

Application of Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Model in Assessing Teaching Practice Placement among Student-Teachers in Kwara State

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Abstract

This study investigated how effective teaching practice placements equip student-teachers with professional skills. The aim was to evaluate students' satisfaction, knowledge and skill development, practical application in the classroom, and the long-term effects on their careers using the four levels of Kirkpatrick's model. A descriptive survey approach was used, involving 50 undergraduate student-teachers from a private university in Kwara State as participants. Data collection was carried out using a validated and reliable questionnaire, which yielded a result of 0.83 at a 0.05 level of significance, designed on a three-point Likert scale, with analysis performed on mean scores and standard deviations. Findings revealed a high level of satisfaction with the placement experiences, notable improvements in pedagogical knowledge, teaching skills, and professional attitudes, along with effective application of learned knowledge and skills in actual classroom environments. The placements also contributed to enhanced professional competence, readiness for future careers, communication skills, and career aspirations. The research concluded that a structured teaching practice is vital for linking theoretical knowledge with practical application in teacher education. It suggested enhancements in supervision, extended practicum periods, systematic reflection opportunities, and reinforced partnerships between schools and universities to maintain these positive outcomes. This study contributes to the existing knowledge by utilising Kirkpatrick's model to assess teacher training in Nigeria, offering evidence-based insights regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the practicum experiences.

Keywords: Teaching practice, Kirkpatrick model, student-teachers, professional competence, Kwara State

1. Introduction

Teaching practice is a crucial component of teacher education, designed to provide student teachers with practical classroom experience under the supervision of qualified mentors. It bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge acquired in teacher training institutions and the realities of classroom teaching (Haron et al. 2025). Through teaching practice, prospective teachers engage in lesson planning, classroom management, instructional delivery, and learner assessment, thereby developing competencies necessary for effective professional practice.

The importance of teaching practice cannot be overemphasised, as it enhances professional growth, fosters reflective practice, and prepares student-teachers for the challenges of the teaching profession. According to Fairbrother et al. (2025), teaching practice provides a platform for student-teachers to integrate theory into practice while cultivating self-efficacy and confidence in teaching. It also allows them to receive constructive feedback, which is vital for improving instructional strategies and ensuring teacher quality in the education system.

Teacher training in Nigeria is primarily facilitated through Colleges of Education, Faculties of Education in universities, and the National Teachers' Institute, which collectively aim to prepare competent educators for different levels of schooling. The training curriculum is designed to combine theoretical foundations in pedagogy, educational psychology, and subject content with practical

teaching experiences (Ying, 2025). Despite these provisions, challenges such as inadequate resources, limited supervision, and insufficient opportunities for practical exposure have hindered the quality of teacher training, thereby necessitating continuous reforms to strengthen the teaching practice component.

Evaluating teaching practice is essential to determine its effectiveness in preparing competent teachers and to identify gaps that may hinder professional development. Effective evaluation ensures that teacher education programs remain relevant, responsive, and aligned with educational standards (Dee et al., 2019). Without systematic evaluation, institutions risk producing teachers who may lack adequate pedagogical competence and classroom readiness, thereby affecting learning outcomes in schools.

The Kirkpatrick Model of Evaluation provides a comprehensive framework for assessing teaching practice by examining four levels: reaction, learning, behaviour, and results (Alsalamah & Callinan, 2021). This model allows teacher educators to evaluate not only student-teachers' satisfaction with the placement but also the knowledge and skills acquired, the extent to which these are applied in classroom practice, and the overall impact on professional competence. Applying this model to teaching practice offers insights into both the strengths and areas for improvement in teacher training programmes.

In Nigeria, teacher training institutions have made considerable efforts to provide student-teachers with

hands-on exposure to the teaching profession through structured teaching practice placements. However, despite these efforts, there appears to be inadequate empirical evidence to inform policymakers on the effectiveness of such programmes in fostering professional competence (Mgaiwa & Milinga, 2024; Prince, 2020). This gap in evaluation poses challenges to decision-making regarding curriculum design, resource allocation, and policy development, thus necessitating systematic evaluation using a model such as Kirkpatrick's.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to evaluate teaching practice placement using Kirkpatrick model. Specifically, the objectives are to:

1. examine teaching practice students' levels of satisfaction regarding their placement experiences (Reaction).
2. assess the extent to which teaching practice placements contributed to students' acquisition of pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, and professional attitudes (Learning).
3. evaluate how effectively students applied the knowledge and skills gained during the teaching practice in real classroom settings (Behaviour).
4. determine the overall impact of the teaching practice placement on students' professional competence, career readiness, and long-term development as future teachers (Results).

