



Research Article

GENDER DIFFERENCES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENT TEACHERS' LEVELS OF PREPAREDNESS AND PERFORMANCE IN OBSERVATION AND PARTICIPATION

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Received March 10, 2015; Accepted March 21, 2015; Published March 25, 2015;

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Cite This Article: Naguiat, J., Nuqui, A.V. (2015). Gender differences: a comparative analysis of the student teachers' levels of preparedness and performance in observation and participation. *Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities Research*, 1(1). 1-10

ABSTRACT

The major concern of the study is to determine the level of preparedness and level of performance in observation and participation of male and female student teachers. The researcher used the causal-comparative method of research. The respondents of the study were the 70 student teachers of the Don Honorio Ventura Technological State University (DHVTSU) who undergone observation and participation practice during the first semester of school year 2014-2015. The teachers were found to be much prepared and exhibited superior performance in observation and participation. The findings revealed that the male and female student teachers have different levels of preparedness in teaching. Based on the positive *p*- values, it can be deduced further that the male respondents are more prepared than the female respondents. Perhaps the male student teachers are more knowledgeable of their topics, they can adjust their teaching methodologies considering the needs of the pupils/students, they are more punctual and they even use specific criteria in evaluating the performance their pupils/students.

KEY WORDS: Gender differences, level of preparedness, performance, comparative analysis, Don Honorio Ventura Technological State University

INTRODUCTION

Student teaching is considered as one of the most challenging aspects of completing a degree in education. The student teachers will be tested by their students, by those supervising their experience and by the craft itself. The tasks that student teachers perform during student teaching can often determine their job prospects as their experience comes to a close. It is essential that they spend time preparing for student teaching to be successful.

Similarly, Wilson, et. al. (2001) believed clinical experiences as a powerful, sometimes the single most powerful, element of teacher preparation. The quality of a student teachers' preparation seems to depend on the specific intent and characteristics of the student teaching experience which are sometimes intended to show what the job of teaching is like, sometimes to help student teachers learn about classroom management, and sometimes to give practical opportunities to apply concepts encountered in the University coursework. Some are offered early in the program, others late. Duration, supervision arrangement, and settings vary dramatically. Nevertheless, student teaching is often limited in range, tending to focus on mechanical aspects of teaching and

dominated by worksheets and workbooks; disconnected from other components of teacher preparation, and prospective teachers had difficulty applying what they had learned in those other components when they entered their practice; and student teachers become overwhelmed with the challenges of learning to teach, they revert to the norms of the schools in which they were taught, which sometimes means that they teach in ways quite different than those envisioned by their mentors.

Student teachers, however, have varied emotions and perspective to student teaching believing that their preparation and skills may not be enough. Hence, they have to make some preparations to be confident and eventually perform efficiently during their student teaching or in observation and participation practice.

According to Williams (2014), there are several things they can do to prepare for student teaching that will make this challenging experience easier and more beneficial to their career. These include: reading everything about the subjects they plan to teach; making contact with their respective supervisors; visiting the schools they will student teach in as soon as they get their assignments; scheduling meetings with the principals; writing mock lesson plans and practice in front of friends; and practicing teacher voice.

Housego (1990) posited that student teachers' feelings of preparedness may influence their ability to perform teaching tasks. Accordingly, student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach increased significantly in a one-year teacher education program. In some aspects—classroom management and instructional planning—there were greater increases than in others—questioning, motivation, record-keeping, and promotion of self-discipline, perhaps because the program's brief field experiences emphasize "survival." Certain subgroups of student teachers, probably because of prior experiences of teaching, initially felt more prepared to teach than others. From a reciprocal deterministic perspective, if student teachers see their program as likely to enhance performance, they may teach more confidently, secure pupil receptiveness, and further augment their confidence.

