

Role of Microteaching in Acquisition of Educational Media Development and Use Skills: Perceptions of Christian Religious Education Pre-Service Teachers and Trainers in Kenya's Public Universities

Naomi Kutto Jebungei

PhD Student/Lecturer

Department of Social Sciences, University of Eldoret, Kenya

P. O. Box 1125-30100, Eldoret, Kenya

Abstract

The integration of media into teaching dominates contemporary discourse on pedagogy and forms an integral part of microteaching. Nonetheless, the use of such media in the day-to-day teaching/learning remains minimal. The purpose of the study was therefore to investigate the perceptions of CRE pre-service teachers and trainers on the availability and use of educational media during microteaching sessions in public universities in Kenya. Based on the study, this paper explores the perceptions of CRE pre-service teachers and trainers on the role of microteaching in acquisition of educational media development and use skills. The study was grounded in the Cognitive Constructivist, Media Effects and Operant Conditioning theories. It adopted a concurrent mixed methods research design embedded in the pragmatic paradigm. The four universities were purposively sampled on the criterion that they were public and offered education programmes. Purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 287 pre-service teachers, 21 CRE teachers and 4 Heads of Departments. Data was collected using questionnaire, interview guide and focused group discussion guide and analysed using descriptive and thematic analysis with narration. The findings established that CRE pre-service teachers and trainers in public universities perceived the use of educational media in CRE instruction positively in terms of skills acquisition. Such media enable pre-service teachers to enhance classroom participation in a range of relevant activities and improves the teaching process. The study recommends the need to address the surging number of students in terms of increasing physical facilities and media resources, equipping trainers with technical expertise, tapping trainees' innovative abilities to avoid compromising the quality of microteaching sessions. The study findings offer public universities a pedestal upon which to improve microteaching policy and practice to enhance skill acquisition among pre-service teachers.

Keywords: perceptions, christian religious education, pre-service teachers, trainers, skill acquisition, development, use, educational media, microteaching

1. Introduction

A proper acquisition of the requisite skills, knowledge and abilities is an essential facet in contemporary education. There is a greater emphasis on dispositional frameworks as opposed to solely focusing on rational cognition. Indeed, provision of quality education is recognized as inherent in the quality of teaching that teachers bring into their instruction (Leu & Price-Rom, 2006). Most countries, Kenya included, have therefore invested more resources in pre-service teacher education programmes and conditions that nurture better teachers. The critical role played by teachers in imparting knowledge and skills in learners calls for a proper preparation of teachers is considered crucial to all educational systems across the world. Onocha (2013), for instance, argues that all human societies need the development of pre-requisite skills, knowledge and experience for growth and preservation. The desire for dispositional frameworks is however posing challenges in the teaching of subjects such as Christian Religious Education in contemporary classes that require demonstrable competencies hinged on outcome based philosophies.

Dispositional frameworks reportedly focus on the long-term learning trajectories among students and often lean towards nurturing orientation towards learning and habits that are strengthened during the learning process. As a consequence, such frameworks as noted by Claxton (2007) turn attention on the process of learning and do require that pre-service teachers are given a suitable foundation for the same. Teacher training institutions have therefore got their work cut out for them in ensuring training that can qualitatively focus the trainee towards disposition.

1.1 Perceptions of Pre-service Teachers and Trainers' on Skill Acquisition on Development and use of educational media during Microteaching

Literature reveals that pre-service teachers perceive the use of educational media during microteaching as having potential to improve their motivation and skill development. Besides, they contend that educational media brings reality to the classroom (Kadzera, 2006; Mwaka & Kafu, 2013). Trainee teachers are taken through an array of teaching techniques and expertise as well as real life experiences. Microteaching was introduced in teacher education for purposes of promoting the quality of teaching (He & Yan, 2011). According to Kilic (2010), by engaging in microteaching, pre-service teachers get opportunities to develop an array of skills pertaining to lesson preparation, setting goals, capturing student attention, time management, assessment techniques among others. In essence, the process of microteaching develops pre-service teachers' skills for classroom management. Sen (2010) argues that an emphasis on teaching skills enables microteaching to improve self-confidence in both students and teachers.