1.2 Research questions

1. What are teaching practice students' levels of satisfaction regarding their placement experiences?
2. To what extent did the teaching practice placement contribute to students' acquisition of pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, and professional attitudes?
3. How effectively did students apply the knowledge and skills gained during the teaching practice in real classroom settings?
4. What is the overall impact of the teaching practice placement on students' professional competence, career readiness, and long-term development as future teachers?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual framework

The Kirkpatrick Model of Evaluation, developed by Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006), provides a robust theoretical foundation for assessing the effectiveness of educational and training programmes. The model is structured around four levels of evaluation: *reaction*, *learning*, *behaviour*, and *results*. Each level builds upon the previous one, offering a comprehensive approach to understanding both immediate and long-term outcomes of training experiences. In the context of teaching practice placements, this model serves as a valuable framework for evaluating how student-teachers perceive their training, the extent of skills acquired, how they apply such skills in classroom practice, and the overall impact on their professional growth.

Applying this model to the evaluation of teaching practice in Nigeria offers a systematic means of linking teacher training processes to professional readiness. At the *reaction* level, the model allows researchers to assess student-teachers' satisfaction and attitudes toward their placements, which are important indicators of motivation (Cabaron & Oco, 2023). The *learning* dimension helps to measure the extent to which pedagogical knowledge, instructional techniques, and professional dispositions are acquired during the placement (Zhang et al., 2022). The *behaviour* level provides insights into whether these competencies are effectively applied in real classroom settings, while the *results* level evaluates the long-term impact on teaching competence and career readiness, thereby aligning training outcomes with broader educational goals.

In this study, the Kirkpatrick framework serves as the guiding conceptual lens, ensuring that evaluation goes beyond surface-level observations to capture holistic outcomes of teaching practice placements. By integrating all four levels of evaluation, the framework addresses both individual experiences and institutional effectiveness, offering policymakers and teacher educators evidence-based insights for curriculum improvement. Moreover, the model's adaptability across contexts makes it particularly relevant for Nigeria, where there is a need for systematic evaluation tools to assess teacher preparation programmes (Cahapay, 2021). Thus, the Kirkpatrick Model not only structures the research design but also strengthens its practical utility in shaping policy and practice in teacher education.

2.2 Students' Levels of Satisfaction regarding their Placement Experiences

Student-teachers' satisfaction with teaching-practice placements is widely recognised as a core indicator of practicum quality and a measure of teacher-education programmes' effectiveness in preparing graduates for classroom realities. Satisfaction is typically conceptualised as an attitudinal outcome reflecting the extent to which placement experiences meet expectations for supervision, learning opportunities, resources, school support, and professional socialisation. Empirical studies, therefore, examine both overall satisfaction levels and the factors that systematically shape them (Jenssen & Haara, 2024). Findings across contexts reveal heterogeneous satisfaction outcomes, ranging from generally high to moderate or low, depending on programme design, school context, and the quality of supervision provided. High-quality practicum placements are often described as "inclusive, qualifying, and facilitative" for professional identity development, with satisfaction linked to structured opportunities for teaching, reflective feedback, and collaborative mentor-student relationships (Jenssen & Haara, 2024). Conversely, in contexts where supervision is infrequent, placements poorly coordinated, or practicum experiences treated as a formality, student-teachers frequently report anxiety, insufficient hands-on opportunities, and dissatisfaction, producing mean satisfaction scores in the "mixed" range and highlighting substantial within-cohort variation (Galana et al., 2023).

Regional studies, particularly in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa, commonly reveal a pattern of conditional satisfaction: while student-teachers appreciate the exposure to real classroom environments, dissatisfaction often arises from inadequate assessment practices, limited feedback, and insufficient teaching resources, all of which depress overall satisfaction despite perceived gains in confidence and skill acquisition (Balogun et al., 2018). Several recurring predictors of satisfaction are consistently identified across the literature. Quality and frequency of supervision emerge as among the strongest determinants, with regular, constructive guidance from university supervisors and cooperating teachers strongly associated with higher satisfaction, while weak supervision consistently predicts dissatisfaction (Wu et al., 2024). The school environment and mentor relationships also play a central role, as supportive mentors and collegial school cultures foster higher satisfaction, whereas overcrowded classrooms, indifferent mentors, and unsupportive school contexts diminish it (Galana et al., 2023). Similarly, authentic responsibilities such as lesson planning, teaching, and assessment—are shown to elevate satisfaction, while overly scripted or observational placements reduce it (Jenssen & Haara, 2024). Resource availability and workload balance further shape outcomes, as insufficient materials, short placements, and heavy timetables often transform practicums into stressful rather than developmental experiences (Galana et al., 2023). Finally, transparent, formative assessment processes that emphasise learning are linked to higher satisfaction, whereas opaque or summative-heavy evaluation practices generate dissatisfaction (Balogun et al., 2018).