Another challenge in student teaching, aside from student teachers' level of preparedness, is gender differences. The idiosyncracies demonstrated by gendered groups in society, specifically in the academe, has implications for the identities adolescents develop and to a large extent determine the careers and lifestyles chosen. Gender bias implies some form of preference, inclination and prejudice for one sex over another. Education (that is access, enrolment, participation, performance and achievement) emerges as the arena in which both academic analyses and popular perception locate male marginalization (Barriteau, 2003).

Conversely, discrepancies between the performance of female and the performance of male in the University leads some critics to argue that male are being neglected within the education system. PLeo-Rhynie and Pencle (2006) asserted that the programs pursued by girls reveal and obvious attraction to the helping professions such as teaching and nursing. Moreso, teachers have played an

enormous role in the process so much so that the historiography over the last 30 years have given much attention to what is coined as the "feminization of the teaching profession" (Downes, 2003).

With the foregoing contentions, the researcher was motivated to conduct this research with the end in view of comparing the level of preparedness of male and female student teachers and their level of performance in observation and participation practice.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The major concern of the study is to determine the level of preparedness and level of performance in observation and participation of male and female student teachers.

Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

- i. How may the level of preparedness of the student teachers be measured in terms of:
 - a. Instruction
 - b. Guidance
 - c. Management
 - d. Evaluation
 - e. Public/Human relation?
- ii. What is the level of performance of student teachers in observation and participation practice?
- iii. Is there a significant difference between the levels of preparedness of male and female student teachers?
- iv. Is there a significant difference between the levels of performance in observation and participation practice of male and female student teachers?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The researcher used the causal-comparative method of research. *Causal-comparative research*, or *ex-post facto* research, is a research approach that seeks to explain differences between groups by examining differences in their experiences. (Johnson, 2000).

Since the study focused on the differences of the level of preparedness and level of performance in observation and participation practice of male and female student teachers, causal-comparative method of research is deemed applicable and important. The researcher used validated questionnaires in gathering data and supported by interview to validate the data gathered.

The respondents of the study were the 70 student teachers of the Don Honorio Ventura Technological State University (DHVTSU) who undergone observation and participation practice during the first semester of school year 2014-2015. The researcher used two (2) sets of student teacher-respondents as required by the design of the study which is causal-comparative. The first set composed of the male student teachers and the second set included the female student teachers. A non-probability sampling, which is quota sampling, was used in choosing the respondents. The researcher chose 35 male and 35 female student teachers. Tale 1 presents the distribution of respondents.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

Course	Male		Female	
	f	%	f	%
BSED	16	45.7	12	34.3
BEED	14	40.0	18	51.4
BTTE	5	14.3	5	14.3
Total	35	100	35	100

As seen in the Table 1, there were 16, 14 and 5 male respondents enrolled in the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED), Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) and Bachelor of Technical Teacher Education (BTTE) programs respectively. On the other hand, there were 18 female respondents enrolled in BSED, 18 in BEED and 5 in BTTE programs.

The researcher used validated questionnaire to measure the level of preparedness of student teachers to teach. The same questionnaire is being used by the student teaching supervisor in evaluating the student teachers. The student teachers' grades in observation and participation practice, on the other hand, were obtained from the registrar's office.

The student teachers' level of preparedness was presented using mean and Five-Point Likert Scale interpreted as follows:

3	Sometimes (Satisfactory)
2	Rarely (Fair)
1	Never (Poor)

The grades of the respondents in observation and participation practice were presented using frequency and percentage categorized and interpreted as follows:

Grade Interpretation	Verbal
1.0	Excellent
1.50-1.01	Superior
2.00-1.51	Very Good
2.50-2.01	Good
3.00-2.51	Fair or Passing

Scale	Verbal Interpretation
5	Always (Excellent)
4	Usually (Very Satisfactory)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the findings of the study in four (4) parts. Part 1 deals on the level of preparedness of the student teachers measured in terms of instruction, guidance, management, evaluation and public/human relation. Part 2 presents the level of performance of student teachers in observation and participation practice. Part 3 and Part 4 exhibit the significant difference between the level of preparedness of male and female student teachers and the significant difference between the level of performance in observation and participation practice of male and female student teachers respectively.

