

PERCEPTIONS OF EXPERIENCED SENIOR TEACHERS AND PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS ON CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING IN SAGAING TOWNSHIP

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out the difference in perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning in Sagaing Township. Quantitative methodology was used to find out the perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning. The design adopted in this study was a survey research design. This study was limited to all experienced senior teachers in Sagaing Township and all pre-service teachers, B.Ed. Fourth Year Senior Students who are studying in Sagaing Institute of Education in (2013-2014) academic year. There were (184) senior teachers and (248) pre-service teachers. Therefore, the total population was (432) enough to allow census and the sampling procedure was not adopted. A questionnaire consisting of (44) items with one open-ended item was used developed by Ibrahim (2000). The data yielded from the questionnaire was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) for collection of data. Research hypotheses were analyzed by using independent samples *t* test. The findings of this study of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers of Sagaing explained that perceptions of male and female of both groups were, more or less, same. Some differences were found in the perceptions of the groups. This indicated that teaching experience has an impact on the perceptions of teachers on classroom instructional planning, and the gender has no impact on it.

Keywords: instruction, planning, instructional planning, experienced teachers, and pre-service teachers

Introduction

Successful education depends upon many factors such as effective teachers, suitable teaching methods, advance planning, hard-working students, suitable buildings, good discipline, attractive textbooks, audio-visual aids, etc. Viewed from the standpoint of teachers, however, the main concern of teachers is their instructional task. They must understand the instructional process and should be able to manipulate it to make it effective and productive.

The word instruction is similar to the word teaching. Therefore, instructional planning is primarily the task of the teacher. Teachers try their best to plan their lesson in advance. Instructional planning is the process teachers use to decide how to select, organize, and deliver a learning experience to maximize both teacher and student achievement, and satisfaction. In other words, before they begin teaching, good teachers consider what to teach and how to teach it so that teaching and learning are worthwhile for all (Bainer, Cruickshank & Metcalf, 1999).

Instruction is the main activity in a school but good and successful instructions cannot be carried out without planning. Instruction is the process whereby the environment of an individual is deliberated to enable him to learn to emit or engage in specified behavior under specified conditions or as responses specified situation (Corey, 1976). Instructional planning includes not only planning what students will learn, but how they will learn it. Instructional planning may include considerations of academic content, assistive or augmentative technology needs, scaffold supports, specific teaching strategies, and adaptations of or modifications to content.

Learning is not exclusive to the domain of an education system. Learning begins a very long time before school; continues for even longer after school; and happens rapidly, and in parallel with school in a great number of different ways and settings. Teachers are good at providing excellent opportunities for allowing children's learning to progress. Often, without

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fully understanding the reasons why, teachers encourage learning in their charges which works well, and is a good approach at a particular time with a particular child or group of children. With greater insight into what is currently known about the processes of learning and about individual learning preferences, teachers are able to provide even better learning situations which are more likely to lead to effective learning (Pintchard, 2009).

Schools were created by society to provide an environment where learning can be organized effectively and economically. To discharge his responsibility well, the teacher in today's school must be better prepared and must plan more effectively than ever before. An increase in numbers and heterogeneity of the school population, rapid expansion of all fields of knowledge, newer developments in teaching methods, and an increasing volume of instructional materials of all types has compounded the complexity of instructional planning. The teachers of today must plan or perish professionally.

Purposes of the Study

- To find out the difference in perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning
- To study the perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning
- To explore the difference between the perceptions of male and female experienced senior teachers on classroom instructional planning
- To compare the perceptions of male and female pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning
- To give suggestions to improve teaching and learning based on the results of the study

Research Questions

- To what extent is it different in the perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning?
- To what extent is it different in the perceptions of male and female experienced senior teachers on classroom instructional planning?
- To what extent is it different in the perceptions of male and female pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning?

Definition of Key Terms

Instruction

Instruction is defined as the set of planned external events which influence the process of learning and thus promote learning (Ibrahim, 2000).

Planning

Planning is a design, scheme, program or method marked out before hand for the accomplishment of an objective, a plan of attack, a proposed or tentative project (Ibrahim, 2000).

Instructional Planning

Instructional planning is the process teachers use to decide how best to select, organize, and deliver a learning experience to maximize both teacher and student achievement and satisfaction (Bainer, Cruickshank & Metcalf, 1999).

Experienced Teachers

Experienced teachers are those teachers who were teaching in secondary schools, trained or untrained (Ibrahim, 2000).

