]; East Africa in Rwanda [1] and Uganda [15]. In Kenya [10] study was done in Moi University, [3] did the study in a public university, while [16, 17] did their studies in Kericho, Bomet, Uasin Gishu, Keiyo, Nyeri, Kirinyaga and Nairobi counties respectively. Although studies in Kenya were done in different universities and counties in Kenya, the current study was done in Embu, Kirinyaga, Tharaka Nithi, Meru, Nyeri, Marsabit, Muranga, Kiambu counties and specifically used TP supervisors from one public university different from Moi University and the one by Kimwarey's study.

Different researchers had different purposes for undertaking their studies. [12] explored the supervision of teaching practicum, while [16] investigated the challenges teacher trainees face during TP supervision [2]. A different study examined the impact of TP supervision on student teachers' performance and acquisition of skills [7, 15]. Studies on TP su-

supervisors' experiences, understanding and provision of student's support in addition to diversified and underlying challenges and its influence on effective supervision was done by [9, 13]. While [14] explored quality of TP supervision on students' teachers, [10] examined the extent to which school characteristic influences posting, supervising, assessing and grading of student teachers during TP. Studies done by [1, 6, 17] were based on student teachers' perceptions and experiences of TP assessment. In particular, [1] investigation was based on TP organization, supervision process, professional support student teachers receive from supervisors and time supervisors spend with the students' teachers. Further, [3] explored TP supervisors' responses on student's teachers' preparation of the scheme of work. Majority of the researchers investigated TP supervision in reference to perceptions and experiences of students' teachers and its impact on performance, except [3, 9, 13] who used TP supervisors. The current study examined experiences and perceptions of internal TP supervisors from one public university based on selected pedagogical and management practices (preparation, posting, funding, zone coordination and induction) while supervising students in public secondary schools. The choice of some of the selected practices in the current study was partly informed by [10].

While some of the researchers in the reviewed studies did not indicate the research design used, three studies used descriptive research design [3, 6, 17], in addition [16] used cross-sectional and phenomenological research designs which were integrated and utilized to achieve the purpose of the study. Further, [1] used a multisite case study design to examine student teachers' supervision experiences in Rwanda. Use of descriptive research design in the current study was partly informed by [3, 6, 17] in addition to case study design since TP supervisors were drawn from one public university.

On the target and sampled population, a number of researchers collected data from students' teachers [1, 6, 7, 14-16], cooperating teachers and TP supervisors [7, 9, 13, 14, 16], principal and sub-county directors [16]. In particular, [9] used external TP supervisors, and in addition to school practice supervisors and students' teachers from different education programs, [15] engaged faculty deans and heads of department. Although use of TP supervisors was partly informed by [9, 10, 13-15], specifically the current study used regular/internal TP supervisors from the Faculties of Education (Arts, Science, Agriculture and Extension) in one public university. Internal supervisors were used because they spend most of the time teaching and preparing students for TP, and as [14] noted it is the supervisors who usually have first-hand information on TP operations. Moreover, [13] describe supervisors are a source of support, assistance and knowledge provision, which means they are expected to objectively observe, assess and provide adequate and relevant feedback to student teachers based on different management and pedagogical practices.

Regarding the sampling techniques and procedures, a number of studies used stratified, simple random, systematic and

purposive sampling techniques and procedures to select 15 school principals, 333 teachers and 84 teacher trainees [16] 80 students and 10 teachers [7]. Further, [1] used chain referral sampling where students' teachers were continuously sampled until data reached saturation. In addition, [6] obtained 150 student-teachers from 9 departments through the use of random sampling techniques. Third year students in the School of Education taking Bachelor of Education Degree posted for TP in several schools within the selected zone and 4 supervisors were randomly picked to obtain data from the Lesson Observation Forms (LOFs) from which 30% rule of thumb was applied [3]. Ten external TP supervisors contracted by the TP Office (TPO), 50 students who had participated in the school-based mentorship programs participated in the study. The external supervisors were recruited through interactions with academics and administrative staff [13].

