

Assessment of Time Allocation and Adequacy in Mentoring and Supervision of Teaching Practice in Teacher Training Institutions in Sokoto State

Hussaini Manir, Ph.D

*Department of Educational Foundations
Federal University, Birnin Kebbi
hussainimanir@gmail.com*

Amina Rahma Audu

*Department of Educational Foundations
Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto
sarauniyamina@gmail.com*

Abstract

This study assesses time allocation and adequacy in the supervision and mentoring of pre-service teachers during teaching practice in teacher training institutions in Sokoto State. The objectives were to determine the amount of time supervisors spend on individual pre-service teachers and to examine the adequacy of this supervision and mentoring. A case study approach employing both qualitative and quantitative methods was used. The study sampled 278 lecturers from a total population of 975, along with 15 purposively selected supervisors with relevant teaching practice experience. Data were collected through a self-designed questionnaire, observation technique, and in-depth interview. Reliability testing using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient yielded indices of 0.89 and 0.80. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were transcribed and examined thematically. Findings revealed that classroom supervision during teaching practice typically lasts between 11 to 20 minutes, which was deemed inadequate for comprehensive evaluation. However, supervisors were found to allocate sufficient time for pre-teaching and post-teaching mentoring sessions. The study recommends, among others, extending classroom supervision time to ensure a complete assessment of lessons, improving supervisor training on time management, and reducing the supervisor-to-student ratio.

Keywords: teaching practice, supervision, mentoring, time allocation, pre-service teachers

Introduction

Teaching practice is a fundamental component of teacher education, providing pre-service teachers with practical classroom experience under the supervision of experienced mentors. It enhances professional skills, instructional techniques, and classroom management abilities (Olawale, 2024; Yee & Hassan, 2019). Effective supervision involves mentoring,

observation, feedback, and evaluation to ensure that pre-service teachers meet professional standards (Mok & Staub, 2021). According to Goffman (2002), the theory on the presentation of self, time limitations may compel pre-service teachers to prioritise quick performances over meaningful engagement with their teaching process. Supervisors play a crucial role in lesson preparation, classroom delivery, and reflective practice. The time spent on supervision and mentoring helps identify strengths, address weaknesses, and improve teaching practice outcomes (Tull, 2023). However, challenges such as limited time, heavy workloads, and inadequate resources often hinder effective supervision (Anyadiegwu, 2025). In Sokoto State, Nigeria, teacher training institutions face supervision challenges, including high student-teacher ratios and insufficient feedback mechanisms. Supervisors often struggle to allocate adequate time to individual pre-service teachers, affecting mentorship quality. This study examines the time supervisors dedicate to mentoring and supervision and evaluates whether it is sufficient to meet teacher preparation goals.

This study employs Symbolic Interactionism Theory and Social Exchange Theory to examine the dynamics of time allocation and adequacy in mentoring and supervision during teaching practice in Sokoto State. Symbolic Interactionism, developed by Mead (1934) and later expanded by Blumer (1986), examines how individuals create meaning through social interactions, emphasizing micro-level human behaviour. This theory helps explain how supervisors and pre-service teachers engage, shaping their perceptions of time and mentorship during teaching practice (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1986). Recent research by Lyons and Bandura (2022) highlights its continued relevance in contemporary social structures.

Social Exchange Theory, introduced by Homans (1958) and expanded by Cook and Hahn (2021), suggests that individuals weigh costs and benefits in social interactions. In this study, it helps analyze how supervisors and pre-service teachers perceive mentoring time based on professional gains versus workload constraints (Homans, 1958; Cook & Hahn, 2021). Kakyo et al. (2025) further examine power dynamics in social exchanges, emphasizing their role in mentoring effectiveness. Both theories provide insights into how supervision time allocation influences mentorship quality and pre-service teacher preparedness in Sokoto State.

Statement of the problem

Supervision and mentoring are crucial in preparing pre-service teachers for effective classroom instruction. However, in Sokoto State, limited time, heavy workloads, and inadequate resources significantly hinder supervisors' ability to provide comprehensive support. The researchers observed that supervisors typically spend an average of 11–20 minutes per pre-service teacher, which is insufficient for thorough lesson preparation,

classroom observation, and post-lesson feedback. Although certain aspects, such as lesson plan corrections, receive attention, critical areas like scheme of work reviews and in-depth classroom evaluation are often overlooked. This insufficient time allocation raises concerns about the effectiveness of mentorship and the readiness of pre-service teachers. Without adequate guidance, pre-service teachers may struggle to develop essential teaching competencies, thereby negatively impacting their classroom performance and the overall success of teaching practice programmes. This study aims to assess the adequacy of supervision time during teaching practice in Sokoto State.

