

## The Interpersonal Challenges and Effective Strategies of Trainee Teachers During Practicum

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### Abstract

Trainee teachers often face significant interpersonal challenges during their practicum, such as building rapport with students, managing classroom and many more. These challenges can impact their confidence and effectiveness in real teaching environments. This study explores the interpersonal challenges faced by trainee teachers during their practicum and identifies effective strategies to overcome these challenges. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from trainee teachers of Faculty of Education, UiTM Puncak Alam, through open-ended surveys and questionnaire. Findings reveal that trainee teachers commonly struggle with specific challenges, such as teaching skill, managing classroom behaviour, preparing lesson and they employ strategies such as two-way communication, active learning reflective practice, students and mentorship feedback to address these issues. Based on the results, the study proposes recommendations for teacher training institutions, mentors, or policymakers to enhance the practicum experience, including conducting longitudinal studies to track trainee teacher's development over time, thereby enhancing the research's impact and applicability in improving teacher training and professional development. This research contributes to the ongoing efforts to improve teacher training programs and better prepare future educators for real-world teaching environments.

**Keywords:** Trainee Teachers, Interpersonal Challenges, Effective Strategies, Practicum, Questionnaire

### Introduction

The teaching profession is a noble and essential position that plays a role in shaping the future of individuals and societies. Teachers are dedicated professionals who impart knowledge, skills, and values to students, equipping them with the tools they need to succeed academically and in life. The role of a teacher goes far beyond just delivering information they

act as mentors, facilitators, and role models for their students. They create a nurturing and supportive learning environment where students can explore, question, and grow intellectually and emotionally. Teaching is not only about providing instruction but also about fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills in students. Teachers encourage a lifelong love of learning and instil a sense of curiosity that goes beyond the classroom. The teaching profession can be both rewarding and challenging where they must constantly strive to improve their teaching methods, keep up with the latest educational trends, and engage in professional development to ensure they are providing the best possible education for their students. Back to the beginning of teaching profession, to become a teacher, a student of education must go on training or practicum to qualify as a teacher and during the training they are called as a 'trainee teacher'. The major goal of a successful well- designed teacher-training program is to provide comprehensive exposure to trainee teachers for effective teaching strategies and experiences (Msangya, 2016).

Teacher training is a critical aspect of educational development, as it directly affects the quality of education delivered to students. Trainee teacher training, in particular, plays a vital role in preparing educators for the challenges they will face in the real classroom setting. Through reviewing educational history, starting in the year when Malaysia became independent in year 1957 until 1972, official teacher training can be divided into three groups, firstly, Daily Teachers College to produce primary school teachers. The minimum academic qualification is three years in secondary school, having a *Sijil Rendah Pelajaran* and have three years of teaching training. Second, Malayan Teachers College to produce junior high school teachers. Qualifications enter is five years of secondary school education and obtain a Senior Certificate Cambridge or Federation of Malaya Certificate of Education. Thirdly, The Faculty of Education of the University of Malaya produces high school and sixth form teachers. The entry qualification is a degree from the University and a year of teaching training to obtain a Diploma in Education (Saad, 2019). Nowadays, teacher education has grown rapidly and the institutions that provide teacher education courses are also growing in abundance. Apart from upgrading existing teaching colleges to the Institute of Teacher Education (IPG), several public and private universities also offer these courses. Public universities such as Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) offer various programs from diploma level to Doctorate (PhD) (Jamil, 2008).

In recent years, the field of education has seen rapid changes due to advancements in technology, evolving pedagogical approaches, and an increasingly diverse student population. These changes have placed more demands on teachers, requiring them to adapt to new teaching methods, use technology effectively, and cater to the diverse needs of their students. Existing research on trainee teacher training has offered valuable insights into the challenges faced by teachers during their training period. However, there is still a need for in-depth investigations that delve into the specific interpersonal difficulties met by trainee teachers and the strategies they adopt to address these challenges effectively. These challenges could encompass various aspects, such as instructional methods, classroom management, adapting to diverse student needs, integrating technology, working with colleagues and mentors, and dealing with time constraints, among others.

This research focused on the experiences of trainee teachers in teacher education programs, with an emphasis on the practical aspects of their training by investigating and understanding the various interpersonal challenges faced by aspiring teachers during their practicum period and to identify effective strategies that can help them overcome these challenges. The study aims to provide valuable insights into the practical aspects of teacher education with highlighting the specific difficulties encountered by trainee teachers and exploring innovative approaches that can enhance their preparation for successful teaching careers. By addressing the research objective, the study seeks to contribute to the improvement of teacher training programs and the development of competent and capable trainee teachers who can positively impact the learning experiences of their future students. The study is revolving around academic issue and would aim to identify and categorize the specific challenges encountered by trainee teachers during their practical training. These challenges may include issues related to classroom management, student engagement, adapting teaching methods, time management, technology integration, and addressing diverse student needs. The research would delve into the underlying factors that contribute to the interpersonal challenges faced by trainee teachers in training. This could involve investigating aspects such as the curriculum of teacher education programs, the structure of practical training sessions, available resources and support, and the exposure to real classroom situations. As for strategies employed by trainee teachers, the study would explore the various strategies and techniques utilised by trainee teachers to address the identified challenges. These strategies might include innovative teaching methods, technology integration, differentiated instruction, mentorship, collaboration with experienced teachers, and reflective practices.

This study was conducted for trainee teacher who teaching high school students of adolescence aged which around 13 to 17 years old only. The sample size of trainee teachers participating in the study may be limited which make it opposing to draw broad conclusions about the entire population of trainee teachers. The selection process for participants may also introduce biases if certain groups are over represented or underrepresented.

### **Literature Review**

This paper discussed the three theories which are Constructivism theory, Cognitive Load theory, and Bloom's Taxonomy. These theories form the foundation of understanding the interpersonal challenges and strategies experienced by practical teachers in training. They highlight the interplay between knowledge construction, cognitive management, and the alignment of teaching objectives with student outcomes, offering valuable insights for enhancing teacher training programs.

Vygotsky's theory of constructivism emphasizes that learners actively construct their understanding of the world based on their prior knowledge, experiences, and interactions with the environment. By incorporating authentic and practical classroom in teacher training programs, trainee teachers can develop a deeper understanding of how theoretical concepts apply in real classroom settings. This approach encourages trainees to think critically, plan effective teaching strategies, and actively implement them in the teaching-learning process with a combination of 'acting, thinking and doing' (Schneider, 2023). Constructivism theory can provide a strong theoretical framework to understand how trainee teachers in training navigate interpersonal challenges and develop effective strategies to enhance their teaching practices based on active learning, collaboration, reflection, and personalized support. The

critical thinking abilities of aspiring teachers play a pivotal role as they directly impact how effectively these trainees can instil and pass on the same skills to their future students. Consequently, students who possess strong critical thinking skills are more likely to become innovators, explorers, and influential figures who drive positive changes within their societies (Ugwuozor, 2021). As a result, cultivating a culture of critical thinking within teacher training is of ultimate importance. It serves as a catalyst for fostering heightened in the social in general and teacher's training programme.

Cognitive load theory, developed by Sweller, focuses on the cognitive demands imposed on learners' working memory during the learning process. Trainee teachers may face challenges in managing the cognitive load associated with planning lessons, implementing teaching strategies, and assessing student learning. Understanding cognitive load theory can guide the design of training materials and activities that optimize information presentation, reduce extraneous cognitive load, and facilitate the acquisition of essential teaching skills. Based on trainee teachers' mental effort in learning spreadsheet through self- instructional module based on Cognitive Load Theory, observing the ability to develop teaching module, the outcome of the study, in order to enhance the effectiveness of computer documentation for quicker and more seamless learning, it is essential to make adjustments to the instructional design using insights from Cognitive Load Theory and a minimalist approach. These modifications are crucial elements that contribute to the improvement of the documentation, facilitating a more efficient and user-friendly learning experience (Tazir, 2011).

Bloom's Taxonomy, a well-established framework for categorizing cognitive skills and learning objectives, classifies thinking abilities into six levels, ranging from lower-order skills like remembering and understanding to higher-order skills like applying, analysing, evaluating, and creating. Developed by educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom in the 1950s, this taxonomy has become a fundamental tool in designing effective learning experiences and assessments. For this study, the focus will be on higher order thinking skills, namely applying, analysing, evaluating, and creating. In applying, this level involves the ability to use previously learned information in new and practical situations. Learners demonstrate their understanding by applying knowledge and concepts to solve problems or complete tasks. Activities may include using formulas, solving equations, or applying theories to real-life scenarios. As for the trainee teachers, the required to apply their prior knowledge about pedagogical technique in teaching. Next, analysing level where learners can break down complex information into its component parts and examine the relationships between these parts. They can identify patterns, compare, and contrast ideas, and draw conclusions based on evidence. Activities may include data analysis, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, or classifying information. When the trainee teachers encounter challenges during their training, they need to have skills in analysing the problem and overcome it by using effective strategies.