Using purposive and random sampling procedures [15] sampled 13 participants out respondents who included; 2 Faculty Deans, 2 Heads of Departments, 15 school practice supervisors, 20 Bachelor of Teacher Education second/ third year students, 10 Diploma students in Education Primary, 25 Diploma students in Education Secondary, 10 Diploma students in Technical Teacher Education and 56 Bachelor of Education students. Through convenient sampling, [14] obtained 20 open distance post-graduate diploma students in Education, six lecturers and supervisors. While [10] collected data from 31 university supervisors and 148 fourth year Bachelor of Education students in the School of Education, [9] used four selected external supervisors who were contracted by University of South Africa (UNISA) thus, careful consideration was put in place to ensure they had adequate and relevant content knowledge and experience of South African education system. Further, [17] sampled 68 students teachers using stratified random sampling technique based on gender and subject area specialization. In the current study use of purposive sampling technique was partly informed by [6, 7, 15, 16], which gave the researcher an opportunity to obtain 46 out of 100 internal supervisors.

Most of the researchers collected data using closed open-ended questionnaires and in-depth interview guides [1, 7, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17]. Specifically, [6] designed 'Student-Teachers' Perception on the Effectiveness of TP Supervision Questionnaire (STPETPSQ)' while [14] collected data using focus group discussions. Further, [16] used document analysis guide and observation checklist. Data for the current study was collected using open and closed ended questionnaires which was uploaded in google platform and administered online using TP supervisors' emails and what's ups platforms. The questionnaire covered specific sub-themes; TP preparation, materials and funds; supervision of students; debrief, submission of TP reports to zone coordinator and role of zone coordinator. Data for the current study was limited to questionnaires only. Going by [1] statement, the findings for the current study are only relevant in helping us understand selected TP practices from one public university rather than generalizing the findings to a wider population. Future studies may consider using more than one

method for collecting data and more than one institution for purposes of triangulation and generalization of findings.

On data analysis techniques and procedures, [6, 7, 10, 15-17] used descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages), inferential statistics (Pearson Correlation), and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29 to analyze quantitative data. Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data which was presented in themes, narratives and direct quotes [1, 3, 7, 13, 16]. In particular recorded data was transcribed into texts before analysis, while codes were used to generate and group data into themes of similar ideas. The codes facilitated condensing of data into specific but similar experiences [1]. Data for the current study which was obtained from closed and open-ended questionnaires was analysed using descriptive statistics and content analysis.

Findings on TP preparation can be summarized in two ways; Pre-TP workshop and issuance of job cards [1, 9, 14]. On issuance of job cards, according to [1] the list assigned to supervisors contained student's teacher's names and phone numbers. This made it possible for student teachers and supervisors to make phone calls to plan for supervision. This is important since there is a possibility that some of the supervisors are not aware of the location of the placement schools. The Pre-TP workshop or orientation programs were organized for supervisors and students [9, 14]. Lecturers and students attributed good quality aspects of TP supervision to workshops conducted before actual supervision with the aim of preparing students for work integrated learning, in addition to improving their confidence levels [9, 14]. Further, [1] noted the importance of sharing TP expectations with the student's teachers before the onset of supervision. Some student teachers reported that supervisors organized virtual meetings nearing the observation day which allowed student teachers to practice and get well prepared for TP [1]. While noting the importance of TP preparations, the current study examined the extent to which TP supervisors are satisfied with the issuance of job cards by the zone coordinators, whether they attend induction trainings and the extent to which they think they are useful.

While focusing on TP supervision, [1, 3, 13] are in agreement that preparation of schemes and lesson plans are key to effective teaching. In particular proficiency in content, lesson planning, classroom management, assessment of the lesson, teaching aids, methods and techniques, and action research are important [1]. Further, [3] reported lack of uniformity in preparation of schemes of work with majority of student teachers not able to present it as per the expected requirements. The results of the study form a basis for refocusing on re-training especially in regard to preparation of the schemes of work. In addition, [13] noted that lesson plan components vary depending on teacher preferences, coverage of the subject content and students' individual needs. Although according to [1] majority of the student teachers acknowledged that the support they received from supervisors was useful, some complained that the support was late as supervisors arrived in schools toward the end of internship. This tendency of late supervision may lead