Part 1: Level of Preparedness of Student Teachers Instruction

Table 2 presents the level of preparedness of student teachers in instruction

Table 2: Level of Preparedness of Student Teachers in Instruction

Items	Male		Female	
	Mean	Verbal Int.	Mean	Verbal Int.
Identify specific needs, interests and capacities of individual pupils/students.	4.43	Much Prepared	4.14	Much Prepared
Analyze and identifies specific learning tasks.	4.47	Very Much Prepared	4.06	Much Prepared
Show evidence of mastery of subject matter.	4.69	Very Much	4.29	Much



		Prepared		Prepared
Provide varied learning experiences for the development of communication work interpretation and other basic skills involves in learning process.	4.40	Much Prepared	4.06	Much Prepared
Select, prepare and utilize instructional materials and aids effectively in achieving teaching goals.	4.49	Much Prepared	4.28	Much Prepared
Select appropriate available community resources and use these effectively in the teaching-learning process.	4.31	Much Prepared	3.97	Much Prepared
Effectively activate the lesson and tasks to develop critical thinking and use materials that meet the peculiar needs and problems of children.	4.40	Much Prepared	4.00	Much Prepared
Communicate ideas effectively in English and Filipino.	4.49	Much Prepared	3.91	Much Prepared
Select appropriate methods and techniques of teaching.	4.59	Very Much Prepared	4.20	Much Prepared
Ask definite, clear, relevant and thought-provoking questions that lead to the development and understanding of the lesson.	4.59	Very Much Prepared	4.28	Much Prepared
Overall Mean	4.47	Much Prepared	4.12	Much Prepared

As seen in the Table 2, the highest mean values of 4.69 and 4.29 interpreted as “very much prepared” and “much prepared” were obtained by the male and female student teachers’ level of preparedness in showing evidence of mastery of the subject matter. This purports that the respondents have exerted so much of their efforts in studying their lessons and were able to impart knowledge to their pupils/students with pride and confidence. That subject matter is an essential component of teacher knowledge is neither a new nor a controversial assertion. After all, if teaching entails helping others learn, then understanding what is to be taught is a central requirement of teaching. The myriad tasks of teaching, such as selecting worthwhile learning activities, giving helpful explanations, asking productive questions, and evaluating students’ learning, all depend on the teacher’s understanding of what it is that pupils/students are to learn. *Ravitch (2012) stressed that a teacher needs passion and patience, but more than anything else she needs to know what she is talking about. That is what gives the teacher authority.*

The lowest mean value of 4.31 interpreted as “much prepared” was obtained by the male student teachers’ preparedness to select appropriate available community resources and use these effectively in the teaching-learning process. This means that, despite of inadequacy of teaching tools or educational inputs, the respondents made use of available resources and they are trying to be resourceful in teaching. Being resourceful means being able to get the information and results the respondents need. It takes practice, but is a skill that is of benefit in many areas of life.

The female student teachers, on the other hand, were “much prepared” in communicating their ideas effectively in English and Filipino as it received the lowest mean value of 3.91. This means that the respondents used different medium of instruction to explain to their pupils/students the topics and used language they can best understand the lessons.

Communicating effectively is the cornerstone of education. Without effective communication ideas, directions, and thoughts are lost or misunderstood. In education this can have serious repercussions. According to Srivastava (2014), teaching profession demands good communication skill, along with the knowledge of the subject. If they are unable to teach what they know, students tend to be less involved and lose inspiration to learn. They should be motivated to speak up their viewpoints in class and raise questions, if they are unable to grab certain topic. For this, it is vital for the teachers to communicate effectively with them.

In general, the level of preparedness of male and female student teachers in instruction was evaluated as “much prepared” based on the average mean values of 4.47 and 4.12 respectively.

Guidance: Table 3 exhibits the level of preparedness of student teachers in guidance.