Objectives of the study

1. To determine the amount of time supervisors spend on individual pre-service teachers during teaching practice.
2. To examine the adequacy of supervision and mentoring time provided by supervisors during teaching practice.

Research questions

1. How much time do supervisors spend on individual pre-service teachers during teaching practice?
2. How adequate is the time allocated for supervision and mentoring by supervisors during teaching practice?

Methodology

Employing a case study approach, this study adopted a mixed-methods design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of mentoring and supervision during teaching practice. The total population comprised 975 lecturers, out of which 278 were sampled using the Research Advisor (2006) table. A multi-stage sampling procedure was applied: purposive sampling was first used to select three public schools, followed by proportionate sampling to determine the number of respondents from each school. Purposive sampling was also employed to select 15 supervisors who had direct and substantial experience with the teaching practice (TP) process, ensuring that the respondents possessed the specific expertise and contextual knowledge needed to provide valid and relevant responses.

Data were collected using a self-developed instrument titled “Mentoring and Supervision in Teaching Practice Questionnaire for Supervisors” (MSTPQS), alongside observation and in-depth interview techniques. The MSTPQS was designed to assess both the amount of time supervisors devoted to mentoring and supervision and the adequacy of that time for specific supervision activities.

The instrument comprised two sections. Section A was on time spent on mentoring and supervision with four items. It captured the duration of mentoring and supervision per observation, with response categories of 1–10 minutes, 11–20 minutes, 21–30 minutes, and 31–40 minutes. Section B was on adequacy of time spent on specific supervision activities with six items. It measured the adequacy of time spent on particular supervision tasks, including time spent with the student teacher before entering the class, correcting the scheme of work, correcting the lesson plan, correcting the lesson note, observing classroom delivery, and interacting with the pre-service teacher after the lesson. Responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale: 1= Very Inadequate, 2 = Inadequate, 3 = Adequate, 4 = More than Adequate, 5 = Very Adequate. Mean values below 2.50 were interpreted as indicating inadequacy, while mean values of 2.50 or above indicated adequacy. The MSTPQS contained a total of 10 items, and higher aggregate scores in Section B reflected greater perceived adequacy of supervision time. The instrument's reliability was established through a test–retest procedure, producing Pearson product–moment correlation coefficients (r) of 0.89 and $r = 0.80$, which demonstrated high reliability.

Qualitative data from interviews and observations were transcribed and analyzed thematically, while quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to generate frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation scores.

Presentation of results

Research question 1: What amount of time is being spent by supervisors on individual pre-service teachers?

To address this research question, data were collected from 278 pre-service teachers during their teaching practice exercise. The relevant section of the questionnaire asked respondents to select one of four categories representing the approximate duration their supervisor typically spent with them during each visit:

1. 1–10 minutes
2. 11–20 minutes
3. 21–30 minutes
4. 31–40 minutes

Each category was coded numerically (1–4) for data entry purposes. As this variable represents nominal data rather than continuous measurements, descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to summarize the responses. The category with the highest percentage (mode) was identified as the most typical supervision duration.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of pre-service teachers' responses on the amount of time spent by supervisors on mentoring and supervision

S/N	Time spent	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	1–10 minutes	54	19.4
2	11–20 minutes	146	52.5
3	21–30 minutes	52	18.7
4	31–40 minutes	26	9.4
Total		278	100

The results indicate that 11–20 minutes was the most commonly reported supervision duration, selected by 52.5% of respondents. This suggests that majority of the supervisors spent 11-20 minutes during teaching practice supervision. The least reported supervision duration was 31–40 minutes, chosen by 9.4% of respondents. Overall, the data reveal that individual supervision sessions tended to be brief.

Research question 2: How adequate is the time spent on supervision and mentoring by supervisors in teaching practice?

To address this research question, data were collected from the same 278 pre-service teachers, who rated the adequacy of supervision and mentoring time across six specific activities during teaching practice. Responses were obtained using a 5-point Likert scale, where:

1 = Very Inadequate

2 = Inadequate

3 = Adequate

4 = More than Adequate

5 = Very Adequate

Scores for each activity were averaged across respondents. A mean score of ≥ 2.50 indicated that the time spent on the activity was perceived as adequate, while a mean score of < 2.50 indicated inadequacy. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were computed using SPSS version 20.0.