to assessing the practice more in a summative way instead of formative. However, the three studies did inform the current study on the need to examine views of TP supervisors regarding the extent to which student teachers are prepared for TP, since as [13] noted assessment is an integral component of teaching and learning, thus supervisors need to understand how to examine different pedagogical practices, a way of enhancing effective supervision and assessment of student teachers. Findings on the importance of supervision shows that cooperating teachers, supervisors and students' peers have a positive influence on student's acquisition of skills and knowledge [6, 7]; improves student teachers' subject competence, builds their confidence and experience while learning new teaching techniques [15]. The implication is that under the guidance of supervisors, TP supervision positively impacts on teaching and content delivery by student teachers.

Debrief, post lesson observation or dialogical pep talk which involves sharing of immediate feedback is a key aspect of student's teachers professional support by TP supervisors [1, 7, 13, 14] what [14] refers to as quality aspect of TP supervision. In particular, according to [13] supervisors are aware of their roles regarding the required skills and competencies student teachers are required to attain for them to sharpen their professional skills. Supervisors are a source of support, assistance and knowledge provision; thus, they are expected to objectively observe and assess student teacher [13]. Findings by [1] shows that school-based interaction and observation was highly limited especially where classroom observation sessions lasted for forty minutes. Most of the student teachers reported that there were pre- and post-observation meetings. During post-observation meeting, student teachers reported having received comments from supervisors about their strengths and areas of focus for improvement [1]. Such comments are likely to go along way in guiding student teachers to reflect on their strength and challenges after each lesson in order to modify and improve subsequent lessons [13]. Majority of student teachers appreciated the support they received from supervisors based on the advice and encouragement especially in regard to lesson planning, delivery and evaluation [1]. Although there is need for supervisors to put more emphasis on feedback since it is an opportunity for sharing and discussing best practices with the student teachers, findings by [13, 14] revealed that debrief might fail to be productive especially if discussions are dictatorial and done in a hurry. There is need for cooperating teachers, regional inspectors and school principals to organize pre- and post-conferences; regular seminars/workshops to train teachers and supervisors on their role during TP [7]. While noting the importance of holding debrief sessions after lesson observation, the current study explored the length of time supervisors take with the student's teachers after each lesson.

The challenges students' teachers encounter during TP vary from irregular supervisory visits due to principals' administrative burdens, limited feedback and mentorship to shortage of resources including inadequate teaching materials to anxiety among student trainees, limited time for supervision meetings

and unavailability of principal [16]. TP supervisors face challenges such as coverage of long distances; inadequate supervision, bad roads and weather; poor students teachers' preparation; poor allocation of supervisors to students; tiresome and time consuming [15]. In terms of preparedness, some of the students do not see the need of being assessed, while others claim to have been exempted from participating in TP with the assumption that the assessment is not important since they are not awarded marks [9]. In addition, financial related concerns especially poor budget allocation, delay in release of supervision funds and facilitation was a key challenge faced by the TP supervisors [10, 15]. Such challenges are likely to affect the number of students supervised per day especially in schools which are far apart and in remote areas [14]. It is important to consider contextual characteristics of TP schools such as the availability and quality of cooperating teachers and teaching and learning resources when posting and supervising or assessing and grading student teachers [10]. The current study explored challenges TP supervisors encounter especially during the postings in the zones and secondary schools.

## 4. Research Methodology

The study used descriptive and case study research design. The targeted population consisted of all 100 regular/internal TP supervisors from the Faculties of Education, Agriculture, Arts and Social Sciences, Science and Technology from one public university in Kenya. The supervisors are the ones who had been posted to all the TP zones in 2024. Due to the small number of TP supervisors, the researcher used purposive sampling technique, where all the 100 supervisors were expected to participate in the study. Open and closed ended questionnaires was used to collect data from the TP supervisors. The questionnaire was uploaded in the google documents and the link shared with the all the supervisors' using emails and what's up platforms. Out of 100 TP supervisors only 46 completed the questionnaires. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics; namely, frequencies and percentages for the closed ended items, while data from the open-ended questionnaires was analysed using themes in line with the study objective. Data was presented in tables, pie charts, themes, while integrating the findings with relevant literature.