Research has further shown that pre-service teachers' views about teaching significantly change after they undergo microteaching (Gorgen, 2003). This view is shared by He and Yan (2011) who agree that microteaching portends positivity for students' professional development. Besides, other studies have shown that microteaching prepares pre-service teachers to handle challenges faced in teaching (Kucukoghi, Kose, Tasgin, Yilmaz & Karadenur, 2012). These authors found that teachers who were exposed to microteaching during their pre-service training had fewer challenges in teaching compared to their counterparts who were not exposed to microteaching (Kucukoghiet *al.*, 2012).

Positive perceptions on the microteaching practice have also been reported among pre-service teachers. It has been observed that microteaching as a process enables teachers to get feedback on their practice and modify their behaviour accordingly (Sayed & Zaid, 2012). Microteaching provides an environment for teacher trainers to develop the requisite skills of technology operation and professionalism which are the core for the teaching practice (ISTE, 2008). The potential provided by microteaching is recognized in many studies. These studies repeatedly point to acquisition of skills such as posing questions, time management, creating learner interest, choosing, developing and using appropriate technology, providing feedbacks and learner assessment as key skills acquired through the practice (Harris & Hofer, 2009; Kilic, 2010, Peker, 2009). Other skills that are credited to the process of microteaching include critical thinking, problem solving and awareness of the dynamics within classrooms (MEB, 2012; Sonmez, 2012).

Despite the many studies showing the importance of microteaching in skill acquisition, literature does not clearly show what pre-service teachers and their trainers think about the exercise. It is important to appreciate the fact that the success of a programme is dependent on perceptions that consumers/users of the programme have towards it.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Technology has become an integral phenomenon in contemporary society. The endeavour to improve the quality of education must therefore take cognizance of the important role that technology plays in effective delivery of instruction. In recognition of how important technology is to education, teacher development and training that is oriented towards integration of technology in teaching remains central (Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007). Through microteaching, for instance, Kasomo (2012) posits that pre-service teachers learn how to integrate technology, by simulating real classroom situations using small groups of peers. Kasomo contends that, in this way, the pre-service teachers are able to observe given teaching concepts, assess them and implement them in a makeshift lesson.

In CRE evidence shows that teachers tend to exclusively make use of the auditory channel of communication during instruction making lessons to be rather boring (Groenewegen, as cited in Situma, 2016). Although various reasons such as inadequacy of media and lack of integrative knowledge of media pedagogy have occasionally been advanced to explain these differences in technology utilization, pre-service teachers and trainers' beliefs about technology use in instruction have largely been overlooked. Moreover, whereas research shows that use of educational media has potential to increase skill acquisition and development, literature fails to clearly articulate how CRE pre service teachers and their trainers think about microteaching in relation to acquisition of skills. This study therefore examined the perception of CRE pre service teachers and trainers on skill acquisition in the development and use of educational media during microteaching session.

2. Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in selected public universities across Kenya. At the time of the study, there were 22 public universities in Kenya established through institutional Acts of Parliament under the Universities Act, 2012. The Act provides for the development of university education, the establishment, accreditation and governance of universities. Four universities were selected on the criterion of the length of time they had been offering the Bachelor of Education degree programme. The choice of these four universities was informed by the fact that, being the oldest, they offered an ideal framework for examining educational media for microteaching since over time they have observed the evolution of both print and electronic media in education. For ethical considerations, these universities were identified as A, B, C and D.

The study adopted a concurrent mixed methods research design. This is an approach to inquiry that combines and associates both qualitative and quantitative forms (Ayiro, 2012). It involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of the study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Creswell, 2012). The study targeted all fourth-year B.Ed. students taking CRE as a teaching subject and lecturers in the four selected public universities. The choice of fourth-year students was based on the fact that this group of students had conducted their microteaching sessions. Besides, CRE lecturers were deemed to have incisive views regarding educational media and microteaching management. Therefore, a total of 287 CRE student teachers, 21 lecturers and 4 HODs were sampled as respondents from the four public universities.