Table 2: Adequacy of time spent on supervision and mentoring by supervisors in teaching practice

S/N	Adequacy of time activity	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Time spent with the student teacher before entering class	278	2.09	1.08	Inadequate
2	Time spent correcting the scheme of work	278	1.89	0.99	Inadequate
3	Time spent correcting the lesson plan	278	2.81	1.00	Adequate
4	Time spent correcting the lesson notes	278	2.01	0.99	Inadequate
5	Time spent observing classroom delivery	278	2.66	1.10	Adequate
6	Time spent interacting with the pre-service teacher after the lesson	278	2.95	1.11	Adequate
	Average	278	2.40	1.05	Inadequate

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics on the adequacy of supervision and mentoring time during teaching practice in Sokoto State. The analysis revealed an average mean of 2.40 and a standard deviation of 1.05, indicating that supervision time was grossly inadequate for assessing all components. Three items were rejected: Item 1 (mean = 2.09, SD = 1.08), Item 2 (mean = 1.89, SD = 0.99), and Item 4 (mean = 2.01, SD = 0.99). However, time spent on correcting lesson plans, classroom observation, and post-lesson interactions was considered adequate, with post-lesson interactions being the most prominent.

Thematic analysis of the qualitative segment of the study

Responses were collected from 15 lecturers through open-ended interviews. To ensure confidentiality, participants are referred to as RL1, RL2, and so on. These interviews are cited in the text but are not included in the reference list because they are not publicly accessible. On the amount of time supervisors spend on individual pre-service teachers during teaching practice, the following thematic schemes emerged:

1) Theme 1: Insufficient time allocation

RL 4 stated, "We often have too many tasks and not enough time." Supervisors struggle with time constraints and excessive workloads, making it difficult to provide meaningful support. This inadequate allocation of time negatively impacts the quality of mentorship.

2) Theme 2: Variability in supervision duration

RL1: "In other schools, where the supervisor has a limited number of students, the supervision lasted for up to 30 minutes."

Code: Supervision quality, time allocation disparity

Researchers' observation: Supervisors in schools with fewer student-teachers could spend more time on each session, offering more detailed guidance. In contrast, in schools with more students, supervision sessions were shorter and rushed.

Analysis: The number of pre-service teachers impacts the quality of supervision. Schools with fewer students allow for longer and more thorough supervision, while schools with more students experience time allocation disparities. This results in inequities where some pre-service teachers benefit from extended mentorship, while others receive minimal attention.

3) Theme 3: Inadequate supervision duration

"The majority of the supervision sessions observed did not reach up to that 30-minute duration," According to RL1.

Code: Time shortfall, mentoring insufficiency

Researchers' observation: Many sessions were cut short, typically lasting 10–20 minutes, due to supervisors' workload and time pressure. This limited time hindered the ability to assess lesson delivery and classroom management thoroughly.

Analysis: The short supervision duration reflects systemic issues in the teaching practice framework, where supervisors cannot provide the necessary support. This limits the quality of mentoring and prevents pre-service teachers from receiving the detailed feedback needed for improvement.

On the adequacy of supervision and mentoring time provided by supervisors during teaching practice, the following themes emerged:

4) Theme 4: Impact on quality of mentoring

According to a respondent, "The short time for supervision does not allow for meaningful support."

Code: Quality compromise, feedback limitations

Analysis: Limited supervision time restricts opportunities for constructive feedback and guidance, thus reducing the effectiveness of teacher training. Without adequate time, pre-service teachers struggle to refine their instructional methods and improve their teaching performance.

5) Theme 5: Recommended supervision duration

RL 3 suggested, "The supervision period should ideally be under 35 minutes, depending on whether it is in a primary or secondary school setting."

Code: Duration recommendation, engagement time

Analysis: Supervisors propose that 35–40 minutes per session would allow for a more thorough assessment. However, the current practice of limiting sessions to 5–10 minutes is insufficient for meaningful evaluation.

6) Theme 6: Limited presentation time

"The period allocated to each student teacher to make his/her presentation is only 10 minutes."

Code: Presentation constraints, time insufficiency

Researchers' observation: The 10-minute presentation window often cuts short essential parts of the lesson, especially during the introduction and evaluation phases. Many pre-service teachers struggled to demonstrate their instructional strategies fully within such a brief timeframe.

Analysis: The limited presentation time places constraints on pre-service teachers' ability to effectively showcase their teaching skills. Critical components like students' engagement and evaluation are often neglected, resulting in an incomplete assessment of their teaching performance.

7) Theme 7: Financial constraints affecting supervision

RL 15 highlighted, "Many students are supposed to spend the entire semester in teaching practice, but as we speak, we are in the fourth week, and 50% of them have not collected their posting letters due to financial constraints."

Code: Financial barriers, delayed participation

Analysis: Financial barriers delay participation in teaching practice, reducing available supervision time and limiting learning opportunities. These constraints further strain an already limited supervision structure, exacerbating mentorship challenges.

8) Theme 8: Importance of unofficial mentoring

RL 2 remarked, "Wise mentees do not solely rely on official mentoring; they also seek guidance from their lecturers (mentors) and engage in interactive discussions with them."

