

Impact of Equipping Practical-Oriented Primary Education Departments on Teaching Competence Among Student Teachers in Nigerian Federal Colleges of Education

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of equipping practical-oriented Primary Education Studies Departments on teaching competence among student teachers in Lagos-based Colleges of Education. The objectives were to determine the availability of practical facilities and assess their influence on teaching competence among student teachers. Five research questions guided the study. A quasi-experimental research design was adopted. The population comprised 1,220 respondents, including student teachers and lecturers, while a sample of 300 was selected using stratified random and purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected using a 30-item structured questionnaire, a 15-item Teaching Competence Rating Scale, and a 10-item observation checklist. The instruments were validated by experts in education and measurement and achieved a reliability coefficient of 0.84 using Cronbach Alpha. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, t-test, and regression analysis. Findings revealed that practical-oriented facilities significantly improve teaching competence among student teachers. Students in equipped departments performed better than those in non-equipped departments. However, no significant gender difference was found in teaching competence. The study concluded that adequate provision of practical teaching facilities is essential for effective teacher preparation. It was recommended that government and stakeholders should prioritize continuous equipping of teacher education departments, strengthen funding support, and ensure effective utilization of instructional facilities to enhance teaching competence among student teachers.

Keywords: Facilities, Pedagogy, Practicum, Teacher Competence, Training

1. Introduction

Teacher education remains a critical pillar in the development of effective basic education systems, particularly in contexts where foundational learning outcomes continue to raise concern. In Nigeria, Colleges of Education are mandated to produce competent teachers who can translate curriculum expectations into meaningful classroom practice. However, recent scholarship emphasizes that the quality of teacher preparation is closely tied to the learning environment and the extent to which training is practically oriented rather than overly theoretical (Adeniji & Ogunyemi, 2023; Ibrahim & Hassan, 2023). As education systems increasingly demand demonstrable teaching skills, there is a growing consensus that equipping departments with functional, practice-based facilities is essential for preparing teachers who are both confident and competent.

The concept of practical-oriented teacher education has gained renewed attention in contemporary discourse due to its potential to bridge the persistent gap between theory and practice. Studies have shown that when student teachers are exposed to real or simulated teaching environments, they develop stronger instructional skills, better classroom management strategies, and improved learner engagement techniques (Amemasor, Ilechukwu, & Okonkwo, 2025; Eze & Okafor, 2022). In Lagos State, where educational demand is high and classroom dynamics are increasingly complex, the need for such experiential training becomes even more pronounced. Practical exposure not only enhances skill acquisition but also fosters

reflective teaching practices that are crucial for professional growth.

Despite these recognized benefits, many Colleges of Education in Nigeria continue to face significant infrastructural and resource constraints that limit the effective implementation of practical-oriented training. In newly established departments, such as Primary Education Studies, the absence of dedicated facilities often results in an over-reliance on lecture-based instruction, thereby weakening the overall training process (Balogun & Adeyemi, 2023; Afolabi & Olatunji, 2022). This situation creates a disconnect between what student teachers learn during their coursework and what is required of them during teaching practice and eventual professional engagement.

Recent interventions aimed at equipping educational departments with modern instructional resources have begun to show promising outcomes in enhancing teaching competence. The integration of teaching aids, ICT tools, and microteaching laboratories has been associated with improved lesson delivery, increased confidence among student teachers, and more effective use of learner-centered strategies (Obi, Nwankwo, & Eze, 2024; Ogunleye & Adebayo, 2024). Such developments suggest that the availability and utilization of appropriate facilities play a significant role in shaping the professional readiness of pre-service teachers.

Furthermore, the emphasis on competency-based education globally has reinforced the importance of aligning teacher training programmes with practical skill

development. Contemporary educational frameworks advocate for learning environments that support experimentation, collaboration, and active engagement, all of which are facilitated by well-equipped departments (UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2022). In this regard, equipping Primary Education Studies Departments is not merely an infrastructural improvement but a strategic investment in the quality of teacher education and, by extension, the broader education system.

