

**School Practice Quality and Competencies of Secondary School Teacher Trainees in
Mbarara City**

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**A Dissertation Submitted to the Directorate of Graduate Studies in Partial
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of Education Administration and Planning
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Declaration

I Charles Lwanga Bitarinsha, declare that this dissertation is my original work and has never been submitted to any institution of higher learning for any award.

Signed.....

Date. 26/07/2025

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Approval

This dissertation has been done under our supervision and guidance and is now ready to be submitted to the directorate of graduate studies for the award of Masters in Education Administration and Planning.

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Date: 29/9/25

Dedication

I dedicate this research dissertation to my wife who extraordinarily provided love and financial support in countless ways during my time as a Masters *et al* student. I also dedicate this dissertation to my beloved Children for the love, emotional and physical support they rendered to me during the whole process of preparing this research dissertation. Thank you for all you have done for me during this process, and most importantly, for always believing in me.

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I thank my typist who laboured so much to type all the work provided to him in a short time to meet the deadline. May God bless them abundantly

List of Acronyms

GOK	Government of Kenya
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
SP	School Practice
TT	Teacher Trainees
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of school practice quality on competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City. It was guided by the following specific objectives: (i) to examine the major aspects of the School Practice Quality for the secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City, (ii) to establish the major competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City and (iii) to assess the relationship between school practice quality and secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City. The study adopted cross-sectional survey design and used mixed method strategy to collect data specifically concurrent triangulation strategy was used. The study population included 950 respondents and samples size was 376 respondents who included School practice coordinators, Teacher Trainees, Faculty Deans, Head teachers, Teachers. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview guides. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient and linear regression analysis using SPSS. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic and content analysis. From the study, it was found that while school practice quality in Mbarara City is generally perceived positively, there are gaps in professional development opportunities, inclusive teaching preparedness, and the consistency of supervision. Addressing these areas can enhance the effectiveness of teacher training and better prepare trainees for real-world teaching challenges. The study demonstrates that secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City exhibit strong competencies in subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills, professional values, and ethical conduct. However, there are weaknesses in lesson planning, instructional material selection, and time management. Addressing these gaps through targeted interventions will enhance their preparedness for effective teaching. The findings suggest that school practice quality has a significant positive relationship with the competencies of secondary school Teacher Trainees in Mbarara City. From the discussion of findings, the researcher recommends enhancing Professional Development and Inclusive Training: Teacher training institutions should integrate structured professional development workshops focused on inclusive education, equipping trainees with skills to handle diverse classrooms, including learners with disabilities and language barriers. The researcher also recommends that institutions should incorporate more classroom-based practical experiences and mentorship programs to help teacher trainees refine their lesson planning, classroom management, and instructional material selection. The researcher recommends the enhancement of School Practice Supervision where institutions should strengthen school practice supervision by increasing the frequency of monitoring and providing continuous professional mentorship to Teacher Trainees to enhance their competency.

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

This chapter entails background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, Scope of the study, significance of the study, conceptual framework and the theoretical framework.

Background of the Study

The background of the study is presented in four perspectives, namely; historical, theoretical, conceptual and contextual perspectives as given below;

Historical Background

Globally, teacher instruction places significant emphasis on instructing practice (López-Martín *et al.*, 2023). Within the preparation of student-teachers educating practice holds a central role. Its purpose is to expose student-teachers to the practical aspects of the teaching profession, allowing them to apply the theoretical knowledge gained from classroom interactions with their teachers (Banda *et al.*, 2024). Teacher instruction relies on comprehensive and cohesive approaches, aiming to equip learners for a subjective and productive professional life. While teacher instruction is crucial for professionalism, effective planning and management are essential factors that foster teaching mastery, self-regulation, and cognitive abilities, supporting proficient competence. However, Nketsia and Opoku (2024) have observed that insufficient preparation and management of school practice can lead to incompetence among learners and practicing instructors, thereby hindering professional development and competence.

In Pakistan, school practice is a mandatory component in teacher education, specifically in the M. Ed (Master of Education) program. According to Mitchell *et al.* (2024), the approach adopted in Pakistan is inadequate because the duration of the school practice is very short, and Teacher

Trainees spend most of their time in classrooms for teaching without being adequately prepared for other school-related activities. As a result, effective learning does not occur, impacting the performance of Teacher Trainees negatively. Paulson *et al.* (2024) remarks that the two-week period allocated for school placements is insufficient to provide Teacher Trainees with the necessary experience and exposure the practice intends to promote. Moreover, in some cases, administrators do not have enough time to engage with Teacher Trainees due to the rush to transition to another school. Additionally, universities appoint administrators with diverse qualifications to supervise school placements without considering how these variations may affect the performance of Teacher Trainees.

In the U.S.A, the school practice lasts for six weeks, during which Teacher Trainees are visited by analysts four times per session, and they are placed in different schools for each practice period (OECD, 2024). However, the approach to conducting school practice varies across states, with different states employing diverse methods of organizing the practice. In South Africa, aspiring teachers are required to attend five weeks of school practice annually. During this period, students are responsible for arranging their teaching placements in schools of their choice and are supervised by experienced educators (Nombulelo *et al.*, 2024). The five-week duration may seem short, but it becomes crucial for Teacher Trainees to demonstrate competence in their teaching field.

Similarly, Nigerian public universities have mandatory school attachment courses in the Faculty of Education, which are essential for graduation. However, according to Sanfo and Malgoubri (2023), the quality of school attachments offered by teacher training programs has declined, especially at the university level. There are numerous challenges faced by prospective teachers during the execution of this practice, impacting the effectiveness of Teacher Trainees. Varol *et al.*

(2023) suggest that the brief duration of school attachment does not adequately prepare Teacher Trainees to effectively implement the instructional methods and practical skills they have learned theoretically.

In Kenya, school practice has been given significant importance as a central element of teacher education programs (GOK, 2017). Since independence, the Kenya Education Commission recognized school practice as a crucial exercise in teacher training and recommended that teacher colleges should conduct school placements for a duration of twelve weeks, equivalent to one school term (GOK, 2017). The significance of school practice in the preparation of teachers in Kenya continued to gain prominence, as noted by subsequent committees, commissions, and working parties on education, such as the National Committee on Education Goals and Policies, the Presidential Work Party on Education for this Decade and beyond, and a Review of Graduate Teacher Education in Kenya (GOK, 2017).

In Uganda, all educational institutions that enroll Teacher Trainees include a school practice program in their respective educational disciplines (Strydom *et al.*, 2021). Within this program, school practice (SP) is a practical teaching activity where students have the opportunity to demonstrate their acquired academic skills, which are then further improved through the supervision of experienced teachers over a specific period (Mok & Staub, 2021). The school practice exercise takes place during the second and third years at the conclusion of the second semester, usually from June to July each year. Through SP, students gain confidence and a comprehensive understanding of the entire teaching and learning process as future educators. However, any negative or inappropriate experiences during the practice can impact the overall teacher preparation process (Rugyendo, 2021). On the other hand, instructors also benefit from school practice as they have the chance to assess their teaching methods both theoretically and

practically. This enables them to evaluate the quality and competence of future teachers and refine their own teaching skills.

According to reports from the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), a significant number of novice teachers lack effective competence in lesson planning, instruction, and evaluation (UNESCO IICBA, 2021; Taole *et al.*, 2021; Lawson *et al.*, 2021). Surprisingly, Taole *et al.* (2021) found that there is very little difference between trained and untrained teachers concerning lesson planning and classroom practices, despite the rigorous training and school practice that teacher trainees are required to undergo. School practice, also known as school practice or practicum in various contexts, is a learning process in which teacher trainees are exposed to the school environment during their internship (Kahu & Nelson, 2021). UNESCO IICBA (2023) view school practice as a range of experiences that Teacher Trainees encounter when engaged in classroom and school activities. The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) mandate school practice for all students enrolled in education programs at any teacher training institution in Uganda.

In Mbarara City, teacher training institutions consistently organize practicum experiences for their Teacher Trainees. However, there has been a growing concern about the high failure rates of their students in both internal and external examinations (UNESCO IICBA, 2023). This has undoubtedly raised doubts about the overall quality of education in the region. Several factors contribute to this situation, including teacher quality, their training, and supervision during school practice. Mitchell *et al.* (2024) also observed that there is little difference in terms of teaching preparation and classroom practices between trained and untrained teachers in Uganda. Interestingly, private schools, which employ more untrained teachers compared to public schools, tend to outperform public schools in Uganda. Therefore, it is essential to examine the impact of

school practice in enhancing the competencies of teacher trainees in secondary schools in Mbarara City.

Theoretical Background

The study about school practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City will use a Social Constructivism theory, which was developed by Lev Vygotsky (1978) and further supported by Engestrom (1987) and other researchers. Social constructivism is a significant educational theory that places great emphasis on the role of social interactions and social contexts in shaping an individual's learning and cognitive development. According to Vygotsky's social constructivism theory, learning is a collaborative process that occurs through social interactions, particularly within a social and cultural environment. Individuals actively construct knowledge and understanding through their interactions with others and their environment. In the context of teacher education and professional development, this theory implies that teacher trainees' learning experiences during school practice will heavily depend on the interactions they have with their mentors, fellow teachers, students, and the broader school community. Engestrom (1987) expanded on Vygotsky's theory by introducing the concept of activity theory. Activity theory emphasizes the significance of the socio-cultural context in shaping an individual's actions, goals, and understanding. It highlights that learning and development are influenced not only by the activities and tasks individuals engage in but also by the tools and resources available to them within their social settings. In the context of studying secondary school teacher trainees' professional development, the social constructivism theory suggests that their learning and growth as educators will be influenced by the collaborative activities they participate in during school practice. Interactions with experienced teachers, feedback from mentors, and engagement in real teaching scenarios will play a crucial role in shaping their pedagogical knowledge, classroom management skills, and overall teaching competence. The Social

Constructivism theory, enhanced by Engestrom's activity theory, provides a valuable theoretical foundation for understanding the dynamics of secondary school teacher trainees' professional development during school practice in Mbarara City. By considering the significance of social interactions, social contexts, and collaborative activities, the study will use insights into the factors that contribute to effective teacher preparation and enhance the overall quality of education in the region.

Conceptual Background

In this study school practice quality is an independent variable while competencies of secondary school teacher trainees is a dependent variable. School practice quality will be conceptualized as; span and period of school practice, frequency of Teacher Trainee supervision, and quality of supervision. While competence will be conceptualized as subject matter knowledge (Content Delivery, Conceptualization); teaching skills (Effective teaching, time management) and professional values (proper assessment of students, exemplary conduct). School practice refers to the period during which secondary school teacher trainees engage in practical teaching experiences within a school setting (Banda *et al.*, 2024). This aspect of teacher education is crucial for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge acquired in teacher training programs and the real-world School Practice quality. Span and period of school practice is the length of time allocated for school practice and the number of teaching sessions provided to teacher trainees play a pivotal role in shaping their competence (Paulson *et al.*, 2024). Frequency of Teacher Trainee Supervision is the level of supervision and guidance provided to teacher trainees during school practice is essential for their professional growth (Mok & Staub, 2021). Quality of supervision is the competence and expertise of the supervisor (such as mentor teachers, cooperating teachers, or school administrators) can greatly influence the quality of guidance and feedback given to teacher trainees (López-Martín *et al.*, 2023).

Competence encompasses the multifaceted aspects of a pre-service secondary school teacher's growth, including subject matter knowledge, teaching skills, and professional values and behavior (Nombulelo *et al.*, 2024). Content Delivery is the ability of teacher trainees to effectively communicate subject matter content to students which is critical for successful teaching. Effective Teaching is proficient classroom management, use of various teaching strategies, differentiation, and student engagement are essential elements of effective teaching (Varol *et al.*, 2023). Time Management is Skillful allocation of instructional time and efficient lesson planning ensure that curriculum goals are achieved, and students have ample opportunities for learning (Strydom *et al.*, 2021). Teacher trainees should possess the ability to assess student progress accurately and use assessment data to inform instructional decisions. Fair and valid assessment practices foster student growth and achievement. Exemplary Conduct refers to demonstrating professional ethics, respect for diversity, and the ability to establish positive relationships with students, colleagues, and the school community.