Code: Proactive engagement, alternative support

Analysis: Proactive pre-service teachers supplement formal supervision with unofficial mentoring, enhancing their skills through self-initiative. This demonstrates the critical role of engagement and self-motivation in professional development, showing that effective mentorship extends beyond official supervision.

9) Theme 9: Consequences of inadequate mentors

RL 4 observed, "Out of 50 students, 49 will return to their parents with inflated egos and mistakes."

Code: Negative outcomes, confidence issues

Analysis: Inadequate mentorship can lead to overconfidence and uncorrected errors, highlighting the need for structured mentorship programmes. Without sufficient supervision, pre-service teachers may develop misconceptions about their teaching abilities, impacting their professional growth.

10) Theme 10: Impact on learning outcomes

"The student-teacher involved was able to reach up to the point of evaluating the learners."
(RL13)

Code: Instructional depth, learning gaps

Researchers' observation: When supervisors spent more time, pre-service teachers engaged more deeply with their teaching tasks, particularly in assessing students and adjusting strategies based on feedback. However, this deeper engagement was not consistent across all sessions.

Analysis: Adequate supervision time allows for more in-depth teaching practices, including learner evaluation and real-time adjustments. Shortened sessions prevent this, leading to gaps in the development of critical teaching skills.

The thematic analyses reveal that supervisor overload, limited presentation time, and variability in supervision duration contribute to the overall inadequacy of mentorship. These issues hinder the professional development of pre-service teachers, affecting their instructional depth and learning outcomes. Structural adjustments, such as reducing supervisor-to-student ratios, increasing supervision duration, and addressing financial barriers, are needed to improve the quality of supervision during teaching practice.

Summary of the findings

1. It was found that the duration of time spent in classroom teaching practice supervision is mostly 11 to 20 minutes.
2. The study also found that teaching practice supervisors take adequate time for pre-teaching and post-teaching practice supervision and mentoring. However, time for classroom supervision and mentoring sessions is not adequate, with many supervisions not lasting up to the evaluation component of the lesson.

Discussion of the findings

The study underscores the importance of the time spent on supervision and mentoring during teaching practice, drawing on Symbolic Interactionism and Social Exchange Theory. RL4 stated, "When I spend time explaining things after a lesson, I can see the difference in how they approach the next class" (RL4). This aligns with Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958), which suggests that both mentors and mentees derive benefits from their interactions. Supervisors witness the growth of pre-service teachers, who in turn receive essential guidance. However, the study found that most classroom teaching practice (TP) supervision sessions last only 10 to 15 minutes, limiting the depth of feedback provided.

Supervisor RL12 remarked, "We barely have enough time to observe critical aspects of the lesson. Ten to fifteen minutes is not enough to assess teaching techniques, student engagement, or classroom management" (RL12, personal communication, March 2025). Similarly, RL7 noted, "With so many student-teachers to supervise, we are forced to limit the observation time, which compromises the quality of our feedback" (RL7, personal

communication, March 2025). From a Symbolic Interactionism perspective (Blumer, 1986), these short sessions reflect institutional constraints that reduce the depth of mentorship. RL8 observed, "When we have so little time, it feels like we are just checking boxes instead of truly mentoring the student-teachers" (RL8).

The limited observation period also affects pre-service teachers' perceptions of their teaching abilities. RL9 stated, "Because of the time constraints, the feedback we give tends to be general and does not fully address individual strengths and weaknesses. This can lead to a lack of confidence in their teaching performance" (RL9). This finding connects to Goffman's (2002) theory on the presentation of self, where time limitations force pre-service teachers to focus on quick performances rather than engaging meaningfully with their teaching process.

Recommendations

1. To address the short duration of classroom supervision (10–15 minutes), institutions should extend the time allotted for teaching practice supervision. Supervisors should be trained on effective time management to maximise the value of the sessions, ensuring both teaching and evaluation components are covered. Pre- and post-supervision meetings should focus on detailed feedback and actionable advice for pre-service teachers. Institutions should reduce the supervisor-to-student ratio to allow for more thorough observation and feedback. Additional resources, such as video-based assessments, can supplement in-person supervision.

2. To improve supervision quality, institutions should allocate more time for classroom supervision, allowing supervisors to fully assess the lesson's effectiveness. Supervisors should be encouraged to engage in both pre- and post-supervision discussions with detailed guidance. Time for mentoring sessions should be increased, focusing on reflective practices and continuous learning. Institutions should adopt flexible supervision schedules to accommodate more in-depth supervision and mentorship. Technological tools like video reviews or online feedback could also be integrated to complement classroom-based supervision.

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