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CHALLENGES FACED BY PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS DURING MICRO TEACHING

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Abstract: *This study explores the challenges faced by pre-service teachers during microteaching sessions, focusing on instructional preparation, psychological readiness, and classroom management. Despite the importance of microteaching in teacher education, many student-teachers struggle to navigate its demands, which may affect their professional development. A qualitative research design was employed, involving classroom observations of microteaching sessions, questionnaires completed by 30 participants, and unstructured interviews with 15 student-teachers. Data were triangulated and thematically analysed, with descriptive percentages used to summarise patterns observed in the qualitative data. Findings indicate that a substantial proportion of participants experienced difficulties with lesson preparation and technology use, with approximately 75% reporting related challenges and technical disruptions observed in around 60% of sessions. In addition, about 68% of participants expressed anxiety related to peer and instructor evaluation, reflected in physical signs of nervousness and reduced teaching confidence. Classroom management challenges were evident in approximately 45% of sessions, largely due to disruptive peer behaviours that affected lesson flow and perceived authority. These findings highlight the multifaceted challenges encountered in microteaching and suggest that teacher education programmes should provide integrated support targeting technological competence, emotional resilience, and classroom management skills to better prepare pre-service teachers for real classroom contexts.*

Keywords : Microteaching, Challenges, Pre-service teachers.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji tantangan yang dihadapi oleh calon guru selama sesi mikro-mengajar, dengan fokus pada persiapan instruksional, kesiapan psikologis, dan manajemen kelas. Meskipun mikro-mengajar memiliki peran penting dalam pendidikan guru, banyak calon guru mengalami kesulitan dalam menghadapi tuntutan tersebut secara efektif, yang berdampak pada perkembangan profesional mereka. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini, meliputi observasi sesi mikro-mengajar, kuesioner yang diisi oleh 30 peserta, serta wawancara tidak terstruktur dengan 15 calon guru. Data kemudian ditriangulasi untuk mengidentifikasi tema-tema umum. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 75% peserta mengalami kesulitan dalam persiapan pelajaran dan penggunaan teknologi, sementara 60% sesi mengalami gangguan teknis. Selain itu, 68% peserta melaporkan mengalami kecemasan terkait evaluasi dari rekan dan instruktur, yang tampak melalui tanda-tanda fisik kegugupan dan menurunnya kepercayaan diri dalam mengajar. Tantangan manajemen kelas juga diamati pada 45% sesi, terutama disebabkan oleh perilaku mengganggu dari rekan yang memengaruhi kelancaran pelajaran dan otoritas pengajar. Temuan ini menyoroti kompleksitas berbagai tantangan dalam mikro-mengajar dan menunjukkan bahwa program pendidikan guru perlu menyediakan dukungan terintegrasi yang mencakup keterampilan teknologi, ketahanan emosional, dan manajemen kelas untuk meningkatkan kesiapan calon guru dalam menghadapi lingkungan kelas nyata.

Kata kunci : Mikroteaching, Tantangan, Calon Guru

INTRODUCTION

Microteaching has emerged as a fundamental component in contemporary teacher education programs, offering pre-service teachers a structured and supportive environment to practice and refine their instructional techniques (see recent studies, e.g., *Author A, 2022; Author B, 2023; Author C, 2024*) to underscore its current relevance and empirical support. It has become an indispensable element within contemporary teacher education programs, providing pre-service teachers with a structured and supportive platform to practice, evaluate, and enhance their instructional skills. Rooted in the principles of experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984), microteaching allows student-teachers to engage actively in a cyclical process of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting on their teaching performance. This approach, which typically involves teaching short lessons to a small group of peers who simulate actual students, enables student-teachers to focus on specific teaching skills and receive immediate feedback from both instructors and peers (Purwanti & Suhargo, 2022). By breaking down the complexities of classroom instruction into manageable segments, microteaching facilitates the development of pedagogical competencies such as lesson planning, questioning techniques, and student engagement strategies (Mafulah & Febrianti, 2023). Furthermore, it encourages reflective practice, allowing future educators to critically assess their teaching methods and make evidence-based improvements. Despite these pedagogical advantages, pre-service teachers often face several challenges when participating in microteaching sessions. These difficulties may include anxiety related to peer judgment, uncertainty about instructional strategies, time constraints during lesson delivery, and issues in managing classroom behaviour, even in a simulated setting (Gokgoz-Kurt & Karaferye, 2023). Such challenges highlight the need for comprehensive support structures and scaffolded guidance to ensure that microteaching experiences translate into meaningful professional growth for aspiring educators.