Three main instruments were used to collect data, namely a questionnaire for B.Ed. (CRE) pre-service teachers, an interview guide for B.Ed. CRE trainers, and a focused group discussion guide for pre-service teachers. The use of the three tools was a necessary triangulation process that enabled collection of data from diverse sources. Both quantitative and qualitative data analyses were conducted in order to better understand the CRE pre-service teachers and trainers' perspectives regarding the role of microteaching in acquisition of skills in development and use of educational media.

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics for all the quantitative data. Coded data was entered into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 which was then used to screen data for missing values and response rate. Means and standard deviations were used to summarize CRE pre-service teacher and trainers' perceptions regarding the constructs under study. This allowed for identification of the most typical response and the consistency with which it was made across the respondents. Thematic analysis was used to explore pre-service teacher perceptions derived from focused group discussions as well as, capturing perceptions of CRE trainers. Thematic analysis was preferred since, as noted by Creswell (2012), it allows an examination of responses for prominent, recurrent themes across and within respondents. Besides, it allows for processing of data inductively rather than deductively. Consequently, recurrent themes and sub-themes arising from respondents were presented in form of data matrices with narration.

3. Results and Discussion

The study sought to document the perceptions of pre-service teachers and trainers on the role of microteaching in acquisition of skills relevant to development and use of educational media in CRE instruction. Pre-service teachers' perceptions were assessed through structured questionnaire and focused group discussions. Trainers' perceptions were assessed through face-to-face interviews.

3.1 Perception of CRE Pre-service Teachers on Acquisition of Skills for Media Development and Use

Several questionnaire items were used to examine CRE pre-service teachers' perceptions on skill acquisition for development and use of educational media during microteaching. The first set of items focused on skill acquisition in selected educational media. The second set concentrated on acquisition of skills on preparation and management of CRE instruction. The findings on these two groups of items were as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Pre-service teachers' Perception on Skills Acquisition

Skills for Media development and use	D		MA		A		SA	
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
The various techniques of writing legible and large letters	0	.0	24	10.6	62	27.3	141	62.1
Drawing straight and curved lines while making illustrations in CRE	0	.0	43	18.9	78	34.2	107	46.9
Appropriate use and management of chalkboard during CRE instruction	0	.0	13	5.8	60	26.9	150	67.3
Development and use of graphics such as posters, charts, and maps of the kingdom of Israel	0	.0	55	24.1	78	34.2	95	41.6
Drawing clearly annotated and visible charts for use during CRE instruction	3	1.3	36	15.9	106	46.7	82	36.1
Development and use of illustrations such as photographs of Jesus, Mt. Sinai, and the last supper	16	7.0	18	7.9	111	48.7	83	36.4
Identification and construction of 3-dimensional materials in CRE such as temples and churches, as well as the tables of the ten commandments	19	8.9	46	21.6	144	67.6	4	1.9
Development of 3-D objects that reflects content of the lesson	62	27.2	39	17.1	96	42.1	31	13.6
Incorporation of learning resource persons such as ministers of the church, and African traditional religion specialists in CRE instruction	42	18.4	36	15.8	119	52.2	31	13.6
Using community resources such as churches, resource centres and museums to enrich learner experience.	14	6.1	44	19.3	51	22.4	119	52.2
Production and use of audio recording devices relevant in the teaching of CRE	12	5.3	61	26.8	107	46.9	48	21.1
Use of video cameras and recorders to record sample CRE programmes	46	20.2	46	20.2	90	39.5	46	20.2
Creative skills of developing detailed diorama for use in CRE with components in correct proportion.	29	12.8	51	22.5	78	34.4	69	30.4
Making audio programmes meaningful and captivating to learners	8	3.5	80	35.1	87	38.2	53	23.2
Projecting learning content using both overhead and LCD projectors	36	16.9	37	17.4	107	50.2	33	15.5
Simulating imaginary scenes like parable of the sower using computers	18	9.1	25	12.6	108	54.5	47	23.7
Searching for relevant information from the internet.	2	1.0	35	17.7	75	37.8	86	43.4