At this level, learners engage in critical thinking and judgement. As trainee teachers progress in their training, they move beyond basic comprehension and begin to engage in critical thinking and judgment. They learn to assess the value and credibility of educational information, teaching methods, and educational arguments. Trainee teachers develop the ability to critically evaluate different teaching strategies and materials, considering their

effectiveness in achieving learning outcomes. Finally, trainee teachers advance in their training, they reach the highest level of Bloom's Taxonomy. At the creating stage, they demonstrate their ability to generate novel ideas and innovative approaches based on their understanding, evaluation, and reflection on educational theories and practices. Trainee teachers are encouraged to design original lesson plans, develop creative teaching materials, and propose innovative solutions to educational challenges they may encounter during their practicum or classroom experiences. Overall, Bloom's Taxonomy serves as a valuable guide for designing meaningful and challenging learning experiences that foster cognitive development and academic growth among trainee teachers (Wilson, 2016). This study aims to contribute to the enhancement of trainee teacher training and improve the quality of education delivered in classroom.

A conceptual framework is a study which presents the main variables of the study and the associations of it. In a simple word, it is a visual or written statement that present the variables and relationships. It is presented based on the theories and research evidence that the researcher made after she has the precise vision on her study. In the conceptual framework, key variables of the study are presented alongside the theory used for this study.

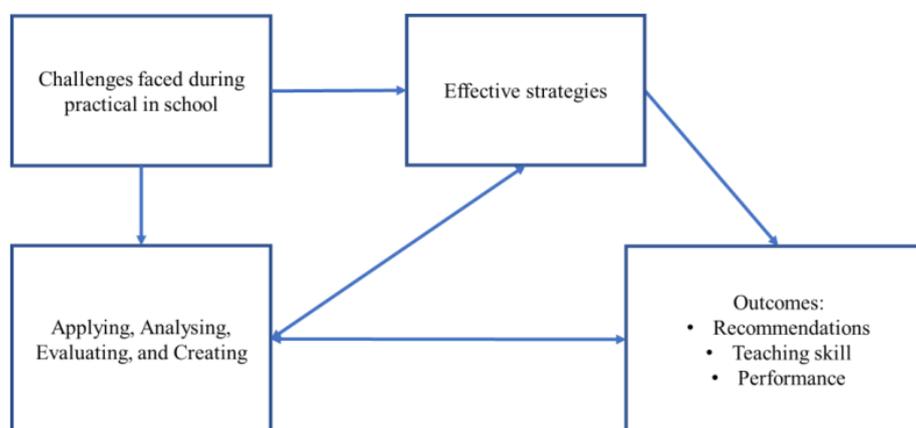


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework of the Research

The conceptual framework is constructed based on the theory used by the researcher which is Bloom's Taxonomy and Vygotsky's theory of constructivism. Based on the conceptual framework above, the researcher models the relationship between the variables of measure, which is interpersonal challenges faced during practical in school, effective strategies, and the reflection for improvement which specified into outcomes, recommendation, performance, and teaching skill. All the variables in this study are directly and indirectly connected to each other. Trainee teachers often struggle to get the necessary pedagogical skills needed for effective teaching. They may find it challenging to translate theoretical knowledge into practical classroom strategies. Thus, applying constructivism and strong critical thinking skills can connect the variables within the study. This framework provides a basis for research design, analysis and serve as visualization for what researcher look for in this whole study.

### Research Methodology

The research was adapted a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods which will allow for a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and strategies from multiple perspectives. The qualitative dominant concurrent mixed methods design (qualitative + quantitative). The chosen mixed methods approach for this study allows participants to express their comprehension through a socially constructed process that incorporates their real-life experiences and learning (Chua, 2020).

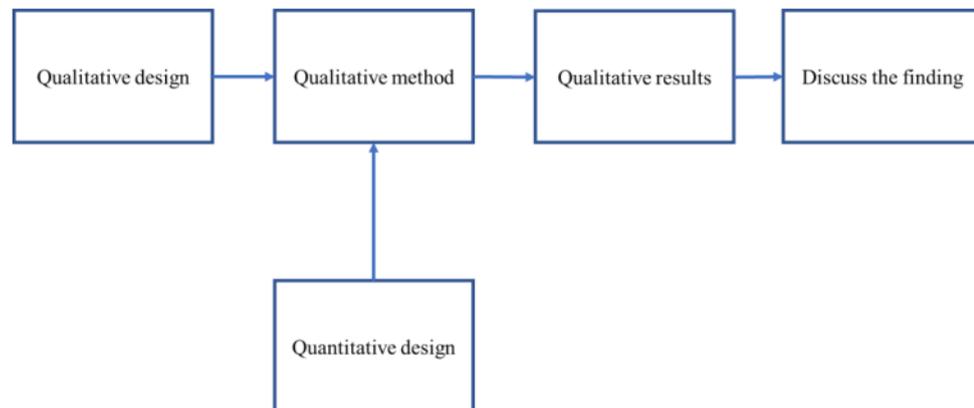


Figure 3.1 Qualitative dominant concurrent nested mixed methods design

The research focuses on the UiTM Faculty of Education students in Puncak Alam, Selangor Campus, specifically student of semester 7 who are the trainee teachers undergoing training or practicum in school. The research will include trainee teachers who are presently undergoing training in educational institutions or working in supervised environments. A sample will be selected based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study. The most appropriate sampling technique for this research would be a combination of purposive sampling and stratified sampling. Purposive sampling a non-probability sampling that would be used to select participants who have specific characteristics or experiences that are relevant to the research objectives. In this case, trainee teachers in training would be purposefully selected to ensure that the sample represents a diverse range of training programs, educational institutions, and regions. The results obtained will only representing the research subject (Chua, 2020)

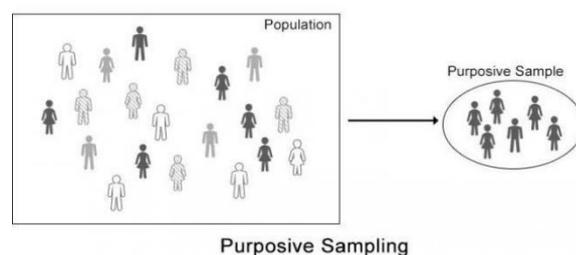


Figure 3.2 Illustration of Purposive Sampling

To ensure adequate representation of different training programs or institutions, stratified sampling can be employed. By using a combination of purposive and stratified sampling, the research can capture a diverse and comprehensive sample of trainee teachers in training, allowing for a more robust exploration of the challenges and strategies they encounter during their training period. The sample's diversity would enhance the research's external validity and provide valuable insights into the broader experiences of trainee teachers in different training contexts. This procedure able to lower sampling error as the researcher can select from a mixed population (Chua, 2020).

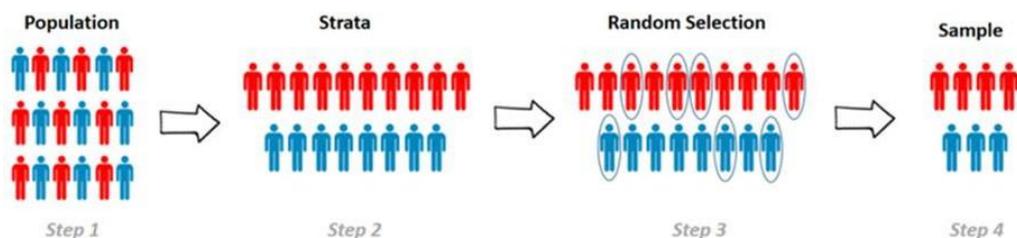


Figure 3.2 Illustration of Purposive Sampling

For the research on Challenges and Strategies of Trainee Teacher in Training, a combination of research instruments will be used to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. These instruments will help in obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by trainee teachers and the strategies employed to overcome them. Some of the instruments that could be used are open-ended survey and questionnaire.

In-depth structured open-ended surveys will be conducted with trainee teachers. Open-ended questions will be used to gather qualitative insights into the challenges and strategies in trainee teacher training. Each one of the respondents will be asked the same question. The respondents are expected to have the same knowledge and level of language ability. These surveys will provide rich and nuanced perspectives on the experiences of trainee teachers (Chua, 2020). Questionnaire refers to a set of questions used to collect data from respondents, and it include closed ended (Likert scale questions) only. It will be using Google Form and administered to trainee teachers to collect quantitative data Likert-scale questions were used to assess the extent to which specific challenges, strategies, and reflection for improvement are perceived by the participants. Items within the questionnaire was primarily construed and obtained from the in-depth open-ended surveys conducted earlier. There are four sections in this questionnaire, which are Section A. Demographic Information, Section B. Challenges Faced During Practicum, Section C. Strategies for Overcoming Challenges and Section D: Reflection for Improvement.