## 5. Presentation of the Findings and Discussion

### 5.1. Demographic Information of TP Supervisors

#### 5.1.1. Gender, Academic Qualifications and Designations

Out of the 46 TP supervisors; 69.6% and 30.4% were males and females respectively. The implication is that majority of

TP supervisors were males. While 96% of TP supervisors were PhD holders, only 4% had either a Masters of Arts or Masters of Education degree with different specializations. The 46 TP supervisors who participated in the study were at different levels; 13.9% full professors, 35.2% associate professors, 17.4% senior lecturers and 30.4% lecturers. Findings shows that majority of TP supervisors were at the level of associate professors.

### 5.1.2. Teaching Practice Experiences

*Table 1. TP Supervisors Experiences in Years.*

No	No of Years	Responses (%)
i)	5-10	20.8
ii)	10-15	23.5
iii)	15-20	25.7
iv)	Over 25	29.6

Findings from Table 1 shows that 29.6% of TP supervisors had over 25 years of TP experience. While 25.7% and 23.5% had 15-20 and 10-15 years of TP experiences respectively. This means that majority of TP supervisors had over 25 years of experience, thus majority are in a position of mentoring the supervisors with less years of experience, while providing high level of supervision.

### 5.2. Preparation for Teaching Practice: Induction Training

The study sought to find the extent to which TP supervisors attend induction trainings and the usefulness of such trainings in preparing them for TP activity. The findings shows that 97.8% and 68.7% of TP supervisors had attended useful induction sessions. The induction programs are meant to provide systematic structured support for those beginning with the TP supervision. Noting the importance of induction trainings, [11] reported that for lecturers to claim they are qualified, competent and professional supervisors, they need to attend special training. Further, the TP supervisors noted that since the induction trainings are a prerequisite, they should be well-organized focused sessions, orientation programs, trainings or refresher courses before and after the commencement of TP exercise. This will enable supervisors to effectively and continuously mentor students before and during TP if they have to become competent, professional future teachers while improving their levels of confidence as noted by [6, 7, 9].

Specifically, TP supervisors reported the importance of workshops since they are likely to empower the newly ap-

pointed and non-Bachelor of Education lecturers and supervisors with the relevant and adequate pedagogical skills and knowledge, especially in physical education. Further skills on how to use online materials, while providing clear outlines of the supervision expectations, techniques and status of preparing schemes of work, lesson plan and assessment across all subjects in the school curriculum. Thus, induction training provides an important forum, network and platform for the newly appointed lecturers to share their challenges, real experiences and observations with the more qualified

supervisors. Goethals & Howard, 2010 in [6] reported that any effective supervision requires well trained personnel with the knowledge, interpersonal and technical skills in order to provide the required and appropriate guidance and support to faculty members. In particular, [14] pointed out that lecturers attributed good quality aspects of TP supervision by Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) supervisors to workshops conducted at the Regional Centre before embarking on supervision.

### 5.3. Teaching Practice Application Forms

*Table 2. Supervisors responses on TP Application Forms.*

No	Aspects of TP Application forms	Yes (%)	No (%)
i)	Do you fill in application forms?	100.0	0
ii)	Are you satisfied with the posting to various zones?	63.0	37.0
iii)	Is the posting in line with the application forms?	73.9	26.1

Findings in Table 2 shows that all the supervisors filled in the application form as part of TP preparation. About 63% of the TP supervisors are satisfied with the posting in different zones. 73.9% of the TP supervisors were satisfied with the way the posting is done since it is in line with the application forms.

#### 5.3.1. Challenges Supervisors' Encounter During TP Postings in the Zones/Schools

Although TP supervisors noted improvement in posting to TP schools, that they did not have to lobby and their choices were considered, however some supervisors shared some of the following challenges:

First, there are times when posting is not based on applications; for instance, preferred zone, date and time, bias where some of the supervisors get more slots and opportunities than others. Overall, effective posting of supervisors to TP schools depends on competencies and experiences of the zone coordinators. There are times when zone coordinators tend to have their own issues which makes them to misuse their responsibilities.