On the question of the skills they were exposed to in relation to development and use of educational media, the results presented in Table 1 above show that pre-service teachers were exposed to many relevant skills in the development and use of educational media. Cumulating percent agreements and strong agreements, key skills that pre-service teachers were exposed to included: appropriate use and management of chalkboard during instruction (94.2%); various techniques of writing legible and large letters (89.4%); development and use of illustrations such as photographs of Jesus during His ministry, Mt. Sinai, and the last supper (85.1%); drawing clearly annotated and visible charts for use during CRE instruction (82.8%); searching for relevant information from the internet (81.2%); drawing straight and curved lines while making illustrations in CRE (81.1%); development and use of graphics such as posters, charts and maps depicting Biblical occurrences (75.8%); simulating imaginary scenes like parable of the sower using computers (78.2%); using community resources

such as churches, resource centres and museums to enrich learner experience (74.6%); identification and construction of 3-dimensional materials in CRE such as temples and churches, as well as the tables of the ten commandments (69.5%); production and use of audio recording devices relevant in the teaching of CRE (68.0%); incorporation of learning resource persons such as ministers of the church, and African traditional religion specialists in CRE instruction (65.8%); projecting learning content using both overhead and LCD projectors (65.7%); creative skills of developing detailed diorama for use in CRE with components in correct proportion (64.8%); making audio programmes meaningful and captivating to learners (61.4%); use of video cameras and recorders to record sample CRE programmes (59.7%), and development of 3-D objects that reflects content of the lesson (55.7%).

The respondents were further asked to specify any other relevant skills they may have acquired through use of educational media during microteaching. Their responses were as summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Other Core Skills Acquired through Media use

Question	Response
Specify any other skills you may have acquired through use of educational media during microteaching (if any)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Communication skills</u> ✓ <i>Clear elaboration of the topic</i> ✓ <i>drawing of well labeled pictures and diagrams</i> • <u>Time management skills</u> ✓ <i>Time allocation to various activities</i> ✓ <i>Maximum use of time and good class management</i> • <u>Media integration</u> ✓ <i>How to use the media and at what stage during the lesson development</i> ✓ <i>Making relevant media for use in the lesson</i> • <u>Capturing learner attention</u> ✓ <i>Attracting learners' attention for a long time</i> ✓ <i>Ability to vary stimulus to capture learners' attention</i> • <u>Role playing</u> ✓ <i>Dramatizing biblical stories and contemporary issues</i> ✓ <i>using dramatization to demonstrate the actual activity of the content taught</i>

The data in Table 2 above points to acquisition of five other major skills not suggested in the structured section of the questionnaire. Respondents indicated that they had acquired communication skills through which they were able to give a clear elaboration of topics laced with labelled pictures and diagrams. The second skill identified was time management skills. Respondents indicated that they had acquired skills relating to allocation of time to various lesson activities and how to maximize use of time. A third skill that pre-service teachers claimed to have acquired was media integration. It also emerged that pre-service teachers had acquired skills on how to develop and use media in instruction and when to integrate them into their teaching. Capturing learner attention was the fourth skill identified. Respondents indicated that they were able to capture learner attention for a long time. The fifth and final skill identified was role playing. Respondents argued that through role play, they were able to dramatize biblical stories such as triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and give meaning to content being taught.

The exposure of CRE pre-service teachers to the skills of using educational media identified in the study during microteaching is an important part of teacher training. Such a framework focuses on long-term learner trajectories as opposed to accumulation of particular bodies of knowledge, skills and understanding (Claxton & Carr, 2004). In cultivating dispositions, educators are thought to have potential to maintain gains made in acquiring skills and even spread and deepen them (Claxton, 2007). Indeed, this is in line with Skinner's operant conditioning where skill acquisition is a function of reinforcement.

CRE as a subject has wider applications in real life context. Skills gained are therefore often applied long after the actual class orientation. Exposure to diverse skills that can actualize the dispositional approach is therefore consistent with Hyde's (2010) domains of learning dispositions for CRE which among others require skills that enhance curiosity, being dialogical, persisting and living with uncertainty, meaning making and taking responsibility, and role playing contemporary issues using dramatization. This is manifestation of a desire to achieve symbolic interactionism.