From the open-ended surveys conducted, the researcher will collect the important items to be used in constructing questions for the questionnaire. Questions and items are validated by consulting with a supervisor or field related expert lecturer. Moreover, the validity of items can be tested by conducting pilot study. A pilot study is conducted was as a preliminary test to form questionnaire items for the study. After the questionnaire done, a pilot test can be used to test the appropriateness of the item's arrangement and arrangement of choices for each item (Chua, 2020). Internal consistency reliability is assessed through a pilot study involving a subset of the sample. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is used to measure the

reliability of the questionnaire items related to challenges, strategies, reflection, and improvement. It can be concluded that the constructed of the study has good reliability with total value 0.813 which more than 0.7.

Table 3.1  
*Value of Cronbach's Alpha*

| Items/Components                                | Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items |
|---|------------------|--|
| Section B: Challenges Faced During Practicum    | 0.867            | 0.864  |
| Section C: Strategies for Overcoming Challenges | 0.528            | 0.453  |
| Section D: Reflection for Improvement           | 0.696            | 0.838  |

To conduct this study, permissions from the researcher's institution, UiTM Puncak Alam, was requested and approved. Consent from the respondents was also requested on both open-ended surveys and questionnaire by filling the consent form. All the data collected from the study are only be used for the purpose of this study. The privacy of the respondents is kept safely from external parties that are unrelated to the study. Ethical considerations taken into account during the research, such as ensuring informed consent, maintaining participant confidentiality, and adhering to ethical guidelines in data collection and analysis. The research adapted a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Open-ended survey was conducted with 3 trainee teachers as respondents to obtain qualitative insights and in-depth perspectives on the trainee teacher training experience. Additionally, a questionnaire was be administered to trainee teachers to gather quantitative data on the interpersonal challenges they encounter during their training and the strategies they use to address those challenges. The findings provided valuable knowledge to inform improvements in teacher education programs and enhance the preparation of trainee teachers for successful careers in the classroom.

The responses gained from open-ended surveys was analysed thematically to identify common themes and categories of challenges, strategies, and reflection for improvement. This method of analysis covered research questions (1) What are the common interpersonal challenges faced among the trainee teacher in training? (2) What are the effective strategies needed by trainee teachers in overcoming the challenges faced?, and (3) What recommendations can be proposed on reflection for improvement of practicum by trainee teacher? The quantitative data from the questionnaire was analysed using statistical tools to identify patterns, frequencies, and correlations related to the challenges, strategies and reflection for improvement. Since the data gathered comprises in form of numbers, it will be analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. This quantitative study will objectively answer the research questions. This method of analysis covered

research questions, (4) Is there any significant difference of interpersonal challenges faced among the trainee teacher in training between gender? (5) Is there any significant difference of effective strategies needed by trainee teacher between programme code? and (6) Is there any relationship between interpersonal challenges faced among the trainee teacher and reflection for improvement of practicum? As discussed previously, several methods of data collection and data analysis are conducted to gain the right and valid results. The findings of this research can benefit not only trainee teachers but also educational institutions, policymakers, and teacher educators.

### Findings

This paper presents the findings of the study, organized according to the research questions. The results are derived from both qualitative and quantitative analyses, providing a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by trainee teachers during their practicum, the effective strategies they employed, and the relationship between these challenges and their reflection for improvement. The findings related to demographic information and related research questions data will be covered. The qualitative data was gathered from open-ended surveys and the quantitative data was analysed using statistical tests such as Independent Sample T- Tests and ANOVA. The open-ended survey included three participants, aged between 23 and 24 years. Two participants identified as male, and one identified as female. In terms of educational background, all three participants held bachelor's degrees, with majors in Mathematics, Science, and English. Due to the small sample size, demographic details are presented in a generalized format to maintain participant anonymity

The descriptive statistics describing the demographic background of the study respondents for questionnaire are displayed in this section. The part on the demographic basis of the basic inquiries, which are gender and programme code. Firstly, the gender tabulation of the research respondents is displayed in Table 4.1. The table below demonstrates that female trainee teacher made up the majority of those who responded. There were 96 female trainee teachers that took part in the questionnaire overall, and they had a rate of 62.3% as opposed to 58 male trainee teachers and a percentage of 37.7% for male trainee teachers.

Table 4.1

#### *Gender of Respondents*

|       |        | Gender    |         |               |                    |
|-------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|       |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Male   | 58        | 37.7    | 37.7          | 37.7               |
|       | Female | 96        | 62.3    | 62.3          | 100.0              |
|       | Total  | 154       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

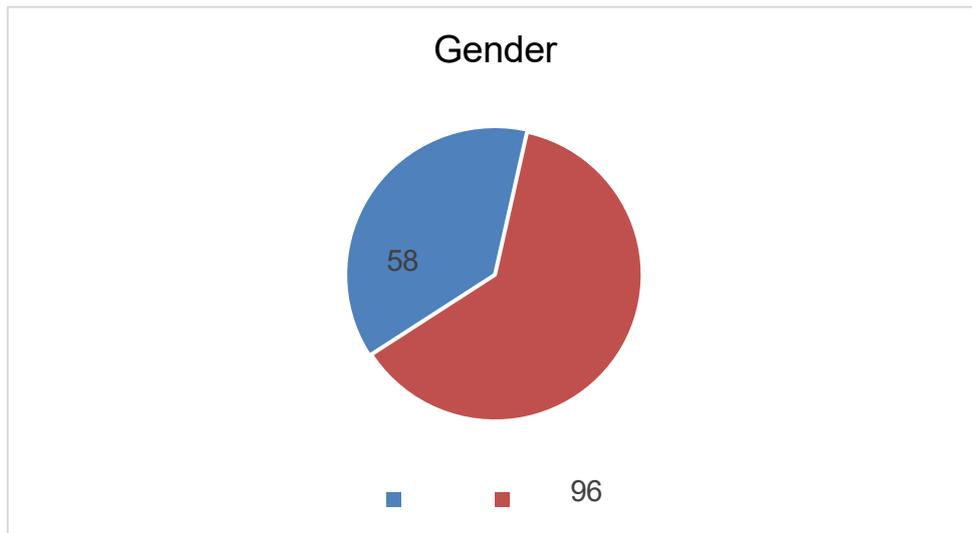


Figure 4.1 Gender of Respondents Pie Chart

Next, the Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2 summarize the distribution of respondents across different programme codes. where the majority respondents' programme code participated in this research was from ED248 with frequency of 47 respondents accounting for 30.5% of the total. In contrast, ED260 has the lowest representation, with only 8 respondents (5.2%). The remaining programmes show a more balanced distribution: ED241 has 13 respondents (8.4%), while ED242, ED246, ED247, and ED249 each have between 20 and 22 respondents, contributing between 13% and 14.3% to the total.

Table 4.2  
*Programme Codes of Respondents*

|       |       | Program me Code |         |               |                    |
|-------|-------|-----------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|       |       | Frequency       | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | ED241 | 13              | 8.4     | 8.4           | 8.4                |
|       | ED242 | 20              | 13.0    | 13.0          | 21.4               |
|       | ED246 | 22              | 14.3    | 14.3          | 35.7               |
|       | ED247 | 22              | 14.3    | 14.3          | 50.0               |
|       | ED248 | 47              | 30.5    | 30.5          | 80.5               |
|       | ED249 | 22              | 14.3    | 14.3          | 94.8               |
|       | ED260 | 8               | 5.2     | 5.2           | 100.0              |
|       | Total | 154             | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

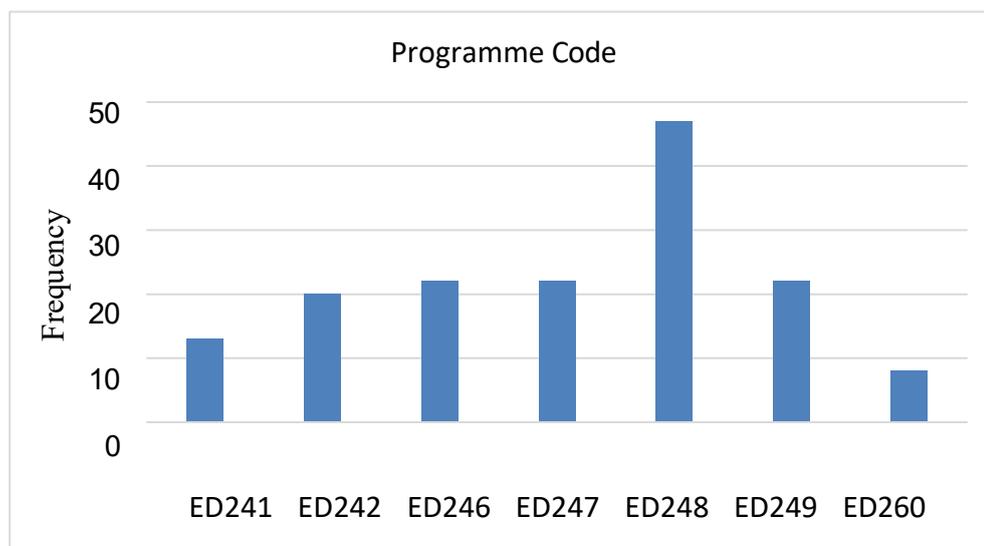


Figure 4.2 Programme Code of Respondents Bar Chart

The qualitative results derived from open-ended surveys address Research Questions 1, 2, and 3. Themes and patterns were identified through qualitative analysis methods, thematic analysis, which helped in drawing connections between participants' feedback and the research questions. Meanwhile, the quantitative results, including descriptive and inferential statistics from questionnaires, refer to Research Questions 4, 5, and 6. Inferential statistics were used to examine relationships or correlations between variables.

