

Assessing Educational Practices in Local Applied Undergraduate Universities Toward Educational Practices Modification

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Abstract: This study aimed to assess educational practices, including student-faculty interaction, collaborative learning, active learning engagement, feedback management, and identification of diverse learning, and identify challenges faced by senior normal students. A mixed methods research design was employed, combining a survey to assess respondents' perceptions of educational practices and an analysis of interviews to identify challenges. The sample comprised 400 senior normal students from four Chinese universities, selected through stratified sampling. The findings revealed strong agreement among the respondents in their assessment of educational practices. Regardless of sex and course, the participants shared similar perceptions of educational practices. The challenges faced by senior normal students encompassed a range of issues, including limited understanding of students' conditions, inadequate guidance, reliance on online resources without innovation, and insufficient attention to individual differences. The results provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic and highlight areas for future interventions and enhancements in the education system for senior normal students. The study's mixed methods approach, with a large and diverse sample, contributes to a robust analysis of educational practices and challenges, offering valuable insights for educational stakeholders and policymakers.

Keywords: Student-Teacher Interaction; Collaborative Learning; Active Learning Engagement; Feedback Management; Identification of Diverse Learning Needs.

1. Introduction

Good educational practices provide the groundwork for effective teaching and learning for teacher education. These strategies have been widely explored in higher education and are presented as a starting point to help instructors develop and deliver their course (Iowa State University, 2022). For Arindale (2019), good educational practice includes broad variety of individual actions, policies, and programmatic methods that aim to generate positive changes in student attitudes or academic behaviors. The creative teaching tactics that are now being used in classrooms all started out as concepts that were tried and then refined by the people who developed them. This provides evidence that the term best practice may be understood to mean instructional strategies that have been shown to be successful.

Taylor (2023) affirms that there will be ongoing progress and change in the field of teacher education throughout the next several decades. Institutional institutions are responsible for adapting to new advances in educational technology, the expansion of human knowledge, and the challenge of developing a curriculum that is relevant and suitable despite the vast amount of content that is now accessible. The ways in which student teachers acquire knowledge will be understood in new ways. The structures of power in society will continue to shift, and it is expected that there will be a greater understanding of the necessity of moral and personal education in a world that is more characterized by a diversity of values and objectives. The education and preparation of teachers will be impacted in a variety of ways as a result of all of these variables.

There is evidence of a profound transformation in the structure of ideas and beliefs that underpin the preparation of teachers in every country, regardless of whether or not any

substantial institutional reforms are being considered. But it is quite improbable that the future decades will witness the development of any kind of all-encompassing educational system that is comparable to those that were prevalent in the 19th century. There is not likely to be a single learning or teaching theory that can accommodate the wide variety of individual requirements and social systems. Though while it is prudent to depend on existing procedures that have been shown to be effective, it is both a challenge and a pleasure for educators in today's world to develop these practices and make them even more effective. Student are expected to think creatively and with an eye toward the future.

1.1. Background of the Study

In China, as an important part of teacher education, the educational practice should be given full attention in the process of teacher professionalization. Educational practice, as an important practical bridge connecting pre-employment and post-employment teachers' professional development at different stages, is a key link in obtaining relevant practitioner qualifications, an important stage for normal students to improve their teaching ability, and directly affects the results of professional certification. As a qualified professional teacher, in addition to having professional knowledge and skills, more importantly, it is necessary to have professional practical ability, that is, the ability to put knowledge and skills into practice, which needs to be reflected in educational practice.

Educational practice is an important part of cultivating normal students' independent teaching ability and professional practice ability. It provides a practice place, professional instructors and adaptation time for normal students to change from the role of students to the role of teachers. The evaluation of educational practice is an

important basis for testing the effect of practice and measuring the teaching abilities of normal students. Educational practice evaluation is of great value in improving the process of practical education, and the implementation status of educational practice evaluation has also become an important indicator to measure the quality of training students in normal schools. The "Overall Plan for Deepening Educational Evaluation Reform in the New Era" (2020) clearly states that "educational practice evaluation is related to the direction of educational development, and what kind of evaluation baton is there will be what kind of school-running orientation. Therefore, how to reform the evaluation system of educational practice, ensure the high-quality development of educational practice, and promote normal students to "practice teacher ethics", "learn to teach", "learn to educate people" and "learn to develop" has important theoretical and practical significance.