The study also sought to gauge the pre-service teachers' acquisition of skills on preparation and management of CRE instruction. The research results were as presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Skills on Preparation and Management of CRE Instruction

	MA		A		SA	
	N	%	n	%	N	%
Preparation	34	14.9	99	43.4	95	41.7
Stating specific and measurable cognitive and attitudinal instructional objectives						
Selecting the most appropriate sequence of topics and tasks	0	.0	149	65.4	79	34.6
Deciding on the most appropriate methods	36	15.8	106	46.5	86	37.7
Identifying appropriate assessment and evaluation techniques	20	8.8	123	53.9	85	37.3
Identifying materials that can be used to promote greater understanding of learning experiences	14	6.1	105	46.1	109	47.8
Appropriate learning environment set up.	15	6.8	60	27.3	145	65.9
CRE Instruction						
Arousing learner attention and stimulation of his/her imagination (Human experience)	70	30.7	106	46.5	52	22.8
Guiding learners in reading the Bible references and explain where appropriate	34	14.9	103	45.2	91	39.9
Helping learners analyse, synthesize and apply life skills learnt to real life situations	33	14.6	140	61.9	53	23.5
Involving learners in carrying out activities such as singing, role play related to topic being taught.	24	11.1	66	30.6	126	58.3
Consolidating the lesson through oral questions based on learnt content	3	1.4	80	37.7	129	60.8
Class Management	20	9.1	110	50.0	90	40.9
Drawing the attention of learners						
Controlling noise and un-attentive learners	12	5.3	115	51.1	98	43.6
Reinforcing learner responses	4	1.9	78	37.5	126	60.6
Incorporating gestures and body language appropriately	33	14.5	73	32.0	122	53.5
Taking care of visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners accordingly	63	27.7	80	35.1	85	37.3

The findings of the study shown above reveal that respondents tended to strongly agree that under preparation, they acquired skills on appropriate learning environment set up (65.9%). They also agreed that they acquired skills in selecting the most appropriate sequence of topics and tasks (65.4%); and that they were able to identify appropriate assessment and evaluation techniques (53.9%).

Under CRE instruction, they strongly agreed that they were able to consolidate lessons through oral questions based on content learnt (60.8%). They also agreed that by incorporating the life approach, they had acquired skills on how to help learners analyse, synthesize and apply life skills learnt to real life situations (61.9%). Under class management, the respondents strongly agreed that they had acquired skills in reinforcing learner responses (60.6%) and incorporating gestures and body language appropriately (53.5%). They also agreed that they were able to control noise and un-attentive learners (51.1%) and also draw attention of learners (50%).

The implication of these results is that through microteaching, CRE pre-service teachers are able to build on cognitive constructivism to acquire social skills that guide them through preparation, instruction and management of classes. This is possible since the microteaching process enables them to use media logic for instance, to view the world in their own ways, and to evaluate themselves and improve accordingly. This is indeed consistent with views, that state that through microteaching which is a process that develops social skills by providing feedback, pre-service teachers have an opportunity to modify their practice until the particular skills are acquired (Sayed & Zaid, 2012).

Moreover, the finding that through microteaching pre-service teachers were able to acquire preparation and presentation skills was in conformity with the views of Adulwaheb and Ismail (2011) that microteaching opens opportunities to develop skills to prepare lesson plans, choose teaching goals, ask questions, and manage time effectively. Acquisition of skills during pre-service training enables teachers to teach effectively and enhance students learning outcomes, and more so in the case of CRE which hinges on values and often requires a value-

based pedagogy which focuses teaching on values and in essence on holistic teaching (Lovat, Clement, Dally & Tomey, 2010).

3.2 Focused Group Discussion Results on Pre service Perceptions on Acquisition of Skills for Media Development and Use

Pre-service teacher perceptions on acquisition of skills on media development and use were also examined using focused group discussion. Respondents were first asked to mention some of the skills for teaching CRE that they acquired during micro teaching as a result of using educational media. Secondly, they were required to explain how they applied these skills in the teaching of CRE. The results of the thematic analysis of their responses were as presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Skills Acquisition: A Focus Group Perspective