Contextual Background

The current state of teacher competence in Uganda raises concerns. Reports by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEBC) have highlighted several issues affecting teachers' effectiveness in the classroom. Many teachers lack the competencies to effectively teach and assess learners, including setting and monitoring tests. Additionally, inadequate subject knowledge and struggles in interpreting concepts have been observed among teachers (UNESCO IICBA, 2021). The responsibility for the poor quality of teachers in schools today is shared by universities and teacher education institutions. Despite their efforts to improve teacher training programs, the outcomes have not met expectations. This situation has spurred a need to investigate the factors that contribute to the declining performance of teacher trainees, with school practice quality being suspected as a major contributing factor (Mitchell *et al.*, 2024). Mbarara City, a vibrant educational

hub in Uganda, serves as the focal point for this study. The research aims to examine the impact of school practice in enhancing the competence of teacher trainees in secondary schools in Mbarara City. By deriving into the experiences and challenges faced by teacher trainees during school practice, the study seeks to shed light on the effectiveness of current teacher preparation programs and identify areas for improvement. The findings of this study will hold significant implications for teacher education in Uganda, as they can inform policy decisions and contribute to the overall improvement of teacher training programs. By addressing the issues related to school practice quality and teacher trainee competence, the study endeavors to bridge the gap between theory and practice, leading to better-prepared teachers who can positively influence the education landscape in the country.

Statement of the problem

It is of utmost importance that instructors undergoing training at universities demonstrate the ability to perform well during school practice as it is through this practice that they gain confidence to apply the new knowledge acquired in higher education. According to Lavy (2007), these new graduates who engage with students during school practice excel in content delivery, exhibit professional competence, and take significant strides towards building their professional careers.

However, the performance of novice teachers graduating from Ugandan colleges has been declining over the years (Otaala, Maani & Bakaira, 2021). Recently, the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) report highlighted that many teachers in Uganda lack the competencies to effectively teach and assess learners, including setting and monitoring tests. The report further noted that many teachers have inadequate subject knowledge and struggle to interpret concepts (Uganda National Examinations Board, 2015, cited in Komakech, 2015). Universities and teacher education institutions share responsibility for the poor quality of teachers in schools today leading to public dissatisfaction (Otaala, Maani & Bakaira, 2021). Despite

substantial investments in teacher training programs by universities and teacher education institutions, the quality of teacher graduates remains insufficient (Otaala, Maani & Bakaira, 2021; UNEB, 2015, cited in Komakech, 2015). While various factors impact teacher performance, school practice quality is suspected to be a major contributing factor. Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of school practice quality in enhancing teacher trainees' competence in secondary schools in Mbarara City.

Objectives

Main Objective

To examine the influence of school practice quality on competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.

Specific Objectives

1. To examine the major aspects of the School Practice Quality for the secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.
2. To establish the major competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.
3. To assess the relationship between school practice quality and secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.

Hypothesis

H₀ There is no statistical significant relationship between school practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.

H₁ There is a statistical significant relationship between school practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.

Scope of the Study

Content Scope

The content scope of the study was based on examining the major aspects of the school practice quality for the secondary school teacher trainees, the major competencies of secondary school teacher trainees and the relationship between school practice quality and secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.

Geographical scope

The study was conducted among teacher trainees who are undergraduate education students in third year of Bishop Stuart University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, University of St. Joseph and Metropolitan International University Mbarara City who were involved in eight weeks of school practice in the academic year 2022/2023. The study will be carried out in Mbarara City western Uganda. It is located approximately 295 kilometers (183 mi) by road, southwest of Kampala, Uganda *et als* Capital City, and largest metropolitan area.

Time Scope

The study utilized a literature of 17 years (2006-2024). The study was limited to the period 2024 to 2024. The period is ample enough to develop the proposal and writing a report for the study. This is hoped to give relevant and detailed information concerning the topic under study.

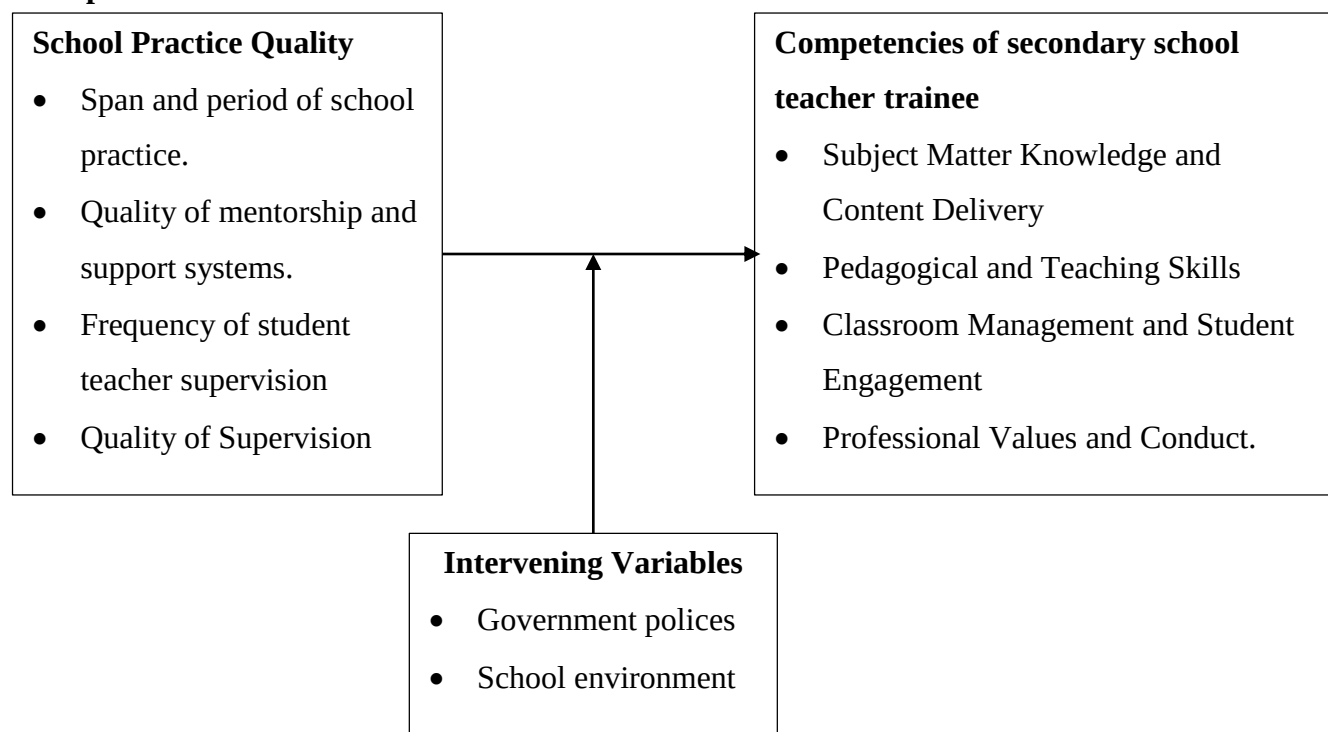
Significance of the Study

This study aims at providing universities, lecturers, the Ministry of Education, government, teachers, Teacher Trainees and other education stakeholders with data on the effect of school practice quality on secondary school teacher trainee competence. This data is expected to provide a basis on which policy formulation on the number of supervisions, and the role of peer and cooperating teachers in school practice can be enhanced or adopted in an effort to justify the finances used on supervision of teacher trainees by universities.

The findings of this study may provide a base line to policy makers in designing and implementing programmes that meet the felt need of teaching profession. The findings from this study are also expected to inform extra roles to teacher educators who are key stake holders in implementation of the school practice programme to Teacher Trainees in their respective teachers' colleges. This subsequently contributes to improve teacher educators' practices, in facilitating and supervising school practice programme.

It is hoped that the study shall contribute to the international debate about the balance between theory and practice and in particular, the role played by the school practice offices in helping teacher trainees to end an apparent gap between theory and practice.

Conceptual Frame Work



Source: Adopted from Selvi (2010) and modified by the researcher

The conceptual framework for this study is the relationship between school practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in secondary schools of Mbarara city. In this relationship; school practice quality is the independent variable measured by Span and period of school practice, frequency of Teacher Trainee supervision and quality of Supervision. Competencies of secondary school teacher trainees is the dependent variable measured by teachers' competencies that are seen in different dimensions; field competencies, research competencies, curriculum competencies, lifelong learning competencies, emotional competencies, social cultural competencies, communication competencies, Informational Communication and Technology (ICT) competencies and environmental competencies. The elements as mentioned can be summarized into three main competency domains namely; knowledge or subject matter knowledge, teaching skills and professional values (Selvil, 2010). These variables will be moderated by government policies and school environment as intervening factors.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter explains the rationale of the problem studied as well as previous research related to the topic and how the findings relate to the problem at hand. The review concentrates mainly on the related literature in line with the objectives of the study.

Aspects of the School Practice Quality for the secondary school teacher trainees

The teacher trainees' school practice is designed to help the teacher trainees to get an opportunity of guided participation in major activities in the classroom for the first time (Johnson *et al.*, 2021). It is aimed that, through engagement teacher trainees are expected to develop essential competencies and skills which will be needed for their future profession. It provides the first intimate contact with the real world of teaching. Conversely, the teacher trainees can face various constraints during practicum. A number of studies have been conducted to understand the problems facing teacher trainees during their school practice. Thompson and Rodriguez (2022) for instance noted that the constraints faced by non-native pre service ESL teacher trainees in an eight-week teaching practicum were pre service teachers' lack of sense of control in class, and inadequacy in English language competence affect the teacher trainees *et al* school practice. Other study that was conducted by Williams and Chen (2021) also identified four different types of constraints such as: classroom management and student discipline related constraints, institutional and personal adjustments related constraints, classroom teaching related constraints and constraints related to students.

Similarly, Martinez *et al.* (2023) identified the teacher trainees' constraints that included personal problems, teaching preparation problems, class participation problems, class management problems, evaluation problems, instructional problems, emotional problems, problems of adjusting

to students, problems with adjustment to school, problems arising from over-extended schedules or workloads and problems with guidance. Ahmed and Hassan (2022) disclosed the constraints in terms of teacher trainees and supervisors perspectives. Hence, the most serious constraints identified by teacher trainees were: lack of coordination between cooperating school, school principal and cooperating teachers, while constraints less serious were: educational supervisor and program preparation procedures; whereas, the most serious constraints in practicum according to their importance, as seen by supervisors were: academic preparation, and the possibilities of training, while constraints less serious were: personal, and social relationships.

The other constraints were identified by the study of Peterson and Lee (2021). The constraints were unhappiness of student-teachers during their practicum due to stresses of being overloaded, being not watched by their supervisors, poor rapport with schools communities, and problems with understanding the needs of their student and that they had a very short time in the schools.

Likewise, the Brown's study of (2022) uncovered constraints that hampered the implementations of practicum program as lack of appropriate criteria for evaluation, intermittent supervision of the college, lack of cooperativeness among practicum stakeholders, and lack of adequate school facilities. Supplementary, Davis (2023) identified the constraints as inadequacy of institutions in promoting competencies of teacher trainees on classroom practices, low levels of English proficiency, lack of reading and basic numeracy pedagogies, and low level of subject knowledge among teachers. In the stated policies teachers' related constraints, such as poor working conditions, poor teacher morale, high absenteeism, high turnover and attrition that cause instability in schools were identified, and lack of physical resources, on-going violent behavior incidences, poor morale amongst teachers, lack of parental involvement and support and limited funding for school improvement (Roberts & Singh, 2021).

In addition, the study of Anderson (2022) listed the constraints as classroom management, being observed by mentors, the students' profiles, teaching procedures and Clark (2021) added the weak staff relationship, classroom management, pedagogy and evaluation techniques, the way teacher trainees are assessed, different expectations of mentors and supervisors as well as the poor quality of feedback received from mentors and supervisors. Similarly, Patel and Kumar (2023) recognized the constraints as the ineffectiveness of teacher trainees and its relation to their readiness to manage their classrooms. Furthermore, Mitchell et al. (2021) claims although schools express willingness to take trainees, they tend to lack mentorship structures for trainee due to, may be, either staff shortage or workloads of their staff. Nakamura (2022) also argued that visits made by supervisors from teacher education institutions tend to be infrequent.

Finally, Taylor et al., (2023) labeled the constraints as psychological, emotional, and sometimes physical well-being, for teacher trainees are relatively new to the world of teaching and, hence, are unaware and not fully prepared to confront the complexities involved in this profession (Garcia & Lopez, 2021). Likewise, Miller et al., (2022) named constraints as culture shock, which, for teacher trainees specially, may result from misunderstanding of school communities' culture, work practices at schools, nature of student–teacher relationships, unfamiliar curriculum, classroom practices, and unaccustomed environment. Therefore, in this study, in light of these empirical studies, it was tried to investigate the constraints that were encountered by teacher trainees during their practicum experiences in four perspectives.

Time can sometimes feel very elusive and what started out as a well-planned day, week, month or even years just slip away with little being achieved. This is likely to be a setback with supervision of school attachments. To avoid time crisis and compromise in quality of any given task, Wilson (2022) advises people on taking time to strategically plan for the available time and expected

activities adequately. Common sense suggests that the more time spent on learning, the more students learn. However, available reviewed literature suggests that the duration assigned for school attachments is short and it is not up to the international standard. This is supported by Khan (2021) who points out that the duration for school attachments in developing countries is short as compared with the developed countries. Sharma (2023) recommends that the duration for school attachment may be increased according to the programme of training.

