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EFL Student Teacher Perceptions of the Teaching Practice Program at SQU

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Abstract

The role of the teacher in all formal educational settings is a vital one. Therefore, it is important to adequately prepare the teacher for the challenging task of teaching. Adequate preparation entails a solid teacher training program and pre-service activities that will equip trainees with the prerequisite skills for facing and responding to the challenges of the new job. In the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), the importance of teacher education and training cannot be overstated. The trainee not only has to learn practical classroom skills, s/he also has to be an effective language learner. One way to examine and reflect on teacher education programs is to determine how trainees perceive a given program and its components. This article reports on a study conducted at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), Oman, which investigated how teacher trainees perceived the teaching practice component of their training program at SQU's College of Education. The results indicated that, although the trainees valued the teaching practice component, they had reservations about such matters as the disrespectful behavior of pupils, the lack of cooperation of some school teachers and of school administrations. The trainees valued supervisor input and feedback though, some felt that there was minimum opportunity to discuss such feedback. However, almost all the trainees felt adequately prepared to enter the workforce after two semesters of teaching practice.

Keywords: teacher education, teaching practice, feedback, field observations, student-teachers