Pre-service Teachers

Pre-service teachers are those teachers who were under teachers' training in training colleges (Ibrahim, 2000).

Scope of the Study

This study is limited to all experienced senior teachers in Sagaing Township and all pre-service teachers, B.Ed. Fourth Year Senior Students who are studying in Sagaing Institute of Education in (2013-2014) academic year.

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Framework of Instructional Planning

Preparation in the form of instructional planning, termed lesson planning by some educators and researchers, is the basis for effective teaching and student learning (Reiser & Dick, 1996). In support of this premise, Sung (1982) found that students who were taught using more structured instructional plans had significantly higher achievement than those taught with less structured plans.

Additionally, teacher planning improves the likelihood of a successful class session through the use of proactive strategies (Bond & Peterson, 2004), and instructional planning provides the teacher —with some control over what is going to happen as opposed to reacting only to what has happened (Duke & Madsen, 1991). As such, an important goal of teacher preparation programs is to assist pre-service teachers in developing a systematic process for instructional planning and to embrace the concept of writing instructional plans (Baylor & Kitsantas, 2005).

Importance of Instructional Planning

Men do many things in their lives, but some faces with success and some with failure although failures work with great effort. It seems that success and failure totally depends on the well planned structure, since planning is an important aspect and it plays a significant role in daily life. Planning is preparation for action (Barge, 2013).

The authorities of the government invest billions on education and they spent on the desired educational results. Thus, planning becomes an important role for the authority concerned. Educational planning at all levels has been growing importance with the passing of time. Best planning assures adequate return on the educational investment. Planning is the best guarantee of unity and proper emphasis in the complex educational world of today so that education can meet the changing needs of the society, and the coordination of the workers in education is possible through proper planning (Ibrahim, 2000).

Planning for education is the task of Government agencies and experts but the planning for instructions mostly depends upon teachers. Teachers are responsible for classroom instructional planning. Classrooms are busy places with many things happening all at once. Teachers are challenged to monitor multiple classroom events simultaneously while at the same time collecting and analyzing data on student performances (Duncan & Met, 2010).

Teaching begins before the teacher steps into the classroom. Prior to each lesson or unit, effective teachers identify what students need to know, understand, and do so as to upgrade curriculum standards. Effective teachers collaboratively determine how mastery of the students will be assessed, prior to planning the lessons. The greatest benefit of instructional planning is that it brings to the teacher a greater versatility in directing the learning situation (Goething, 1955).

Many educators believe that lesson planning is a critical element of effective instruction. As an old adage says, “failing to plan is planning to fail”. Lesson planning helps ensure that classroom instruction aligns with curriculum goals and objectives and therefore enables students to demonstrate their successful learning on unit or curricular assessments (Duncan & Met, 2010).

Elements of Instructional Planning

There are some important elements which should be included in the instructional plan. First of all, the subject matter should be thoroughly studied and then the proper methods of preparation be thought out and noted in the plan (Ibrahim, 2000).

In providing for this part of the lesson to be taught, the nature of the subject matter, individual differences in students, the interests of the students should be considered. Today's classrooms provide unique challenges for teachers. Teachers must know content matter as well as state standards. They are accountable to multiple constituents: students, parents, administrators, and community members, and are expected to demonstrate appropriate yearly progress (Ibrahim, 2000).

When teachers are fully informed about their students, they are better prepared to make appropriate instructional and curriculum decisions, and adapt, as necessary, their teaching practice to ensure success for all students. To learn about their students, teachers must rely on data collected from their students through a variety of methods. Student data must be rich enough in detail to provide teachers with necessary information to connect instructional strategies to their needs and skills. These data must provide information about students' ability and knowledge within the subject matter as well as information about students' interests, learning styles, and pace.

Provision for using concrete materials should be made whenever possible. Questions and topics of discussion should be included in the plan. Many experts explain these elements. A daily lesson plan brings into the focus objectives, contents and methods to be followed in teaching. Certain points like objectives, contents, methods, teaching aids, evaluation techniques are required to be attended to properly in advance for achieving outcomes (Ibrahim, 2000).

Written Lesson Plans

Written lesson plans are said to be good form. Written plan may be a protection against forgetting, reduce the possibilities of digression, encourages exactness and orderly thinking and can provide a written record for future needs and reference. The plan from memory is subject to all the limitations of the memory.

The question is often raised to whether it is necessary to write out lesson plan. The answer is that plans should be written out. However, teacher should not be a slave to his/her lesson plan. A teacher should be ready to depart from his/her plan, whenever sound judgment leads his/her to believe that is right thing to do. Teachers may or may not write the plan of a lesson on paper but they must give a careful thought to each lesson.