1.2. Significance of the Study

Under the background of the national education evaluation reform, combined with the concept of professional certification of teachers, this study takes the normal students who have completed the educational practice and the teachers who participated in the management of educational practice as the research objects, and analyzes the current situation of educational practice evaluation through questionnaire survey. From the perspective of normal students and managers, this paper discovers the relevant problems in the evaluation of educational practice, and provides a reference for further improving the training system of normal students.

The country and universities attach great importance to educational practice

Since the 1970s, as the result of educational practice reform in normal colleges --the educational practice has come to the stage, the promulgation and implementation of national policies, and the continuous exploration of the theory and practice of normal college practice models have highlighted the importance of educational practice models. The "Report on the Construction of Basic Education Teachers' Renewal Project in Poverty-stricken Areas" attracted the attention of the Ministry of Education, major educational media and newspapers. Under the promotion of the national government and the Ministry of Education, normal colleges and universities responded positively, and China's educational practice has begun to take shape, with remarkable results. The educational practice, which originated from the social significance of poverty alleviation and support education, has been hailed as a "win-win model" that combines the advantages of teacher training, the significance of teacher professional development and the social significance of rural support education, which has caused a wave of reform in normal colleges and universities and the country of great importance. "Measures for the Implementation of Free Education for Normal Students in Normal Universities Directly under the Ministry of Education (Trial)" points out: Strengthen the teaching practice link, improve the system of half-year internships for normal students in primary and secondary schools during school, and the six ministry-affiliated normal colleges that enroll free normal students. The free teacher education implementation plan also emphasizes the combination of educational practice and rural teaching support. In 2010, the "National Training Program" was fully implemented by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance. One of the main contents was the

replacement of rural primary and secondary school teachers for off-the-job training. In 2017, the Ministry of Education implemented the "Implementation Measures for the Certification of Teacher-training Majors in Ordinary Colleges and Universities", which clearly stated that colleges and universities should establish internship plans, internship teaching plans, lecture evaluation records, internship summaries and Assessment, etc. as the main content of normal graduate education practice portfolio. Educational practice includes educational probation, educational practice, educational study and other links. One semester of educational practice refers to 18 teaching weeks.

In the 21st century, with the reform of teacher education and the development of teacher professionalization, it has become the requirement of the times to improve the practical curriculum of teacher education, improve the practical ability of normal students, and establish a new model of integrated training of pre-service and post-service teacher education. As the basis and core of the integration of teacher training models, educational practice has increasingly become the subject of constant attention in the field of teacher education in various countries in the world, showing a new trend. Under the background of the new round of curriculum reform, improving the quality of teachers, promoting the professional development of teachers, and building a team of high-quality teachers are new requirements for the development of teacher education made by the country in line with the trend of the new era. In the professional development of teachers, educational theory research and educational practice training are the main development cores, and the combination of the two is the core issue. Educational practice has become an important link between educational theory and practice, a key link in promoting the professional development of teachers, and the most important thing in teacher education. Reforming and continuously improving educational practice is the eternal theme and the appeal of the times to promote the professional development of teachers in the new era (Zhao Xueyan, 2020). As an important form of educational practice reform and innovative teacher education practice, educational practice plays an important role in promoting the professionalization of teachers. The educational practice mainly refers to the teaching practice activities in which normal students complete teaching work under the background of national policies, according to the teaching plan and syllabus, guided by the school and teachers. In the process of educational practice, through direct teaching experience, while constantly testing and revising theoretical knowledge, normal students also rethink educational activities at a deeper level. Knowledge promotes a better combination of educational theoretical research and practical knowledge. In the process, it not only retests and revises the original theory, but also constantly reinterprets and creates educational practice. The so-called "knowledge comes from practice". Through educational practice, the professional quality of teachers has been continuously improved, the professional development level of teachers has been promoted, and a team of high-quality teachers has been built.

Meanwhile, this study will be beneficial for normal students. In the process of educational practice, the evaluation criteria can be more clearly defined, so that normal students can have a correct understanding of their pre-class teaching preparation, classroom teaching, positive reflection after class, and other teaching abilities. Know and understand, so that in the future education and teaching work, they can learn from

each other's strengths, achieve better growth and development, and provide them with more powerful support and help on the road to realize the professional development of teachers. It can also help normal students correct their attitudes, explore potentials, understand the profession of teachers during the internship process, adjust the internship plan in time, improve the ability of education and teaching practice, understand the duties of teachers, and establish a preliminary understanding for them to embark on the road of teachers, so as to improve their own teaching Practical ability and innovation level.