Thompson (2021) reports that the procedure adopted for school attachment in Pakistan is just to pass time because the exercise duration is very short. A study carried out by Ali et al (2022) reveals that the duration for school attachment in Pakistan is very short; running from 4 to 8 weeks, equivalent to teaching of 60 to 75 lessons. They further reported that this duration could not allow teacher trainees to train in activities out of class. Consequently, the teacher trainees are bound to easy principles and methods of teaching like being taught on how to begin a lesson, how to control the class and how to keep an eye over students while writing on the board. It was concluded that teacher trainee performance did not measure to the standards of ideal teachers.

Nigerian universities offer a four year program for the Bachelor of Education degree which is the certificate required for employment as a teacher in the senior secondary school level (Federal Ministry of Education, 2021). Teaching practicum of six weeks duration is a compulsory course both at the penultimate and final levels of the Bachelor of Education program. It is believed that this duration of time is enough to provide the “neophytes” some type of pre - service training which serves as opportunity to be exposed to the realities of teaching and performance of professional activities besides professional activities, which are part of the teacher roles in schools. School practice duration is usually between four and six weeks which begin in the third and fourth year.

Students are usually required to practice in their schools of choice and teach based on their areas of specialization (Adebayo, *et al*, 2022).

Studies carried out by Okafor (2022), Ezeani, Nwosu & Okoro (2023) reveal that the period of twelve weeks is too short as it does not provide the teacher trainee an ample opportunity to effectively gain the experience which the exercise is intended to encourage. The author remarked that some supervisors do not even have time to sit down and discuss their observations and comments with the teacher trainees. The short discussion between the supervisor and the teacher trainee just after the lesson which should afford the teacher trainee the opportunity to appreciate his strengths and weaknesses are often ignored because the supervisor is often in a haste to move on to the next school.

Al-Rashid (2021) in a study conducted at the University of Ebb identifies poor supervision, short period of school attachments and having a theoretical rather than a practical program as a source of the short comings of school attachments. Johnson (2024) has attributed the short duration to inability to produce teachers who are properly grounded in pedagogy and content as well as ability to collaborate professionally in the work environment. He noted that the transition from academic theories in universities to classroom practice has often been very sharp suggesting that teacher trainees are not often properly groomed to put into practice current pedagogy and interactive skills. Transition of theory into practice also need not take a longer time as the information could easily be forgotten. Stewart (2022) and Harrison (2023), suggest that for better results the students should be allowed to practice what they have learned immediately.

Wanjiku (2023), Sharma (2023) and Ali (2021), after lamenting over short duration for school attachments, proposes that the time should be lengthened according to the program of training to develop favorable attitudes in teacher trainees towards the exercise and improve on their

achievement. High school calendar in Kenya vary; there are terms that are shorter than others ranging from 8 weeks to 14 weeks, and individual public Universities also vary on the terms when they post teacher trainees for school attachment. This causes variations on duration when teacher trainees are exposed to the exercise.

Rodriguez & Patel (2023) argue that initial study and subsequent review or practice spaced out over time generally leads to superior learning than having the frequencies occur in close temporal succession. They also report that wider spacing are generally more effective although there may be a point where spacing that are too wide become counterproductive. Therefore, a good heuristic is to aim at having the length of spacing the frequencies intervals equal to retention interval. They also argue that gradually expanding the length of spacing supervisions and assessments can create benefits.

Microteaching Exercise

Microteaching is the technique in teacher education which is used by the teacher trainees to transfer the knowledge and skills into action and, thus, they try to bridge the gap between the theory and practice (Zhang & Wang 2024). This technique offers new and different opportunities to teacher trainees about the planning and implementation of new teaching strategies. In teacher colleges microteaching is conducted under the guidance of a subject tutor in a way of practicing a particular teaching method.

Usually microteaching takes place within the normal classroom of the teacher trainee aiming to make the teacher trainees be familiar with various teaching methods and allow them to learn and later use such methods in teaching in a classroom situation (Kumar, 2022). Teacher trainees have to prepare the lesson plan that the subject is determined and perform microteaching to real students that were planned and prepared by them. Also, lectures are recorded by video camera or portable

receivers. After that, prospective teachers watch and hear themselves from the video recording at the end of the lecture so as to view his/her strengths and weaknesses as other students provide feedback (Zhang & Wang 2024).

Chen (2021) argued that microteaching is a primary utility before school practice and insists that when done prior to the field experience it makes teacher trainees more confident and able to work independently and effectively in the classroom as it involves the process of teaching, criticizing, re-planning, re-teaching and re-criticizing. The specific skills that may be focused in a microteaching lesson include classroom management, the use of teaching materials and questioning skills which finally provide prospective teachers confidence and knowledge when teaching in the classroom (Zhang & Wang 2024).

In developed countries the microteaching is conducted effectively using modern tools e.g. video tapes where the students can use them to listen and play back or pause when asked questions after teaching but in a developing country including Tanzania the process is not well done in teachers colleges due to lack of knowledge, skills and technological facilities. For an effective microteaching exercise the developing countries including Tanzania should commit themselves in enough funds that will be allocated to the training colleges so as to have tools for conducting microteaching.

In another study which was conducted by Okonkwo (2022) in Nigeria on microteaching and subject methodology revealed that microteaching has always had positive influence and feedback on school practice so the teacher trainees in the colleges if possible should be taught micro teaching subjects in both theory and practices. Moreover, Zhang and Wang (2024) points out that microteaching is important as it provides assistance to initial teacher trainees. It helps to provide opportunity for utilizing skills in a setting that is close to real environments so as to build students'

confidence. In Tanzania, the study conducted by Mwalimu and Juma (2021) revealed that most of the teacher trainees had poor teaching skills and this could be attributed to poor preparations in colleges and the lack of microteaching during training and recommended that teachers training should strengthen microteaching during training, apart from the school practice itself.

Demonstration/ Observation

A demonstration is the process when an experienced teacher shows a beginning teacher the proper use of a strategy, skill, or technique by incorporating it into an actual classroom lesson. The experienced teacher demonstrates the designated skills in the classroom while the beginning teacher observes (UNESCO, 2022).

Many studies have been conducted in different countries including Tanzania on school practice exercise in general. There is no study conducted so far specifically to explore the preparation and organization of school practice to prospective science and mathematics teachers at Morogoro teachers' college. This study aimed to fill the gap.

Major competencies of secondary school teacher trainees

Subject Matter Knowledge

Teacher subject matter knowledge refers to a teacher's understanding and expertise in the content area they are teaching. It encompasses a deep knowledge of the subject matter, including its key concepts, theories, principles, and skills. The subject matter knowledge of a teacher is essential for effective teaching and learning, as it allows them to provide accurate and comprehensive explanations, guide students' learning, and facilitate meaningful discussions (Galana *et al*, 2024).

Disciplinarily, on the other hand, refers to the specific academic discipline or field of study in which a teacher possesses expertise. Disciplines can vary widely, ranging from mathematics and

science to literature and history. Each discipline has its own unique body of knowledge, methodologies, and ways of thinking. Teachers who have a disciplinary focus bring a specialized perspective and understanding of their subject, enabling them to delve deep into the subject matter and convey its intricacies to their students.

A teacher's subject matter knowledge and disciplinarily are crucial for several reasons: Content Mastery: A teacher with strong subject matter knowledge has a thorough understanding of the content, enabling them to accurately explain complex concepts and provide clear examples. This expertise enhances their ability to address students' questions and misconceptions effectively. Pedagogical Content Knowledge: Subject matter knowledge is intertwined with pedagogical content knowledge, which refers to the understanding of how to teach specific content to diverse learners. A teachers' deep understanding of the subject allows them to identify common student misconceptions, select appropriate instructional strategies, and design meaningful learning experiences (Aldabbus, 2020).

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving: Subject matter knowledge enables teachers to foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills in students. By presenting authentic and challenging problems within the discipline, teachers can guide students to analyze, evaluate, and apply their knowledge to real-world situations. Differentiation and Personalization: Teachers with strong subject matter knowledge can differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of students. They can provide additional resources, alternative explanations, and advanced content for students who require extra challenges, as well as scaffold instruction for those who need additional support (Galana *et al*, 2024).

Facilitating Disciplinary Thinking: Teachers with disciplinarity understand the nature and processes of their discipline. They can guide students in thinking like a scientist, historian,

mathematician, or artist, for example, by promoting inquiry, critical analysis, and creative problem-solving specific to the discipline. Curriculum Development and Assessment: Teachers with subject matter expertise can contribute to curriculum development within their discipline. They can align instructional goals with the broader aims of the subject area and design assessments that measure students' understanding and mastery of the content (Al-Jaro, & Asmawi, 2019).

If anything is to be regarded as specific preparation for teaching, priority must be given to a thorough grounding in something to teach (Peter, 1977). According to Buchman, (1984:32) "it would be odd to expect a teacher to plan a lesson on, for instance, writing reports in Science and to evaluate related student assignments, if that teacher is ignorant of writing about Science, and does not understand what student progress in writing Science reports might mean". Helping students learn subject matter involves more than the delivery of facts and information (Deborah Ball, 1986). The goal of teaching is to assist students in developing intellectual resources to enable them to participate in, not merely to know about, the major domains of human thought and enquiry. These include the past and its relation to the present; the natural world, the ideas, beliefs and values of our own and other peoples; the dimensions of space and quality; aesthetics and representation; and so on. Philosophical argument as well as "common sense" supports the conviction that teachers' own subject matter influences their efforts to help students learn subject matter. Conant (1963) argues that "if a teacher is largely ignorant or informed he can do much harm". When teachers possess inaccurate information or conceive of knowledge in narrow ways, they may pass on these ideas to their students. They may fail to challenge students' misconceptions; they may use texts uncritically or may alter them inappropriately. Subtly, teachers' conceptions of the knowledge shape their practice –the kinds of questions they ask, the ideas they reinforce, the sorts of tasks they design.

Professional Values

By professional values we mean the complex sets of beliefs that it is considered positive and appropriate for teachers to hold, and the actions by which those beliefs may be communicated to students. Values are an integral part of teaching, reflected in what is taught and also in how teachers teach, and interact with, students. Students spend the greatest amount of their daily time with teachers, who have significant opportunities to influence them. The teacher's role is truly formative for at the heart of the practice of education is the relationship between teacher and student. It is this relationship which sets the tone for all else in the classroom.

As Kelly (1995) reminds us, the provision of education is both a moral and a practical imperative in a democratic society. The very purpose of schools is to make a difference to the lives of students and so the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching provide the core value context in which teachers are located. Values are central to competent professional practice, but competence-based models of teacher training are widely believed to have no commitment to professional values (Hyland, 1993). That is why there is growing interest in defining and assessing ethical judgment and values in the professional education of teachers.

Quality Schemes of work

A scheme of work defines the structure and content of an academic course. It splits an often-multi-year curriculum into deliverable units of work, each of a far shorter weeks' duration (e.g. two or three weeks). Each unit of work is then analyzed out into teachable individual topics of even shorter duration (for example two hours or less) (GOV, 2019).

A scheme of work can either be specific to a single subject, or it can involve a few different subjects. Because there are a lot of overlap at key stages one and two, many primary school teachers favour a cross-curricular approach to learning. This approach can work for some subjects,

but not so well for others. For example, while arts subjects like English can be combined pretty well, subjects like science are better suited to having their own scheme of learning (Petty, 2019).

Better schemes of work map out clearly how resources (books, equipment, time) and class activities (teacher-talk, group work, practical, discussions) and assessment strategies (such as tests, quizzes, homework) will be used to teach each topic and assess students *et al* progress in learning the material associated with each topic, unit and the scheme of work as a whole. As students' progress through the scheme of work, there is an expectation that their perception of the interconnections between topics and units will be enhanced (Forsyth, 2013).

Schemes of work may include times and dates (deadlines) for delivering the different elements of the curriculum. Philosophically, this is linked to a belief that all students should be exposed to all elements of the curriculum such that those who are able to keep up do not miss out on any content and can achieve the highest grades.

In Mbarara City, teachers especially primary teachers prepare schemes of work to help them with support and information with regards to planning, creating and delivering their lessons throughout the year. Therefore teachers refer schemes of work and lesson plans when planning and delivering both the textbook-based lessons and their own non-text book based lessons.

Effective use of Teaching Methods

A teaching method comprised the principles and methods used by teachers to enable student learning. These strategies are determined partly on subject matter to be taught and partly by the nature of the learner. For a particular teaching method to be appropriate and efficient it has taken into account the learner, the nature of the subject matter and the type of learning it is supposed to bring about (Westwood, 2018). The approaches for teaching can be broadly classified into teacher-centered and student-centered. In a teacher-centered (authoritarian) approach to learning, teachers are the main authority figure in this model.

