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Competition or Cooperation? Views of Moral Education Teacher Trainees on Peer Teaching at the University of Botswana

Herman T. Mangope

Lecturer, Department of Languages and Social Sciences Education, University of Botswana, Botswana

Koketso Jeremiah

Lecturer, Department of Languages and Social Sciences Education, University of Botswana, Botswana

Baamphatlha Dinama

Senior Lecturer, Department of Languages and Social Sciences Education, University of Botswana, Botswana

Abstract:

Forty-three (43) Moral Education student teachers involved in the peer teaching exercise at the University of Botswana (UB) were sampled for the study. The study sought to find out the views of teacher trainees on the peer teaching exercise. Among the important issues the study focused on were the importance (value) of peer teaching, the contribution of teaching methods to peer teaching as well as the strengths and weaknesses of peer teaching. One of the major findings was that the majority of the respondents felt that peer teaching was very important and that the university should ensure that teacher trainees get involved in it before they go for teaching practice. Another major finding was that cooperation outweighed competition in the cooperation-competition dichotomy. The study used a mixed methodology approach, that is, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. A questionnaire, which comprised both closed (Likert-type) and open-ended questions, was used to collect data. The study came out with various recommendations. Of these recommendations, one is that real students should be used during peer teaching sessions and the other is that the number of supervising staff should be increased during the peer teaching exercise.

Keywords: Moral Education, peer teaching, University of Botswana, dichotomy, teacher trainees

1. Introduction

Peer teaching (PT) has always been part of teacher preparation at the University of Botswana (UB) since the introduction of teacher training programmes. Students in the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) programme will have done a general degree in various disciplines such as languages, sociology, social work, theology and religious studies, business studies, environmental science and many others. The PGDE programme is a one-year postgraduate professional programme aimed at preparing teachers to teach different subjects at secondary school level.

Peer teaching is far economically viable because it does not involve outsiders like heads of schools (or principals). The peer teaching model in use does not call for travelling and accommodation costs for both student teachers and university supervisors. The university becomes a “one stop shop”, where all the peer teaching activities take place.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Students are expected to collaborate as they work together in preparation for lessons they would teach together in pairs or groups on the one hand. Students, on the other hand are graded as they do peer teaching and this breeds a sense of competition since each pair, group or even individuals would like to outperform others in terms of teaching by wanting to score the highest possible marks. As a result, students are torn between being professionals and at the same time scoring the highest marks possible.

On the whole, students would have been used to compete against each other in their undergraduate courses and would have internalised that attitude and mode of learning which is also mainly centred on the student. Peer teaching is aimed at assisting students to “unlearn” that behaviour by being encouraged to co-operate whilst at the same time being assessed. Such behavioural change is not always easy to shed off after years of learning in competition inclined environments. Educators and especially in higher education institutions usually struggle to try to make students realize the potency of cooperation in the teaching profession.

The study therefore, sought to investigate the views of Moral Education teacher trainees involved in peer teaching.

1.2. Research Questions

The following key questions were generated from the problem statement:

- What is the importance (value) of peer teaching to teacher trainees?
- To what extent does the theoretical knowledge (methods courses) prepare teacher trainees for peer teaching?
- What are the weaknesses of peer teaching?
- To what extent do teacher trainees exhibit competition and cooperation behaviour during training?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish the value (importance) of peer teaching, the contribution of methods courses to the preparation of teacher trainees, the weaknesses of peer teaching and to compare the concepts of competition and cooperation in as far as their contribution to the success of peer teaching is concerned given that they contradict each other.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study sought to generate some knowledge on the value (importance) of peer teaching, the contribution of methods courses in the preparation of teacher trainees, the weaknesses of peer teaching and to compare the concepts competition and cooperation in as far as their contribution to the success of peer teaching is concerned given that they contradict each other. This knowledge will be used, among others, by such personnel as micro-peer teaching supervisors of the University of Botswana, future supervisees of micro-peer teaching, supervisors of teacher trainees in comparable institutions of higher learning, and other interested readers.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