Educational practice managers in colleges and universities can also be benefited by this study. They can optimize and adjust educational practice programs in a timely manner, promote educational practice activities to play a real role, guide educational practice managers to conduct evaluation management more scientifically and rationally, and improve evaluation effects. Further, internship managers in the teaching practice can observe and give feedback on the performance of the interns in real time, and use their professional level and experience to guide the interns, which helps them to reflect on themselves, improve teaching methods, and improve Self-teaching skills.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

Through this study, colleges and universities can start revising and supplement the educational practice plan for normal students in a timely manner, update the professional training plan for teachers in a timely manner, improve the overall quality of normal students' training, and fully exert the human education function of colleges and universities, so as to cultivate a class of talents for the society. A large number of high-quality and high-level excellent teachers make the teaching team more professional.

Finally, teaching practice base can be relatively stable and can provide a suitable educational practice environment and practice guidance to meet the educational practice needs of normal students. No less than 1 educational practice base for every 20 interns. The construction of teaching practice base is directly related to the quality of practice teaching, and plays a very important role in the cultivation of high-quality talents' practical ability, innovation and entrepreneurial ability. The

construction of teaching practice bases is an important way for practice schools to carry out cooperative education, strengthen connotation construction, and improve the soft power of running schools. While guiding the interns, it can help the teaching practice base reflect on its own shortcomings and improve the teaching quality of the practice base. It can also enhance the popularity of the practice base, expand the attractiveness of the student source, and at the same time attract more outstanding and qualified normal students to work in the school.

2. Statement of the Problem

This research aims to assess the educational practice of normal students in local application-oriented undergraduate colleges in Hunan Province. Specifically, this study will seek answers to the following questions.

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 sex
 - 1.2 school affiliation
2. What is the assessment of the respondents of the educational practices in terms of:
 - 2.1 Student-Faculty Interaction
 - 2.2 Collaborative Learning
 - 2.3 Active Learning Engagement
 - 2.4 Feedback Management
 - 2.5 Identification of Diverse Learning
3. Is there a significant difference in the assessment of the respondents when they are grouped according to profile?
4. What specific issues/challenges do senior normal students encounter in terms of educational practices in their own school?
5. Based on the results of the study, what educational practice modification can be conceptualized to improve teaching-learning process?

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the assessment of the respondents of educational practices when they are grouped according to profile.

3. Conceptual Framework

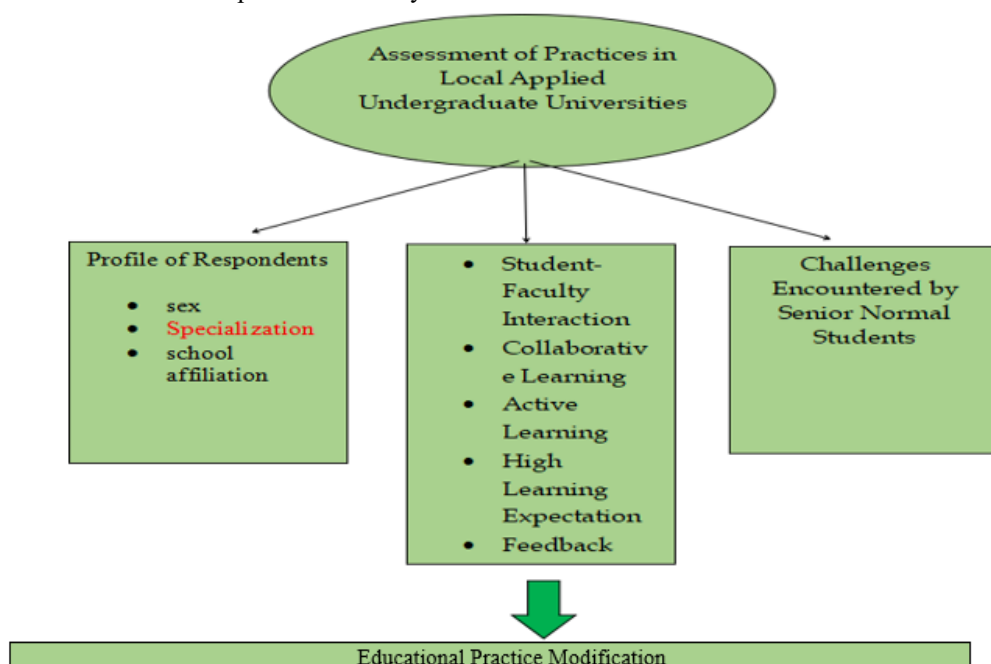


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Figure 1 houses the conceptual framework of the study. As shown, this study will delve into assessment of educational practices of local applied undergraduate universities. Specifically, it will assess student-faculty interaction, collaborative learning, active learning, and feedback based on the perception of the students. Significant differences will also be tested using their profile that includes sex, specialization, and school affiliation. Challenges encountered by the senior normal students will also be identified to be one of the bases for reform of educational practices of local applied undergraduate universities. Then, based on the results of the study, a program on educational practice reform will be conceptualized to improve teaching-learning process for normal students.