Secondly, lack of proper sub-zoning makes supervisors cover a wide geographical area since one has to travel for long distances due to the expansiveness of the zone. This is likely to affect minimum number of students supervised per

day, and especially in remote areas where schools are far apart [14]. It can be time consuming while incurring high fuel expenses. In particular, accessibility to TP schools becomes more challenging especially when the supervisors rely on public transport [10]. Most probably that is what made [1] note that majority of the student teachers complained that some supervisors arrived in schools toward the end of the internship. This tendency of late supervision may be due to geographical spread of the students' teachers which according to [1] may lead to assessing them more in a summative way instead of formative.

#### 5.3.2. Suggestions on How to Improve Posting of TP Supervisors

There is need for TP coordinator to consider posting supervisors in line with the application forms, which means that everyone who applies should be given an opportunity to undertake the exercise, in order to enhance inclusivity, equity and fairness in the posting process across faculties and departments involved in TP. Other supervisors should be considered even if they do not have a bachelor of education degree because they have experience in pedagogical practices, since majority of them were high school teachers before joining the university, thus they are fine-tuned for TP activity.

## 5.4. Teaching Practice Job Cards

### 5.4.1. Nature of the TP Job Cards

*Table 3. Nature of the TP Job cards.*

No	Aspects of job card	Yes (%)	No (%)
i)	Distribution of schools	87.0	13.0
ii)	Geographical sub-zoning of TP schools for ease of supervision	82.6	17.4
iii)	Subject specialization	56.5	43.5

Table 3 shows that 87% and 82.6% of supervisors reported that the job card was friendly in terms of distribution and geographical sub-zoning of TP schools respectively which enhances ease of supervision. Although 56.5% supervisors noted the zone coordinator consider subject specializations, 43.5% were not satisfied with the issuance of job cards. The friendliness of the job cards, concurs with [1] argument that since the list contains student's teacher's names and phone numbers it becomes easier for the supervisor to locate the placement schools. However, the 43.5% TP supervisors who expressed dissatisfaction with the allocation of subjects to supervise mentioned the following challenges:

First, they lack the knowledge and are not familiar with the content in specialized and technical subjects namely; sciences, physical education, mathematics and Kiswahili which challenges their pedagogical skills. Such a challenge is likely to make supervision biased when awarding students marks as one supervisor wrote: '*...writing comments in Kiswahili when assessing Kiswahili lessons. Forcing me to write comments in English while everything else is in Kiswahili...*' (TP Supervisor, 21).

Secondly, pedagogical issues in specialized subjects makes it difficult to determine the appropriate and relevant instructional strategies, mode of lesson delivery, classroom activities, examples and the analogies useful in responding to students' questions. In addition, evaluation during lesson delivery is likely to help students to link and apply concepts and principles to their day-to-day life experiences. Some students confuse topics and sub-topics; state learning outcomes incorrectly, miss vital steps in lesson development and fail to use variety of learning activities. On the subject matter and content, the current study findings concur with [11] sentiments. While some supervisors might not be professionals, they are more likely to criticize subject matter which might end up confusing the students. Findings from this study reveal that most student teachers are not fully prepared for TP, thus sometimes end up being confused which make them to mess up during the supervision process [11].

### 5.4.2. Ways of Making Teaching Practice Job Card More Friendly

A number of TP supervisors came up with some of the following suggestions on how to make TP job card more friendly.

First, there is need for zone coordinators to sub-zone or map out schools in the same geographical area to ensure they are well clustered and close to each other for ease of movement and accessibility. This will make supervisors not to travel long distances to supervise one student while passing others who are not in the job card. This concurs with the challenges outlined by [15] specifically on the coverage of long distances, bad roads and weather, tiresome and time consuming. This can easily be addressed by restricting and advising the students to select schools that are accessible and preparing job cards which include all the students on specific sub-zones and routes in order to minimize unnecessary travel costs.

Secondly, zone coordinators should make an effort to consult supervisors before sharing TP job card. This should be done a week before actual supervision to allow early preparation, effective planning and supervision. Third, there is need for the zone coordinator to avail important information on the job card, for instance, nearest towns or market and student's contacts. Although most of the zone coordinators are extremely professional and helpful, they should further make an effort to be in field at all times, in addition to encouraging students to pick supervisors calls.