Skills acquired	How the skills were applied
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chalkboard use • lettering & demonstration • graphics & charts design • CD & Audio-recording 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Asking students questions and giving them an opportunity to illustrate. ✓ Dividing students into groups and giving them tasks. ✓ Displaying charts in the classroom.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content presentation skills that prevent learners from sleeping in class. • Communication skills maintaining eye contact with learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintaining eye contact with learners in class. ✓ clear and neat board writing ✓ Teaching and delivery content by use of life examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer. • Discussion. • Display 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use of chalkboard during lesson presentation and illustration ✓ Charts for summary of main points ✓ Drawings, maps for location e.g. map of Palestine ✓ Posters and photographs e.g. on issues like corruption and substance abuse

Consistent with results from the pre-service teacher questionnaire, three sets of skills were identified. The first set of skills related to chalkboard use, lettering and demonstration; graphics and chart design, and CD and audio-recording. Respondents noted that these skills were applied through asking questions and illustrations, dividing students into groups and assigning tasks, and displaying charts during lessons.

The second set of skills reverberated around content preparation and communication. Respondents reported that they had acquired skills that enabled them to maintain eye contact with learners in class, write clearly and neatly on the board, and use of life examples in content delivery. The third set of skills included question and answer, discussion and classroom display. It emerged that pre-service teachers were able to use charts to give summaries of key points; make drawings and use of maps; and prepare posters and photographs depicting societal vices such as corruption and substance abuse.

These findings further emphasize the centrality of skill development for CRE pre-service teachers. The ability to prepare and communicate content through well-written and demonstrated approaches that are loaded with real life examples is crucial in imparting values among learners. Ryan and Grajczonek (2007) contend that the religious educator has a responsibility to know and understand the essential tenets of Christianity, which would put them in a position to engage students in learning it. Skill development during microteaching and pre-service in general is therefore essential for teacher competence in CRE instruction.

The finding showing that CRE pre-service teachers acquire sets of skills is quite encouraging for the process as a whole and use of educational media in particular. Students gain more when different strategies are used. Pearsall (2010) argues that “getting the most out of a teacher’s commitment to the profession is all about developing a bank of skills and strategies in the classroom”. This finding therefore points to a practice that has positive connotations for the contemporary CRE teacher.

3.3 Perceptions of CRE Trainers on Acquisition of Skills for Media Development and Use

Perceptions of CRE trainers on pre-service teachers' acquisition of skills in the development and use of educational media during microteaching were measured using three items on the instructor's interview schedule. First, respondents were asked to identify skills relevant for teaching CRE acquired when educational media are integrated into microteaching. Second, they were asked to rate skill acquisition in development and use of educational media during microteaching sessions. Third, they were asked to register their views on how integration of educational media in microteaching facilitates pre-service teachers training. Responses were analysed thematically and results presented in the data matrix in Table 5.

Table 5. Skills Acquisition: A Trainers Perspective

Question	Skill	Comments
Identify skills relevant for teaching CRE acquired when educational media are integrated in microteaching	Still and motion picture production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and use of graphics Use of audio, visual, and multimedia resources • Preparation and use of 3-dimensional media
	Lettering skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legible and appropriate lettering • Alignment of writings and sketches • Display of charts, pictures and posters
	Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set induction • Stimulus variation • Relevant media for lesson closure
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning, observational and demonstration
Question	Response	Comments
Would you rate skill acquisition in development and use of educational media in micro teaching sessions as high, moderate, or low? Give reasons	Moderate (n=12, 75.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microteaching sometimes doesn't start early enough so lecturers may be fast in teaching • Due to resource constraints and students develop a negative attitude
	High (n=4, 25.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is because in most cases media tended to focus learners' attention to what is to be learnt
Question	Themes	Sub-themes
In your view, how does use of educational media in microteaching facilitate trainees' learning?	Active involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media creates interesting and challenging environments that encourage active involvement of trainees • Captivates trainees and maintains their focus
	Social participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a classroom environment that includes group workspaces where resources are shared • Creates circumstances for trainees to interact with each other • Enhances trainees' opportunities for social participation
	Meaningful activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities are situated in authentic contexts (i.e. Real life situations) • Simplifies difficult concepts making teaching/learning easier • Particularly useful in teaching sensitive topics such as sexuality and HIV/AIDS

On the question of skills relevant to CRE instruction acquired when educational media are integrated into microteaching, three sets of skills were identified. The first set of skills identified was *still and motion picture production*. Respondents indicated that pre-service teachers were able to among others; produce and use graphics; use audio, visual and multimedia resources; and prepare and use 3-dimensional media. The second set of skills identified was *lettering skills*. Respondents asserted that pre-service teachers were able to use legible and appropriate lettering, align writings and sketches; and display charts, pictures and posters. The third set of skills revolved around *presentation*. Respondents noted that pre-service teachers were able to among other skills, set the induction, vary stimulus, choose relevant media for lesson closure, and use appropriate questioning, observational and demonstration approaches.