Methodologically, satisfaction has been measured using a variety of approaches, including Likert-scale questionnaires, reflective diaries, focus groups, and mixed-method designs. Institutional surveys often assess domains such as supervision, cooperating teacher support, perceived learning gains, and school climate. However, heterogeneity in instruments and inconsistent definitions of satisfaction domains complicate cross-study comparisons, underscoring the need for standardised tools (Sağ, 2008). In terms of outcomes, higher satisfaction levels are positively associated with stronger professional identity development, higher teaching self-efficacy, and increased intentions to enter and remain in the profession, whereas lower satisfaction corresponds with reduced confidence, diminished commitment, and weaker readiness for the first year of teaching (Becker et al., 2019).

Despite these insights, notable research gaps persist. Longitudinal studies connecting practicum satisfaction with actual graduate performance and career retention remain scarce. Comparative cross-national research is also limited, making it difficult to disentangle programme-level effects from systemic and policy-level influences. Furthermore, psychometric studies are needed to develop and validate standardised satisfaction instruments for cross-context comparability. Finally, while correlational studies dominate literature, experimental interventions such as supervisor training or structured mentoring—require rigorous evaluation to establish causal impacts on satisfaction (Jenssen & Haara, 2024; Wu et al., 2024). Overall, the literature underscores that student-teachers'

satisfaction with practicum placements is systematically shaped by supervision quality, mentor relationships, task authenticity, resources, and assessment practices. Addressing these domains through strengthened university–school partnerships, transparent assessment rubrics, supervisor training, and resource provision appears to be the most evidence-based pathway to improving satisfaction and enhancing professional readiness.

2.2 Extent of teaching practice placement contributes to students' acquisition of pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, and professional attitudes

The teaching-practice (practicum) is widely conceptualised as the capstone of teacher education, intended to bridge theoretical coursework and the realities of classroom teaching by providing sustained, school-based experiential learning. Empirical syntheses generally agree that practicums function as complex, multi-dimensional learning environments where cognitive (knowledge), behavioural (skills), and affective (attitudes) outcomes interact, improvements in one domain (e.g., instructional skill) often accompany changes in another (e.g., professional identity). However, the magnitude and durability of these gains vary substantially by placement quality, supervision, and contextual constraints (Cai et al., 2022).

Several studies report that teaching-practice placements contribute meaningfully to pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge, particularly insofar as placements permit the application and refinement of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) learned in university courses. Field-based experiences enable student-teachers to test lesson designs, adapt explanations to real learners, and develop context-sensitive strategies that are difficult to acquire in lecture settings alone. Nevertheless, rigorous observational and mixed-method studies indicate that gains in abstract pedagogical knowledge are contingent on opportunities for deliberate practice and reflective supervision; where placements are short, poorly scaffolded, or observational rather than participatory, improvements in PCK are limited or superficial (Chen et al., 2024).

In respect of instructional skills, classroom management, lesson delivery, assessment practices, and use of pedagogical strategies the evidence shows consistent short-term gains following practicum experiences. Multiple empirical investigations find that student-teachers report higher confidence and observable improvements in lesson planning, questioning techniques, and classroom routines after supervised teaching episodes. High-quality placements that include repeated teaching cycles, targeted feedback from university supervisors and cooperating teachers, and opportunities for peer observation produce the largest skill gains; conversely, placements that reduce student-teachers to passive observers or that lack structured feedback produce smaller or inconsistent skill improvements (Shaheen et al., 2023).

Teaching practicum also plays a critical role in shaping professional attitudes, including teacher identity, commitment to the profession, and attitudes toward ongoing professional learning. Longitudinal and qualitative studies indicate that authentic teaching experiences accelerate the transformation from student to teacher by

confronting pre-service teachers with the moral, emotional, and social dimensions of schooling; many studies document increases in professional self-efficacy, clearer career intentions, and a more nuanced understanding of teacher responsibilities following internships. That said, the direction of attitudinal change depends on placement quality: supportive mentorship and manageable workloads foster positive professional commitment, whereas hostile school climates, unrealistic expectations, or tokenistic practicum arrangements can diminish motivation and negatively alter attitudes toward teaching (Cai et al., 2022)