In addition to pedagogical and instructional challenges, pre-service teachers frequently encounter technical and psychological barriers during microteaching sessions that can hinder their overall performance and professional development. Technical difficulties, such as operating digital tools—including laptops, projectors, and multimedia lesson materials—often interrupt the flow of instruction and contribute to increased stress levels, ultimately diminishing the confidence of student-teachers (Muslimin et al., 2022). These issues are particularly significant in modern teaching contexts where digital literacy is a fundamental skill. Moreover, psychological challenges, such as performance anxiety and fear of negative evaluation from peers or instructors, further exacerbate the difficulty of delivering effective micro-lessons (Wettstein, Ramseier, & Scherzinger, 2021). The high-stakes nature of being observed and assessed, even in a simulated environment, can lead to cognitive overload and a reduction in teaching effectiveness. Classroom management also remains a complex issue in microteaching, as the simulated setting—often composed of peers role-playing as students—can produce unpredictable behaviours, including inattentiveness, lack of cooperation, or even intentional disruptions meant to mimic real-world scenarios (Mafulah & Febrianti, 2023). These dynamics make it challenging for pre-service teachers to maintain classroom control and apply effective behavioural strategies.

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Understanding and addressing these multifaceted challenges is essential for designing more effective teacher education programs that provide not only technical training and emotional support but also practical strategies for classroom management and instructional resilience.

Although a growing body of literature has explored the pedagogical value of microteaching in teacher education, much of the existing research tends to focus on its benefits for skill acquisition, reflective practice, and professional preparedness (Purwanti & Suhargo, 2022; Mafulah & Febrianti, 2023). However, there remains a significant gap in the literature concerning the specific, interrelated challenges—pedagogical, technical, and psychological—that pre-service teachers face during microteaching sessions. While some studies have addressed these challenges in isolation (e.g., anxiety or technological barriers), few have provided a comprehensive and integrated analysis that captures the full complexity of the microteaching experience from the perspective of pre-service teachers (Wettstein et al., 2021; Muslimin et al., 2022). Moreover, existing research often relies on quantitative survey data, with limited attention to qualitative, observational, or contextual approaches that could offer deeper insight into how these challenges unfold in real-time during microteaching sessions. This gap highlights the need for contextually grounded studies that investigate the dynamic interplay of instructional, emotional, and technological factors in microteaching, and how these affect pre-service teachers' learning outcomes and professional development. Addressing this gap is essential for informing more holistic and responsive teacher education practices.

Understanding these multifaceted challenges is crucial for improving the design and implementation of teacher education programs. For this reason, the present study is titled *Challenges Faced by Pre-Service Teachers During Microteaching: An Observational Study*, aiming to explore and analyze the specific obstacles encountered by student-teachers during microteaching sessions and their implications for teacher training practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Instructional preparation is a fundamental determinant of success in microteaching, as it directly affects the flow and effectiveness of lesson delivery. Effective preparation encompasses not only content mastery and pedagogical planning but also proficiency with technological tools essential for modern classrooms. Muslimin et al. (2022) emphasize the critical role of technological competence, particularly in operating devices such as laptops and projectors, to ensure lessons proceed smoothly without technical interruptions. This notion aligns with the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework proposed by Mishra and Koehler (2006), which argues that teachers must integrate technological skills seamlessly with pedagogical strategies and subject matter knowledge to optimize instructional outcomes. Inadequate preparation in this area can lead to disruptions that detract from learning and increase frustration for both instructors and learners.

Sukadi and Safitri (2023) further corroborate these findings by reporting that pre-service teachers frequently encounter challenges in integrating technology during microteaching sessions, which often results in technical difficulties and compromises lesson continuity. This suggests that insufficient technical preparation

not only undermines the instructional process but may also negatively impact student-teachers' confidence and engagement. Such challenges highlight the need for comprehensive training in both technological tools and pedagogical application, reinforcing the argument that thorough instructional preparation is indispensable for effective microteaching. Consequently, teacher education programs must prioritize building technological competence alongside traditional teaching skills to equip future educators for increasingly digitalized learning environments.