A brief discussion of the constructivist theory as presented by Corsaro and Rizzo (1988) and Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory would be appropriate to set the theoretical stage for understanding the concept of peer teaching based on reasoning as one engages with the practical activity in a social environment and the emphasis on cultural cognitive development and where the tutor may model behaviors (Vygotsky, 1978)). In order to gain an understanding of Vygotsky's theories on cognitive development, one must understand two of the main principles of Vygotsky's work: the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The MKO refers to someone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner, with respect to a particular task, process, or concept. Although the implication is that the MKO is a teacher or an older adult, this is not necessarily the case. In constructivism, according to Corsaro and Rizzo (1988) students interact with the environment and in doing so they gain some skills and knowledge. Within the peer environment students or peers exchange ideas and in so doing obtain meanings from the content. This observations stem from two important assertions developed by Corsaro and Rizzo (1988) namely that: (a) adults do not alone create childhood, it is a product of interaction between adults and children and (b) children do not just use culture, they also play an active part in its creation, the other party in its creation being adults. Adults or parents form an important part of the environment which children interact with and hence acquire knowledge and skills from them. The constructivist perspective being discussed here is both constructive and interpretive by nature. This is because children do not only learn by creating knowledge but they also interpret it to obtain meaning. Vygotsky's theory emphasizes inter-peer collaboration which is a form of socialization and the concept of co-operation develops or is reinforced by this collaboration. The understanding of this type of constructivism and collaboration is therefore fundamental for understanding the essence of peer teaching as a process of learning and teaching that is important in the initial stages of training teacher trainees.

2. Literature Review

Peer teaching has been recognized as a valuable and effective approach for learning and has been incorporated into education programmes that use a variety of approaches. The success of peer teaching is thought to be related to the ability of peer tutors and tutees to communicate more effectively, thereby improving the learning environment.

Peer teaching is the process by which a competent pupil, with minimal training and with a teacher's guidance, helps one or more students at the same grade level learn a skill or concept. It relies on strategies that use students to teach other students, but it only becomes a peer teaching model when a teacher plans for and follows a model based approach. Goldsmd and Goldsmd (1976) define peer teaching as "...students of similar age and/or educational level teach each other..." (p. 10). Similarly, Velez and Wittington (2011), define peer teaching as "... the use of teaching and learning strategies in which students learn with and from each other without the immediate intervention of a teacher" (p. 40). Peer teaching is also called peer learning or collaborative leaning (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985). These definitions reflect the essence of peer teaching that is used to train pre-service teacher trainees enrolled for their Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) teaching qualification at the University of Botswana, specializing in teaching moral education.

The origins of peer teaching can be traced back to the ancient Greeks, and during the days of Aristotle, in particular (Wagner, 1982). In 19th century English and American educational systems, older students were used to drill younger students in the classroom (Wagner, 1982). Using peer teaching techniques helps a teacher to utilize all the resources at his or her disposal. Students understand how other students communicate. Additionally, how one student internally assimilates information can be expressed to help other students understand it better. Effective peer teaching techniques improve the overall learning environment and success of all students when implemented properly. Not only does this reduce the anxiety of public-speaking, but it helps students think about how to lay the information out so that it makes sense to themselves and to the other students. Students have the opportunity to learn from their

classmates through peer teaching. This practice is often highly effective, as some students are more likely to listen and understand better what their peers say than to what their teacher say, and the act of teaching the information helps cement understanding in the student's mind. There is a plethora of ways that teachers can use to integrate peer teaching into their curriculum, for example, a student could be allowed to teach his selected topic to a class using whatever skills he or she possesses. After getting a taste of teaching their peers, students will likely be less nervous and more willing to present information to real students in the classroom. Peer teaching is also known as peer instruction (Birth & Simon, 2012).