Teaching methods are used to impart knowledge to students they are the means by which the teacher attempts to impart the desired learning or experience (Ndirangu, 2017). The choice of a particular method of teaching by the teacher is determined by number of factors which includes the content to be taught, the objectives which the teacher plans to achieve availability of teaching and learning resources and the ability and willingness of the teacher to improvise if convectional teaching aids are not available, evaluation and follow-up activities and Individual learner differences (Ndirangu, 2017).

In line with Sheehy (2018), pedagogical instruction involves the assessment of students' educational proficiency in specific skills. It encompasses an understanding of the pedagogical needs of students in a classroom, which entails employing differentiated instruction and oversight to cater to the diverse needs of all learners. The concept of pedagogy can be approached from two perspectives. First, teaching methods themselves can be diversified, implying a pedagogical range of teaching styles. Second, the students' pedagogical preferences become relevant when a teacher evaluates the educational diversity among their students and adjusts their approach accordingly. For instance, an experienced teacher and parent elaborated on the role of a teacher in the learning process as follows: "The majority of learning occurs through self-study and problem-solving, with ample feedback in that cycle. The teacher's role is to motivate the disengaged, inspire those who are uninterested, humble the overconfident, support the hesitant, identify and rectify individual shortcomings, and broaden the perspectives of all. This function closely resembles that of a coach who uses a full range of psychological techniques to transition each new group of novices from the sidelines to active participation" (Sheehy, 2018).

Behroz-Sarcheshmeh *et al.* (2017) conducted a study examining how trained teachers exhibit enhanced communication, teaching, and critical thinking skills. They further determined that

students' academic performance and their level of interest in the subject matter tend to improve when trained teachers apply teaching methods tailored to the School Practice quality and specific situations. In a separate investigation, Özüdogru (2020) sought to assess how students' queries were addressed by both trained and untrained teachers. The study's findings indicated that teachers who had received training were more adept at providing effective responses to students' inquiries when compared to their untrained counterparts.

Despite these arrays of teaching methods being advocated to, there is no one universally accepted method in Mbarara City. The question still remains is which of these teaching methods contribute to quality teaching especially in secondary schools where the causes of low teaching quality is not well understood.

Effective Time Management

Time Management refers to managing time effectively so that the right time is allocated to the right activity. Effective time management allows individuals to assign specific time slots to activities as per their importance (Brown, 2014).

Time Management plays a very important role not only in schools but also in teachers *et al* lives: Effective Planning, Setting goals and objectives, Setting deadlines, delegation of responsibilities, prioritizing activities as per their importance and spending the right time on the right activity (Walsh, 2018).

An early arrival allows the instructor to move psychologically and emotionally from the self-focused nature of the teaching plan (this is what I am going to do) and concerns about teaching performance (how well am I going to do?), to become immersed in, and connected to, the collective energy of the class.

The additional time also strengthens the relationship with students. It sends a powerful signal that the instructor truly cares for the students as individuals, not anonymous members of the class. Talking informally with participants, instructors get to know them better and have the opportunity to sense where they are in their hearts and minds on that particular day.

A teacher needs to have really good time management skills in order to finish that daily to-do list. So, time management is a very important skill to have. Teacher can use this in the classroom to optimize learning opportunities for students. Time management is important because it helps teachers to prioritize their work. After you have your list of daily tasks down, you need to figure out what you should do first. Those that are important should be the first ones you should tackle.

With time management, it helps teachers get more things done in less time. According to Jean (2014), once a teacher maps out tasks and time, he/she can figure out how much time they can put into the task. Also, it can help you map out other fun activities in class.

Time management is the thread running through almost all aspects of teaching organizing the day, organizing the classroom, deciding how long and how often to teach various subjects, recording student progress, or keeping time-consuming behavior problems to a minimum. Students only have so much time in your classroom (Forsyth, 2013).

In Mbarara City, time is managed by a few of the teachers especially the private teachers because they have enough supervision from the directors, which enables them to improve academically.

Effective Instructional Materials

Instructional materials are all of the tools a teacher uses in teaching a lesson. These materials can include materials that students bring from school as part of a project, textbooks, homework assignments, and other types of resources. Selection, modification, and effective utilization of the right materials can increase student engagement and learning.

These instructional materials bring life to learning by stimulating students to learn. The use of instructional materials in the classroom has the potential to help the teacher explain new concepts clearly, resulting in better student understanding of the concepts being taught. However, they are not ends in themselves but they are means to an end (Kadzera, 2016).

Instructional materials are essential since they help the teacher and learners avoid overemphasis on recitation and rote learning that can easily dominate a lesson. Resource materials allow learners to have practical experiences which help them to develop skills and concepts and to work in a variety of ways. The work of Sampath (2017) graphically explain that people learn more through the senses of sight and hearing compared to other senses.

Effective Class Management

Effective Feedback is a method of students getting back to their teachers about what is helping them learn and what is not, in a course. This principle involves using a variety of assessment techniques and allowing students to demonstrate their mastery of the material in different ways. It avoids those assessment methods that encourage students to memorize and regurgitate. It recognizes the power of feedback to motivate more effort to learn (Weinstein, 2016).

According to Weinstein (2018), it is widely recognized that feedback is an important part of the learning cycle, but both students and teachers frequently express disappointment and frustration in relation to the conduct of the feedback process. Students may complain that feedback on assessment is unhelpful or unclear, and sometimes even demoralizing.

Ayodele and Ige (2012) highlighted that continuous assessment is a method in which a student *et als* final evaluation, considering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of behavior, systematically encompasses all of their performances over a specific period of schooling. This type

of assessment, as they described it, entails employing various evaluation methods to guide and enhance a student's learning and performance. In the case of formative evaluation, the student undergoes diagnostic assessments at various stages of their educational journey, and based on the test results (feedback) received, they are provided with guidance (remediation) on how to proceed next (Owens *et al.*, 2018). Regular and effective evaluation of students' learning during the teaching-learning process, along with timely feedback and support, is likely to result in improved student performance.

Relationship between school practice quality and competences of secondary school teacher trainees

Ensuring the quality of instruction is a major concern in all educational objectives. Classroom instruction supervision and continuous support to teachers are effective ways to improve and maintain the quality of instruction (Naz, Awan, & Nasreen, 2009). Teacher education plays a crucial role in achieving the goal of Education for All (EFA) (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2011). The education system in Uganda includes Pre-Primary, Primary, Lower Secondary, Upper Secondary, Teacher Training, Tertiary, and University Levels, along with Non-Formal Education (NFE) as another component (Komakech, 2017; Ministry of Education and Sports, 2011).

The effectiveness of school practice depends on the role played by college assessors in implementing supervisory approaches based on their expertise and experience to support professional development among teacher trainees. Wambugu, Barmao, and Ng'eno (2013) argue that assessors are critical in shaping teacher trainees and facilitating change by raising awareness of appropriate teaching-learning practices. Effective assessment helps teacher trainees' Bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and the practical application of lesson teaching-learning practices. Guidance from assessors helps teacher trainees connect the materials covered in training courses to the situations encountered in teacher-learning contexts. Adequate support from

assessors enhances the quality of learning by improving the use of instructional resources and reinforcing learning activities. However, in the absence of such support, Mukeredzi and Mandrona (2013) found that the evaluation of lesson work is low, indiscipline may occur, and instructional targets may not be achieved. In such cases, teacher professional competence is diminished, leading to the inability to self-assess, manage the teaching-learning process, and ultimately resulting in lower learning achievement.

Research in educational studies (Erdle, Murray & Rushton, 1985; Maclure, 2000) demonstrates that a teacher's identity or self-identity is intimately connected with classroom discipline and effective teaching. A teacher's identity can either promote positive learning experiences or hinder a well-planned lesson. A teacher who presents themselves confidently, demonstrates eagerness during lessons, maintains emotional stability, and shows enthusiasm for learning can leave a lasting positive impression on learners, motivating them to learn and perform well. On the other hand, an unsettled, uncomfortable, and difficult-to-understand teacher may intimidate learners and disrupt the teaching and learning process.

Faculty assessors provide teacher trainees with the necessary skills in lesson planning for effective teaching, resulting into enhanced learner achievement. They assist teacher trainees in handling relevant content, appropriate instructional resources, and activities that align with instructional objectives. Regular meetings with instructors, department heads, or subject heads help teacher trainees synchronize college plans with school plans for improved competencies in teacher professional development. Harmonized lesson plans ensure a coherent flow of content and synthesized use of resources, which enhances collaborative management and interaction among teacher trainees within the school system, ultimately leading to higher learning achievement.

The school principal's crucial administrative tasks involve facilitating the admission of teacher trainees into the school and providing a comprehensive report on each learner to the college. Principals play a key role in organizing the school's structure and distributing responsibilities to ensure effective management of the teaching-learning process during school practice. These responsibilities encompass academic and inductive support, appropriate assignments, and the provision of sufficient supplies and equipment to enhance learning (Day & Leithwood, 2007). Moreover, principals offer valuable debriefs on strategies and systems, providing coordinated learner support and services for mentoring and integration within the school framework to achieve sustained professional development. Conversely, in the absence of adequate support, Misigo (2014) noted that teacher trainees often face challenges, career demands, and difficulties in managing lesson-related issues they may not have encountered during their college training. To address these challenges, teacher trainees receive consistent emotional mentoring, educational support, and counseling to cope with the evolving educational environment for continuous professional development. When teacher trainees are sufficiently supported, their professional development progresses more rapidly resulting in increased competence in addressing teaching-learning related issues and ultimately leading to higher learning achievement.

Effective planning and preparation on the part of collaborating teachers help ease anxiety and ensure that teacher trainees get off to a smooth start in acquiring essential skills for professional growth. Collaborating teachers assist teacher trainees in adjusting by providing crucial information, such as school rules, policies, physical arrangements, and lesson management tips. Teacher trainees often experience anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, and self-doubt at the beginning of their induction into the teaching profession (Otieno, 2014). When teacher trainees receive appropriate support from collaborating teachers, their confidence is boosted and they become more adept at lesson planning, instructional methods, and learner assessment during and after the

teaching-learning process. On the other hand, Manyasi (2014) found that inadequate support for teacher trainees' results in improper planning and evaluation of learner experiences and progress. Furthermore, weak support leads to a low uptake of appropriate resource materials, ineffective teaching strategies, an inability to address learner issues, and a failure to build relationships with staff and learners. Therefore, the support provided by collaborating teachers upon the commencement of their placement in individual schools is crucial in facilitating teacher trainees' activities that contribute to their professional development. Adequate support for teacher trainees improves the adoption of sound pedagogical approaches, the selection and use of instructional resources, the addressing of learner-centered issues, and support in routine learner management activities, all of which contribute to a smooth transition into becoming proficient teachers.

Regular teachers create an environment for open and honest dialogue by guiding teacher trainees' activities, as the transition to teacher professional development can be overwhelming if support structures are weak. In such cases, professional competencies may not be acquired for effective management of the teaching-learning process. When teacher trainees receive sufficient support, they are more likely to demonstrate professional competence, creativity, effective communication, teamwork, and ethical conduct in the teaching-learning process. In support of this view, Ligadu (2012) observed that teacher trainees who received support from regular teachers were able to navigate the demands of school practice, particularly in curriculum interpretation, lesson management, and learner and school management skills development. However, Piper and Zuilkowski (2015) found that insufficient emotional and physical support can hinder the socialization of teacher trainees into the teaching profession, limit exposure to the school community, and fail to provide them with important information about school policies, regulations, and resources. Such issues may discourage teacher trainees from gaining confidence and independence in using appropriate instructional techniques. Support from regular teachers

enhances understanding of school operations, course management, interrelationships, and evaluation of various school activities, contributing to sustained learning achievement.

School practice supervisors are responsible for improving and maintaining the teaching and learning standards of Teacher Trainees in schools (Silsil, 2008). It is the duty of the college administrator to provide guidance and support to Teacher Trainees as they carry out their teaching responsibilities. Supervision of guidelines is crucial as it directs Teacher Trainees on effective lesson planning, preparation of schemes of work, and related classroom practices, including record-keeping and assessment. These activities contribute to the enhanced performance of Teacher Trainees, resulting in improved students' achievements in examinations (Silsil, 2008). This requires strong leadership and supervision skills. The school or university administrators and teachers should organize, develop, and manage effective strategies for the college. Therefore, the responsibility of school practice supervisors is highly challenging and should be distinct from administrative duties and management tasks.