*Research Question 1: What are the common interpersonal challenges faced among the trainee teacher in training?*

The analysis of open-ended surveys data revealed five major themes related to the interpersonal challenges faced by trainee teachers during their practicum which are lesson planning, classroom management, student engagement, student comprehension, and teaching skills, along with the emotional impact these challenges create. Lesson Planning is the process of outlining and organizing the content, activities, and assessments that will take place during a lesson. Respondents identified lesson planning as one of usual challenges during their practicum which match with Cognitive load theory developed by Sweller. They expressed difficulties in tailoring their lesson plans to meet diverse student needs while adhering to curriculum guidelines. Respondents highlighted the complexity of designing lessons that catered to differing student abilities and learning preferences. Referring to what Respondent 1 (R1) shared, "I face the challenge of preparing my lessons while adapting to the various learning needs of my students." This sentiment was echoed in another statement from the same respondent, "Mostly, I face the difficulty of ensuring that my resources are tailored efficiently with my students' needs. This includes my lesson aids, time, and others." In addition to customizing lessons, respondents faced challenges in aligning their plans with the prescribed curriculum. Respondent 2 (R2) noted, "... also to keep up on the Rancangan Pengajaran Tahunan (RPT) (Yearly Lesson Plan)." This indicates the struggle of maintaining a balance between meeting curriculum expectations and addressing individual learning needs in the classroom.

Classroom Management refers to procedures used by teachers to create and maintain an organized, positive, and productive learning environment. Respondents reported challenges in managing classrooms particularly when they were unfamiliar with student's needs and behaviour. A recurring issue was the initial struggle to maintain classroom control, which impacted both student behaviour and the flow of lessons. R1 shared, "Since I have yet to learn their needs, I feel like I lost control of the students in terms of classroom management and lesson progression." This suggests that understanding students' needs is critical for maintaining discipline and ensuring smooth lesson delivery. The lack of familiarity with the classroom dynamics often left respondents feeling unprepared to handle disruptions or manage time effectively.

Student Engagement can be defined as the level of interest, motivation, and active participation that students exhibit during the learning process. Respondents reported significant difficulties in engaging students during lessons, particularly in addressing issues related to energy levels, interest, and gender. A common issue was managing the low energy levels of students who reside in school dormitories. Respondent 3 (R3) observed, "It is hard to tackle the students who stay in the school dormitory as they constantly feel sleepy, and they will sleep whenever they have free time." This lack of alertness often disrupted the flow of lessons, especially when combined with students' perceptions of certain subjects as uninteresting. As R3 noted, "Students often fall asleep during teaching if they think the subject is boring."

Engaging students in mixed-gender activities also posed challenges. Respondents reported resistance to cooperation in such settings, particularly among female students. For instance, R3 shared, "*Students are hardly given cooperation when doing mixed gender grouping activities.*" Additionally, female students often struggled with participation in class presentations or discussions involving male peers. R3 explained, "*Female students will be extremely shy when doing presentations in front of the class, and they will not do discussions if there are male students in the group.*" These findings highlight the importance of addressing factors like student fatigue, subject interest, and social dynamics to improve engagement. A student's ability to understand, process, and make sense of the material being taught. It involves more than just memorizing facts it includes the capacity to interpret, analyse, apply, and critical thinking. Cognitive Load Theory is directly aligns with student comprehension because it focuses on how the brain processes information and the limits of working memory. Respondent described difficulties in ensuring student's understanding of the lessons, particularly when foundational knowledge was lacking or when students pretended to understand. R2 shared, "*During the practicum, the challenges are when I need to make sure my student understands the content that I deliver.*" However, respondent encountered situations where students pretended to understand the lessons. R2 elaborated, "*When students did not finish the homework and also students act like they understand everything meanwhile they are not.*" This behaviour made it harder for trainee teachers to identify gaps in knowledge and provide necessary support.

Another issue was addressing student's struggles with subjects where their basic understanding was insufficient considering the students already in high school. R2 noted, "At school, some students find it a bit hard for them to understand Mathematics since their basic knowledge on Mathematics is really weak." This required trainee teachers to invest extra time

and effort in explaining concepts and adapting their teaching methods. The abilities and techniques that educators use to effectively deliver instruction, engage students, and facilitate learning. Effective teaching skills include managing cognitive load by breaking down complex information and presenting it in a way that is accessible to students. Respondents expressed difficulties in maintaining clarity and confidence while delivering lessons effectively, particularly when they encountered confusion during the teaching process. For instance, R2 shared, "Sometimes when I teach my student, I stumble into confusion while explaining to the student." This highlights a lack of confidence or intelligibility in subject matter delivery which can impact the overall teaching experience and students' comprehension. Such moments of uncertainty reflect the need for enhanced preparation and adaptive teaching strategies to improve clarity during lessons.

The way experiences, events, or interactions affect a person's emotions, feelings, and overall emotional state. The emotional toll of the practicum emerged as a significant concern for participants. R1 shared their experience of psychological strain, stating, "I do feel anxious and stressed." This comment highlights the emotional challenges trainee teachers face, including managing their workload, adapting to classroom dynamics, and meeting the expectations of their supervisors. Anxiety and stress were often linked to the pressure of delivering lessons effectively, handling student behaviour, and receiving constructive criticism. These emotional struggles may also affect trainee teacher's overall well-being and their ability to focus during the practicum. For example, persistent anxiety can lead to burnout meanwhile, stress may impact classroom management and teaching quality.

*Research Question 2: What are the effective strategies needed by trainee teachers in overcoming the challenges faced?*

The analysis of open-ended surveys data revealed a range of effective strategies employed by practical teachers to address the challenges they faced during their practicum. These effective strategies are organized into themes which are two-way communication, active learning, engagement through games, reward systems, topic coverage, skill improvement, and reflective practices. Two-way communication between a teacher and a student refers to an interactive exchange where both parties actively participate in sharing and receiving information. This type of communication fosters mutual understanding, respect, and collaboration. Respondents emphasized the importance of establishing a strong connection with students through honest communication. These strategies helped create a positive classroom environment, which facilitated better teaching and learning experiences. One effective approach highlighted by the respondent was being genuine and transparent with students. R1 explained, "*I find that by being honest and open with my students, they are willing to be the same in return.*" This indicates that building mutual trust fosters a collaborative relationship where students feel comfortable expressing themselves.

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effectively, handling student behaviour, and receiving constructive criticism. These emotional struggles may also affect trainee teacher's overall well-being and their ability to focus during the practicum. For example, persistent anxiety can lead to burnout meanwhile, stress may impact classroom management and teaching quality.

Alternative effective strategy was adapting vocabulary and communication styles to align with students' levels of understanding and interests. R1 noted, "I think the most effective one is to 'speak their language,' as in I need to adjust my vocabulary and interests to their level." This approach not only bridges the gap between teachers and students but also demonstrates respect for students' perspectives, making them more engaged and receptive during lessons. Active Learning refers to an instructional approach where students are actively involved in the learning process, rather than passively receiving information from the teacher. Constructivist theories emphasize active learning, where students build their own understanding based on prior knowledge and experiences. Respondents described incorporating activities that required movement and interaction to promote student participation during lessons. One approach emphasized the use of group-based activities that encouraged students to communicate and actively engage in the teaching and learning process. R3 shared, "I will do activities that need them to move around and make a group discussion so that they can communicate and participate in the teaching and learning process." This strategy highlights the value of interactive learning methods, which help students contribute actively, fostering a more dynamic and inclusive classroom environment.

Another effective strategy involved changing group members regularly to encourage broader peer interactions. R3 explained, "*I will make sure there is a change of group member every lesson so they will not stick with the same person.*" This practice promotes diversity in collaboration, allowing students to develop interpersonal skills and learn from a wider range of perspectives. Teachers can ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate and build relationships within the classroom.