In certain instances, the teacher or instructor requires students to prepare to learn in class by doing some work outside the classroom. In essence, students do readings and answer questions based on these readings before they go to/attend class. It is a pre-class preparation method which is called Just in Time Teaching (JiTT). JiTT is a teaching strategy through which feedback between classroom learning activities and students' home assignments are used to prepare students for classroom learning (Berth & Simon, 2012). In this way, it enhances student-teachers' motivation which makes it a modified method of peer teaching.

The peer instruction strategy mentioned in the preceding paragraph usually precedes the use of the lecture method by preparing students to be ready for a lecture and in this way it makes the lecture method more effective (Berth & Simon, 2012).

2.1. Importance of Peer Teaching at Tertiary, University or Equivalent Level Institutions

Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) (For detailed information on this see also Ehly and Stephen, 1980) outline and discuss the importance of peer teaching as follows:

- In universities – it enables university staff to cope with large classes or increased teaching load without overworking the teaching staff.
- Peer teaching is suitable for groups such as women and minority groups. Traditional methods of teaching are unsuitable for teaching such groups.
- Peer teaching places more value on co-operation as opposed to competition. It focuses more on co-operation and less on competition. Peer teaching also respects the varied backgrounds and experiences of participants. That is, it takes into consideration the backgrounds and experiences of minority or marginalized groups.

Whenever peer teaching/learning is put into practice, challenges crop up, mainly those that have to do with managing a group and also those that are pedagogically related, especially if the group of students involved differ substantially in terms of ages, cultures and life experiences, and are not used to free interaction with one another (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985).

A study conducted by Ismail (2011) at a university in the United Arab Emirates reveals that prospective teachers derive a variety of benefits when involved in microteaching peer /teaching exercise. The benefits are in terms of improvement in language proficiency, improved teaching competence in relation to an enhancement of pedagogical skills and preparation skills, as well as promoting teacher trainees' managerial skills (Ismail, 2011).

3. Methodology

The study adopted a mixed methodology approach. It (study) comprised two phases based on the 2012/13 cohort of 60 Moral Education students who were divided into groups and it met three (3) times a week for 1 hour. In the initial phase, which was ground or ice breaking, each group of 3 prepared 15 minutes lessons which they presented to their peers and each lesson had three major components namely: introduction, lesson development and conclusion. Each member of the class was expected to present a component of the lesson for 3 to 5 minutes, which demonstrated collaboration and a spirit of team work. After the 3 to 5 minutes lesson presentation, each peer teacher (student teacher) wrote a self-evaluation of the component that he or she taught and submitted the work to the tutor for grading by indicating how they would re-teach the same topic if they were given a second chance, as well as suggesting why they would teach it differently. In their self-evaluation, student teachers had to bear in mind, and reflect on, among other things, aspects of teaching that include: voice projection, use of the board and other teaching aids, questioning techniques, class control, and teacher movements in the classroom. There were 20 peer teaching groups in all and they completed the peer teaching exercise within three weeks. At the end of this phase each student (peer) teacher had acquired minimal experience of what teaching really involves and they were ready for the next phase (Phase 2).

Phase 2 engaged each student for 15 minutes - a mini lesson presentation where each student took full responsibility of presenting a whole 15 minutes lesson from start to finish. Each had to select his/her a topic from the Junior Certificate (JC) Moral Education syllabus and pick any three (3) specific objectives, prepare a lesson plan on them, select appropriate teaching aids and then submit the work to the tutor for vetting before the peer teaching session could take place in case there were suggestions in terms of adjustments to the lesson. In this phase there was a requirement for extra classroom space. Approximately three to four (3-4) rooms were acquired, making it possible for 3-4 parallel sessions to take place whereby students were expected to be as innovative in their teaching as possible, such as using of information technology in their preparation and teaching. In addition, each student was asked to make an arrangement with another fellow student for peer lesson observation and preparation of a report to provide feedback. Each peer teacher was expected to respond to lesson observation report from one of the peers. Response to lesson observation report formed some self-evaluation. The lecturer (or tutor) roved between 3-4 parallel sessions to offer support and ascertain that there was order. In cases where there were three parallel sessions there were a total of nine (9) peer teachers teaching for one (1) hour. Four parallel sessions resulted in 12 presentations for that day. The presenters were provided with the necessary teaching resources such as whiteboard markers, erasers, and manila. After each presentation, each presenter submitted their self-evaluation reports online for feedback from the tutor who gave feedback the same day. The student teachers (peer teachers) benefited from their cooperation and subsequently