Third, zone coordinators should make sure that assessment begin early to avoid anxiety among the students, while ensuring they assess students within the recommended timelines; two weeks. This will avoid last minute assessment which sometimes ends up inconveniencing the students and sometimes supervisors. The supervisors should utilise properly time allocated per block to avoid overlaps with other supervisors in same zone and schools. Further, the number of students allocated to supervisors should not exceed 32 for two weeks, since this will help to check and promote efficiency and effectiveness of TP supervision. There is need to consider the num-

ber of students supervised by each supervisor especially in remote areas where schools are geographically scattered [14].

## 5.5. Teaching Practice Materials

### 5.5.1. Dispatching TP Materials

*Table 4. TP Supervisors Responses on Dispatch of TP Materials.*

No	TP materials	Yes (%)	No (%)
	Are these materials dispatched on time	73.9	26.1

As shown in Table 4, majority of 73.9% TP supervisors reported that zone coordinators dispatch TP materials; job cards and assessment tools on time.

### 5.5.2. Types and Preference of TP Materials

*Table 5. Responses on Types and Preferences of Materials.*

No	Types and preference of TP Materials	Soft (%)	Hard (%)
i)	Are TP materials in soft or hard copies	95.7	4.3
ii)	Which TP materials would you recommend to students and supervisors	52.2	47.8

Findings from Table 5 shows that 95.7% of supervisors received soft copy of TP materials, while 52.2% of supervisors preferred or recommended use of soft copy materials as compared to 47.8% who preferred hard copy materials. The 52.2% TP supervisors noted soft copy materials are the best especially in this era of technology because they are flexible, friendly, convenient, easier to handle, share, manage, store, secure, accurate, traceable and consistency, thus they are less bulky and cumbersome. It is easier and faster to write comments using soft copy materials, which make students to receive immediate feedback. The importance of immediate feedback during TP supervision has been emphasized by [13]. In addition, soft materials are cost effective and efficient in terms of time and expense for both the students and supervisors. In addition, soft copies are compliance with the Artificial Intelligence, while the idea of paperless contribute to environmental protection.

About 47.8% of TP supervisors preferred hard copy materials because of network, internet, power issues and in particular lap tops may not be internet enabled, risk of loss or theft or sometimes potability. Some schools are not digital technology compliance which puts student teachers at risk, while others lack provision of sockets for charging laptops and tables to place the laptop. In addition, typing during the

lesson is likely to pre-occupy the supervisor because of the typing speed which is time consuming. This means that a supervisor ends up writing the comments then typing afterwards which makes one to do double work. Thus, it is easier and faster to write, assess, respond or give instant responses and feedback using hard copy materials since a supervisor is likely to get time to pay attention when the students is teaching. Consequently, supervisors recommended the re-introduction of hard copy TP booklets. The issue of security is a challenge especially where a supervisor has to travel with the laptops in risky areas, for instance North Eastern and Upper Rift Valley.

Use of hard copy lesson plan booklets is important because some students do not have laptops and use smart phones. Using a smart phone when teaching may not be practically easy, which then makes students to either print the lesson plan, use an exercise book or full scarps. Sometimes it becomes easy to check student's overall work when presented in a file, since it makes it possible for the supervisor to clearly see the progress and continuity of work. Majority 89.1% of TP supervisors submitted assessment reports and lesson plans to the zone coordinators in soft copy after the end of the supervision, while 8.7% and 10.9% submitted after one month, in hard and soft copy respectively.