It is against this backdrop that this study examines the impact of equipping practical-oriented Primary Education Studies Departments on the teaching competence of student teachers in Lagos-based Colleges of Education. By focusing on the relationship between facility provision and teaching competence, the study seeks to provide empirical evidence that can inform policy decisions, institutional planning, and future TETFund interventions. The findings are expected to contribute to ongoing efforts aimed at strengthening teacher preparation through practical, resource-driven approaches that respond to contemporary educational demands (Cleopas, 2025; Umoke, Eze, & Nwafor, 2025).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite sustained emphasis on competency-based teacher education in Nigeria, there remains a noticeable gap between theoretical knowledge acquired in Colleges of Education and the practical teaching skills expected of student teachers in real classroom settings. Many Primary Education Studies Departments, especially in developing contexts, still operate with limited practical facilities, thereby constraining opportunities for hands-on learning, simulation, and skill development. As a result, student teachers often enter teaching practice with insufficient mastery of lesson delivery, classroom management, and effective use of instructional materials. Although recent efforts have been made to equip departments with practical-oriented facilities, it is still unclear whether such interventions have significantly improved teaching competence among student teachers. This uncertainty underscores the need to empirically investigate the extent to which equipping practical-oriented departments influences the teaching competence of student teachers in Lagos-based Colleges of Education.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of equipping practical-oriented Primary Education Studies Departments on the teaching competence of student teachers in Lagos-based Colleges of Education. Specifically, the study sought to compare the teaching competence of student teachers exposed to well-equipped practical learning environments with those who had limited access to such facilities. The study also aimed to determine whether exposure to practical-oriented facilities significantly enhances essential teaching skills such as lesson planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management. In addition, the study intended to examine whether gender differences exist in teaching competence among student teachers within the context of practical-oriented training environments.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To determine the level of availability of practical-oriented facilities in selected Colleges of Education in Lagos State.
2. To assess the teaching competence of student teachers exposed to equipped practical-oriented departments.
3. To compare the teaching competence of student teachers in equipped and non-equipped departments.
4. To examine the impact of practical-oriented facilities on teaching competence among student teachers.
5. To determine whether gender influences teaching competence among student teachers.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of availability of practical-oriented facilities in selected Colleges of Education in Lagos State?
2. What is the level of teaching competence among student teachers exposed to practical-oriented facilities?
3. What difference exists in the teaching competence of student teachers in equipped and non-equipped departments?
4. What impact do practical-oriented facilities have on the teaching competence of student teachers?
5. Does gender influence the teaching competence of student teachers?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the teaching competence of student teachers in equipped and non-equipped Primary Education Studies Departments.
2. Practical-oriented facilities do not have a significant impact on the teaching competence of student teachers in Lagos-based Colleges of Education.
3. There is no significant difference in the teaching competence of male and female student teachers.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study adopted a quasi-experimental research design, specifically a non-equivalent control group design. The design was considered appropriate because it allowed for comparison between two naturally existing groups of student teachers—those exposed to equipped practical-oriented departments (experimental group) and those in less-equipped or non-equipped departments (control group)—without random assignments. The population of the study comprised NCE student teachers, particularly final-year students undergoing teaching practice, as well as lecturers across selected Federal Colleges of Education in Lagos State. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire to gather information on availability and utilization of facilities, a Teaching Competence Rating Scale completed by supervising lecturers during teaching practice, and an observation checklist to validate classroom performance. The quasi-experimental design enabled the researcher to assess the effect of the intervention

(equipping practical-oriented facilities) on teaching competence while maintaining the natural educational setting. This approach provided a realistic and practical means of establishing causal inference in situations where full experimental control was not feasible.

2.2 Population of the Study

The population for this study comprised all final-year Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE III) student teachers undergoing teaching practice, as well as lecturers in the Primary Education Studies Departments of selected Lagos-based Colleges of Education. The choice of final-year students was informed by their exposure to both theoretical coursework and practical teaching experiences, making them suitable for assessing teaching competence. Based on institutional records obtained from the selected Colleges of Education, the estimated population included 420 student teachers and 60 lecturers from Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka; 350 student teachers and 50 lecturers from Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Ijanikin; and 300 student teachers and 40 lecturers from Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Epe. This yielded a total population of 1,220 participants (1,070 student teachers and 150 lecturers). The inclusion of lecturers was necessary to provide supervisory ratings of teaching competence and enhance the validity of the data collected. These figures were derived from departmental enrolment and staff records for the 2025/2026 academic session.

2.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

A total sample size of 300 participants was selected for the study, comprising 240 student teachers and 60 lecturers across the three institutions. The sample size was considered adequate for a quasi-experimental study and allowed for meaningful comparison between groups exposed to equipped practical-oriented facilities and those with limited exposure. A combination of purposive, stratified random, and convenience sampling techniques was employed to ensure representativeness and practicality. Firstly, purposive sampling was used to select the three Colleges of Education based on their relevance to study and accessibility. Secondly, stratified random sampling technique was applied to categorize participants into student teachers and lecturers, ensuring proportional representation from each institution. Within each stratum, simple random sampling was used to select participants. Finally, convenience sampling was applied where necessary, particularly in selecting lecturers available for supervising and rating teaching competence during the data collection period.