A robust theme in the literature is mediating factors, such as supervision quality, mentoring relationships, placement duration and intensity, curriculum school alignment, and resource availability, determining whether practicum experiences translate into durable professional competence. Supervisory models that combine formative assessment, reflective dialogue, and co-teaching opportunities are consistently associated with stronger gains across knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Conversely, structural weaknesses (e.g., short placements, lack of mentor training, overcrowded classrooms) frequently explain null or modest effects reported in lower-resource contexts (Shaheen et al., 2023)

Methodologically, research on practicum outcomes is dominated by self-report surveys, small-scale qualitative studies, and cross-sectional pre-post comparisons. While such designs provide valuable insights into perceived learning and identity work, the field lacks a large number of rigorous longitudinal and experimental studies that link practicum experiences to objective measures of teaching quality and later classroom impact. This measurement gap complicates causal claims about the extent to which practicum alone (versus concurrent coursework or innate dispositions) produces sustained improvements in pedagogical knowledge and instructional effectiveness (Lawson et al., 2015).

In summary, the literature supports the conclusion that teaching-practice placements can substantially contribute to the acquisition of pedagogical knowledge, the honing of instructional skills, and the formation of professional attitudes provided placements are well-designed, sufficiently long, closely supervised, and embedded within coherent university-school partnerships. Where these conditions are absent, gains are smaller, more variable, and less likely to persist in early-career teaching. Future research should prioritise longitudinal, mixed-methods, and intervention studies that (a) isolate the active components of effective practicum design, (b) employ validated measures of PCK and instructional practice, and (c) track graduates into their first years of teaching to assess durability and classroom impact (Cai et al., 2022).

2.3 Effectiveness of students applying the knowledge and skills gained during the teaching practice in real classroom settings

The capacity of teaching practice (practicum) to foster transferable classroom behaviours defined as the actual application of pedagogical knowledge and instructional skills in real classroom contexts remains a central concern in teacher-education research. This challenge is often framed in terms of the theory-practice gap and the “transfer

of training,” which asks whether, and to what extent, learning from university coursework and supervised placements is enacted when pre-service teachers assume full classroom responsibilities. Empirical reviews consistently indicate that while practicum placements can yield observable classroom-level application, such transfer is conditional on placement design, supervisory support, and contextual variables (Jenssen & Haara, 2024). Evidence shows that student-teachers often adopt lesson-planning formats, implement assessment or questioning strategies, and improve classroom management following supervised practice. However, these applications are frequently partial, inconsistent, or short-lived. Transfer tends to be strongest for procedural skills, such as lesson structuring and specific questioning techniques, and weaker for more complex and integrative capacities like adaptive pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and responsive formative assessment (Walton & Rusznyak, 2013).

Several mediating conditions significantly influence the degree of transfer from practicum to classroom practice. The quality and nature of supervision and mentoring are particularly critical, with targeted, formative feedback, co-teaching, and scaffolded reflection cycles shown to increase the likelihood of strategy enactment. Studies demonstrate that structured mentor training, such as content-focused coaching, further strengthens transfer outcomes (Becker et al., 2019). Opportunities for deliberate practice also enhance application; iterative teaching cycles involving planning, teaching, feedback, and re-teaching consolidate skills, while observation-only or short-term placements limit transfer (Chea, 2024). Moreover, alignment between the university curriculum and school tasks enhances authenticity and strengthens the likelihood of transfer, whereas mismatches between theoretical coursework and school realities reduce application (Sathasivam et al., 2024). Contextual constraints, including overcrowded classrooms, resource shortages, and unsupportive school climates, often force student-teachers to abandon or modify university-taught techniques, thereby undermining fidelity of implementation (Galana et al., 2023).

The literature also highlights domain-specific patterns of transfer. Procedural skills such as lesson planning, classroom routines, formative questioning, and technology integration exhibit higher rates of immediate application, whereas higher-order competencies like adaptive PCK, differentiation for diverse learners, and assessment for learning require extended scaffolding and deliberate coaching. In domains such as technology use and project-based learning, explicit modelling and in-situ coaching are critical for sustained transfer into everyday classroom practices (Zhang & Ma, 2023). Methodologically, evidence is drawn from self-report surveys, reflective portfolios, supervisor ratings, and classroom observations. While self-reports often suggest high levels of application and confidence, observational studies reveal gaps between reported intentions and enacted practices. Systematic reviews further emphasise that existing research is dominated by small-scale qualitative or cross-sectional designs, with relatively few longitudinal or experimental studies tracking transfer into early-career teaching. As

such, causal claims about durable transfer remain tentative (Eginli & Solhi, 2021).