The use of game-based activities or elements to enhance student involvement, motivation, and learning outcomes in educational settings. One of the strategies that respondents found effective for engaging students was incorporating games into lessons. This approach served as both a learning tool and a motivational strategy. R2 shared, "*I am doing some game activity that will divide them into a few groups, and they will compete to get the prize. Students will discuss and try to answer the question as fast as they can.*" This game-based strategy encourages friendly competition and actively involves students in the learning process. The competitive element of the game helps maintain attention and fosters excitement which making the learning experience more enjoyable.

A reward system is a structured approach to motivate and encourage desired behaviours by offering incentives or recognition when specific actions or goals are achieved which can encourage students to progress through the Bloom's taxonomy that offering recognition for achieving milestones at each level. In addition to games, respondents also utilized reward systems to motivate students and reinforce desired behaviours. R2 explained, "I use a point reward for those who finish the homework and cooperate well with me." This point-based reward system helps to incentivize academic performance and positive behaviour. By rewarding students for completing homework and cooperating, teachers encourage a culture

of responsibility and teamwork. The use of actual rewards provides immediate feedback to students which reinforcing their positive actions and motivating them to continue to study thoroughly.

The extent and depth to which a particular subject or content area is addressed within a curriculum, lesson plan, or study material. It ensures that all essential concepts, skills, and knowledge related to a topic are adequately taught and learned. To ensure that all required topic is covered, respondents adopted additional strategies for topic coverage. R2 mentioned, "I use the extra class during Saturday to cover the topic so that I can keep up with the RPT." This demonstrates the commitment of trainee teachers to meet the curriculum requirements, even if it means dedicating extra time outside regular class hours. Holding extra classes ensures that the syllabus is fully covered to providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the material and allowing teachers to observe to the prescribed lesson plan.

The process of enhancing one's abilities, expertise, and competencies in a specific area through deliberate practice, learning, and reflection Respondents point out the importance of self-reflection and continuous learning as crucial strategies for improving their teaching skills. These reflective practices allowed them to identify weaknesses and enhance their teaching methods for better student comprehension and engagement. One key strategy for skill improvement was adjusting teaching methods based on feedback and self-reflection. R2 noted, "... luckily most of the time I get to think and provide them with a new explanation. So, for the other class, I will be more careful in explaining that part so that students can understand well." This approach highlights the participant's ability to learn from previous teaching experiences and adjust their explanations to better meet students' needs. Another important strategy for skill improvement was the ongoing process of self-assessment and learning. R2 explained, "I will keep learning as soon as I finish teaching some classes. With this method, I will know where my weaknesses are." This commitment to learning from each teaching session allows respondents to pinpoint areas of weakness and actively work on them, promoting continuous professional growth. Respondents also noted the valuable role that mentorship played in their skill development. R2 shared, "My teaching approach keeps getting better as I learn from my mentor." Mentorship provided guidance and constructive feedback, which helped respondents refine their teaching techniques.

Reflective Practices is a process of thinking about one's actions, experiences, and decisions to gain insights and improve future performance. Respondents emphasized the importance of reflecting on students' informal progress, rather than solely focusing on their formal academic achievements. R1 shared, "I focus mostly on student's informal progress rather than their formal learning in my reflections." This approach indicates a recognition that learning goes beyond formal assessments and includes the development of social, emotional, and behavioural skills. Teachers gain a more holistic understanding of their students' overall growth by reflecting on informal progress. One more key aspect of reflective practice discussed by participants was the importance of daily self-reflection to navigate the challenges of the practicum. R3 noted, "As everyone has their own challenges and difficulties during their practical time, I think they need to reflect on themselves every day." This approach underlines the value of continuous reflection as an ongoing practice rather than a one-time event and track their progress over time. Respondents also highlighted the role of student feedback in their reflective practices. R3 explained, "I use student's feedback to acknowledge

*my weaknesses, which include using the 'parking lot' method where students will write their feedback after the teaching and learning session."* The feedback method like 'parking lot' allows students to provide anonymous feedback on the lesson, including what they found helpful and areas that need improvement. This method gives teachers valuable insights into student perceptions, helping them recognize their own weaknesses and areas for growth.

*Research Question 3: What recommendations can be proposed on reflection for improvement of practicum by trainee teacher?*

The analysis of open-ended surveys data highlighted the reflective insights and improvement shared by trainee teachers during their training. Key themes emerged, including additional preparation, the difference between theory and practice, teaching approach progression, interactive learning, supportive environment, and the overall practicum experience contributed to their growth and development as future educators. An effort for extra steps, resources, or efforts taken to ensure that one is fully ready for a task particularly in teaching. Respondents expressed that additional preparation before and during the practicum was essential to overcoming challenges and improving teaching effectiveness. R1 mentioned, *"I feel that practical teaching duration is quite brief for a teacher trainee to learn the basics of teaching."* This reflects the sentiment that the limited time spent in practicum leaves little room for teacher trainees to fully grasp the foundational skills needed for teaching. R1 further suggested, *"I think an extra week can benefit a lot for them in catching on to the teaching career."* An extra week of practical experience was seen to better equip trainees with essential teaching tools and confidence, enabling them to adjust more easily to the demands of the teaching profession.

In addition, R2 emphasized that overcoming challenges during the practicum required a blend of preparation and adaptability, stating, *"Overcoming challenges during practical training requires a combination of preparation, adaptability, and a growth mindset. It's important to plan lessons carefully, adapt to unexpected situations, and seek feedback from mentors to continually improve."* This highlights the importance of a flexible approach, where being prepared and adaptable enables trainees to effectively handle classroom challenges while fostering continuous professional development. The contrast between abstract concepts, ideas, or principles (theory) and the actual application or execution of those concepts in real-world situations (practice). A recurring theme among respondents was the discrepancy between theoretical knowledge and real-life classroom experiences. R1 shared, *"The picture of students that I imagine in class while learning is vastly different from what I encountered in real life. Students are more proficient than what I thought they would be, and they are livelier (livelier) than how I imagined."* This suggests that theory-based expectations often do not align with the dynamic and varied realities of the classroom, where students may present diverse levels of proficiency and engagement. R3 also discussed the gap between theory and practice, particularly when applying teaching methods and interacting with students, *"As in the class we just learned about the theory about young adolescence, methods of teaching, and how to handle these students with different backgrounds. I think there is a lot of difference, especially when you need to apply it during teaching and having interaction with the students themselves."* This highlights the challenge of translating theoretical concepts into practical teaching strategies, emphasizing the need for teacher trainees to adapt and refine their approach as they gain real-world experience. The evolution and development of

instructional methods and strategies over time. As respondents progressed through their practicum, they reported significant growth in their teaching approaches. R1 noted, "I would say my teaching style has relaxed and towards the end of my training." This indicates that with experience, trainee teachers feel more confident and comfortable in their roles, allowing them to adopt a more relaxed and effective teaching style. R2 shared, "I am no longer feeling nervous, and I do really enjoy meeting my students every day." This reflects an increased sense of confidence and enjoyment in the teaching process, showing that over time, the initial anxiety, and nervousness associated with teaching diminishes as skills and rapport with students develop. R3 further emphasized the improvement in their teaching approach, "I think my teaching approach is getting better. I am finally able to tackle all the students to learn compared to when I first started." This highlights the growth in the teacher's ability to manage and engage all students effectively, which can be attributed to increased experience and refinement of teaching techniques over the course of the practicum.

Interactive learning can be referred as an educational approach that actively involves students in the learning process, encouraging them to participate, engage, and collaborate. Respondents highlighted the need for more practical training in integrating digital tools into daily lessons to foster interactive learning. R2 stated, "More practical training is needed on how to effectively integrate digital tools into daily lessons. This includes using technology not just as a presentation tool but as a means to enhance student interaction, collaboration, and personalized learning." This feedback underlines the importance of digital literacy in education and the need for teacher training programs to better equip trainees with the skills necessary to use technology effectively to engage students and facilitate collaborative, student-centred learning. A supportive network of colleagues, students, and mentors contributed to a positive teaching experience. Building supportive relationships with both students and colleagues was seen as key to a successful practicum experience. R1 reflected, "The teachers and school staff became my support, the students became my friends, and the bond we created essentially made the school a safe place for me." This highlights the importance of a supportive school community in fostering a positive and conducive learning environment for both trainees and student.

R2 emphasized, *"Building positive relationships with students and developing strong classroom management skills will create a supportive and effective learning environment."* This replicates the belief that strong relationships with students, coupled with effective classroom management, are essential for creating an environment where both teaching and learning can thrive.