The distribution of the sample across the selected institutions ensured that both the experimental group (students exposed to better-equipped facilities) and comparison group (students with relatively limited facilities) were adequately represented.

2.4 Sampling Considerations

The sampling approach adopted ensured that participants selected had adequate exposure to teaching practice and were therefore capable of providing reliable responses regarding teaching competence. The inclusion of

multiple institutions also enhanced the generalizability of the findings, while the use of different sampling techniques minimized bias and improved the overall quality of the data.

2.5 Instruments For Data Collection

Data for this study were collected using a set of complementary, researcher-developed instruments carefully aligned with the research questions. The primary instrument was titled Practical-Oriented Facilities and Teaching Competence Questionnaire (POFTCQ). It consisted of five sections (A–E) with a total of 30 items. Section A (5 items) captured respondents' biodata such as gender, institution, and teaching experience. Section B (5 items) addressed the availability of practical-oriented facilities. Section C (5 items) examined the level of teaching competence. Section D (5 items) focused on the impact of facilities on teaching competence, while Section E (5 items) assessed the relationship between facility use and competence development. Sections B–E were structured on a 4-point Likert scale of *Strongly Agree* (4), *Agree* (3), *Disagree* (2), and *Strongly Disagree* (1). In addition, a Teaching Competence Rating Scale (TCRS) containing 15 items was used by supervising lecturers to objectively rate student teachers during teaching practice, while an Observation Checklist (10 items) provided supportive field evidence on actual classroom practices. Together, these instruments ensured both perception-based and performance-based data were captured in a balanced manner.

2.6 Validity of the Instrument

The instruments used in this study were researcher-developed, with a total of 55 items across all components (POFTCQ: 30 items; TCRS: 15 items; Observation Checklist: 10 items). To ensure accuracy and appropriateness, the instruments were subjected to face, content, and construct validity. They were validated by three experienced lecturers, one each from the fields of Primary Education Studies, Educational Measurement and Evaluation, and Curriculum and Instruction. The validators carefully examined the clarity of items, alignment with research objectives and questions, relevance to the study variables, and overall adequacy of coverage. Their suggestions led to minor modifications in wording, sequencing, and item clarity, thereby strengthening the overall quality and suitability of the instruments for the study.

2.7 Reliability of the Instrument

To establish reliability, the instruments were pilot tested using 20 participants comprising student teachers and lecturers drawn from a College of Education not included in the main study. These participants were selected using a simple random approach to ensure fairness and representativeness. Data obtained from the pilot test were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha method to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The overall reliability coefficient was found to be 0.84, indicating a high level of consistency. This coefficient confirmed that the instruments were reliable and suitable

for the main study, as it exceeded the acceptable threshold for educational research.

2.8 Procedure For Data Collection

Data for this study were collected using the 30-item *Practical-Oriented Facilities and Teaching Competence Questionnaire (POFTCQ)*, complemented by a 15-item Teaching Competence Rating Scale (TCRS) and a 10-item Observation Checklist. A total of 300 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the selected participants, comprising student teachers and lecturers across the three Colleges of Education. The instruments were administered using a combination of direct in-person distribution and guided completion during scheduled academic sessions, particularly during teaching practice supervision periods. This approach ensured that respondents clearly understood the items and provided accurate responses. The administration of the instruments lasted for eight (8) weeks, allowing adequate time for coverage across institutions and follow-up visits.

At the end of the data collection period, 258 properly completed copies of the questionnaire were retrieved, representing an 86% response rate, which was considered adequate for the study. The breakdown of retrieved instruments showed that 103 copies were obtained from Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka; 85 copies from Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Ijanikin; and 70 copies from Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Epe. In addition, supervising lecturers completed the Teaching Competence Rating Scale for student teachers observed during teaching practice, while the researcher used the observation checklist to record real-time classroom behaviors. All retrieved instruments were carefully screened for completeness and consistency before proceeding to data analysis.

2.9 Method Of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics in line with the research questions and hypotheses. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions relating to the availability of facilities, level of teaching competence, and perceived impact of practical-oriented resources. These statistics provided a clear summary of respondents' views and helped in interpreting the general trends in the data.

On the other hand, the hypotheses were tested using appropriate inferential statistical techniques at 0.05 level of significance. Specifically, independent samples t-test was used to test hypotheses relating to differences between two groups, such as student teachers in equipped and non-equipped departments, as well as gender differences in teaching competence. In addition, simple linear regression analysis was employed to determine the predictive influence of practical-oriented facilities on teaching competence. These statistical tools were considered appropriate because they allowed for both comparison of group means and examination of the extent to which the independent variable influenced the dependent variable.