Based on the data, the highest mean value of 4.45 was obtained by the male student teachers in making provision for the needs of slow and fast learners. This means that the male respondents were “very much prepared” in guiding the pupils/students to learn by considering their individual physical needs and socio-cultural orientation. They can make some adjustments in the way they teach the lessons and use approaches appropriate to the learning competencies of the students.

Guild (2001) posited that a limited acknowledgment of individual learning differences also encourages a continual search for the one "best" way for students to learn, teachers to teach, and the curriculum to be studied. There is ample proof over the years- in reading, mathematics, writing, and foreign language instruction, for example, that it is futile to search for the single best way to achieve a broad educational outcome, in large part because learners do not fit a single mold.

Table 3: Level of Preparedness of Student Teachers in Guidance

Items	Male		Female	
	Mean	Verbal Int.	Mean	Verbal Int.
Empathic with pupils/students’ problems and make adequate provisions for these.	4.40	Much Prepared	4.06	Much Prepared
Provide for the maximum involvement of pupils/students in the learning activities.	4.43	Much Prepared	4.26	Much Prepared
Stimulate and compliment pupils/students to elicit positive and active interaction.	4.40	Much Prepared	4.29	Much Prepared
Provide situations for decision-making and goal oriented behavior.	4.43	Much Prepared	4.14	Much Prepared
Function effectively as a member of the learning group.	4.49	Much Prepared	4.17	Much Prepared
Provide opportunities for self-explorations of feelings and values in group interaction.	4.37	Much Prepared	4.17	Much Prepared
Help pupils/students develop self-discipline in and through the learning process.	4.43	Much Prepared	4.34	Much Prepared
Take constructive measures rather than punitive ones in response to misbehavior.	4.37	Much Prepared	4.09	Much Prepared
Make provision for the needs of slow and fast learners.	4.54	Very Much Prepared	4.06	Much Prepared
Overall Mean	4.42	Much Prepared	4.18	Much Prepared

Conversely, the female respondents help pupils/students develop self-discipline in and through the learning process as it received the highest mean value of 4.34 interpreted as “much prepared”. This means that the female student-teachers guided their pupils/students to believe in themselves and in their capacity to excel in everything they do. Hence, they are capable to obtain knowledge and eventually share the same to their classmates. Fraser-Thill (2014) mentioned that self-discipline not only seems to be related to academic success, but it also makes a student less likely to have problem behaviors that can interfere with school performance.

As a whole, the level of preparedness of male and female student teachers in guidance was assessed as “much prepared” based on the average mean values of 4.42 and 4.18 respectively.

Management: Table 4 presents the level of preparedness of student teachers in management.



The data revealed that the respondents are “much prepared” in managing the classroom and the teaching-learning process. The male respondents obtained 4.41 mean value while 4.15 for the female respondents.

The data in Table 4 further revealed that the highest mean value of 4.56 interpreted as “very much prepared” was obtained by the male student teachers’ level of preparedness in starting learning activities promptly while the female student teachers obtained the lowest mean value of 4.06. This denotes that the male respondents were punctual and strictly observed time in teaching than the female respondents. This manifests the male student teachers’ seriousness to teach and perform their responsibilities even without the supervision of the cooperating teachers.

Table 4: *Level of Preparedness of Student Teachers in Management*

Items	Male		Female	
	Mean	Verbal Int.	Mean	Verbal Int.
Adequately prepare for the day’s learning activities	4.43	Much Prepared	4.09	Much Prepared
Start learning activities promptly.	4.56	Very Much Prepared	4.03	Much Prepared
Provide a permissive and stimulating atmosphere that encourages pupils/students to raise questions and suggest alternative solutions problems.	4.54	Very Much Prepared	4.11	Much Prepared
Administer test effectively and return corrected papers and other pupils/students’ work promptly.	4.26	Much Prepared	4.17	Much Prepared
Routine handling of materials, equipment and supplies.	4.31	Much Prepared	4.06	Much Prepared
Routinize activities such as entering and leaving classrooms, assigning seats, calling the roll, distributing materials and the like.	4.46	Much Prepared	4.31	Much Prepared
Achieve teaching objectives to the optimum degree possible for the particular subject, lesson or activity within a measurable period of time.	4.43	Much Prepared	4.29	Much Prepared
Overall Mean	4.41	Much Prepared	4.15	Much Prepared