developed mutual support for each other. They realized that through collaboration they could help each other develop into effective and professional future teachers.

3.1. Sampling Techniques and Data Collection Instruments

Forty-three (43) students out of a total sixty (60) were sampled and responded to the data collection instrument which was a questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised both closed (Likert Type) and open-ended questions. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was tested for validity through pilot testing. The questionnaire return rate was 100% since all sampled respondents responded and all the completed questionnaires were collected and administered online.

4. Data Analysis (Presentation) and Discussion of Findings

The questionnaire consisted of a total of twenty-five questions. Of these, eighteen (18) were Likert type questions (closed) while the remaining (seven) (7) were open-ended.

The Likert type questions varied in their requirements. However, the most important (or typical) aspects of all the questions (or statements) in this category included the importance (or value) of peer teaching and the contribution of teaching methods courses to the success of the peer teaching exercise.

4.1. Importance (Value) of Peer Teaching

The most prominent (or conspicuous) questions under this category in the way the respondents answered became skewed to either extreme (negative or positive) included the following (See Table 1 for details on all the Likert type questions or statements):

(1) The university should involve students in peer-teaching before the teaching practice exercise begins. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of student teachers responded by saying they strongly agreed with this statement. This is a total of 42 student teachers out of 43. The response shows that, by and large, peer teaching is an extremely valuable exercise or activity.

(2) Some people are of the view that peer teaching is a waste of time. Fifty-three percent (53%) of student teachers responded by saying strongly disagree. This response rate is a little above half or over 50% of the total census used in this study. This shows that peer teaching, in terms of time, is not too much above average in value or importance. However, respondents had difficulty in taking position with regard to this statement.

(6) I learned a lot about techniques of teaching during peer teaching. Eighty-percent of (80%) student teachers responded by saying they strongly agree with this statement. This means that student teachers find peer teaching a very valuable exercise in that it enables them to acquire teaching techniques.

(7) I learned a lot about the subject matter during teaching sessions. Eight-one percent (81%) responded by saying they strongly agree to the statement. This indicates that peer teaching is a very valuable exercise as it equips student teachers with more content or subject matter which they impart to their peers.

(9) Peer lesson observation reports and self-evaluation are helpful to my professional development. Eight-four percent (84%) of student teachers said they strongly agree with this statement. This shows that these documents (lesson observation and self-evaluation reports) are very important as they promote the professional development of student teachers involved in peer teaching.

(10) Peer teaching helped me to collaborate with other peers. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the respondents said they strongly agree with the statement.

(11) Peer teaching encourages destructive competition. Thirty-five percent (35%) of the respondents said they strongly agree with the statement.

These two statements, i.e., ten (10) and eleven (11) are contradictory. Collaborate and destructive competitions are concepts that are directly opposed to each other. However, data shows that collaboration outweighs destructive competition in that respondents strongly agree with collaboration and strongly agree with destructive competition at the rates of 67% and 35%, respectively. The interpretation is that student teachers, while working together or cooperating in preparing for lessons that they teach during peer sessions, they also compete in the assessment, that is, marks or grades that they get in the final analysis. This is because the supervisor, instructor or tutor grades the work of the individual student teachers and not groups. In this way, it becomes a matter of competition between individual student teachers not groups of student teachers. In this context, it is very likely that some student teachers may collaborate less because they fear that they may be competing against themselves if they put more effort.