A period of supervised, hands-on training or learning, typically within a professional setting, where students or trainees apply theoretical knowledge to real- world situations. Trainee teachers expressed mixed emotional experiences, ranging from initial struggles to transformative growth. The practicum experience had a profound impact on the respondents, with responses ranging from challenging to highly rewarding. R1 described the experience as initially difficult, stating, *"Very traumatising at first. While it may only apply to me due to personal reasons, I would say that my limits are tested every now and then. I am an introverted person, so teaching and delivering to students are one of the most chilling actions."* This response suggests that for some, the practicum experience was an emotionally and

mentally challenging process, particularly for introverted individuals who found teaching to be outside their comfort zones.

However, other respondents found the experience to be enriching. R2 remarked, "For me, it is really an amazing part of the story of my life. From meeting new people to teaching wonderful students, I will never forget this experience." Similarly, R3 shared, "I love my practicum journey in my school as I am able to learn a lot of things to be a real teacher." These positive reflections demonstrate the significant personal and professional growth that occurred during the practicum with many trainees appreciating the opportunity to learn and gain hands-on experience.

*Research Question 4: Is there any significant difference of challenges faced among the trainee teacher in training between gender?*

Table 4.3  
*Group Statistics*

|            |        | Group Statistics |        |                |                 |
|------------|--------|------------------|--------|----------------|-----------------|
|            | Gender | N                | Mean   | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Challenges | Male   | 58               | 4.2701 | .31075         | .04080          |
|            | Female | 96               | 4.3082 | .44428         | .04534          |

Table 4.4  
*Independent Samples Test*

| Independent Samples Test   |                             |       |      |       |               |                 |                       |   |         |        |
|--|-----------------------------|-------|------|-------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|---------|--------|
| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances t-test for Equality of Means |                             |       |      |       |               |                 |                       |   |         |        |
| F  |                             | Sig.  | t    | df    | Sig. 2-tailed | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |         |        |
|  |                             |       |      |       |               |                 |                       | Lower                                     | Upper   |        |
| Challenges   | Equal variances assumed     | 2.378 | .125 | -.573 | 152           | .568            | -.03804               | .06644                                    | -.16930 | .09321 |
|  | Equal variances not assumed |       |      | -.624 | 148.671       | .534            | -.03804               | .06100                                    | -.15858 | .08250 |

Null hypothesis, H0: There is no significant difference in mean score of the challenges faced during practicum between gender. Alternative hypothesis, H1: There is significant difference in mean score of the challenges faced during practicum between gender. Based on the Independent Sample Test table, since p-value of Levene's test for equality of variances is 0.125 which is more than 0.05, so the output in Equal variance assumed will be used. The

p-value of the independent samples test is 0.534 which is more than 0.05, then the null hypothesis accepted. An independent t-test showed that the difference in scores between the Male group (n=58, M=4.2701, SD=0.31075) and Female group (n=96, M= 4.3082, SD=0.44428) is statistically significant different,  $t(148.671) = -0.624, p = 0.534$ . It can conclude that female trainee teachers have higher mean score for Challenges compare to Male trainee teacher by looking at the mean for both female and male.

*Research Question 5: Is there any significant difference in mean score of effective strategies needed by trainee teacher between programme code?*

Table 4.5  
ANOVA Test

| ANOVA          |                |     |             |       |      |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Strategies     |                |     |             |       |      |
|                | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
| Between Groups | .667           | 6   | .111        | 2.154 | .051 |
| Within Groups  | 7.588          | 147 | .052        |       |      |
| Total          | 8.255          | 153 |             |       |      |

Table 4.6  
Multiple Comparisons

| Multiple Comparisons                      |                    |                       |            |       |                         |             |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------|------------|-------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Dependent Variable: Strategies Bonferroni |                    |                       |            |       |                         |             |
| (I) Programme Code                        | (J) Programme Code | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig.  | 95% Confidence Interval |             |
|   |                    |                       |            |       | Lower Bound             | Upper Bound |
| ED241                                     | ED242              | -.11192               | .08094     | 1.000 | -.3622                  | .1383       |
|   | ED246              | -.13147               | .07948     | 1.000 | -.3772                  | .1143       |
|   | ED247              | -.17692               | .07948     | .578  | -.4227                  | .0688       |
|   | ED248              | -.02373               | .07120     | 1.000 | -.2439                  | .1964       |
|   | ED249              | -.13601               | .07948     | 1.000 | -.3818                  | .1097       |
|   | ED260              | -.20192               | .10210     | 1.000 | -.5176                  | .1137       |
| ED242                                     | ED241              | .11192                | .08094     | 1.000 | -.1383                  | .3622       |
|   | ED246              | -.01955               | .07020     | 1.000 | -.2366                  | .1975       |
|   | ED247              | -.06500               | .07020     | 1.000 | -.2820                  | .1520       |
|   | ED248              | .08819                | .06066     | 1.000 | -.0993                  | .2757       |
|   | ED249              | -.02409               | .07020     | 1.000 | -.2411                  | .1929       |
|   | ED260              | -.09000               | .09505     | 1.000 | -.3839                  | .2039       |
| ED246                                     | ED241              | .13147                | .07948     | 1.000 | -.1143                  | .3772       |
|   | ED242              | .01955                | .07020     | 1.000 | -.1975                  | .2366       |

|       |       |         |        |       |        |       |
|-------|-------|---------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
|       | ED247 | -.04545 | .06850 | 1.000 | -.2573 | .1663 |
|       | ED248 | .10774  | .05869 | 1.000 | -.0737 | .2892 |
|       | ED249 | -.00455 | .06850 | 1.000 | -.2163 | .2073 |
|       | ED260 | -.07045 | .09380 | 1.000 | -.3605 | .2196 |
| ED247 | ED241 | .17692  | .07948 | .578  | -.0688 | .4227 |
|       | ED242 | .06500  | .07020 | 1.000 | -.1520 | .2820 |
|       | ED246 | .04545  | .06850 | 1.000 | -.1663 | .2573 |
|       | ED248 | .15319  | .05869 | .210  | -.0283 | .3347 |
|       | ED249 | .04091  | .06850 | 1.000 | -.1709 | .2527 |
|       | ED260 | -.02500 | .09380 | 1.000 | -.3150 | .2650 |
| ED248 | ED241 | .02373  | .07120 | 1.000 | -.1964 | .2439 |
|       | ED242 | -.08819 | .06066 | 1.000 | -.2757 | .0993 |
|       | ED246 | -.10774 | .05869 | 1.000 | -.2892 | .0737 |
|       | ED247 | -.15319 | .05869 | .210  | -.3347 | .0283 |
|       | ED249 | -.11228 | .05869 | 1.000 | -.2937 | .0692 |
|       | ED260 | -.17819 | .08690 | .884  | -.4469 | .0905 |
| ED249 | ED241 | .13601  | .07948 | 1.000 | -.1097 | .3818 |
|       | ED242 | .02409  | .07020 | 1.000 | -.1929 | .2411 |
|       | ED246 | .00455  | .06850 | 1.000 | -.2073 | .2163 |
|       | ED247 | -.04091 | .06850 | 1.000 | -.2527 | .1709 |
|       | ED248 | .11228  | .05869 | 1.000 | -.0692 | .2937 |
|       | ED260 | -.06591 | .09380 | 1.000 | -.3559 | .2241 |
| ED260 | ED241 | .20192  | .10210 | 1.000 | -.1137 | .5176 |
|       | ED242 | .09000  | .09505 | 1.000 | -.2039 | .3839 |
|       | ED246 | .07045  | .09380 | 1.000 | -.2196 | .3605 |
|       | ED247 | .02500  | .09380 | 1.000 | -.2650 | .3150 |
|       | ED248 | .17819  | .08690 | .884  | -.0905 | .4469 |
|       | ED249 | .06591  | .09380 | 1.000 | -.2241 | .3559 |

Null hypothesis, H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in mean score effective strategies needed by trainee teacher between programme code. Alternative hypothesis, H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in mean score effective strategies needed by trainee teacher between programme code. From Table 4.5 ANOVA Test shown above, the mean square values are computed by dividing the sum of squares by their respective degree of freedom. The F- value (2.154) is computed by dividing the mean square between groups by the mean square within

groups. The p-value for ANOVA test is 1.000 which is more than 0.05, so null hypothesis accepted. Bonferroni tests showed that all groups scored statistically significantly different from each other.