Nevertheless, the male respondents’ preparedness to manage the administration of the test effectively and return corrected papers and other pupils/students’ work promptly got the lowest mean value of 4.26 interpreted as “much prepared”. It can be deduced that the male respondents do not immediately return to the pupils/students their test papers and projects. Perhaps they prioritized other school works and requirements in their other subjects than checking test papers and projects.

The female student teachers, on the other hand, garnered 4.31 which is the highest mean value interpreted as “much prepared” as they routinized their activities such as entering and leaving classrooms, assigning seats, calling the roll, distributing materials and the like. The findings revealed that the female respondents observed class activities strictly to maintain order in the classroom, thus, systematic.

Evaluation: Table 5 exhibits the level of preparedness of student teachers in evaluation.

Table 5: *Level of Preparedness of Student Teachers in Evaluation*

Items	Male		Female	
	Mean	Verbal Int.	Mean	Verbal Int.
Use specific criteria for the accurate evaluation of individual performance.	4.63	Very Much Prepared	4.34	Much Prepared
Select/evolve and utilizes criterion-references tests and other appropriate assessment.	4.40	Much Prepared	4.06	Much Prepared
Make a continuing assessment of pupil/students' achievement.	4.40	Much Prepared	4.14	Much Prepared
Analyze and interpret evaluation results skillfully.	4.37	Much Prepared	4.09	Much Prepared
Utilize evaluation results as a basis for improving instruction.	4.43	Much Prepared	4.20	Much Prepared
Overall Mean	4.45	Much Prepared	4.17	Much Prepared

Looking closely on the Table 5, the male and female respondents were “very much prepared” in using specific criteria for the accurate evaluation of individual performance based on their respective mean values of 4.63 and 4.34. The findings proved that the respondents are fair in evaluating the pupils/students in performance in the classroom on the basis of their examination, recitation, quizzes among others.

Variation exists on the lowest mean values obtained by the respondents. The male respondents obtained the lowest mean value of 4.37 in analyzing and interpreting the evaluation results skillfully while the female respondents obtained the lowest mean value of 4.06 in selecting/evolving and utilizing criterion-references tests and other appropriate assessment.

Generally, the level of preparedness of the male and female respondents in evaluation were rated “much prepared” with 4.45 and 4.17 mean values for male and female student teachers respectively.

Human Relations: Table 6 shows the level of preparedness of student teachers in human relations.

Table 6: *Level of Preparedness of Student Teachers in Public/Human Relations*

Items	Male		Female	
	Mean	Verbal Int.	Mean	Verbal Int.
Maintain cordial relationship with the pupils/students.	4.55	Very Much Prepared	4.50	Very Much Prepared
Maintain cordial relationship with the school staff.	4.49	Much Prepared	4.34	Much Prepared
Maintain cordial relationship with the parents.	4.43	Much Prepared	4.17	Much Prepared
Maintain cordial relationship with the community people.	4.43	Much Prepared	4.20	Much Prepared



Are willing to get along with others.	4.51	Very Much Prepared	4.46	Much Prepared
Are ready to assert one's ideas in an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of others.	4.54	Very Much Prepared	4.43	Much Prepared
Overall Mean	4.49	Much Prepared	4.35	Much Prepared

The level of preparedness of student teachers in public/human relations was assessed as “much prepared” based on the average mean values of 4.49 and 4.35 for male and female respectively. The highest mean values, however, of 4.55 and 4.50 interpreted as “very much prepared” were obtained by male and female student teachers in maintaining cordial relationship with the pupils/students. This means that the respondents believe that strong and supportive relationships between teachers and pupils/students are fundamental to a healthy development of all pupils/students in schools

Tyoakaa (2007) cited that student's relationship and interactions with teachers either produce or inhibit developmental change to the extent that they engage meaningful challenge and provide social and relational supports. Therefore, a positive relationship should be established between the two parties or individuals at either ends. The qualities for a positive relationship can vary to set a learning experience approachable and inviting the student to learn.