(12) Peer teaching helped me to develop confidence in myself. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the respondents said they strongly agree with this statement. This shows that through peer teaching student teachers develop confidence in their teaching. In other words, they gradually develop trust in themselves as they engage in teaching. They become less nervous in the long run. This finding concurs with the finding of Birth and Simon (2012) who found that when students are involved in the peer teaching exercise, they get used to it and become less nervous when they teach in a real school environment.

4.2. The Contribution of Teaching Methods Courses to Peer Teaching

The most typical questions (or statements) in this category of the questionnaire included the following (See Table 1 for details):

Methods courses adequately prepared me to do peer-teaching. (3)

I learned a lot about techniques of teaching during peer teaching. (6)

Peer teaching has helped me to develop teaching skills. (14)

After PT all my teaching aids are appropriate and I can use Media Technology effectively to enhance my teaching. (18)

The teaching methods courses contributed immensely to peer teaching in that they equipped student teachers with strategies or techniques of teaching including the methods of selecting appropriate teaching aids and technology for the subjects they were teaching. With time the student teachers became skilled in imparting content knowledge to pupils and were transformed from being theorists to become pragmatists, that is, professionals who are more inclined to practical uses of ideas than to mere theory.

Description of a factor for Perception		1	2	3	4	5
1	The university should involve students in peer -teaching before the teaching practice exercise begins.	42 (98)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
2	Some people are of the view that peer teaching is a waste of time.	5 (12)	8 (19)	2 (5)	5 (12)	23 (53)
3	Methods courses adequately prepared me to do peer -teaching.	30 (70)	12 (28)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)
4	I felt comfortable in my role as a teacher during peer teaching.	29 (67)	12 (28)	2 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)
5	I believe that fellow students benefited from my teaching.	34 (79)	9 (21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
6	I learned a lot about techniques of teaching during peer teaching.	36 (84)	7 (16)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
7	I learned a lot about the subject matter during teaching sessions.	35 (81)	8 (19)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
8	If I had the same choice, I would choose to do peer teaching again.	34 (79)	9 (21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
9	Peer lesson observation reports and self-evaluation are helpful to my professional development.	36 (84)	7 (16)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
10	Peer teaching helped me to collaborate with other peers.	29 (67)	6 (14)	1 (2)	1 (2)	6 (14)
11	Peer teaching encourages destructive competition.	11 (26)	9 (21)	2 (5)	6 (14)	15 (35)
12	Peer teaching helped me to develop confidence in myself.	33 (77)	7 (16)	2 (5)	0 (0)	1 (2)
13	Theoretical knowledge alone without peer teaching does not adequately prepare student teachers for Teaching Practicum.	38 (88)	4 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2)
14	Peer teaching has helped me to develop teaching skills.	38 (88)	5 (12)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
15	Peer teaching assisted me to be familiar with the Moral Education syllabus.	33 (77)	7 (16)	2 (5)	0 (0)	1 (2)
16	Before PT I had no idea on how to conduct a lesson.	30 (70)	5 (12)	6 (14)	2 (5)	0 (0)
17	After PT sessions I can now move freely in the classroom.	34 (79)	9 (21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
18	After PT all my teaching aids are appropriate and I can use Media Technology effectively to enhance my teaching.	26 (60)	16 (37)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Table 1: Perception factors and results expressed as frequencies and percentages

Key: Strongly Agree=SA → 1; Agree=A → 2; Neutral=N → 3; Disagree=D → 4 and Strongly Disagree=SD → 5

4.3. Further Assessment of Peer Teaching

Respondents were required to assess the importance (or value) of peer teaching by responding to open-ended questions. This gave them an opportunity to go beyond the responses they gave under the Likert-type scale (See Table1). The question required the respondents to list the strengths of peer teaching (Question 19).The following are the responses in a condensed form:

- Builds confidence through sharing ideas with their peers, hence they (student teachers) become better teachers.
- Prepares student teachers for teaching practice; provides them with skills (competencies) and strategies /methods for teaching.
- Makes student teachers understand the syllabus (and the content/subject matter more).
- Student teachers develop self-esteem for teaching.
- Helps student teachers to detect/identify their strengths and weaknesses and gives them opportunities to correct/work on their weaknesses before engaging in actual teaching practice.
- They (student teachers) learn classroom management skills.

- Professional development as teachers: student teachers develop into professional teachers which become more enhanced during and after teaching practice as they become more experienced.

Question twenty (20) required respondents to list the weaknesses of peer teaching. The following are the responses that were given and they are in a condensed form:

- Students are not real, know everything.
- Peer teaching is given little time; hence some student teachers do not perceive it as a serious task.
- Shortage of professional supervisors – only one lecturer for most peer teaching groups.
- Attendance should be monitored because there are some student teachers who miss or stop attending when they are done with peer teaching which inconveniences those still to teach as students become fewer.
- Peer teaching is awarded little time which does not give student teachers enough time to practice.
- Does not involve all subjects.
- Repetition of topics causes boredom.
- Overdone, becomes monotonous.
- The technology you choose to use may not be effective.
- Books for junior and senior secondary schools are inadequate.
- A peer teaching lesson should be allocated forty (40) minutes no fifteen (15) minutes.

Question twenty-one (21) required respondents to give their opinions on the type of preparation and guidance they thought peer teaching should possess to enhance the performance of peer teachers (student teachers) and ensure that these trainees get the maximum benefit from the exercise. The responses, in a condensed form, are as follows:

- PT should be done more frequently and student teachers should be briefed on how to behave in class.
- More time should be spent on PT.
- Step by step preparation of portfolio is needed/also more mentoring.
- Increase number of professional supervisors so students can get proper feedback.
- Educational technology should provide more support.
- There should be evaluators from TSM/MESD to give feedback.
- There should be lessons on PT before the exercise begins to equip student teachers with the necessary skills e.g. how to follow a lesson plan, time management, etc.
- PT should be evaluated by lecturers that student teachers do not know.
- Resources for PT should be availed at all times.
- Student teachers need guidance in preparation of scheme of work and record of work done.
- There should be classrooms for PT teaching only.
- Peer teaching should be taught as a course on its own (time-tabled).
- PT should be graded.
- Duration for PT lessons should be equal/equivalent to that of normal schools.
- Student teachers complaints should be given a hearing and addressed.
- Lecturers should evaluate/assess PT not students as they tend to be lenient to their friends.

Question twenty-two (22) required student teachers to give their opinions as to what they thought were the challenges facing peer teaching at the University of Botswana (UB). The following is a list of some of their responses:

- Lack of teaching aids/textbooks for school subjects. Student teachers have to borrow from schools.
- Some student teachers do not treat PT seriously, for example, they miss P.T. classes and only come when it is their turn to teach. (See also (h) below).
- Limited time – the exercise is treated lightly. Very little time is allocated to PT. Needs 40 minutes instead of 15 minutes.
- Not all lecturers favour PT. They do not seem to like the practical.
- Shortage of professional supervisors.
- Planning for PT is time consuming.
- PT is not challenging, especially when teaching your peers because they know the content very well.
- Those who taught first tend to miss classes when it is others' turn to teach – not fair/Poor attendance/Demoralizes others.
- Lack of motivation for both lecturers and students, especially because PT is done in later hours.
- Pile of assignments, tests and projects – some lecturers and students unable to attend PT.
- PT is not given enough time in other subjects – this makes it less important or insignificant.
- Student teachers do not respect each other.
- UB allocating few classrooms for PT.
- Minimum supervision.
- Some student teachers do not participate in class.
- Lack of monitoring by UB officials.