*Research Question 6: Is there any relationship between challenges faced among the trainee teacher and reflection for improvement of practicum?*

Table 4.7  
Correlations between Challenges and Reflection for Improvement

| Correlations               |                     |         |         |
|----------------------------|---------------------|---------|---------|
| Challenges                 |                     |         |         |
| Reflection For Improvement |                     |         |         |
| Challenges                 | Pearson Correlation | 1       | 0.370** |
|                            | Sig. (2-tailed)     |         | 0.000   |
|                            | N                   | 154     | 154     |
| Reflection for Improvement | Pearson Correlation | 0.370** | 1       |
|                            | Sig. (2-tailed)     | 0.000   |         |
|                            | N                   | 154     | 154     |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Null hypothesis, H0: There is no significant relationship between challenges faced among the trainee teacher and reflection for improvement of practicum. Alternative hypothesis, H1: There is significant relationship between challenges faced among the trainee teacher and reflection for improvement of practicum. Since p-value is less than 0.05, so reject null hypothesis, H0. A Pearson product moment correlation test showed that the relationship between Challenges and Reflection for Improvement are statistically significant,  $r = 0.370$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . This part presented the findings of the study, addressing the research questions through both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The results revealed that trainee teachers face a range of interpersonal challenges during their practicum and identified a significant positive relationship between the challenges faced by trainee teachers and their reflection for improvement, indicating that interpersonal challenges often serve as catalysts for professional growth when accompanied by reflective practices. Overall, the findings underscore the nature of teaching challenges and the critical role of reflection and adaptive strategies in fostering the professional development of trainee teachers. These results provide a foundation for the discussion and recommendations presented in the next chapter. Also offering valuable insights into how teacher training programs can better support trainee teachers in navigating the complexities of the practicum and preparing for their future roles as educators

This part presents a discussion of the findings from the research, exploring their implications in relation to the research questions and the existing literature. The results of the study, based on both qualitative and quantitative data, are analysed and interpreted to provide a

deeper understanding of the interpersonal challenges faced by teacher trainees during their practicum and the effective strategies they use to overcome these challenges. This chapter also reflects on the significance of the findings in relation to the development of teaching skills, the effectiveness of different teaching strategies, and the overall impact of the practicum experience on the professional growth of teacher trainees. Finally, a conclusion is drawn, summarizing the insights gained from the study and suggesting areas for further research in the field of teacher education. The findings discussed in relation to the research questions. Each section addressing the corresponding research question. As there are six research questions, the discussion will be organized into six parts, each focused on the relevant findings and how they relate to the respective question. This structure will ensure a comprehensive analysis of the results and providing clear insights into each aspect of the study.

The findings of this study reveal several interpersonal challenges faced by trainee teachers during their practicum, including lesson planning, classroom management, student engagement, student comprehension, teaching skills, and the emotional impact of these challenges. These findings are consistent with recent research on teacher training and the complexities of transitioning from theory to practice in educational settings. The challenges in lesson planning reported by respondents, such as tailoring lessons to diverse student needs while adhering to curriculum guidelines, are supported by recent studies. For example, trainee teachers often struggle with designing lessons that accommodate diverse classrooms, particularly when balancing curriculum requirements with individual learning needs (König et al., 2020). This aligns with the respondents' difficulties in aligning their plans with the *Rancangan Pengajaran Tahunan (RPT)*. Additionally, the prominence of adaptive lesson planning, suggesting that trainee teachers need more training in creating flexible and inclusive lesson plans that cater to diverse student abilities (Lampert et al., 2013).

Classroom management emerged as a significant challenge, particularly in the initial stages of the practicum. This finding is supported by recent research, which identified classroom management as one of the most critical skills for novice teachers to develop (Korpershoek et al., 2016). The respondents' struggles with maintaining classroom control and understanding student behaviour align with the importance of building relationships and establishing routines to create a positive classroom environment.

The difficulties in engaging students, particularly those with low energy levels or disinterest in certain subjects, are consistent with recent findings which identified student engagement as a key predictor of academic success (Wang, 2013). The challenges of mixed-gender activities and female students' reluctance to participate in front of male peers are supported by research which highlights the influence of gender dynamics on classroom participation (Leaper, 2014). The respondents' struggles with ensuring student comprehension, particularly when students lack foundational knowledge or pretend to understand, associate with the importance of formative assessment and feedback in identifying and addressing learning gaps (Hattie, 2020). The issue of students pretending to understand, as reported by R2, reflects a phenomenon that the need for teachers to employ diagnostic strategies to uncover misconceptions and provide targeted support (Brookhart, 2017). The challenges in teaching Mathematics due to weak foundational knowledge further underscore the importance of scaffolding and differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2023). The respondents'

difficulties in maintaining clarity and confidence during lessons are consistent with findings from recent research on teacher self-efficacy. The novice teachers often experience self-doubt and uncertainty, particularly when faced with unexpected challenges during instruction (Tschannen-Moran, 2019). The moments of confusion reported by R2 highlight the need for adaptive teaching strategies and ongoing professional development to enhance trainee teachers' confidence and effectiveness in delivering lessons. The emotional toll of the practicum, including anxiety and stress, is a recurring theme in recent literature on teacher training. Identified teaching as a highly stressful profession, particularly for novice teachers who are still developing their skills and coping mechanisms (Schonfeld et al., 2017). The respondents' experiences of psychological strain and the impact of workload, classroom management, and supervisory feedback on trainee teachers' well-being. The potential for burnout and its impact on teaching quality further emphasize the need for emotional support and stress management strategies during the practicum (Montgomery, 2005). Each of these themes directly responds to the research question by identifying specific interpersonal challenges that trainee teachers encounter during their training. The findings provide a comprehensive overview of the struggles faced by trainee teachers, which are critical for understanding their experiences and improving teacher training program.

The analysis of open-ended survey data revealed seven key strategies employed by trainee teachers to address the challenges they encountered during their practicum. These strategies are supported by recent research and highlight the importance of adaptive, student-centred, and reflective approaches in teacher training. The emphasis on two-way communication as a strategy aligns with recent studies that highlight the importance of building trust and rapport in the classroom. The teachers who foster open and honest communication with students create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment (Cornelius-White, 2007). The respondents' approach of adapting their vocabulary and communication styles to match students' levels of understanding (Mercer, 2020), who emphasized the role of teacher-student rapport in enhancing engagement and learning outcomes. This strategy not only bridges the gap between teachers and students but also demonstrates respect for students' perspectives, fostering a collaborative classroom culture. The use of active learning strategies, such as group discussions and movement-based activities, is supported by recent research on student engagement. Found that active learning techniques significantly improve student participation and retention of material (Freeman et al., 2014). The respondents' practice of changing group members regularly to encourage diverse interactions supports with the benefits of cooperative learning in developing interpersonal skills and fostering inclusivity (Johnson, 2018). These strategies demonstrate the importance of creating dynamic and interactive classroom environments that cater to diverse learning preferences.

Incorporating games into lessons as a motivational and learning tool is consistent with recent studies on gamification in education. game-based learning enhances student motivation and engagement by introducing elements of competition and collaboration (Dichev, 2017). The respondents' use of competitive games to encourage participation and discussion helped in increasing the effectiveness of gamification in maintaining student attention and making learning enjoyable (Sailer, 2020). This strategy highlights the potential of playful learning activities to address challenges related to student disinterest and low energy levels. The implementation of reward systems to motivate students and reinforce positive behaviours is supported by research on behavioural interventions in education. The role of extrinsic rewards

in shaping student behaviour, particularly when combined with intrinsic motivation strategies (Deci, 2012). The respondent's use of point-based rewards for homework completion and cooperation aligns the effectiveness of tangible rewards in promoting academic responsibility and teamwork. This strategy shows up the importance of immediate feedback and positive reinforcement in creating a culture of accountability (White, 2023). The strategy of topic coverage through extra classes and adherence to curriculum guidelines reflects the challenges trainee teachers face in balancing time constraints and syllabus requirements. The significance of flexible lesson planning and time management in meeting curriculum demands (Darling-Hammond, 2010). The respondents' commitment to holding extra classes to ensure comprehensive topic coverage eased for adaptive teaching practices that prioritize student understanding over rigid adherence to schedules (Tomlinson, 2023).

The focus on skill improvement through self-reflection, mentorship, and continuous learning is consistent with recent research on teacher professional development. The position of reflective practices in helping teachers identify areas for growth and refine their teaching methods (Korthagen, 2018). The respondents' use of feedback from mentors and students to improve their teaching aligns with the role of constructive feedback in fostering professional growth. This strategy demonstrates the value of ongoing learning and adaptation in addressing the complexities of classroom teaching (Timperley et al., 2017). The emphasis on reflective practices, including daily self-reflection and student feedback, is supported by recent studies on teacher resilience and effectiveness. Found that reflective practices help teachers manage stress and improve their teaching strategies by fostering self-awareness and adaptability (Schonfeld et al., 2017). The respondents' use of methods like the "parking lot" to gather student feedback aligns with findings the importance of student-centered reflection in creating inclusive and responsive learning environments (Brookhart, 2013). These strategies align with recent research and highlight the importance of adaptive, student-centred, and reflective approaches in teacher training. By incorporating these strategies into their practice, trainee teachers can enhance their effectiveness, resilience, and ability to create positive learning experiences for their students.