When asked to rate skills acquisition in development and use of educational media in microteaching, 75% of the

respondents rated it moderate. They argued that occasionally the microteaching sessions failed to start on time and this made some trainers to move students through the exercise very fast. In addition, due to resource constraints students tended to develop a negative attitude towards the exercise. The remaining 25% of the respondents rated skill acquisition as high arguing that educational media tended to focus learner attention solely to what had to be learnt. On how integration of educational media facilitates pre-service teachers training, three themes emerged. The first theme emerging was that of *active participation*. Respondents observed that educational media enhances active participation by creating interesting and challenging environments, capturing pre-service teachers' attention and maintaining their focus, and creating classroom environments that allow for work spaces through which resources are shared.

The second theme was *social participation*. It emerged that use of educational media creates circumstances which encourage pre-service teachers' interaction which enhances opportunities for social participation. The third theme that emerged was *use of meaningful activities*. Respondents reported that educational media encouraged activities situated in authentic contexts and which made teaching of difficult concepts easy. Media were noted by CRE trainers to be particularly useful in teaching sensitive topics such as sexuality and HIV/AIDS. Indeed, the research findings from teacher interviews emphasize the need for use of educational media as a way of encouraging pre-service teacher interaction and use of relevant activities. This is consistent with views that point to such media as able to enhance classroom participation in a range of relevant activities and also improving pre-service teachers teaching process (Adeyanju, 2007; Kadzera, 2006).

4. Conclusion

CRE pre-service teachers and trainers in public universities perceive use of educational media in CRE instruction positively in terms of skills acquisition. Such media enable pre-service teachers to enhance classroom participation in a range of relevant activities and improves the teaching process. They find use of educational media very handy in demystifying real life issues such as HIV/AIDs during CRE instruction. Moreover, the acquisition of skills during microteaching enables CRE teachers to teach effectively and enhance students learning outcomes. Use of educational media in CRE instruction is a key stimulation of learning as well as inculcation of positive attitude and values that generate learner interest and positive change of behaviour.

In addition, the methods that are used in CRE instruction such as dramatization, project work require presence of diverse media for instance text books, internet, animation which are reputed in developing key skills such as creative thinking, decision-making, critical thinking, and problem solving. Microteaching sessions are crucial in exposing the pre-service teachers to these media and subsequent acquisition of skills relevant to development and use during CRE instruction.

5. Recommendations

The study established that the use of educational media in CRE instruction not only enhances acquisition of skills in media production but also social skills that guide pre-service teachers through preparation, instruction and management of class. The study therefore recommends that greater emphasis needs to be placed on the use of educational media in teaching abstract and complex religious concepts and in demystifying real life issues in CRE instruction. It is laudable that the CRE pre-service teachers and trainers make efforts to devise mechanisms to overcome challenges experienced in the development and use of educational media during microteaching sessions. The CRE pre-service teachers' innovative and initiative skills in improvising educational media by using resources available in the local environment need to be tapped and reinforced.

References

- Adulwahed, S., & Ismail, A. (2011). Student Teachers' Microteaching Experience in a Preservice English Teacher Education Program. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(5), 1043-1051.
- Adeyanju, L. (2007). *Teachers Perception of the Effects and Use of Learning Aids in Teaching: A Case Study of Winneba Basic and Secondary Schools*. Ulitbase
- Ayiro, L. (2012). *Functional Approach to Educational Research Methods and Statistics: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. USA, NY: Mellen Press.
- Claxton, G., & Carr, M. (2004). A framework for teaching learning: the dynamics of disposition. *Early Years*, 24(1), 87-97.