Part 2: Level of Performance of Student Teachers in Observation and Participation Practice

The grades of the respondents range from 1.00 to 1.40 as presented in the Table 7. The data revealed that majority of the male (40.0%) and female respondents (34.3%) obtained a grade of 1.10 in their observation and participation practice. This means that their level of performance was interpreted as “superior”. It can be noticed in the Table 7 that from the 35 male respondents, only five (5) or 14.2% recorded a grade of 1.00 and only eight (8) or 22.8% of the 35 female respondents have the same grade. None of the male respondents, however, obtained a grade of 1.40 while one (1) of the female respondent got the same grade.

Table 7: Grades of Student Teachers in Observation and Participation Practice

Grade	Male			Female		
	f	%	Verbal Int.	f	%	Verbal Int.
1.00	5	14.2	Excellent	8	22.8	Excellent
1.03	1	2.9	Superior	0	0	Superior
1.05	1	2.9	Superior	1	2.9	Superior
1.10	14	40.0	Superior	12	34.3	Superior
1.15	1	2.9	Superior	0	9	Superior
1.20	10	28.5	Superior	8	22.8	Superior
1.25	0	0	Superior	1	2.9	Superior
1.30	2	5.7	Superior	4	11.4	Superior
1.40	1	2.9	Superior	1	2.9	Superior
Total	35	100		35	100	

Part 3: Significant Difference between the Levels of Preparedness of Male and Female Student Teachers

The data revealed that there were significant differences in the levels of preparedness of male and female student teachers in instruction, guidance, management and evaluation based on the significant *p* values of .002, .025, .024 and .037 respectively. The findings revealed that the male and female student teachers have different levels of preparedness in

teaching. Based on the positive *p*- values, it can be deduced further that the male respondents are more prepared than the female respondents. Perhaps the male student teachers are more knowledgeable of their topics, they can adjust their teaching methodologies considering the needs of the pupils/students, they are more punctual and they even use specific criteria in evaluating the performance their pupils/students.

The findings of the study contradict with the findings of Housego in 1992 where he evaluated the student teachers’ feelings of preparedness to teach. His study revealed that male student teachers’ measures of preparedness did not increase significantly in the entire duration of the study while the female student teachers felt significantly more prepared to teach.

Table 8: Significant Difference between the Levels of Preparedness of Student Teachers

Variable	Gender	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Instruction	Male	4.47	0.439	3.156	0.002	Significant
	Female	4.12	0.475			
Guidance	Male	4.42	0.409	2.285	0.025	Significant
	Female	4.18	0.514			
Management	Male	4.41	0.450	2.313	0.024	Significant
	Female	4.15	0.493			
Evaluation	Male	4.45	0.490	2.128	0.037	Significant
	Female	4.17	0.605			
Human Relations	Male	4.49	0.533	1.166	0.248	Not Significant
	Female	4.35	0.490			

Part 4: Significant Difference between the Levels of Performance of Male and Female student Teachers in Observation and Participation Practice

As depicted on the data, the male and female student teachers showed no significant difference in their levels of performance in observation and participation practice based on the *p*-value of .835 which is higher than the .05 level of significance. The result proves that the two groups of respondents exhibited “excellent” performance during their practice.

Table 9: Significant Difference between the Levels of Performance of Student Teachers in Observation and Participation Practice

Variable	Gender	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Performance in Observation and Participation	Male	1.129	0.085	-0.209	0.835	Not Significant
	Female	1.134	0.107			

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