Knowledge Gap

The reviewed literature indicates that most studies on school practice have been conducted outside Uganda, such as the study by (Colbert, Brown, Choi, and Thomas, 2018). Some studies have focused on a single college within Uganda, while others have addressed other issues that affect school practice, like the study by (Otieno, 2014). Several studies have emphasized the need for increased and improved resources invested in school practice activities. Additionally, various research works have been conducted on teacher education in general, ranging from international to national levels, including Uganda. The literature reviewed in this study reveals efforts made to establish measures for teachers to become professionally competent. Moreover, the literature has highlighted how school practice is organized in different countries, raising questions about how

these benchmarks will be achieved and within what timeframe. However, a crucial research gap is identified in the literature, as no study has been conducted on the contribution of school practice to teacher professional competence in the Ugandan context. This research gap will be addressed by this study.

Considering the above, it is reasonable to assume that the nature and support provided by the teaching institution can predict the ultimate outcome of the entire teacher education program. While some studies like Ochanji (2015) and (Ryan & Couver, 2017) have evaluated the effectiveness of school practice in Uganda, little has been documented in the literature regarding the types of mentorship that student-teachers are exposed to and the areas that still need to be addressed as the country continues to invest in teacher education. Therefore, this study aims to identify the contributions of school practice towards developing professional readiness in student-teachers, using Mbarara city as the case study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter presents the techniques that were used to collect the required data for the study. It describes the research design, area of study, population of the study, sample size and sampling procedure, sources of data, data collection methods and instruments. In addition, it covers the data collection procedure, data processing, analysis and interpretation, and limitations of the study.

Research design

This study used a cross-sectional descriptive survey research design with mixed approaches of data collection and analysis. Descriptive survey research designs were utilized in initial and exploratory studies to enable researchers to gather information and summarize, present, and interpret data to gain clarity. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the purpose of descriptive research is to determine and report the current state of affairs, aiding in establishing the existing status of the population under study. Surveys are self-report studies that involve collecting quantifiable data from the sample. They are useful for describing, explaining, or exploring the current status of two or more factors (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008).

A survey design can effectively be used to measure the characteristics of a large sample both subjectively and quantitatively, providing causal explanations for phenomena (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Additionally, a survey research design allows for collecting significant amounts of data in the shortest possible time (Kombo & Tromp, 2006; Orodho, 2005). The combination of both research principles enabled methodological triangulation, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study.

Study Population

The study population included undergraduate education students in third year at Bishop Stuart University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, University of St. Joseph Mbarara and Metropolitan International University, Deans of education Faculties, school practice coordinators, head teachers and teachers from the selected schools in the area. In this study, Teacher Trainees are considered by virtue of undertaking school practice as a requirement for teacher training, which is the interest of this study. Therefore, the Teacher Trainees as consumers of school practice were considered to have vital information regarding supervisors *et al* qualifications, frequency of supervision, span and duration of supervision. On the other hand the school practice coordinators in universities were considered in their capacity as officers in charge of managing school practice activities that include among others posting Teacher Trainees and university supervisors in the designated school practice areas. Therefore, these officers were considered to have vital information regarding supervisor qualifications, frequency of supervision and span and duration of supervision. This information was useful in the triangulation of the students-teacher information. A target population of 950 respondents will be used in this study.

Sample size

A sample size is a part of a population methodologically selected for purposes of drawing a conclusion about a population and its characteristics. A sample size of 376 respondents will be used. This was determined from the target population of 950 respondents determined with help of Krejcie and Morgan, 1970 (pp.607 - 610) tables from the target population.

Table 3.1: Sample size determination

Respondents	Population	Sample size	Sampling technique
School practice coordinators	4	4	Purposive
Teacher Trainees	810	260	Simple random sampling
Faculty Deans	4	4	Purposive
Head teachers	22	22	Purposive
Teachers	110	86	Simple random sampling
Total	950	376	

Sampling Techniques

Sampling is the act, or techniques of selecting a suitable sample for the purposes of determining the characteristics of the whole population. The researcher used simple random sampling and purposive sampling.

Simple random sampling

260 Teacher Trainees and 86 teachers were selected using simple random sampling, where a list of teachers was got from the head teachers' office by the researcher. The names of teachers were written on papers; the papers were folded and then dropped in a box. The researcher picked papers from the box at random to get the number representing teachers from selected schools to participate in the study, for each, simple random sampling was used to avoid bias that may come up when other methods are used.

Purposive sampling

The purposive sampling was used to select head-teachers, Faculty Deans from Universities and university School practice coordinators. The purposive sampling method is a non-probability sampling technique in which a researcher selects a number of specific objects that exhibit the

characteristics of interest from a given population to form part of the sample (Neuman, 2007). This approach as described by Creswell (2009), may not necessarily be a representative sample, but it allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the issue. The purposively chosen sample serves as a rich source of information pertaining to the area of interest.

Sources of Information

Primary Sources. Here, the researcher obtained raw data from the field using data collection tools from the questionnaire survey and the interviewing method.

Secondary Sources. Here, data was collected from the existing sources such internet, textbooks and library.

Data Collection Methods

This study used both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data was obtained through the questionnaire survey method while qualitative data was obtained from interviews of key respondents.

Questionnaire Survey

The questionnaire survey was the major method used for data collection. Questions for respondents will be designed and administered; this involved the use of a set of questions printed in a definite order. This was used to collect information from community members. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to generate quantitative data. The questionnaires were designed according to the objectives of the study so as to generate data for each objective. The questionnaire method helped to generate statistical data that was used in quantitative analysis so as to meet the objectives of the study. The researcher and his research assistants administered structured questionnaires to 158 Teacher Trainees and 86 teachers.

Interview method

The interviews were guided by unstructured questions composed of mainly open ended questions. Open ended questions were used to capture perceptions and feelings of the key informants. The interviews helped the researcher to obtain data that may not have been effectively got through the questionnaire and this help guard against confusing the questions since the information from the interviews availed some clarity, helping the respondent to give relevant responses. Using these interviews, very personal and sensitive information were obtained from select head-teachers, Faculty Deans from Universities and University School practice coordinators. This face-to-face interaction necessitated maximum participation from respondents (Mugenda, 2003). This method was preferred because it is flexible enough to allow the interviewer to ask supplementary questions.

Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire

A set of predetermined and structured questions were provided to the respondents and they were asked to respond in writing. The questionnaires contained both open-ended and closed-ended questions. According to Bryman (2008), open-ended questions allow respondents to answer in their own words, offering the flexibility for unusual responses and providing room for further elaboration to justify their answers. The choice of open-ended surveys is to stimulate free thinking, encourage creativity, seek additional details, and efficiently gather sufficient data from multiple respondents in a short period. This instrument utilized a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions to collect firsthand data from the students, teachers, and teachers.

Interview Guide

As stated by Kothari (2004), interviews consist of a series of questions designed to gather information through verbal communication between the researcher and the respondents. This was

used to collect information about the subject from select head-teachers, Faculty Deans from Universities and university School practice coordinators. This study used semi-structured interview. This technique is used to collect qualitative data by setting up a situation that allows respondents to talk about their opinions on a particular subject. The focus of the interview was decided by the researcher and there were areas that the researcher was interested in exploring. It gave respondents the room to express their full emotions and getting more clarifications. The researcher overcame any limitations by ensuring that the questions are clearly set as to be understood by the respondents in order to get the relevant data as required. The guide helped to standardize the interview situation and to obtain required data. The use of the interview guide made it possible to collect information that would have been impossible to collect using questionnaires alone, such as in-depth information on the subject matter, clarifications and captured varied opinions of respondents.

Data Quality Control

As noted by Vogt (2007), several studies have utilized this instrument and found its reliability and validity values to be acceptable among the population under study. Therefore, it is recommended to test the validity and reliability of the instruments in different contexts. The instruments will be pre-tested to determine their validity and reliability.

Validity of instruments

According to Basheka (2016), data validity refers to the extent to which the study accurately reflects or assesses the specific concept that one intends to measure. To evaluate validity, tests were conducted to assess content, criterion, and construct validity, which determine how well the instrument represents the variables, captures their relationships, and measures the concepts (Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Vogt, 2007; and Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). This study used triangulation

to ensure validity of research findings prior to the administration of the research instruments. The instrument was checked by experts including the supervisors of the researcher. Content validity ratio was used to calculate the Content Validity Index, using formula below;

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Total Number of items rated by all respondents}}{\text{Total Number of items in the Instrument}}$$

Total Number of items in the Instrument

A content validity index of 0.7 and above according to Amin, (2005) qualify the instrument for the study.

Reliability of instruments

The degree to which a research instrument consistently produces similar results upon repeated trials is referred to as reliability (Kothari, 2004). Random error, which is the deviation from the true value, can affect the instrument's reliability by increasing it whenever it is high. Reliability risks are common in research studies and can arise from incorrect data coding, unclear instructions, interviewer/interviewee fatigue, and bias. In this study, the researcher addressed reliability by reducing both the instrument and the researcher's scoring errors, thereby minimizing inconsistencies in the measurements that could affect the reliability of the collected data. To achieve reliability in this study, the internal consistency method using Cronbach's coefficient Alpha calculation was employed to assess the relationship among the items. In this method, scores from a single test were analyzed on a sample subject, where the score on one item is correlated with those from other items within the instrument. According to Kothari (2004), an alpha value of 0.7 or higher is considered acceptable to demonstrate reliability, indicating that the closer the alpha value is to 1, the higher the internal consistency reliability. Underneath, is the expression of the Cronbach *et als* coefficient Alpha or Kunder-Richardson (K-R) 20 equation;

$$KR20 = \frac{(K) (s^2 - \sum s^2)}{(S^2) (K-1)}$$

Where;

KR20= Reliability coefficient of internal consistency

K = Number of items used to measure concepts

S^2 = Variance of all scores

s^2 = Variance of individual items

From the researcher *et als* computation results that was obtained above, the higher the coefficient the higher the item correlation among themselves.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis

The quantitative data analysis involved numerical values, from which descriptions such as means and standard deviations were calculated (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze data. After participants responding to the questionnaires raw data was cleaned, sorted and entered using statistical data entry form designed in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software for analysis according to the objectives of the study. Questionnaire data was obtained from questionnaires each questionnaire was given a unique serial number extracting of inertial summaries by data reduction using soft numbers coding by categorizing data, sorting and filling was carried out. Statistical Package for the social sciences (SPSS) version of 23 was used to aid the processing and summarizing of information got from the questionnaires.

Qualitative data analysis

After collecting data, it was processed and analyzed. The qualitative data was analyzed by sorting out major themes, concepts and ideas that relate to the variables of the study so as to make meaning and draw conclusions. Qualitative data analysis involved both thematic and content analysis and

was based on how the findings relate to research objectives, content analysis was used to edit data and reorganize it into meaning full short statements. The thematic analysis was used to organize data into themes and codes was identified. After collection, data was assembled according to the themes, it was compared to the quantitative data. Later on data was interpreted by making explanations from the variance and in relation to the themes, categories of the research questions and it was illustrated and substantiated by quoting the respondents. The contents of the data collected was analyzed objective by objective and reported alongside the quantitative data. The researcher used inferential statistic to determine the relationship between variables

Ethical Consideration

The ethical considerations that were adopted in this study as guided by the recommendations made by Saunders *et al*, 2012 which argue that participation in research should: be voluntary and based on informed consent; ensure there is no harm to the participants; be anonymous and confidential; and not deceive subjects.

Ethical approval: The study sought approval from Bishop Stuart University Research Ethics Committee and permission to go to the field for data collection from the directorate of graduate studies of Bishop Stuart University.

Confidentiality: The data collected from the participants was kept as confidential and was used for the purpose of the fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Masters of Arts in Education Administration and Planning. Key ethical issues such as privacy, anonymity of the respondents, and maintenance of the conditions of the data provided by individuals were given priority. The participants were also informed of the content of the research and the result of the study were published to benefit the participants.

Informed consent: Before study, respondents' consent was sought, got permission from the relevant authorities and ensured that only questions that are directly related to the study were administered. In addition, no inducement was given to respondents and for individual unwilling to be part of the research, he/she was permitted to opt out of it or delegate to one of his or her junior. To avoid any harm that might affect participants, the researcher paid special attention to the physical and psychological comfort of participants throughout the research process as well as in any communication leading to or following the discussion. Participants were not pressurized to answer questions that they feel uncomfortable with, and are offered the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any point, highlighting the discretionary nature of their participation.

Plagiarism: All major works and statements in the study were dully cited with source clearly indicated, within text and properly referenced.

Research Procedure

Before starting data collecting, the Researcher needed to get approval from university administration. Informed consent was also be sought by the Principal Investigator. For study involving human subjects, informed permission is a moral and legal obligation. In order to inform responders of the information gathered, the researcher also gave them the letter of introduction.