Psychological readiness, encompassing emotional stability and self-efficacy, plays a critical role in shaping pre-service teachers' performance during microteaching sessions. According to Wettstein, Ramseier, and Scherzinger (2021), educators who demonstrate higher levels of emotional stability are better equipped to manage classroom dynamics effectively and foster positive teacher-student relationships, which are essential for creating a supportive learning environment. This finding aligns with Bandura's (1997) concept of self-efficacy, which posits that individuals with a strong belief in their capabilities are more likely to persevere through challenges, employ effective strategies, and maintain resilience in stressful situations. Conversely, anxiety experienced during microteaching, often triggered by peer observation and fear of negative evaluation, can undermine pre-service teachers' confidence and impede their ability to communicate effectively with students (Mafulah & Febrianti, 2023). Elevated anxiety levels may lead to cognitive overload, reducing working memory capacity and limiting responsiveness in real-time classroom interactions (Sweller, 1988). Thus, fostering psychological readiness through interventions that enhance emotional regulation and self-efficacy is crucial in teacher education programs to improve the microteaching experience and prepare future educators for the demands of actual classroom teaching.

Classroom management remains a significant challenge for pre-service teachers, even within the controlled environment of microteaching simulations. Gokgoz-Kurt and Karaferye (2023) highlight that managing inattentive or disruptive peers—who role-play as students—can be particularly demanding, as these behaviors often disrupt the flow of instruction and detract from the teaching experience. Such challenges align with Kounin's (1970) theory of effective classroom management, which emphasizes the teacher's ability to maintain "withitness"—an awareness of classroom dynamics—and to manage overlapping activities to prevent misbehaviour. Similarly, the behaviour management approach outlined by Canter and Canter's (2001) assertive discipline theory underscores the importance of clear expectations, consistent consequences, and teacher assertiveness to establish and maintain classroom order.

Furthermore, Skinner's (1953) operant conditioning theory provides a foundational understanding of how reinforcement and consequences shape student behaviour. In microteaching, pre-service teachers' ability to apply positive reinforcement techniques—such as praise or rewards—can encourage desirable behaviors, while appropriate consequences can reduce disruptions. However, Mafulah and Febrianti (2023) observed that peer behaviors like chatting or ignoring instructions undermine the student-teacher's authority, making lesson delivery less effective. These peer dynamics demonstrate the challenge of transferring theoretical classroom

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management strategies into practice, particularly in simulated settings where the social roles of peers as both collaborators and disruptors may blur.

Together, these theories illuminate the multifaceted nature of classroom management, emphasizing that pre-service teachers must develop not only practical behavioral strategies but also the interpersonal skills to assert authority and engage students effectively. Microteaching simulations provide an invaluable context for practicing these skills, enabling pre-service teachers to experiment with diverse management techniques and build confidence in handling the complexities of real classroom environments.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design to gain an in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by pre-service teachers during microteaching sessions. Combining multiple qualitative methods—observations, questionnaires, and unstructured interviews—allowed for methodological triangulation, enhancing the credibility and richness of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Observations were conducted during actual microteaching sessions, with the researcher adopting a non-participant observer role. A structured observation protocol, consisting of a checklist of key teaching behaviors (e.g., lesson preparation, technology use, classroom management strategies), was used alongside supplementary field notes to capture additional contextual details. Observers were trained to ensure consistent and systematic recording, supporting the replicability of the study. This approach aligns with ethnographic principles emphasizing contextualized, real-time data collection to capture authentic behaviors and interactions (Angrosino, 2007).

Questionnaires were distributed to 30 student-teachers and contained open-ended items only, enabling participants to articulate their experiences and perceived challenges in their own words. This qualitative approach allows for nuanced insights into instructional, psychological, and managerial difficulties (Foddy, 1994). To complement these findings, unstructured interviews were conducted with 15 selected participants to explore more nuanced emotional and technical struggles in greater depth. Unstructured interviews, characterized by their flexible, participant-led nature, enable researchers to probe complex issues and capture rich, detailed narratives (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Data from all sources—observations, questionnaires, and interviews—were systematically triangulated to enhance validity and reliability by identifying recurring themes and patterns related to instructional preparation, psychological factors, and classroom management. Triangulation, as described by Denzin (1978), involves the use of multiple data sources and methods to cross-verify information, thereby reducing potential biases and increasing the robustness of qualitative research outcomes. Thematic analysis was then employed to code and categorize the data, allowing for the emergence of salient themes that reflect the multifaceted challenges experienced by pre-service teachers during microteaching (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This comprehensive approach ensured a nuanced understanding of instructional, emotional, and managerial difficulties, providing a strong foundation for evidence-based recommendations in teacher education.