4. Research Design

This study utilized a mixed methods research approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative elements. The aim was to provide a comprehensive understanding of the population, circumstances, and phenomena under investigation. The research design incorporated descriptive research techniques, which defined and systematically examined the variables, along with other research approaches. The mixed methods research design employed in this study facilitated a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the data, offering a holistic understanding of the educational practices and challenges faced by senior normal students in the given context.

4.1. Sampling Technique

The participants included selected senior students from different normal majors and educational practice managers from four local application-oriented undergraduate colleges in Hunan Province. Stratified sampling was employed to ensure representation of the population, with distinct groups or strata created based on comparable characteristics. This sampling strategy minimized selection bias and ensured a diverse representation of the demographic groups.

4.2. Data Gathering Procedures

Data gathering was conducted through a self-made questionnaire designed to assess educational practices in local applied undergraduate universities. The researchers extensively utilized the school's library and electronic resources, consulting books, periodicals, newspapers, and other relevant materials related to the assessment of educational practices for normal students. These materials were analyzed, summarized, integrated, and examined to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research results of teacher education practice at home and abroad, providing a solid theoretical foundation and reference content for the selected topic.

5. Output of the Study

Based on the summary of findings, the researcher came up with the following conclusions:

1. The respondents comprised both male and female senior normal students from various schools, including Hunan University of Science and Technology, Xiangnan University, Huaihua University, and Shaoyang University.

2. The assessment of educational practices revealed strong agreement among the respondents in terms of student-faculty

interaction, collaborative learning, active learning engagement, feedback management, and identification of diverse learning.

3. The analysis found no significant differences in the assessment based on the respondents' sex or school affiliation, suggesting a consistent perception of educational practices among the respondents regardless of these factors.

4. The identified challenges highlighted areas that require attention and improvement to enhance the quality of education for senior normal students. The issues ranged from limited understanding of students' conditions and inadequate guidance to reliance on online resources without innovation, and insufficient attention to diverse learning needs.

6. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the findings, the following recommendations can be made to address the identified challenges and improve the educational practices for senior normal students:

1. Enhance Student-Teacher Interaction:

Provide training and professional development opportunities for teachers to improve their communication and mentoring skills.

Establish regular channels for student-teacher communication, such as office hours or virtual platforms, to facilitate meaningful interactions.

Encourage teachers to understand the unique learning and living conditions of students to provide personalized guidance and support.

2. Promote Collaborative Learning:

Incorporate collaborative learning activities into the curriculum, including group projects, discussions, and problem-solving tasks.

Provide training for both students and teachers on effective teamwork, communication, and collaboration.

Create a supportive and inclusive classroom environment that fosters cooperation and encourages active participation from all students.

3. Foster Active Learning Engagement:

Implement active learning strategies, such as hands-on experiments, simulations, case studies, and role-playing, to actively engage students in the learning process.

Incorporate technology and digital resources to enhance interactive and immersive learning experiences.

Encourage students to take ownership of their learning by setting goals, reflecting on their progress, and seeking opportunities for self-directed learning.

4. Improve Feedback Management:

Establish clear and transparent feedback mechanisms that include regular assessments, timely feedback, and constructive guidance for improvement.

Promote a culture of feedback by encouraging students to provide peer feedback and engage in self-assessment.

Provide training for instructors on effective feedback practices and techniques to ensure meaningful and actionable feedback.

5. Address Challenges in Diverse Learning:

Develop a diverse and inclusive curriculum that addresses the individual learning needs and preferences of senior normal students.

Provide resources and materials that cater to different learning styles, backgrounds, and abilities.

Encourage collaboration between institutions and practice

schools to ensure a variety of learning opportunities and experiences for students.

6. Continuously Evaluate and Improve Practices:

Regularly assess the effectiveness of educational practices through student feedback, surveys, and evaluation mechanisms.

Encourage open dialogue and communication between students, teachers, and administrators to identify areas for improvement and implement necessary changes.

Stay updated with the latest research and best practices in teaching and learning to adapt and refine educational practices accordingly.

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