In order to gather accurate data from the field that later produced fruitful results, the researcher: recorded responses from the respondents for easy discussion and interpretation of the study findings; asked for permission from respondents to do so; protected and preserved the information obtained to avoid leakages into the hands of unauthorized customers before lawful processing, analysis, and presentation of the findings; and again, ensure an adequate level of confidentiality of the research. Finally, he made sure that all research-related communications are conducted honestly, transparently, and without the use of false information or biased representations of primary data.

Community Engagement Plan

The researcher was committed to fostering active participation and collaboration with the local community.

The researcher-initiated partnerships by reaching out to stakeholders, conducting meetings to discuss objectives and potential collaborations.

Community involvement was fostered through focus group discussions with various stakeholders to gather their perspectives. Regular evaluation and impact assessment was conducted to measure the effectiveness of community engagement activities, allowing for necessary adjustments to enhance the plans

The researcher tried as much as possible to avoid activities involving a higher risk of transmission with appropriate process in place to ensure high standards of hygiene are maintained (such as shared equipment, food sharing).

Results dissemination Plan

The results of this study were disseminated to the community through distribution of the copies of research findings to the following: Published copy was made available as a way of disseminating results to the community Library of Bishop Stuart University, Faculty of Education, Arts and Media Studies as reference by students doing related undergraduate and postgraduate studies. The office of the District Education Officer and school administrators of the respective secondary schools in Mbarara were provided with copies to act as a reference for further supervision and monitoring. A final reference copy was submitted to the research supervisors.

Chapter Four:

Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Overview

The study was set out to examine the effect of School practice quality on Competencies of Secondary School Teacher Trainees in Mbarara City.

This chapter presents research finding, analysis and interpretation based on the specific objectives stated earlier as thus; to examine the major aspects of the School Practice Quality for the secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City, to establish the major competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City and to assess the relationship between school practice quality and secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.

Response Rate

The response rate is the ratio of the actual number of respondents visa vie the target population. Out of 376 respondents, 350 responded positively to the study. The response rate was thus computed as; $350/376 \times 100 = 93\%$. The researcher based on Amin *et als* (2004) recommendations that in a survey, a response rate of over 70% should yield valid findings. Accordingly, the researcher *et als* response rate was 93% which was above what Amin recommended and hence yielded valid responses. The response rate from interviews was 100% as all the targeted informants were met and they provided the data as per questions asked.

Presentation of Demographic Information

The questionnaires were administered to the sample size of 320 teachers and teacher trainees. While interviews were conducted on 30 key informants who were school practice coordinators, faculty deans and head teachers. The researcher among the demographic information, sought to investigate on gender, age distribution of respondents, highest level of education and years in service deemed important and pertinent to the study.

Table 4.1: Demographic Information

Aspects	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Males	224	64
Females	126	36
Total	350	100
Age (Years)		
20-30	154	44
30-40	77	22
40-50	66	19
50 and above	53	15
Total	350	100
Highest education level		
Undergraduate	234	67
Graduate (Bachelors level)	89	25
Master <i>et als</i> degree level	23	07
PhD level	04	01
Total	350	100
Marital status		
Single	284	81
Married	66	19
Total	350	100

Source: Primary Data, 2024

According to Table 4.1, majority of the respondents 224 (64%) were males while the remaining 126 (36%) were females. This implied that more males participated in the study than females in each of the different categories of the respondents. This pointed to the fact that most male student teachers participated since this category constituted a bigger number than any other category of respondents.

According to the findings from Table 4.1, the majority respondents 154 (44%) were aged 20-30 years. This is because it is in this age bracket that most student teachers belong. The other category of respondents 77(22%) were aged 30-40 years. 66 (19%) respondents belonged to the age bracket of 40-50 years while the remaining 53 (15%) of the total number of respondents were aged 50 years and above. This implied that those in the age bracket of 20-30 years and 30-40 years were

mainly student teachers who are still energetic to handle classes with many learners as is the case with Schools.

According to the findings from Table 4.1, the respondents had gone as far as their highest education levels as follows: The majority 234 (67%) were undergraduate students who were in this case the student teachers, 89 (25%) were graduates with a bachelor *et als* degree, 23 (07%) had gone as far as the level of a master *et als* degree while the remaining 04 (01%) were for PhD and these were all Faculty deans.

Aspects of School Practice Quality for the secondary school teacher trainees

In the first objective, respondents were subjected to Likert scale questionnaire to capture responses on the major aspects of the school practice quality for the secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara city and the results that emerged were presented in Table 4.2;

In order to fulfil this fully, several responses were sought in relation to this objective of study and results were collected, sorted and summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Aspects of the School Practice Quality for the secondary school teacher trainees

School Practice Quality Aspects	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	SD
Span and period of school practice	25 (7%)	40 (11%)	55 (16%)	158 (45%)	72 (21%)	4.2	0.88
Frequency of teacher trainee supervision	38 (11%)	47 (13%)	68 (19%)	140 (40%)	57 (17%)	3.8	0.92
Quality of Supervision	30 (9%)	35 (10%)	60 (17%)	175 (50%)	50 (14%)	4.0	0.85
Supervision and Mentorship	45 (13%)	50 (14%)	65 (19%)	130 (37%)	60 (17%)	3.7	1.02
Opportunities for Observation and Reflection	22 (6%)	34 (10%)	59 (17%)	165 (47%)	70 (20%)	4.1	0.79
Integration of Theory and Practice	33 (9%)	40 (11%)	68 (19%)	147 (42%)	62 (18%)	3.9	0.95
Inclusive and Diverse Teaching Environments	50 (14%)	55 (16%)	70 (20%)	126 (36%)	49 (14%)	3.6	1.10
Feedback and Assessment	18 (5%)	30 (9%)	55 (16%)	190 (54%)	57 (16%)	4.3	0.82
Professional Development Opportunities	55 (16%)	60 (17%)	68 (19%)	122 (35%)	45 (13%)	3.5	1.05

Source: Field data, 2024

Key: SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; NS = Not Sure; D = Disagree; SD, = Strongly Disagree

From the table, 158 respondents (45%) agreed that the span and period of school practice was adequate for proper teacher training, while 72 respondents (21%) strongly agreed (Mean = 4.2, SD = 0.88). This indicates that a majority believe the school practice duration is sufficient, but 25 respondents (7%) strongly disagreed, suggesting a small percentage feel the time is inadequate.

Regarding teacher trainee supervision frequency, 140 respondents (40%) agreed and 57 (17%) strongly agreed, giving a mean of 3.8 (SD = 0.92). However, 38 respondents (11%) strongly disagreed, implying that supervision is not consistent across schools.

The quality of supervision was rated highly, with 175 respondents (50%) agreeing and 50 (14%) strongly agreeing, leading to a mean of 4.0 (SD = 0.85). This suggests that teacher trainees find the supervision effective, though 35 respondents (10%) disagreed that it meets expectations.

On supervision and mentorship, 130 respondents (37%) agreed, but 45 respondents (13%) strongly disagreed, resulting in a mean of 3.7 (SD = 1.02). This variation suggests that mentorship support is not uniformly provided across schools.

For opportunities for observation and reflection, 165 respondents (47%) agreed and 70 respondents (20%) strongly agreed, resulting in a high mean of 4.1 (SD = 0.79). This suggests that most teacher trainees had ample chances to learn through observation and reflection.

The integration of theory and practice was rated at 3.9 (SD = 0.95), with 147 respondents (42%) agreeing and 62 (18%) strongly agreeing. However, 40 respondents (11%) disagreed, indicating some challenges in linking classroom theory with real-world teaching experiences.

The inclusive and diverse teaching environments aspect had a lower mean of 3.6 (SD = 1.10), with 126 respondents (36%) agreeing and 49 (14%) strongly agreeing, while 50 respondents (14%) strongly disagreed. This suggests that diversity and inclusion in teaching placements need improvement.

The highest-rated aspect was feedback and assessment (Mean = 4.3, SD = 0.82), where 190 respondents (54%) agreed and 57 (16%) strongly agreed. This indicates that teacher trainees receive timely and constructive feedback.

Lastly, professional development opportunities received the lowest rating (Mean = 3.5, SD = 1.05), with 122 respondents (35%) agreeing but 55 respondents (16%) strongly disagreeing. This suggests a gap in structured professional growth programs.

The results indicate that while most aspects of school practice quality are perceived positively, particularly feedback and assessment, observation opportunities, and supervision quality, areas

such as professional development, inclusive teaching environments, and supervision frequency require enhancement to improve the overall training experience.

From the interview with the Head Teacher of School A, he said,

“I love the way school practice is structured because it allows teacher trainees to gain hands-on experience. However, some trainees lack confidence, and this affects their effectiveness in the classroom” (INT. H/Tr School A, 2024).

This suggests that while the school practice program is well-structured and beneficial, some teacher trainees struggle with confidence which may limit their ability to fully apply their teaching skills. It highlights the need for mentorship and additional classroom exposure to build trainee confidence.

Similarly, the School Practice Coordinator at School B noted,

“The supervision process is generally good, but some supervisors do not give detailed feedback. Some just tick the evaluation forms without engaging the trainees on their strengths and weaknesses” (INT. SP Coord. School B, 2024).

This indicates a gap in the supervision process where some supervisors provide minimal feedback, which could hinder trainees *et al* professional growth. More structured feedback sessions could help trainees understand their areas of improvement.

Furthermore, the Faculty Dean at Institution C remarked,

“We encourage our teacher trainees to integrate theory with practice, but some find it difficult to apply pedagogical concepts in real classroom settings. They tend to focus more on content delivery rather than student engagement” (INT. Faculty Dean, Inst. C, 2024).

This implies that while teacher trainees receive theoretical knowledge, there are challenges in its practical application. More emphasis on interactive teaching methods and classroom engagement strategies may be necessary during school practice.

Finally, the Head Teacher of School D expressed concerns about inclusive teaching, saying,

“Trainees are not well-prepared to handle diverse classrooms. Some struggle with teaching learners with disabilities or those from different linguistic backgrounds”
(INT. H/Tr School D, 2024).

This highlights a critical gap in teacher training regarding inclusive education. Schools and training institutions need to strengthen strategies that prepare trainees to teach in diverse learning environments.

The interview responses suggest that while school practice provides valuable experience, improvements are needed in areas such as supervision quality, feedback provision, integration of theory and practice, and inclusive teaching preparation. Strengthening mentorship programs, increasing feedback engagement, and equipping trainees for diverse classrooms could enhance the overall quality of school practice.

Major competencies of secondary school teacher trainees

The second objective of study was aimed at establishing Major competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City. Responses were sought in line with this objective in a likert scale format. These were collected and presented as in Table 4.3

Table 4.3: Competencies of Secondary School Teacher Trainees in Mbarara City

Response	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean Score
Subject Matter Knowledge	12	23	45	150	120	3.85
Teaching Skills	10	18	50	160	112	3.90
Professional Values	15	25	40	140	130	3.85
Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills	8	20	35	155	132	3.95
Ethical and Professional Conduct	9	22	38	148	133	3.93
Subject Matter Expertise	11	19	42	142	136	3.95
Effective Use of Teaching Methods	14	26	37	130	143	3.91
Quality Schemes of Work	17	30	50	128	125	3.75
Effective Instructional Materials	13	28	47	138	124	3.80

Source: Field data, 2024

Key: SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; NS = Not Sure; D = Disagree; SD, = Strongly Disagree

From the table, 150 respondents (42.9%) agreed that secondary school teacher trainees possess strong subject matter knowledge, while 120 respondents (34.3%) strongly agreed. This is interpreted to mean that the majority of the respondents believe that teacher trainees have a strong grasp of their subject content, which is essential for effective teaching.

Regarding teaching skills, 160 respondents (45.7%) agreed that teacher trainees exhibit effective teaching abilities, while 112 respondents (32%) strongly agreed. This suggests that a substantial proportion of the respondents consider teacher trainees to be adequately skilled in lesson delivery, though a small number (28 respondents, 8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

For professional values, 140 respondents (40%) agreed and 130 respondents (37.1%) strongly agreed, indicating that teacher trainees demonstrate essential professional ethics and commitment, which are crucial for fostering a positive learning environment.

On pedagogical knowledge and skills, the highest agreement was observed, with 155 respondents (44.3%) agreeing and 132 respondents (37.7%) strongly agreeing. This suggests that teacher trainees are well-prepared in lesson planning, instructional design, and student engagement techniques.

With regard to ethical and professional conduct, 148 respondents (42.3%) agreed and 133 respondents (38%) strongly agreed, implying that teacher trainees uphold professional integrity and ethical standards in their practice.

For subject matter expertise, 142 respondents (40.6%) agreed and 136 respondents (38.9%) strongly agreed, showing a high confidence level in the trainees' deep understanding of their teaching subjects.