Despite these limitations, intervention studies identify effective levers for improving transfer outcomes. These include training cooperating teachers in structured mentoring, designing practicum sequences that allow iterative practice and reflection, aligning university assignments with authentic school tasks, and providing protected time and resources in host schools to facilitate ambitious pedagogical practices. When such supports are in place, observed classroom application and student outcomes tend to improve (Becker et al., 2019). Nonetheless, important research gaps remain. There is a pressing need for longitudinal studies that examine whether practicum-derived practices persist into the first years of teaching and whether they contribute to pupil learning gains. Comparative studies that account for systemic variables such as policy, funding, and curriculum frameworks are also necessary to disentangle programme levels from contextual influences. Furthermore, validated observational instruments capable of capturing both the presence and quality of implementation across domains including PCK, differentiation, and assessment for learning are required to strengthen measurement precision (Österling & Christiansen, 2022).

2.4 Impact of the Teaching Practice Placement on Students' Professional Competence, Career Readiness, and Long-Term Development as Future Teachers

Teaching-practice (practicum) placements are consistently framed in the teacher-education literature as the crucial bridge between university-based preparation and the enactment of teaching in real classrooms. They are understood as complex professional learning environments whose capacity to shape professional competence, career readiness, and long-term development is contingent upon factors such as structural design, interpersonal supports, and contextual resources. Recent reviews and empirical studies emphasise that high-quality, well-supported placements contribute substantially across these domains, whereas short or poorly scaffolded practicums yield only limited or fragile developmental outcomes (Heinz, 2024).

One of the most robust areas of evidence concerns professional competence. A substantial body of mixed-method and observational research highlights that practicum placements significantly enhance pedagogical content knowledge, lesson design, classroom management, and formative assessment, particularly when candidates are given sustained, authentic teaching responsibilities alongside targeted supervisory feedback. Studies structured around repeated cycles of planning, teaching, feedback, and re-teaching tend to report larger gains in observed instructional quality than those with limited teaching opportunities or primarily observational placements. By contrast, where supervisory engagement is minimal, or tasks peripheral to authentic instruction, improvements in competence are often modest and less likely to persist into early career practice (Cai et al., 2022).

Career readiness is another important outcome domain. Surveys and programme evaluations consistently demonstrate that candidates exposed to co-teaching

arrangements, authentic assessment practice, and alignment between university coursework and school tasks report greater confidence and stronger intentions to enter teaching. These experiences not only strengthen self-perceived preparedness but also support smoother transitions into employment. However, the literature cautions that negative practicum conditions—such as unsupportive mentors, excessive workload, or tokenistic treatment—may reduce career commitment and undermine the positive effects of prior training (Buchanan et al., 2013).

Although fewer in number, longitudinal and quasi-experimental studies provide important insights into long-term developmental effects. Extended or residency-style placements have been shown to yield lasting benefits, with participants demonstrating stronger classroom practices and, in some cases, higher retention rates for several years post-qualification. Nevertheless, many longitudinal studies also report that induction conditions, including mentoring availability, workload, and school support, critically mediate the endurance of practicum-acquired practices. In contexts where induction is weak, new teachers often abandon innovative approaches developed during practicum, and some experience attrition, highlighting the conditional nature of practicum's long-term impact (Van Den Borre et al., 2021).

Across diverse contexts, three mediating mechanisms consistently emerge as decisive for practicum outcomes. First, mentoring quality, particularly when mentors are trained to provide content-focused, developmental feedback, is strongly linked to improved competence transfer and teacher retention. Second, alignment between practicum assignments and authentic school demands enhances both application and readiness. Third, workload and resource dynamics shape overall outcomes; excessive demands in the absence of adequate resources diminish both immediate learning and subsequent professional development. Reviews underline that strong mentoring, coupled with manageable job demands, is a necessary condition for practicum placements to yield sustainable professional growth (Luong, 2025).

Methodologically, the current evidence base is dominated by qualitative case studies, surveys, and small-scale evaluations. While these consistently report perceived gains in competence and readiness, they are less able to capture sustained changes in practice or measurable impacts on pupil learning. There remains a notable shortage of rigorous longitudinal and experimental research. As such, although the weight of evidence affirms positive short- to medium-term effects of well-designed practicums, stronger causal claims about long-term development require further study (Cai et al., 2022; Heinz, 2024).

Taken together, these findings suggest several important implications for programme design and policy. Effective practicum models should prioritise iterative, authentic teaching cycles supported by targeted supervision, invest in mentor training and compensation, and ensure strong curriculum–placement alignment to make tasks transferable. Moreover, structured induction supports after qualification are essential to protect and extend practicum gains into early career stages. Such reforms represent the most evidence-based strategies for maximising practicum impact on competence, career

readiness, and long-term professional development (Luong, 2025).