## 5.6. Pedagogical Practices and Students' Preparedness for Teaching Practice

*Table 5. TP supervisors responses on selected pedagogical practices.*

No	Selected pedagogical practices	Yes (%)	No (%)
i	Availability of schemes of work	73.9	26.1
ii	Lesson plan derived from schemes of work	71.7	28.3
iii	Use of student's experiences in the lesson introduction	63.0	37.0
iv	Lesson development has detailed content	58.7	41.3
v	Use of appropriate methods to deliver content	63.0	37.0
vi	Learning resources and references	60.9	30.1
vii	Lesson conclusion	69.6	30.4

### 5.6.1. Availability of Schemes of Work and Lesson Plan

Preparation and availability of schemes and lesson plans are key to effective TP [1, 3, 13]. Majority 73.9% and 71.7% of TP supervisors reported that students availed their schemes of work and lesson plans respectively. However, the question is how did 26.1% and 28.3% TP supervisors manage to teach without schemes of work and lesson plans? This concurs with findings by [3] who reported lack of uniformity in the preparation of the schemes of work as per the expected requirements. According to [13] a lesson plan is always derived from the schemes of work and it provides a road map with detailed description of how the lesson is expected to unfold, purpose of the lesson, teaching strategies and assessment activities while providing guidance on how the lesson is expected to unfold.

### 5.6.2. Use of Learner's Experiences in Lesson Introduction

63% of TP supervisors reported that students used relevant experiences in the lesson introduction. Lesson introduction provides an opportunity for student teachers to communicate the purpose and intention of the lesson during the teaching and learning process. TP supervisors should make the students understand that introductions form an important link between students experiences and the new content. This concurs with what [13] stated on the need to make introductions interesting since it sets the tone for constructive interaction. Therefore, lesson introductions provide student teachers with an opportunity to communicate the purpose and intention of the lesson which form an important link between student's frame of reference and the new content [13].

### 5.6.3. Detailed Lesson Content and Use of Appropriate Methods

While 58.7% of supervisors were for the view that lesson plans contained detailed content, more than half 63% of the supervisors reported that students used appropriate methods to deliver lesson content. About 37% supervisors reported that students do not use appropriate methods. However, the study did not go into the details of examining the specific methods and the reasons which made the students to use different teaching methods, yet this information is important since as [13] noted lesson plan components vary depending on teacher preferences, coverage of the subject content and students' individual needs.

### 5.6.4. Adequate Learning Resources, References and Lesson Conclusion

Majority 60.9% of TP supervisors reported that students had indicated appropriate learning resources, references and conclusion; 30.4% reported that lesson plans did not have conclusions. To some extent these findings concur with [11] who noted lack of adequate preparedness during TP is likely to confuse the students, which makes them mess up with teaching practice.

### 5.6.5. Number of Lessons Supervised per Day

On average, majority 47.5% and 41.3% of TP supervisors, assessed 2-4 and 4-6 lessons per day respectively. The results help in addressing the knowledge gap mentioned by [14] who noted the need for the university to re-look on the minimum number of students each TP supervisor should assess on a given day. The number of lessons to be supervised is mostly determined by the nature of job card issued by zone coordinator, in terms of sub-zones and geographical locations of the schools as pointed out by [1].

## 5.7. Debrief Session After TP Supervision

TP supervisors who participated in the current study reported holding debrief sessions and sharing immediate feedback with the students teachers at the end of each supervision or assessment. This concurs with findings by [14] who noted that majority of ZOU supervisors use post lesson observation dialogical talk, since it is an important aspect of establishing quality TP supervision. Further evidence shows that provision of immediate feedback through debrief sessions is a vehicle and central quality aspect to supervisory process which is likely to improve student teacher's level of confidence and competence thus, contribute to professionalism by identifying their strengths and weaknesses [10, 11, 13, 14], after each lesson in order to modify and improve subsequent lessons [13]. Debrief session or what [7] refers to as a collaborative process, is according to Sethusha (2020) an important and good opportunity for sharing and discussing TP best practices. Appropriate, productive and effective feedback should be given in a private meeting space or environment that is conducive to the supervisor and the student teacher in order to allow them to internalize and analyse what happens in the classroom during the lesson [9, 10]. While emphasizing on the importance of debrief session, [1] noted that supervision should not be limited to the number of observations but to the quality of interaction and feedback student teachers receive in order to improve their professional development.

The study went further to explore the time taken during the debrief session as shown in Table 6.