In terms of effective use of teaching methods, 130 respondents (37.1%) agreed and 143 respondents (40.9%) strongly agreed, indicating that teacher trainees are employing appropriate and diverse instructional strategies to enhance learning.

Concerning quality schemes of work, 128 respondents (36.6%) agreed and 125 respondents (35.7%) strongly agreed, suggesting that while many teacher trainees prepare structured lesson plans, there is room for improvement.

Finally, for effective instructional materials, 138 respondents (39.4%) agreed and 124 respondents (35.4%) strongly agreed, reflecting a positive but slightly lower perception of trainees' ability to select and use appropriate teaching materials effectively.

The findings reveal that secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City exhibit strong competencies across multiple domains, with the highest ratings in pedagogical knowledge and subject matter expertise. However, areas such as quality schemes of work and instructional materials require further enhancement to ensure well-rounded teaching competencies. These results indicate that teacher training programs should continue strengthening practical and professional aspects to maximize teacher effectiveness in the classroom.

From the interview with the Head teacher of School A, he said,

“I love the way teacher trainees’ exhibit enthusiasm and dedication to their work, but some still struggle with lesson planning and time management.” (INT. H/Tr School A, 2024).

The interpretation is that while teacher trainees demonstrate commitment and passion in their teaching practice, there is still a need for improvement in their ability to plan and manage lessons effectively to ensure structured and productive classroom experiences.

Similarly, a School Practice Coordinator remarked,

“Most teacher trainees have a good grasp of subject matter knowledge, but some lack creativity in engaging learners with diverse needs.” (INT. SPC, 2024).

This suggests that while trainees possess adequate content knowledge, there is a gap in their ability to implement inclusive and engaging teaching strategies that cater to different learning abilities.

A Faculty Dean added,

“Our teacher trainees generally meet professional expectations, but they need more exposure to real classroom challenges before they graduate.” (INT. FD, 2024).

This implies that despite their theoretical preparedness, trainees require more hands-on experience to navigate the complexities of a real teaching environment effectively.

The findings reveal that secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City exhibit strong competencies across multiple domains with the highest ratings in pedagogical knowledge and subject matter expertise. However, areas such as quality schemes of work and instructional materials require further enhancement to ensure well-rounded teaching competencies. These results indicate that teacher training programs should continue strengthening practical and professional aspects to maximize teacher effectiveness in the classroom.

Relationship between school practice quality and secondary school teacher trainees

The final objective of study was aimed at assessing the relationship between school practice quality and secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City. Responses were sought in line with this objective in a likert scale format. These were collected and presented as in Table 4.4

Table 4.4: Relationship between School Practice Quality and Competencies of Secondary School Teacher Trainees (n=350)

Statement	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean
School practice students are supervised on a daily basis	20 (5.7%)	30 (8.6%)	40 (11.4%)	150 (42.9%)	110 (31.4%)	3.86
Head teacher visits the classroom to ensure Teacher Trainee content delivery is in line with the recommended syllabus	25 (7.1%)	40 (11.4%)	60 (17.1%)	140 (40.0%)	85 (24.3%)	3.63
School practice students <i>et al</i> supervision has improved Teacher Trainees <i>et al</i> Subject Competence	15 (4.3%)	20 (5.7%)	50 (14.3%)	160 (45.7%)	105 (30.0%)	3.91
Teacher Trainees build confidence in teaching as a result of constant school practice students <i>et al</i> supervision	10 (2.9%)	25 (7.1%)	40 (11.4%)	170 (48.6%)	105 (30.0%)	3.96
Trainees learn new teaching techniques during school practice students <i>et al</i> supervision	12 (3.4%)	18 (5.1%)	55 (15.7%)	165 (47.1%)	100 (28.6%)	3.92
During school practice students <i>et al</i> supervision, Teacher Trainees learn their weak areas	8 (2.3%)	20 (5.7%)	45 (12.9%)	175 (50.0%)	102 (29.1%)	3.98
Teacher Trainees are mentored professionally by the supervisors during school practice	6 (1.7%)	15 (4.3%)	50 (14.3%)	180 (51.4%)	100 (28.6%)	4.01

Trainees gain teaching experience with the help of the supervisors	5 (1.4%)	18 (5.1%)	45 (12.9%)	190 (54.3%)	92 (26.3%)	3.99
School practice improves student-teacher relationships	10 (2.9%)	22 (6.3%)	55 (15.7%)	160 (45.7%)	103 (29.4%)	3.93
Support supervision has helped Teacher Trainees to manage time and be more regular in school	8 (2.3%)	20 (5.7%)	48 (13.7%)	170 (48.6%)	104 (29.7%)	3.98
School practice helps Teacher Trainees in designing appropriate instructional methods	7 (2.0%)	16 (4.6%)	50 (14.3%)	180 (51.4%)	97 (27.7%)	3.98

Source: Field data, 2024

Key: SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; NS = Not Sure; D = Disagree; SD, = Strongly Disagree

From the table, 150 respondents (42.9%) agreed that school practice students are supervised on a daily basis, while 110 (31.4%) strongly agreed. This is interpreted to mean that the majority of respondents acknowledge that school practice supervision is a regular activity, contributing to consistent monitoring and evaluation of Teacher Trainees.

Similarly, 140 respondents (40.0%) agreed that head teachers visit classrooms to ensure that Teacher Trainees *et al* content delivery is in line with the recommended syllabus, while 85 (24.3%) strongly agreed. This indicates that head teachers play a role in quality assurance for trainee teaching.

Regarding the impact of supervision on subject competence, 160 respondents (45.7%) agreed, while 105 (30.0%) strongly agreed. This suggests that supervision significantly enhances Teacher Trainees *et al* mastery of subject content, ensuring improved instructional delivery.

In terms of building confidence in teaching, 170 respondents (48.6%) agreed, while 105 (30.0%) strongly agreed. This implies that continuous supervision helps Teacher Trainees develop confidence in classroom instruction, thereby preparing them effectively for their professional roles.

Moreover, 165 respondents (47.1%) agreed that trainees learn new teaching techniques during school practice, while 100 (28.6%) strongly agreed. This suggests that supervision exposes Teacher Trainees to innovative and effective pedagogical approaches, enhancing their teaching methodologies.

Regarding the identification of weak areas, 175 respondents (50.0%) agreed, while 102 (29.1%) strongly agreed. This signifies that school practice supervision enables trainees to recognize and work on their weaknesses, thereby improving their overall teaching skills.

Professional mentorship was also highlighted, with 180 respondents (51.4%) agreeing that Teacher Trainees are mentored by supervisors, and 100 (28.6%) strongly agreeing. This demonstrates that professional mentorship is a critical component of school practice, contributing to the professional growth of trainees.

Additionally, 190 respondents (54.3%) agreed that trainees gain teaching experience with the help of supervisors, while 92 (26.3%) strongly agreed. This suggests that practical teaching experience is largely facilitated by effective supervision.

Concerning student-teacher relationships, 160 respondents (45.7%) agreed, and 103 (29.4%) strongly agreed that school practice enhances interactions between students and Teacher Trainees. This means that school practice helps foster positive relationships that contribute to effective teaching and learning.

Furthermore, 170 respondents (48.6%) agreed, while 104 (29.7%) strongly agreed that support supervision helps Teacher Trainees manage time and be more regular in school. This implies that school practice inculcates professionalism, discipline, and time management among trainees.

Lastly, 180 respondents (51.4%) agreed that school practice helps Teacher Trainees design appropriate instructional methods, while 97 (27.7%) strongly agreed. This indicates that school practice significantly contributes to trainees' ability to develop and apply effective instructional strategies.

The findings suggest that school practice quality has a significant positive relationship with the competencies of secondary school Teacher Trainees in Mbarara City. Regular supervision, mentorship, and head teacher involvement enhance trainees' confidence, subject competence, teaching techniques, and overall instructional skills. These results imply that continuous and structured school practice supervision is crucial for developing well-rounded and competent secondary school teachers.

Correlation between School Practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees

A Pearson correlation coefficient was run in order to establish if there was a relationship between School Practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.

Table 4.5: Correlation between School Practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees

		Correlations	
		School Practice quality	competencies of secondary school teacher trainees
School Practice quality	Pearson Correlation	1	.562**
	N	350	350
competencies of secondary school teacher trainees	Pearson Correlation	.562**	1
	N	350	350

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Table 4.5, shows correlation results between School Practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in secondary schools. Findings reveal the Pearson correlation ($r = .562^{**}$), sample size ($n=210$). Therefore, School Practice quality designated a positive and statistically moderate correlation with learning process. This implied that as favourable School Practice quality is offered, competencies of secondary school teacher trainees is moderately impacted.

Regression results for School Practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees

A regression technique using (Model Summary) was run to examine the percentage effect of School Practice quality on learning process in Mbarara City and the results that emerged are presented in Table 4.8;

Table 4.4: Model Summary results for School Practice quality and competencies of secondary school teacher trainees

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.562 ^a	.316	.316	5.05555

a. Predictors: (Constant), School Practice quality

Source: Primary Data, 2024

The model summary Table 4.6 reveals a correlation coefficient (R), using the predictor; School Practice quality that was at .562^a, adjusted R squared of .316 and Standard error of estimate value of 5.05555. This implied that 56.2% (.562*100%) effect on competencies of secondary school teacher trainees was explained by School Practice quality while the remaining percentage variations of 43.8% were explained by other factors.

Therefore we reject the null hypothesis and confirm that, there is a significant relationship between School Practice quality and the competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in secondary schools of Mbarara City.

Chapter Five:

Discussion Conclusions and Recommendations

Overview

The study examined the effect of School practice quality on Competencies of Secondary School Teacher Trainees in Mbarara City. Therefore, this chapter presents discussion of findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Areas for further research based on the study findings.

Discussion of the Findings

Discussion was made in accordance with the study objectives using the findings and interpretations from data obtained during the field study as follows;

Major aspects of the School Practice Quality for the secondary school teacher trainees

The findings indicate that key aspects of school practice quality, such as feedback and assessment ($M = 4.3$), observation and reflection opportunities ($M = 4.1$), and supervision quality ($M = 4.0$), were rated highly by respondents. This aligns with Darling-Hammond (2006), who emphasizes that structured feedback and reflection are essential for developing effective teaching competencies. Similarly, Zeichner (2010) argues that teacher trainees benefit significantly from mentorship and observation opportunities, reinforcing the study *et als* findings that these aspects are well-integrated into school practice programs in Mbarara City.

However, areas such as professional development opportunities ($M = 3.5$) and inclusive teaching environments ($M = 3.6$) were rated lower, indicating areas for improvement. Feiman-Nemser (2001) highlights that school practice should not only focus on classroom management but also prepare teachers for diverse and inclusive learning settings. The low ratings on inclusion suggest that teacher trainees may not be adequately prepared to handle learners with special needs or

diverse linguistic backgrounds, supporting Shulman *et als* (1987) assertion that integrating pedagogical theory into practice remains a challenge in teacher education programs.

The concern about insufficient supervision and detailed feedback from some supervisors, as raised in the qualitative interviews, aligns with Goodlad (1990), who stresses that effective supervision must be consistent and involve constructive feedback. The findings suggest that while some trainees receive quality supervision, others experience minimal engagement, reinforcing the need for standardized mentorship approaches.

Major competencies of secondary school teacher trainees

The findings of this study reveal that secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City exhibit varying levels of competencies in subject matter knowledge, teaching skills, professional values, pedagogical knowledge, ethical conduct, and instructional planning. These findings align with previous scholarly works that emphasize the essential role of teacher competencies in shaping effective teaching and learning experiences.

Subject matter knowledge is a critical component of teacher effectiveness, as emphasized by Shulman (1987), who introduced the concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). He argued that for teachers to be effective, they must not only master their subject areas but also understand how to teach them effectively. The findings show that a significant proportion of respondents (77.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that teacher trainees possess adequate subject matter knowledge. This aligns with Darling-Hammond (2000), who asserted that teachers with strong content knowledge are better equipped to facilitate meaningful learning. However, minor discrepancies in the responses suggest that while most trainees demonstrate competence, there are still gaps in deeper subject specialization that need to be addressed through continuous learning.

Effective teaching skills are foundational in delivering quality education. According to Kyriacou (2009), effective teaching involves well-structured lessons, engaging instructional methods, and the ability to adapt to diverse learners. The study found that 77.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that teacher trainees possess adequate teaching skills, supporting the view that contemporary teacher training programs emphasize competency-based learning. Additionally, Borich (2016) highlighted that teaching skills are developed through hands-on experiences, practice teaching, and mentorship programs, which aligns with the findings that trainees exhibit varied levels of teaching effectiveness depending on their exposure to practical teaching experiences.