RESULT AND FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the study exploring the challenges faced by pre-service teachers during microteaching sessions. Data were collected through observations, questionnaires, and unstructured interviews and analysed using thematic triangulation. The analysis identified three primary areas of difficulty experienced by participants: instructional preparation, psychological and emotional readiness, and classroom management. Each theme is discussed in detail below, supported by quantitative data and illustrative qualitative excerpts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles pre-service teachers encounter in microteaching contexts.

Instructional Preparation Challenges

Seventy-five percent of participants reported encountering significant difficulties during lesson preparation, particularly when it came to selecting appropriate instructional materials and managing the technological equipment required for their microteaching sessions. This suggests that a substantial proportion of pre-service teachers struggle not only with content organization but also with integrating the necessary tools to deliver their lessons effectively. Observational data further supported these self-reported challenges, revealing that approximately 60% of the observed microteaching sessions were disrupted by technical issues, such as projector malfunctions and problems with laptop connectivity. These technical disruptions frequently caused delays and interruptions that hindered the smooth flow of instruction, reducing the overall quality of the teaching experience (Muslimin et al., 2022).

Interviews with participants shed light on the emotional and cognitive consequences of these technological difficulties. One participant expressed feelings of nervousness and uncertainty regarding the use of classroom technology, stating, "*I was nervous because I wasn't sure if the infocus would work, and I couldn't control the laptop well. It made me lose focus*." This extract exemplifies how technological challenges can undermine pre-service teachers' confidence and concentration, ultimately impacting their instructional effectiveness. The uncertainty surrounding the operation of teaching aids not only disrupts lesson delivery but also elevates stress levels, making it harder for student-teachers to maintain composure and focus on pedagogical goals. These findings highlight the critical need for improved training in the use of educational technology within teacher education programs to bolster both technical competence and teaching confidence.

Psychological and Emotional Challenges

A significant proportion of respondents, approximately sixty-eight percent, reported experiencing anxiety during their microteaching sessions. This anxiety primarily originated from a fear of being judged by both their peers and instructors, highlighting the evaluative pressure inherent in the microteaching environment. Observational data corroborated these self-reports, with nearly half of the student-teachers exhibiting observable signs of nervousness, including trembling voices and reduced eye contact, which are commonly recognized indicators of performance anxiety (Wettstein, Ramseier, & Scherzinger, 2021). Such manifestations not only affect verbal and non-verbal communication but may also impede the overall effectiveness of

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instructional delivery.

Further insights were gained through interviews, where participants expressed that the evaluative aspect of peer observation heightened their self-consciousness and negatively influenced their teaching performance. One student-teacher reflected on this experience, stating, "*It felt like a real classroom, and I was scared of being judged if I couldn't manage the class well*." This sentiment illustrates how the perceived pressure of assessment in a simulated setting can evoke emotional stress akin to that experienced in actual classroom teaching. These findings underscore the importance of psychological readiness, particularly emotional stability and self-efficacy, as crucial factors in the development of effective teaching skills (Bandura, 1997). Addressing these emotional challenges within teacher education programs is essential to help pre-service teachers build resilience and confidence in their instructional roles.

Classroom Management and Peer Behavior

Disruptive behaviors, including chatting and inattentiveness, were observed in approximately 45% of the microteaching sessions, presenting significant challenges for pre-service teachers in maintaining classroom control and ensuring the continuity of lesson delivery (Gokgoz-Kurt & Karaferye, 2023; Mafulah & Febrianti, 2023). Such peer behaviors not only interrupt the flow of instruction but also undermine the authority and confidence of student-teachers, who are still developing their classroom management skills. The unpredictable nature of these disruptions can lead to increased stress and decreased engagement, making it difficult for pre-service teachers to implement effective teaching strategies and maintain student focus. Moreover, the presence of inattentive or disruptive peers in a simulated environment reflects real-world classroom dynamics, highlighting the complexity of classroom management even within controlled settings. These findings emphasize the need for targeted training that equips future educators with practical techniques to manage disruptive behaviors and foster positive peer interactions during both simulated and actual classroom experiences.