Despite advances, gaps remain in the research landscape. Key priorities include longitudinal studies that track cohorts through the first three to five years of teaching to assess the durability of practicum benefits, experimental evaluations of specific design elements such as co-teaching or residency placements, and the development of validated observational instruments to assess not only the presence but also the quality of practicum-derived practices. Addressing these gaps will allow for stronger causal inference and greater understanding of how practicum placements contribute to meaningful, long-term professional development (Pan et al., 2024)

3. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research design to evaluate teaching practice placement using Kirkpatrick's model in Ilorin, Kwara State. The population of the study comprised undergraduate students in a selected private university in Kwara State who were at the end of their 300 level and transitioning to the 400 level. These students participated in teaching practice by delivering micro-teaching presentations, which served as the context for the evaluation. The choice of this group was based on accessibility and the suitability of their training stage for the objectives of the study. The instrument for data collection was a researcher-designed questionnaire developed on Google Forms. To ensure accessibility, the form link was converted into a barcode that participants scanned immediately after their microteaching presentations. Necessary approvals were sought from the school authorities and respondents before administering the instrument. The questionnaire was subjected to validation by two experts in Educational Technology and one expert in Tests and Measurement. The reliability of the instrument was determined on a section-by-section basis, yielding coefficients of 0.75 for reaction, 0.81 for learning, 0.71 for behaviour, and 0.90 for results, which were considered acceptable levels of internal consistency.

The instrument comprised 21 items organised into five sections. Section one captured demographic data (1 item), while sections two to five assessed the four levels of Kirkpatrick's model: reaction (5 items), learning (5 items), behaviour (5 items), and results (5 items). Items in sections two to five were structured on a three-point Likert scale of Agree, Undecided, and Disagree to capture participants' perceptions and experiences. For data analysis, demographic information was presented using frequency counts and percentages, while responses to sections two through five were analysed using the grand mean method. A decision rule was applied where a mean range of 1.0–1.5 was interpreted as "Accept", while a mean range of 1.6–3.0 was interpreted as "Reject." This methodological approach ensured systematic evaluation of the teaching practice placement and provided insights aligned with the levels of Kirkpatrick's model.

4. Result and Discussion

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on gender

Gender	N	%
Male	12	24.0%
Female	38	76.0%
Total	50	100.0%

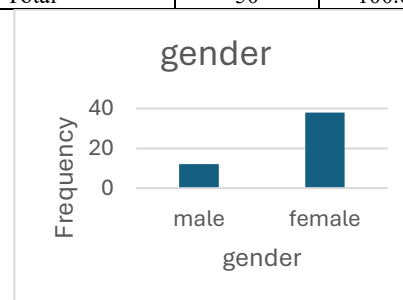


Figure 1: Gender distribution of respondents

The gender distribution of respondents shows that many participants were female, accounting for 38 respondents, representing 76.0% of the total sample. In contrast, only 12 respondents, representing 24.0%, were male. This indicates that female students were more actively represented in the study population, suggesting either a higher proportion of females enrolled in the program or greater participation of female students in the teaching practice placement compared to their male counterparts

RQ1: What are the teaching practice students' levels of satisfaction regarding their placement experiences?

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Students' Levels of Satisfaction Regarding Placement Experiences

S/N	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	I found the teaching practice placement to be engaging and enjoyable.	50	1	1	1.00	.000
2.	The environment at my placement school was welcoming and supportive.	50	1	1	1.00	.000
3.	The objectives of the placement were clearly communicated to me.	50	1	1	1.00	.000
4.	I was satisfied with the mentorship provided by the school staff.	50	1	2	1.12	.328
5.	I would recommend this teaching practice experience to others.	50	1	1	1.00	.000
	Valid N (listwise)	50			1.02	

The results reveal that teaching practice students expressed a high level of satisfaction with their placement experiences. The computed average mean score of 1.02 falls within the acceptance range of 1.0–1.5, according to the decision yardstick adopted for this study. This indicates that the respondents agreed that the placement was engaging and enjoyable, the environment was welcoming, the objectives were clearly communicated, and they were generally satisfied with the mentorship received. The near-perfect mean values of 1.00 across most items further

reinforce the overwhelmingly positive perception of the placement experience.

Furthermore, the finding that students would readily recommend the teaching practice to others underscores the program's effectiveness in meeting its objectives and creating a supportive learning environment. Although the mean score for mentorship (1.12) showed slight variability compared to other items, it remained within the acceptance threshold, suggesting overall satisfaction with supervisory support. Collectively, these findings highlight that the teaching practice placement contributed positively to students' professional growth and affirmed the value of the program in preparing them for future teaching responsibilities.