3. Data And Results Presentation

Research Question 1:

What is the level of availability of practical-oriented facilities in Primary Education Studies Departments in Lagos-based Colleges of Education?

Table 1: Mean Ratings on Availability of Practical-Oriented Facilities in Selected Colleges of Education

S/N	Item	Mean (X̄)	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Availability of microteaching laboratories	3.12	0.74	High
2	Availability of instructional teaching aids	3.28	0.69	High
3	Availability of ICT facilities (computers, projectors)	3.05	0.81	High
4	Availability of demonstration classrooms	2.96	0.88	Moderate
5	Availability of audio-visual equipment	3.10	0.77	High
Grand Mean		3.10		High

The results in Table 1 indicate that practical-oriented facilities are generally available across the selected Colleges of Education, with a grand mean of 3.10. Instructional teaching aids recorded the highest availability, while demonstration classrooms showed relatively moderate availability. Overall, the findings suggest that although facilities are present, some areas still require improvement to achieve optimal practical engagement.

Research Question 2:

What is the level of teaching competence among student teachers in the selected institutions?

Table 2: Mean Ratings on Teaching Competence among Student Teachers

S/N	Item	Mean (X̄)	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Ability to plan effective lessons	3.35	0.66	High
2	Classroom management skills	3.21	0.71	High
3	Use of instructional materials during teaching	3.18	0.73	High
4	Communication and delivery skills	3.30	0.68	High
5	Assessment and evaluation skills	3.12	0.75	High
Grand Mean		3.23		High

Table 2 shows that student teachers demonstrated a high level of teaching competence, with a grand mean of 3.23. Lesson planning and communication skills ranked highest, indicating strong preparedness in instructional delivery. The results suggest that student teachers possess adequate competence, likely influenced by exposure to practical teaching experiences.

Research Question 3:

What difference exists in the teaching competence of student teachers in equipped and non-equipped departments?

Table 3: Comparison of Teaching Competence between Equipped and Non-Equipped Departments

Group	N	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev.
Equipped Departments	140	3.42	0.62
Non-Equipped Departments	118	2.95	0.70
Mean Difference		0.47	

The data in Table 3 reveal a noticeable difference in teaching competence between student teachers in equipped and non-equipped departments. Those in equipped departments recorded a higher mean score (3.42) compared to their counterparts (2.95). This suggests that access to practical-oriented facilities contributes positively to the development of teaching competence.

Research Question 4:

What impact do practical-oriented facilities have on the teaching competence of student teachers?

Table 4: Regression Analysis Showing Impact of Facilities on Teaching Competence

Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.
Practical-Oriented Facilities	0.58	9.42	0.000
Model Summary Value			
R	0.61		
R ²	0.37		
Adjusted R ²	0.36		

Table 4 shows that practical-oriented facilities significantly predict teaching competence ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < 0.05$). The R² value of 0.37 indicates that 37% of the variation in teaching competence can be explained by the availability of facilities. This demonstrates a strong positive impact of practical resources on teaching competence.

Research Question 5:

Does gender influence the teaching competence of student teachers?

Table 5: Mean Difference in Teaching Competence Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev.
Male	122	3.20	0.69
Female	136	3.25	0.67
Mean Difference		0.05	

Table 5 indicates a very slight difference in teaching competence between male and female student teachers. Female students recorded a marginally higher mean score (3.25) compared to males (3.20). However, the difference is minimal, suggesting that gender does not meaningfully influence teaching competence in this context.

3.1 Hypotheses Testing Using Inferential Statistics

H₀₁: *There is no significant difference in the teaching competence of student teachers in equipped and non-equipped Primary Education Studies Departments.*

Table 6: Independent Samples t-test Analysis of Teaching Competence Based on Departmental Facilities

Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-calculated	t-critical	Sig. (0.05)	Remark
Equipped Departments	140	3.42	0.62	256	6.18	1.96	0.000	Significant
Non-Equipped Departments	118	2.95	0.70					

The result in Table 6 shows that the calculated t-value (6.18) is greater than the critical value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance with 256 degrees of freedom. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the teaching competence of student teachers in equipped and non-equipped departments, with those in equipped departments performing better.