Pedagogical knowledge is essential in enabling teachers to translate content knowledge into effective teaching. According to Mishra and Koehler (2006), pedagogical knowledge involves understanding different teaching methodologies, student learning styles, and classroom management strategies. The study revealed that 82% of respondents agreed that teacher trainees possess strong pedagogical skills, indicating that training institutions in Mbarara City emphasize teaching methodologies. This aligns with findings by Grossman (1990), who argued that teachers with strong pedagogical knowledge can design engaging learning experiences that meet diverse student needs. However, the interview responses suggest that some trainees struggle with adapting pedagogy to real classroom settings, a challenge noted by Ball and Forzani (2009), who emphasized that theoretical pedagogical knowledge must be complemented with practical application.

Professional values and ethical conduct are fundamental to the teaching profession. Lunenburg (2010) highlights that teachers must demonstrate integrity, respect, fairness, and responsibility to foster a conducive learning environment. The study findings show that 78% of respondents believe

teacher trainees uphold professional values, resonating with research by Sanger & Osguthorpe (2011), which emphasizes that professional ethics influence teacher-student relationships, discipline, and the moral upbringing of learners. However, as indicated in the interviews, some trainees struggle with classroom management and maintaining professional boundaries, which aligns with UNESCO (2019), suggesting that ethics training should be integrated into teacher education programs to enhance professional behavior.

The ability to develop quality schemes of work and utilize effective instructional materials is a crucial competency for teacher trainees. According to Farrant (2004), well-prepared schemes of work enhance lesson organization, ensure syllabus coverage, and provide a roadmap for instruction. The study found that 72.3% of respondents agreed that teacher trainees prepare adequate schemes of work. However, findings from UNESCO (2017) indicate that many novice teachers struggle with lesson planning due to limited experience. The interviews further highlight that while most trainees prepare lesson plans, some fail to align them with instructional objectives and learner needs, a challenge also documented by Darling-Hammond (2010).

In terms of instructional materials, 74.8% of respondents agreed that teacher trainees effectively use teaching aids. This is consistent with studies by Bransford et al. (2005), who emphasize that the use of instructional materials enhances conceptual understanding and retention. However, some respondents noted that trainees lack creativity in selecting diverse teaching aids, supporting the argument by Tomlinson (2001) that teachers must be trained to use differentiated instructional materials to cater to diverse learners.

The findings align with existing literature on teacher competencies, reinforcing the argument that teacher trainees in Mbarara City exhibit strong subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, professional values, and ethical conduct. However, gaps exist in classroom adaptability, lesson planning,

instructional material utilization, and differentiated teaching strategies. This suggests a need for more practical exposure, mentorship programs, and targeted training to ensure that trainees transition effectively from theoretical knowledge to classroom application.

Relationship between school practice quality and secondary school teacher trainees

The findings align with previous research, such as that of Darling-Hammond (2006), who emphasized that effective school practice supervision enhances teacher competency, confidence, and subject mastery. The results showing that supervision improves subject competence and confidence are supported by Ingersoll & Strong (2011), who found that mentorship and instructional guidance positively impact teacher effectiveness and student performance. Furthermore, the identification of weak areas and professional mentorship as indicated in the study is consistent with Feiman-Nemser (2001), who argued that structured teacher training enables trainees to refine their teaching strategies and develop professionally.

The study also echoes findings by Rockoff (2008), who observed that frequent supervision and guidance build a teacher's instructional capacity and ability to manage classroom dynamics effectively. Additionally, the results that school practice enhances student-teacher relationships are supported by Pianta (2011), who highlighted that positive student-teacher interactions significantly contribute to classroom engagement and learning outcomes. Finally, the study affirms the argument by Zeichner (2010) that school practice programs provide trainees with hands-on experience that fosters professional growth and competence.

Conclusion

The study findings reveal that while school practice quality in Mbarara City is generally perceived positively, there are gaps in professional development opportunities, inclusive teaching

preparedness, and the consistency of supervision. Addressing these areas can enhance the effectiveness of teacher training and better prepare trainees for real-world teaching challenges.

The study demonstrates that secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City exhibit strong competencies in subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills, professional values, and ethical conduct. However, there are weaknesses in lesson planning, instructional material selection, and time management. Addressing these gaps through targeted interventions will enhance their preparedness for effective teaching.

The findings suggest that school practice quality has a significant positive relationship with the competencies of secondary school Teacher Trainees in Mbarara City. Regular supervision, mentorship, and head teacher involvement enhance trainees' confidence, subject competence, teaching techniques, and overall instructional skills. These results imply that continuous and structured school practice supervision is crucial for developing well-rounded and competent secondary school teachers.

Recommendations

From the discussion of findings, the researcher recommends the following:

To teacher training institutions. Teacher training institutions in Mbarara City should restructure their school practice programs by extending the duration from the current short periods to a minimum of 12-16 weeks per academic year to align with international best practices. The institutions need to establish robust partnerships with secondary schools to create structured mentorship programs where experienced teachers are formally trained and compensated for their supervisory roles. Furthermore, these institutions should integrate comprehensive pre-practice preparation through enhanced microteaching sessions, classroom management workshops, and pedagogical content knowledge seminars before deploying teacher trainees to schools. The

curriculum should also incorporate reflective practice components where trainees maintain detailed journals and participate in regular debriefing sessions to bridge the theory-practice gap effectively.

To the ministry of education and sports. The Ministry of Education and Sports should develop and implement national standards for school practice quality that include specific guidelines for supervision frequency, assessment criteria, and minimum duration requirements across all teacher training institutions. The ministry needs to allocate adequate funding for school practice programs, including resources for transportation, accommodation, and supervision activities to ensure consistent quality delivery. Additionally, the ministry should establish a certification program for school practice supervisors and cooperating teachers, ensuring they possess the necessary skills and knowledge to guide teacher trainees effectively. The ministry should also create a national database to monitor and evaluate school practice outcomes, using this data to inform policy decisions and continuous improvement initiatives in teacher preparation programs.

To secondary schools. Secondary schools serving as practice venues should establish formal school practice coordination units led by designated teacher mentors who are trained in supervisory and assessment techniques. These schools need to create supportive learning environments by providing teacher trainees with adequate teaching resources, classroom space, and opportunities to participate in various school activities beyond classroom teaching, such as co-curricular activities, parent-teacher meetings, and administrative tasks. Schools should also implement structured orientation programs for incoming teacher trainees, familiarizing them with school policies, student demographics, curriculum expectations, and school culture to minimize adjustment challenges. Furthermore, cooperating schools should maintain regular communication

with teacher training institutions through formal feedback mechanisms to ensure alignment between school expectations and institutional learning objectives.

To teacher trainees and trainers. Teacher trainees should take proactive responsibility for their professional development by engaging in thorough preparation before beginning school practice, including reviewing curriculum materials, understanding assessment methods, and researching the specific context of their assigned schools. They need to maintain professional attitudes by demonstrating punctuality, appropriate dress code, respect for school authorities, and commitment to continuous learning throughout their practice period. Teacher trainees should actively seek feedback from supervising teachers and mentors, implementing suggested improvements and reflecting critically on their teaching experiences to enhance their pedagogical competencies. Additionally, trainees should collaborate effectively with their peers by sharing experiences, challenges, and best practices while maintaining professional relationships with students, colleagues, and the broader school community to maximize their learning opportunities and professional growth.

Areas for Further Study

- Long-term Career Performance and Retention Rates of Secondary School Teachers: A Five-Year Follow-up Study of Teacher Trainees from Mbarara City
- Comparative analysis of school practice quality across teacher training institutions in Western Uganda.
- The role of digital technologies in enhancing school practice quality and teacher trainee competencies in Secondary Schools.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Questionnaire for Teacher Trainees and Mentor teachers

Dear respondent,

I am Bitarinsha Charles Lwanga a student of Master of Education Administration and Planning of Bishop Stuart University carrying out an academic research on the influence of school practice in enhancing competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara city. Therefore, the success of this research project will substantially depend on your help and co-operation. I hereby request you to respond as honestly as possible and to the best of your knowledge. The information provided will exclusively be treated with utmost confidence. Please give answers in the spaces provided and tick (tick the appropriate)

Section A: Bio-data of respondents

1) Gender of the respondent

Male ☐

Female ☐

2) Age of the respondent

Below 30years ☐ 31-40 years ☐

41-50 years ☐ 51- 60 years ☐

3) Marital status of the respondent

Single ☐ Married ☐

Others specify

4. Highest level of education

(a) Certificate ☐

(b) Ordinary Diploma ☐

(c) Bachelor *et als* Degree ☐

☐

(d) Postgraduate

(e) Others (please specify)

.....

Section B: Aspects of the School Practice Quality for the secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara City.

For each of the following statement, please tick where applicable the extent to which you agree using the Likert scale. SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; NS = Not Sure; D = Disagree; SD, = Strongly Disagree

Response	SD	D	NS	A	SA
Span and period of school practice					
Frequency of teacher trainee supervision					
Quality of Supervision					
Supervision and Mentorship					
Opportunities for Observation and Reflection					
Integration of Theory and Practice					
Inclusive and Diverse Teaching Environments					
Feedback and Assessment					
Professional Development Opportunities:					

Section C: Major Competencies of Secondary School Teacher Trainees in Mbarara City.

For each of the following statement, please tick where applicable the extent to which you agree using the Likert scale. SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; NS = Not Sure; D = Disagree; SD, = Strongly Disagree

Response	SD	D	NS	A	SA
Subject Matter Knowledge					
Teaching skills					
Professional Values					
Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills					
Ethical and Professional Conduct					
Subject Matter Expertise					
Effective use of Teaching Methods					
Quality Schemes of work					
Effective Instructional Materials					

Section D: Relationship between School Practice Quality and Secondary School Teacher Trainees in Mbarara City.

For each of the following statement, please tick where applicable the extent to which you agree using the Likert scale. SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; NS = Not Sure; D = Disagree; SD, = Strongly Disagree

Response	SD	D	NS	A	SA
School practice students are supervised on daily basis					

Head teacher visits the classroom to ensure Teacher Trainee content delivery is in line with recommended syllabus					
School practice students supervision has Improved Teacher Trainees <i>et al</i> Subject Competence					
Teacher Trainees <i>et al</i> Build Confidence in Teaching as a result of constant school practice students supervision					
Trainees Learn New Teaching Techniques during School practice students supervision					
During, school practice students supervision Teacher Trainees Learn their weak areas					
Teacher Trainees <i>et al</i> are Mentored Professionally by the supervisors during school practice					
Trainees gain Teaching Experience with the help of the supervisors					
School practice improves on Students <i>et al</i> Teachers Relationships					
Support supervision has helped Teacher Trainees to manage time and be more regular in school					
School practice helps Teacher Trainees in designing appropriate instructional methods					

Appendix II: Interview guide for; Head teachers, School Practice Coordinators and Faculty Deans

I am Bitarinsha Charles Lwanga a student of Master of Arts Degree in Education Administration and Planning of Bishop Stuart University carrying out academic research on the influence of school practice in enhancing competencies of secondary school teacher trainees in Mbarara city. Therefore, the success of this research project will substantially depend on your help and co-operation. I hereby request you to respond as honestly as possible and to the best of your knowledge. The information provided will exclusively be treated with utmost confidence.

Questions

1. Share with me your experience with school practice students you have ever supervised?
2. How long do they normally spend at school practice?
3. How adequate can you rate their stay at school practice compared to their education needs?
4. How do you normally determine their supervisors at the school of practice?
5. How does their frequency of supervision affect their competence?
6. How often do school based supervisors supervise school practice students in relation to university supervisors?
7. How does the education qualification of supervisors affect Teacher Trainee competence during school practice?
8. What challenges do Teacher Trainee experience in a bid to improve their competence in during school practice?
9. What do you think needs to be done to improve their pedagogical competence during school practice?

Thank you for your time

Appendix III: Budget

Code	Particulars	Unit	Unit cost (Ugx)	Total cost (Ugx)
01	Transport			
	Data collection	5 times	30,000	150,000
	Meeting supervisor	3 times	60,000	180,000
	Documentation	3times	40,000	120,000
02	Accommodation			
	Data collection	2 times	30,000	60,000
	Documentation	2 times	40,000	80,000
	Compensation	274	5,000	1,370,000
03	Meals			
	Data collection	10 times	10,000	100,000
	Meeting supervisor	3 times	20,000	60,000
	Documentation	3 times	40,000	80,000
04	Stationery			
	Reams of paper	2	15,000	30,000
	Clipboard file	1	10,000	10,000
	Pens	5	500	2,500
	Pencils	2	250	500
	Bag	1	20,000	20,000
	Box file	1	10,000	10,000
	Secretarial work	-	-	-
	Printing	200pgs	1,000	200,000
	Photocopying	600pgs	100	60,000
	Internet	General	General	100,000
	Binding	4 books	10,000	40,000
	TOTAL			2,673,000