The results indicated very high levels of satisfaction, as respondents reported that placements were engaging, enjoyable, and supportive, with clearly communicated objectives. These findings resonate with Jenssen and Haara (2024), who emphasised that inclusive and facilitative practicum environments foster professional identity development and satisfaction. Similarly, the observed positive perceptions regarding mentorship aligning with Wu et al. (2024), who identified supervision quality as a critical determinant of satisfaction. However, the slight variability in responses to mentorship in this study suggests that supervisory practices may not have been uniformly strong, echoing Galana et al. (2023), who noted that inconsistent supervisory engagement reduces satisfaction. Thus, while the study affirms high satisfaction, it also underscores the need to enhance the consistency of mentoring support.

RQ2: To what extent did the teaching practice placement contribute to students' acquisition of pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, and professional attitudes?

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Students' Acquisition of Pedagogical Knowledge, Instructional Skills, and Professional Attitudes

S/N	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	I gained new teaching methods and strategies during my placement.	50	1	1	1.00	.000
2.	I improved my lesson planning and instructional delivery skills.	50	1	1	1.00	.000
3.	I learned how to manage a classroom effectively.	50	1	2	1.26	.443
4.	I acquired better assessment and feedback techniques for learners.	50	1	2	1.12	.328
5.	My understanding of the teaching profession has significantly improved.	50	1	2	1.12	.328
	Valid N (listwise)	50			1.10	

The result shows that the average mean of 1.10 falls within the range of 1.0–1.5, which is interpreted as Accept according to the decision rule. This indicates that the teaching practice placement significantly contributed to

students' acquisition of pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, and professional attitudes. Specifically, all the items recorded mean values between 1.00 and 1.26, suggesting strong agreement among respondents that the placement enhanced their professional learning. Notably, students reported gaining new teaching strategies, improving lesson planning and delivery, developing classroom management competence, and acquiring effective assessment and feedback techniques.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that students' overall understanding of the teaching profession improved through their participation in placement. The consistency of low mean values across the items, coupled with relatively small standard deviations, indicates a high level of consensus among respondents. This suggests that the teaching practice placement was effective in equipping students with essential pedagogical and professional competencies, thereby validating its role as a crucial component of teacher education in the study context.

Respondents affirmed that the teaching practice significantly contributed to their acquisition of teaching strategies, lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment practices. These outcomes corroborate Cai et al. (2022), who reported that well-structured placements provide meaningful opportunities for applying pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). The improvement in instructional delivery and assessment practices further aligns with Shaheen et al. (2023), who found that repeated teaching cycles supported by feedback produce measurable skill gains. Moreover, the students' improved understanding of the teaching profession reflects evidence that practicums strengthen professional identity and commitment (Chen et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the results also confirm Lawson et al. (2015), who argued that the durability of these outcomes depends on sustained opportunities for deliberate practice, highlighting the importance of extended placements for consolidating professional competencies.

RQ3: How effectively did students apply the knowledge and skills gained during the teaching practice in real classroom settings?

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Students' Application of Knowledge and Skills Gained During Teaching Practice

S/N	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	I applied the teaching strategies learned during training in real classroom settings.	50	1	2	1.12	.328
2.	I demonstrated effective classroom management during my placement.	50	1	2	1.14	.351
3.	I used feedback from mentors to improve my teaching performance.	50	1	3	1.36	.693
4.	I consistently reflected on my teaching practice to enhance effectiveness.	50	1	3	1.50	.707
5.	I maintained a professional attitude and conduct throughout the placement.	50	1	1	1.00	.000
	Valid N (listwise)	50			1.22	

The findings show that the overall average mean score of 1.22 falls within the acceptance range of 1.0–1.5 based on the yardstick, indicating that students effectively applied the knowledge and skills gained during their teaching practice in real classroom settings. Specifically, the highest performance was observed in maintaining professional attitude and conduct, with a mean score of 1.00, suggesting unanimous agreement among respondents. Similarly, high levels of application were recorded in classroom management ($M = 1.14$) and the use of teaching strategies ($M = 1.12$), reflecting students' ability to translate theoretical learning into practice.

However, relatively higher mean scores were recorded in areas such as reflection ($M = 1.50$) and use of feedback ($M = 1.36$), though still within the acceptance range. This suggests that while students engaged in reflective practice and utilised feedback, these aspects may require further strengthening compared to other domains. Overall, the results affirm that the teaching practice placement was effective in equipping students with the capacity to apply learned strategies, manage classrooms, and maintain professionalism in real teaching contexts.