DISCUSSION

Consistent with the findings of Muslimin et al. (2022) and Sukadi and Safitri (2023), this study confirms that technical difficulties and a lack of familiarity with teaching aids and educational technology remain significant obstacles for pre-service teachers during microteaching. These challenges not only disrupt lesson flow but also undermine the confidence and instructional efficacy of novice educators. Furthermore, the anxiety and nervousness reported by participants align closely with the findings of Wettstein, Ramseier, and Scherzinger (2021), who emphasized the critical role of emotional stability in enhancing teaching performance. Their research underscores how psychological factors such as self-efficacy and anxiety management are pivotal in enabling teachers to perform effectively, particularly in evaluative settings like microteaching.

Classroom management challenges identified in this study, particularly those stemming from peer disruptions, mirror those described by Gokgoz-Kurt and Karaferye (2023) and Mafulah and Febrianti (2023). These studies highlight the inherent complexity of managing simulated classrooms, where the unpredictable

behaviors of peers can mimic real-world classroom dynamics but without the formal authority typically granted to practicing teachers. Such findings emphasize that effective classroom management requires not only behavioral strategies but also confidence-building and adaptive skills that can be nurtured through targeted training.

Taken together, these results suggest that a comprehensive approach integrating technological training, psychological support, and practical classroom management strategies is essential to enhance the efficacy of microteaching programs. Providing pre-service teachers with scaffolded support in these three interconnected domains can foster greater instructional competence, emotional resilience, and classroom control—key attributes for successful teaching both in simulated and real educational environments.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study emphasize that micro teaching presents a complex set of challenges that require not only pedagogical knowledge but also technological skills and emotional resilience (Muslimin et al., 2022; Wettstein, Ramseier, & Scherzinger, 2021). Addressing these challenges through integrated teacher education programs is essential for preparing pre-service teachers for the realities of classroom teaching (Purwanti & Suhargo, 2022).

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations emerge for teacher education programs aiming to enhance the effectiveness of microteaching as a core component of pre-service teacher training.

Enhance Technological Training and Support. Given the significant technical challenges encountered by student-teachers, teacher education programs should incorporate comprehensive training focused on the use of educational technology. This includes hands-on workshops for operating projectors, laptops, and multimedia software, as well as troubleshooting common technical issues. Embedding these skills within the curriculum will increase technological self-efficacy, reduce lesson disruptions, and improve overall instructional delivery (Mishra & Koehler, 2006).

Develop Psychological Preparedness and Emotional Resilience: To address anxiety and nervousness during microteaching, programs should integrate psychological support mechanisms such as stress management workshops, mindfulness exercises, and peer support groups. Encouraging reflective practice and fostering a growth mindset can help pre-service teachers build emotional stability and confidence (Bandura, 1997). Additionally, reducing the evaluative pressure during early microteaching sessions through formative, non-graded feedback may help alleviate performance anxiety.

Strengthen Classroom Management Training: Classroom management remains a key challenge, particularly when managing disruptive peer behaviors in simulated settings. Teacher education programs should provide explicit instruction and modeling of effective behavioral strategies grounded in theories such as Kounin's with-it-ness and overlapping (Kounin, 1970) and Canter's Assertive Discipline model (Canter & Canter, 2001). Role-playing exercises and scenario-based practices can better prepare pre-service teachers to respond adaptively to classroom disruptions, thereby fostering classroom control and engagement.

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Integrate Holistic and Scaffolded Support Systems: The interconnected nature of technological, psychological, and classroom management challenges calls for a holistic approach in microteaching programs. Structured support that simultaneously addresses these domains—such as mentorship by experienced educators, regular formative assessments, and targeted feedback—can scaffold pre-service teachers' development effectively. Such integrative support will promote instructional resilience and prepare student-teachers for the multifaceted demands of real classroom environments.

In conclusion, implementing these recommendations can significantly improve microteaching outcomes by equipping pre-service teachers with the necessary technical skills, emotional readiness, and classroom management competencies essential for effective teaching. Teacher education programs that prioritize these areas will better prepare future educators to navigate the complexities of modern classrooms and foster positive learning experiences for their students.

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