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into Research Question 3 which was about reflection for improvement. The respondent's emphasis on the need for additional preparation before and during the practicum is supported by recent research. The suggestion by R1 for an "extra week" of practical experience is supported with a research, extended practicum periods provide trainee teachers with more opportunities to adapt to classroom realities and refine their teaching strategies Korthagen (2018). The importance of extended practicum durations to allow trainee teachers to develop foundational teaching skills and confidence. Additionally, R2's recommendation for a combination of preparation, adaptability, and a growth mindset resonates with research that emphasized the role of reflective practice and mentorship in fostering continuous improvement during the practicum (Timperley et al., 2017). The recurring theme of the gap between theory and practice is a well- documented challenge in teacher training. R1's observation that classroom realities often differ from theoretical expectations. The complexities of translating theoretical knowledge into practical teaching strategies (Lampert et al., 2013). R3's experience of struggling to apply teaching methods in real-world settings, which emphasized the need for teacher training programs to bridge the theory-practice divide through more immersive and hands-on experiences (König et al., 2020). These findings suggest that practicum programs

should incorporate more opportunities for trainee teachers to practice and adapt theoretical concepts in diverse classroom contexts. The respondents report of progression in their teaching approaches over the course of the practicum are consistent with recent studies on teacher development. R1's observation that their teaching style became more relaxed and effective over time. The role of experience in building teacher confidence and competence (Tschannen-Moran, 2019). Similarly, R2's increased enjoyment and reduced nervousness reflect that practical experience helps trainee teachers develop resilience and adaptability (Schonfeld et al., 2017). R3's improved ability to engage all students underscores the importance of reflective practice and mentorship in refining teaching techniques (Korthagen, 2018). The call for more practical training in integrating digital tools into lessons reflects the strengthening importance of technology and digital literacy in education. R2's recommendation to use technology for enhancing student interaction and personalized learning can emphasize the effectiveness of gamification and digital tools in fostering engagement (Sailer, 2020). The importance of a supportive environment in fostering a positive practicum experience is well-supported by recent research. R1's reflection on the role of teachers, school staff, and students in creating a safe and supportive space (Cornelius-White, 2007), who emphasized the impact of positive relationships on teacher well-being and effectiveness. Similarly, R2's emphasis on building strong relationships with students and developing classroom management skills resonates with the role of supportive networks in creating effective learning environments (Emmer, 2020).

The mixed emotional experiences reported by respondents reflect the transformative yet challenging nature of the practicum. R1's initial struggles with teaching as an introverted individual align with findings by Montgomery (2005), who highlighted the emotional and psychological challenges faced by novice teachers. Conversely, R2 and R3's positive reflections on the practicum as a rewarding and enriching experience resonate with research which emphasized the potential for personal and professional growth during the practicum (Schonfeld et al., 2017). The findings answer Research Question 3 by identifying key themes and recommendations for improving the practicum experience which followed the theories which are Constructivism theory and Bloom's Taxonomy. Practicum can better prepare trainee teachers to navigate the challenges of the classroom and foster positive learning experiences for their student

The results of the Independent Sample T-Test indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of challenges faced during the practicum between male and female trainee teachers. The results suggest that gender does not play a significant role in determining the challenges faced by trainee teachers during their practicum. This finding aligns with recent research on gender differences in teaching experiences. For example, a study by found that while male and female teachers may experience different types of challenges, the overall intensity or frequency of these challenges does not significantly differ by gender (Bardach, 2021). Likewise, factors such as classroom environment, mentorship, and individual resilience have a greater impact on trainee teachers' experiences than gender (Schonfeld et al., 2017). The lack of significant gender differences in this study may also reflect the evolving nature of gender roles in education. As noted, the teaching profession has become increasingly inclusive, with both male and female teachers facing similar expectations and pressures (Darling-Hammond, 2010). A meta-analysis observed no significant gender differences in the overall stress levels or challenges faced by teachers,

although they noted that male and female teachers may cope with these challenges differently (Wang, 2017). Trainee teachers should be encouraged to openly discuss their challenges, regardless of gender, to foster a culture of collaboration and mutual support.

The findings of this study address Research Question 5, the results of the ANOVA test indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of effective strategies needed by trainee teachers across different program codes. Additionally, the Bonferroni post-hoc tests confirmed that there were no statistically significant differences between any of the program code groups. The results suggest that program code does not play a significant role in determining the effective strategies needed by trainee teachers during their practicum. This finding implies that trainee teachers, regardless of their program code, face similar challenges and require comparable strategies to overcome them. The high p-value (1.000) indicates that the observed differences in mean scores between program codes are likely due to random variation rather than any systematic differences. This finding aligns with recent research on teacher training, which suggests that the core challenges and strategies in teaching are often consistent across different educational contexts and programs (Darling-Hammond, 2010). For example, studies by Korthagen (2018) have underlined that effective teaching strategies are universally applicable regardless of the specific program or specialisation.

The findings of this study are consistent with recent literature on teacher training and the universality of teaching challenges. For instance, a meta-analysis found that while teaching contexts may vary, the core strategies needed to address challenges such as classroom management and student engagement are similar across different educational settings (Wang, 2017). Highlighted that effective teaching strategies, such as building rapport with students and fostering a supportive classroom environment, are essential for all teachers, regardless of their program or specialization (Mercer, 2020). The lack of significant differences between program codes may also reflect the standardized nature of teacher training programs, which often emphasize common pedagogical principles and practices. The teacher training programs typically focus on developing foundational skills that are applicable across various teaching contexts, which may explain the similarity in the effective strategies needed by trainee teachers from different program codes (Lampert et al., 2013). The findings of this study answer Research Question 5 by demonstrating that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of effective strategies needed by trainee teachers between program codes. This suggests that the challenges faced by trainee teachers and the strategies needed to address them are universal, regardless of their program or specialization. Since program code does not significantly influence the effective strategies needed by trainee teachers, training programs can adopt universal approaches to address common challenges.

The results of the Pearson product-moment correlation test indicate that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the challenges faced by trainee teachers and their reflection for improvement during the practicum. This conclusion is based on the p-value of 0.000, which is less than the conventional significance level of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.370$ ) suggests a moderate positive relationship between these two variables, meaning that as the challenges faced by trainee teachers increase, their level of reflection for improvement also tends to increase. The significant positive relationship between challenges and reflection/improvement

suggests that facing challenges during the practicum can serve as a catalyst for growth and development among trainee teachers. This finding aligns with recent research on reflective practice and teacher development. Korthagen (2018) point out that challenges and difficulties in teaching often prompt trainee teachers to engage in deeper reflection, leading to improved teaching practices and professional growth. Similarly, trainee teachers who actively reflect on their challenges are more likely to develop adaptive strategies and resilience, which contribute to their overall improvement (Schonfeld et al., 2017). The level of mentorship, emotional support, and access to resources may moderate the extent to which challenges lead to meaningful reflection for improvement (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

The findings of this study are consistent with recent literature on the role of challenges in teacher development. For example, a study by Timperley et al. (2017) found that trainee teachers who encountered significant challenges during their practicum were more likely to engage in reflective practices and seek feedback from mentors, leading to improved teaching skills. Equally, challenges often serve as "teachable moments", prompting trainee teachers to critically evaluate their practices and adopt more effective strategies (Mercer, 2020). The positive relationship between challenges and reflection/improvement also aligns with the concept of productive struggle, which has been widely studied in educational research. Productive struggle refers to the process of grappling with difficult tasks or challenges in a way that leads to deeper learning and growth (Lampert et al., 2013). In the context of teacher training, this suggests that the challenges faced during the practicum can be viewed as opportunities for trainee teachers to develop problem-solving skills, adaptability, and resilience. The findings of this study answer Research Question 6 by demonstrating a statistically significant positive relationship between the challenges faced by trainee teachers and their reflection for improvement during the practicum. This suggests that challenges play a crucial role in fostering professional growth and development, particularly when accompanied by reflective practices and supportive conditions.

### **Conclusion**

This study provide valuable perceptions into the challenges and strategies faced by trainee teachers, emphasizing the importance of reflective practice, universal support systems, and technology integration. The teacher training programs can better prepare future educators to navigate the complexities of the classroom and foster positive learning experiences for their students.

This study contributes valuable insights to the field of teacher training by highlighting the universal nature of teaching challenges, the importance of reflective practices, and the need for supportive and inclusive training programs. Addressing the recommendations and limitations outlined in this research contribute for teacher training programs better prepare trainee teachers to navigate the complexities of the classroom, foster positive learning experiences for their students, and ultimately contribute to the advancement of education. The findings of this study serve as a foundation for future research and a call to action for stakeholders in teacher education to prioritize the professional growth and well-being of future educators.

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