The study revealed that student-teachers effectively applied knowledge and skills, particularly in classroom management and maintaining professional conduct. This finding is consistent with Walton and Rusznyak (2013), who found that procedural skills such as lesson planning and classroom routines transfer most readily into practice. However, the slightly higher variability in reflection and use of feedback suggests that these areas remain weaker points. This supports Becker et al. (2019), who highlighted that targeted supervisory feedback and iterative practice cycles strengthen the transfer of learning. In line with Chea (2024), the results suggest that while basic procedural application is strong, higher-order reflective capacities require further scaffolding to ensure sustained transfer into independent practice.

RQ4: What is the overall impact of the teaching practice placement on students' professional competence, career readiness, and long-term development as future teachers?

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics on the Overall Impact of Teaching Practice Placement on Students' Professional Competence, Career Readiness, and Long-Term Development

S/N	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	My placement contributed positively to pupil learning and engagement.	50	1	1	1.00	.000
2.	I feel more confident about entering the teaching profession.	50	1	2	1.26	.443
3.	My overall academic performance improved as a result of this placement.	50	1	2	1.12	.328
4.	I developed better communication and interpersonal skills.	50	1	1	1.00	.000
5.	The teaching practice placement has positively influenced my future career plans.	50	1	2	1.12	.328
	Valid N (listwise)	50				

The analysis reveals an average mean score of 1.10 across all items assessing the impact of teaching practice placement on professional competence, career readiness, and long-term development. According to the decision yardstick (1.0–1.5 = Accept; 1.6–3.0 = Reject), this mean value falls within the acceptance range. This indicates that the teaching practice placement had a positive and significant impact on the respondents, particularly in areas such as enhancing pupil learning, improving confidence to enter the teaching profession, boosting academic performance, strengthening communication skills, and shaping future career aspirations.

Furthermore, the very low standard deviations (ranging from 0.000 to 0.443) demonstrate a high level of agreement among respondents. The consistency of responses, especially on items such as pupil learning and communication skills (mean = 1.00), suggests that these areas were universally recognised as key outcomes of the placement. Overall, the findings confirm that the teaching practice placement plays a vital role in equipping students with the necessary skills, competencies, and professional readiness to function effectively as future teachers.

The positive impact of placements on confidence, communication skills, and career aspirations confirms the central role of practicum in shaping teacher readiness. These findings align with Buchanan et al. (2013), who demonstrated that authentic assessment practice and alignment with coursework enhance preparedness for the profession. Likewise, the reported contribution to pupil learning supports Cai et al. (2022), who observed that practicum enhances observable instructional quality. The strong endorsement of placements as influencing career aspirations resonates with Heinz (2024), who found that well-supported practicums enhance long-term development. However, this study also echoes Van Den Borre et al. (2021), who cautioned that the sustainability of practicum-acquired practices is mediated by induction conditions after qualification. Without ongoing support, there is a risk that some of these positive effects may diminish over time.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of this research indicate that teaching practice placements in Ilorin, Kwara State, significantly contributed to the professional development of student-teachers when evaluated through Kirkpatrick's model. Participants reported a high level of satisfaction with their placement experiences, acquired pedagogical knowledge and instructional abilities, and fostered professional attitudes. They successfully implemented these skills in actual classroom environments, resulting in positive effects on student engagement, confidence, and communication skills. The placement also enhanced their job preparedness and had a favourable effect on their future career aspirations. These findings validate that organised teaching practice is an essential aspect of teacher education for connecting theoretical knowledge with classroom application. However, the study emphasises the need for ongoing supervision, the provision of resources, and well-structured mentorship to maintain these benefits and ensure the long-term professional growth of student-teachers.

Taken together, these findings reinforce the argument that practicum placements, when structured and supported effectively, generate immediate and meaningful gains across satisfaction, learning, application, and career readiness. The evidence highlights the decisive role of mentoring, supervision, and resource provision as mediating mechanisms. The high consensus among respondents in this study suggests that placements in Ilorin largely met these conditions, though variability in reflective practice and mentorship underscores areas for programme improvement.

Based on the findings of the study, the following were recommended.

1. Teacher education programmes should continue to strengthen supportive environments, effective supervision, and clear communication of objectives.
2. As the placement contributed significantly to students' acquisition of pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, and professional attitudes, universities should integrate longer and more structured practicum sessions to deepen these competencies.
3. Institutions should provide continuous mentoring and structured reflection opportunities to sustain and enhance the transfer of training.
4. Policymakers should invest in stronger school-university partnerships and structured induction programmes to consolidate these outcomes.

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