- Some students are not very co-operative in lesson plan preparation.
- Negative attitudes of peers which negatively affect PT.
- Few PT co-ordinators.

Question twenty-three (23) required student teachers to assume they were Moral Education instructors and say if they would conduct their peer teaching sessions differently for their students and if that is the case give reasons as to why they would do so. (Put verbatim the question read: *Assuming you were the Moral Education instructor. Could you conduct your peer teaching sessions differently with your students? Why?*). The following are the responses that were given and they are in a condensed form:

- Yes. Ask two people to assess student teachers not student assessing each other.
- I would encourage attendance and mark the register myself.
- I would break the class into smaller groups and group them together again and they will be taught by a single peer teacher. I would do as you did/repeat.
- I would have done the same as you did.
- I will allocate more time so that students do not do things in a rush.
- The instructor conducted PT very well and should continue the good work he is doing.
- They should use all the teaching techniques e.g. debate, games, and so on. I would also encourage student teachers to teach to about 20 students so as to get used to teaching large numbers.
- I would give students challenging topics.
- I will allocate topics so that they don't teach the same topics again and again in the same lesson.
- The instructor should ensure that no student teachers stop attending lessons while others are still teaching.
- I would give students feedback on their strengths and weaknesses so that they can improve on their weaknesses.
- Give student teachers more time to practice so that they become more confident and professional in teaching and knowledgeable in content/subject matter.
- Allocate 40 min for each PT session.
- Start PT at the beginning of the semester so that all student teachers have enough time to teach.
- I will get more supervisors so that PT is conducted professionally.
- Get more lecturers from the department to supervise PT instead of students.
- I will arrange peer teaching so that all student teachers finish the first round and all go to the second round. This will avoid pressure on student teachers.

Question twenty-four (24) required student teachers to state how they would do their peer teaching differently if they were given a second chance. The following are the responses they gave and they are in a condensed form:

- Prepare more teaching aids for different topics.
- Will monitor PT closely and invite other lecturers to supervise students so that they can be serious about PT.
- Will use more and different teaching aids.
- Will show more confidence in my teaching.
- Will work more on my movement in class.
- I will focus on producing more teaching materials because students have different abilities and learning styles.
- My teaching will be more student-centred – students will do more work e.g. group presentations.
- Will teach difficult topics so I get used to teaching them so that I will be prepared to teach them during teaching practice.
- Will use more group work, presentations and debates so students can grow cognitively.
- Will use improved teaching aids.
- Will give everyday examples and will introduce my lessons in an interesting way.
- Will use more videos than manila - videos are more effective than manila.
- Increase class size to 20 students (peers).
- Will use information technology e.g. Power Point.
- Use more question and answer techniques.
- Make my lessons interesting, involve students.
- Improve my confidence – get rid of stage fright.
- Appoint more supervisors and read more to understand content.
- Will teach the whole class to test my confidence in handling a large class.

Question twenty-five (25) required student teachers to state the professional roles and responsibilities they have learnt as a direct consequence of the peer teaching exercise they have just gone through. (Put verbatim the question read: *What professional roles and responsibilities have you learnt as a direct consequence of undertaking peer teaching?*). The following are the responses given and they are in a condensed form:

- The teacher plays multiple roles at the same time e.g. you are also a parent to the students you teach.
- Practice good classroom management – students should respect the position of a teacher as the overall administrator in a classroom. A teacher also plays the role of counselling students.
- I should be well prepared to teach and also knowledgeable on content/subject matter.
- A teacher is not a fountain of all knowledge – students also have some knowledge, etc.
- I have learnt that teaching is a two way process – teacher must involve students (practice student – centred learning).
- I have learnt how to teach mixed ability classes. I have also learnt how to respond to students' questions. Students must be involved in their learning. Public speaking should be encouraged on students.
- Be patient when students do not understand and when they ask questions.
- Be creative, provide a warm/conducive learning environment, establish rapport, encourage learner-centred methods, use liberation method of teaching. There should be a good relationship with students.
- I have learnt time management.
- Take/do registration of your class – an important factor in classroom management, know yours students.
- Be a role model/Good conduct.
- I have learnt questioning techniques.
- Be punctual and be ready for difficult questions from students.
- Maintain mutual respect between students and the teacher.
- I have learnt to be responsible and accountable as a teacher.
- I have learnt to do more research and avoid giving students false information.