- Claxton, G. (2007) Expanding young people's capacity to learn. *British Journal of Educational Studies*,55, 115-134.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Degu, G., & Yizgaw, T. (2006). *Research Methodology*. Ethiopia Public Health Training Institute.
- Görgen, İ. (2003). The Effect of Microteaching Practises on Student Teachers' Views of Giving Lessons in the Classroom. *Journal of Hacettepe University Education Faculty*, 24, 56-63.
- Harris, J., & Hofer, M. (2009). Instructional planning activity types as vehicles for curriculum-based TPACK development. In C. D. Maddux, (Ed.). *Research highlights in technology and teacher education 2009* (pp. 99-108). Chesapeake, VA: Society for Information Technology in Teacher Education (SITE).
- He, C., & Yan, C. (2011). Exploring Authenticity of Microteaching in Pre-service Teacher Education Programmes. *Teaching Education*, 22(3), 291-302.
- Hyde, B. (2010). A dispositional framework in religious education: learning dispositions and early years' religious education in Catholic schools. *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 31(2), 261-269.
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) (2008). *National educational technology standards for teachers and performance indicators for teachers*. Retrieved from www.iste.org
- Kadzera, C.M. (2006). *Use of instructional technologies in teacher training colleges, Malawi* (PhD Dissertation). Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.
- Kasomo, D (2012). An Evaluation of Teaching in Kenya. *Journal of Education*, 2(4), 66-72.
- Kılıç, A. (2010). Learner-Centered Micro Teaching in Teacher Education. *International Journal of Instruction*,3(1).
- Küçüköğlü, A., Köse, E., Taşgın, A., Yılmaz, B. Y., & Karademir, Ş. (2012). The teacher candidates' opinions regarding the effect of microteaching implementation on teaching skills. *Journal of Educational Sciences Research*, 2(2), 19-32.
- Lawless, K. A., & Pellegrino, J. W. (2007). Professional development in integrating technology into teaching and learning: Knowns, unknowns, and ways to pursue better questions and answers. *Review of Educational Research*, 77, 575-614.
- Leu, E., & Price-Rom, A. (2006). *Quality of Education and Teacher Learning: A Review of the Literature*. Washington, DC: USAID.
- Lovat, T., Clement, N., Dally, K., & Toomey, R. (2010). Values education as holistic development for all sectors: Researching for effective pedagogy. *Oxford Review of Education*, 36(6), 713-729.
- MEB (2012). *General competences of teachers*. Retrieved from <http://otmg.meb.gov.tr/yetgenel.html>
- Mwaka, M., & Kafu, P. (2013). An Evaluation of Educational Technology Use in Teacher Education in Kenyan Universities. *International Journal OF Current Research*, 5(03), 587-593.
- Onocha, C.O. (2013). *Functional Education and Graduate Employability*. A Keynote Address of the 15th National Conference of the Association of Educational Researchers and Evaluators, Nigeria (ASSEREN) held at University of Ilorin, Nigeria on July 8-13, 2013.
- Pearsall, G. (2010). *And gladly teach: A classroom handbook*. Abbotsford, Melbourne: TLN Press.
- Peker, M. (2009). The Use of Expanded microteaching for reducing pre-service teachers' teaching anxiety about mathematics. *Scientific Research and Essay*,4(9), 872-880.
- Ryan, M., & Grajczonek, J. (2007). *An inspired tradition: Religious education in Catholic primary schools today*. Brisbane: Lumino Press.
- Sayed, A., & Zaid, A.N. (2012). Pre-service Teachers' Opinions about the Microteaching Method in Teaching Practice Classes. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 12(2).
- Şen, A.İ. (2010). Effect of Peer Teaching and Micro Teaching on Teaching Skills of Pre-service Physics Teachers. *Eğitim ve Bilim-Education and Science*, 35(155), 78-88.
- Situma, J. (2016). Methods Used by Teachers to Teach Christian Religious Education in Secondary Schools in Kimilili in Bungoma County, Kenya. *British Journal of Education*, 4(1), 1-8.
- Sonmez, D. (2012). *Effects of Microteaching Course on Student Teaching Practice*. Retrieved from <http://www.eera-ecer.de/ecer-programmes>