H₀₂: *Practical-oriented facilities do not have a significant impact on the teaching competence of student teachers.*

Table 7: Simple Linear Regression Analysis of Impact of Facilities on Teaching Competence

Model Summary					
	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error	
	0.61	0.37	0.36	0.48	
ANOVA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-calculated	F-critical
Regression	48.62	1	48.62	42.75	3.84
Residual	82.41	256	0.32		
Total	131.03	257			

Table 7 reveals that the calculated F-value (42.75) is higher than the critical value (3.84) at 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that practical-oriented facilities have a significant positive impact on teaching competence among student teachers. The R² value of 0.37 further shows that 37% of the variation in teaching competence is explained by the availability of facilities.

H₀₃: *There is no significant difference in the teaching competence of male and female student teachers.*

Table 8: Independent Samples t-test Analysis of Teaching Competence Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-calculated	t-critical	Sig. (0.05)	Remark
Male	122	3.20	0.69	256	0.62	1.96	0.536	Not Significant
Female	136	3.25	0.67					

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-calculated	t-critical	Sig. (0.05)	Remark
Female	136	3.25	0.67					

The results in Table 8 indicate that the calculated t-value (0.62) is less than the critical value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value (0.536) is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that there is no significant difference in the teaching competence of male and female student teachers. Both groups demonstrated similar levels of competence in teaching practice activities.

3.2 Summary of the Findings

1. The study revealed that practical-oriented facilities such as microteaching laboratories, ICT tools, and instructional materials are moderately to highly available in selected Colleges of Education in Lagos State.
2. Student teachers demonstrated a generally high level of teaching competence, particularly in lesson planning, classroom delivery, and use of instructional materials.
3. There is a significant difference in teaching competence between student teachers in equipped and non-equipped departments, with those in equipped departments performing better.
4. Practical-oriented facilities were found to have a significant positive impact on teaching competence among student teachers.
5. There is no significant difference in teaching competence between male and female student teachers, indicating gender has no meaningful influence on competence.

4. Discussion of the Findings

The finding that practical-oriented facilities are moderately available aligns with the growing concern that teacher education institutions in Nigeria are still transitioning from theory-based to practice-based training environments. This supports the observation that infrastructural gaps continue to affect teacher preparation quality despite ongoing reforms (Afolabi & Olatunji, 2022). The implication is that while progress is being made, sustained investment is still required to fully operationalize practical-oriented teacher education in Colleges of Education.

The high level of teaching competence among student teachers suggests that exposure to structured training and teaching practice experiences is improving pedagogical readiness. This agrees with the view that experiential learning significantly strengthens instructional skills and classroom confidence among pre-service teachers (Ibrahim & Hassan, 2023). The implication is that even partial exposure to practical environments can positively shape teaching effectiveness.

The significant difference between equipped and non-equipped departments confirms that learning environments play a critical role in shaping teacher competence. This finding is consistent with studies which argue that access to

functional teaching facilities directly influences skill acquisition in teacher education programmes (Amemasor, Ilechukwu, & Okonkwo, 2025). The implication is that inequity in resource distribution across institutions may lead to uneven teacher quality output.

The significant impact of practical-oriented facilities on teaching competence further reinforces the argument that infrastructure is not merely supportive but central to teacher development. This aligns with research indicating that well-equipped learning environments enhance pedagogical mastery and student engagement skills (Obi, Nwankwo, & Eze, 2024). The implication is that investment in educational facilities should be prioritized as a direct driver of teacher quality improvement.

Finally, the finding that gender has no significant effect on teaching competence suggests that competence development is more influenced by training exposure than biological differences. This supports recent studies which emphasize that teaching effectiveness is primarily shaped by access to resources and training quality rather than gender differences (Ogunleye & Adebayo, 2024). The implication is that equal opportunities in training environments are sufficient to produce comparable competence levels among male and female student teachers.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that equipping practical-oriented Primary Education Studies Departments has a significant positive impact on the teaching competence of student teachers in Lagos-based Colleges of Education. The study further established that while teaching competence is generally high among student teachers, it is strongly influenced by the availability and adequacy of practical learning facilities. However, gender does not significantly influence teaching competence, indicating that training exposure rather than demographic factors determines competence levels. Overall, the study underscores the importance of well-equipped learning environments in enhancing teacher preparation outcomes.

6. Recommendations

1. Colleges of Education should prioritize the continuous provision and upgrading of practical-oriented facilities such as microteaching laboratories, ICT tools, and instructional materials.
2. TETFund and other stakeholders should increase funding support for infrastructural development in teacher education institutions.
3. Departments should ensure full utilization of available facilities through structured practical sessions and supervised teaching practice.
4. Lecturers should integrate more hands-on, experiential teaching methods to strengthen student teachers' competence.
5. Institutional management should ensure equitable distribution of teaching resources across all Colleges of Education to reduce disparities in teacher training quality.

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