*Table 6. Time taken for debrief session.*

No	Time taken (minutes)	Responses (%)
i)	10-15	45.7
ii)	15-20	39.1
iii)	Above 20	15.2

Findings from Table 6 shows that majority 45.7% of TP supervisors used 10-15 minutes while only 15.2% used more than 20 minutes for the debrief sessions. To some extent the findings concur with what [14] noted that although TP was timely, it however was not productive in giving students room to share their views and opinions with the supervisors. Although [14] did not reveal how long the supervisors used during the debrief sessions, they however reported that provision of feedback through discussions was dictatorial and done in a hurry.

## 5.8. Coordination of TP in the Zones

Findings from Table 7 shows that most 52.2% and 47.8% of the TP supervisors rated their zone coordinator as above

average and average respectively.

*Table 7. Ratings of zone coordinator.*

No	Ratings	Responses (%)
i)	Above average	52.2
ii)	Average	47.8
iii)	Below average	20.6

*Table 8. Availability of zone coordinator.*

No	Level of availability	Responses (%)
i)	Always	71.7
ii)	Not always	28.3
iii)	Never	None

Results from Table 8 shows that 71.7% and 28.8% of TP supervisors reported that zone coordinators are always and not always available for consultations respectively. TP supervisors further noted the need for zone coordinators to be responsive, conversant and familiar with the geographical area and location of TP schools for ease of sub-zoning the schools in order to prepare and organise friendly job cards as noted by [1].

## 5.9. Teaching Practice Funds

*Table 9. Facilitation of TP funds.*

No	TP facilitation funds	Yes (%)	No (%)	Somehow (%)
i)	Are funds dispatched on time	17.4	82.6	
ii)	Are they adequate	-	69.6	28.3

Findings from Table 9 reveals that majority 82.6% and 69.6% of TP supervisors reported that TP funds are not dispatched on time and in addition they are not adequate respectively. In particular, TP supervisor 36 wrote:

'...How do you expect people to work without facilitation. This is not charity work and it looks some officers are out to frustrate lecturers...'. (TP supervisor, 36)

Financial related concerns especially poor budget allocation, delay in the release of supervision funds and facilitation concurs with findings by [10, 15].

In improving the facilitation of TP funds the supervisors noted some of the following ways, namely; allocation and timely disbursement of funds; use the recommended and standardized realistic mileage and subsistence rates as recommended by Salaries Remuneration Commission (SRC) without alterations. In supporting the review of mileage allowances, one TP supervisor noted as follows:

‘... Ksh 33 per kilometer is extremely too low given the pump prices (proposal Ksh 100 per kilometer) and adjustment of subsistence allowances due to the hard economic times (Ksh 10,500 per day to Ksh 15000 per day for 14 days not 12 days...weekends must be covered...’. (TP Supervisor, 30).

Such a recommendation will go a long way in enabling TP supervisors to offer quality assessment while giving students adequate time for consultation.

## 6. Conclusion

TP supervision is a key pedagogical process which molds and mentors students through the provision of immediate feedback thus enables them to become competent professional teachers. The role of TP supervisor is that of a keen observer, listener, examiner and assessor. What this means is that there is need for TP supervisors to be prepared with different pedagogical practices and skills to enable them handle the teaching process professionally. This entails organizing induction training as a prerequisite before commencement of actual TP exercise with key focus on the newly recruited faculty members. In this era of technology TP supervisors should embrace the use of soft materials instead of hard copy materials because they are more flexible, friendly, convenient, easy to handle, share, manage, store, secure, accurate and consistency. Debrief sessions which entails provision of immediate feedback makes it possible for the supervisor to easily identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching process, which provides an important opportunity for sharing best practices. Although zone coordinators do extremely good work, there is need to allocate more funds; mileage, subsistence and timely disbursement in line with the recommendations by SRC.

## Abbreviations

TP	Teaching Practice
SCR	Salaries Remuneration Commission
TPO	Teaching Practice Office
TPU	Teaching Practice Unit
UNISA	University of South Africa
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University

## Author Contributions

**Juliet Njeri Muasya:** Conceptualization, Data curation,

Formal Analysis, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

## Data Availability Statement

The data is available from the author upon reasonable request. Data access will be provided to researchers upon reasonable request for transparency and reproducibility of the study’s finding.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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