5. Conclusion

The study found an array of findings. Among the major ones are: (a) The peer teaching exercise is very important and the University of Botswana is urged to ensure that teacher trainees get involved in it before going for teaching practice. This is because peer teaching equips them with valuable skills that they need during teaching practice, among them lesson delivery and classroom management skills; (b) Resolution of the cooperation-competition dichotomy. In peer teaching student teachers cooperate in many respects, mainly in lesson preparation and attending the lessons. However, marks or grades are located to individual students. The study found that cooperation outweighed competition; (c) Student teachers learned much from peer teaching, particularly with regard to skills of teaching and content delivery. They had theoretical knowledge of teaching strategies and peer teaching gave them opportunities to practice these skills and to get more as they collaborate with colleagues. Peer teaching also gave them opportunities to read more and understand the content that they taught during the peer teaching exercise; (d) The study also identified some weaknesses of peer teaching, for example, the students in a peer teaching classroom are not real because they are more knowledgeable than real students; as a result they are less challenging to the peer teacher.

The study has identified some weaknesses of the peer teaching exercise. Key amongst these weaknesses are, the following, with suggested recommendations:

- Students are not real, know everything. Recommendation: real students should be used for peer teaching. This will boost the confidence of student teachers as the practice will be comparative to what is happening in the schools. Using real students may change the blend from peer teaching to micro-teaching, or any other nomenclature deemed necessary at the time.
- Peer teaching is given (or awarded) little time, hence some student teachers do not perceive it as a serious task and hence do not practice much. Recommendation: More time should be allocated to peer teaching so that student teachers could treat it seriously and hence take advantage to practice their teaching skills.
- Shortage of professional supervisors – only one lecturer for most peer teaching groups. Recommendation: The number of supervisors should be increased so that supervision of peer teaching should be done effectively.
- Attendance should be monitored because there are some student teachers who miss or stop attending peer teaching sessions when they are done with peer teaching which inconveniences those still to teach as students become fewer. Recommendation: Supervisors should monitor attendance to peer teaching sessions to ensure that all student teachers attend all sessions. This will stop inconveniences suffered by those still to teach as they find themselves teaching less number of “students” than those who preceded them.
- Does not involve all subjects. Recommendation: Peer teaching should involve all teaching subjects so that all students going for teaching practice could benefit.
- Repetition of topics causes boredom. Recommendation: During peer teaching topics should be spread among the various presenters in order to avoid boredom.
- Overdone, becomes monotonous. Recommendation: Contrary to number five (5), some respondents said that too much peer teaching becomes monotonous or boring if it is done excessively.
- The technology you choose to use may not be effective. Recommendation: Student teachers should be assisted in identifying suitable technology for their lessons. The assistance may come from various sources, for example, from their peers as they work in groups, or from the supervisors.

- Books for junior and senior secondary schools are inadequate during the peer teaching exercise. Recommendation: Books used for teaching and learning in junior and senior secondary schools are often in short supply. Required books should be made adequate so that the peer teaching exercise is conducted effectively.
- A peer teaching lesson should be allocated forty (40) minutes not fifteen (15) minutes. Some respondents felt that the fifteen (15) minutes allocated for each peer teaching lesson was inadequate and recommend that it be increased to forty (40) minutes which is comparable to time allocated in real schools.

6. References

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