The experienced teacher can utilize more mental planning in lieu of the detailed written plans needed in pre-service teaching. Lesson planning in advance can lead to a more relaxed feeling as well as to better performance both in the classroom and in subsequent planning periods. Such an arrangement can contribute to the physical and mental benefits also for the learners. A final benefit to this method of scheduling the planning time can be improved learning (Briggs, 1977, cited in Ibrahim, 2000).

Problems in Instructional Planning

The problem of the selection and organization of instructional activities and materials has become more difficult with the expansion of available materials and teaching aids; the broadening of educational objectives, to meet the needs of all students, not just the college bound; and the increasing heterogeneity of the school population (Brink, 1960). Educational shortage is a common topic in educational circles. Probably the greatest shortage of the average classroom teacher is time. With more students of greater diversity to teach, with more to be

taught, and with more duties outside the classroom and in the community, when does the teacher find time to plan his work adequately?

In planning his work, the busy teacher has several alternatives. He may attempt to teach without plans or use the same plans year after year. However, neither of these alternatives satisfies the professional person. It is obvious that an effective teacher must be a highly organized person who is able to budget time wisely, think clearly, and act decisively.

Another problem in instructional planning at the secondary level is the fact that the teacher may be lacking in perspective. Educated essentially as a subject-matter specialist, he can easily lose sight of the fact that such subject matter is a means to an end, not an end itself. Moreover, maintaining a balance between uniformity and flexibility is also another problem in planning instruction. The need for thorough preplanning has already been stressed. However, to plan does not mean to predetermine everything that happens in the classroom. There are unpredictable variables in every teaching-learning situation.

In conclusion, reading and talking about instructional planning, and even being skilled at planning does not make one a good teacher! Planning is necessary but not sufficient for good teaching. It is a means to an end, not an end in itself (Bainer, Cruickshank & Metcalf, 1999).

Research Method

Subjects

The population of the study consisted of all the experienced senior teachers in Sagaing Township and all the pre-service teachers, B.Ed. Fourth Year Senior Students who were studying in Sagaing Institute of Education in (2013-2014) academic year. There were (184) senior teachers and (248) pre-service teachers. Therefore, the total population was (432) enough to allow census and the sampling procedure was not adopted.

Design

Quantitative method is a research technique that is used to gather quantitative data-information dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable (Gay, 1987). In this study, data were mainly collected through a quantitative method. The research design of the study was survey research design.

Research Instruments

A questionnaire consisting of (45) items with five major dimensions was developed for collection of data based on a Ph.D. dissertation by Ibrahim (2000). The items were modified and reconstructed in Myanmar language according to national culture. There were altogether (44) items on a five point Likert-type scale and one open-ended item in the questionnaire.

The language of the questionnaire was carefully edited in consultation with the experts. The items were drawn from the relevant content on the basis of the review of literature, consultation with the experts, and experience of the investigator. A pilot study was run on a selected sample of (50) participants to refine each item of the questionnaire. Then the wording and the structure of the questionnaire was refined. Internal consistency was the Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.68.

Procedure

First of all, the permission of headmasters and headmistresses was requested. Then the data of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers was obtained through questionnaire. This procedure not only ensured 100% return but also elicited responses from the respondents in a framework of clear and full understanding of the whole questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Analytical technique used was quantitative which involved both descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. The three hypotheses were tested using the independent samples *t* test. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS).

Findings

Findings of Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceptions of Experienced Senior Teachers and Pre-service Teachers on Classroom Instructional Planning

It was found that there was a significant difference between the perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on the importance of classroom instructional planning, on the elements of classroom instructional planning, on the written classroom instructional planning and on the constraints in classroom instructional planning. But it was found that there was no significant difference between their perceptions on the general questions about classroom instructional planning (see Table 1).

Table 1. *t* Values for the Perceptions of Experienced Senior Teachers and Pre-service Teachers on Classroom Instructional Planning

Dimension	Teacher	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig.
D1	T1	184	4.34	0.375	0.26	3.18	342.67	.002**
	T2	248	4.08	0.302				
D2	T1	184	4.36	0.455	0.19	2.039	430	.042*
	T2	248	4.17	0.433				
D3	T1	184	3.65	0.382	0.38	4.362	349.46	.000***
	T2	248	3.27	0.316				
D4	T1	184	2.61	0.737	-0.35	-5.24	430	.000***
	T2	248	2.96	0.662				
D5	T1	184	3.60	0.337	0.08	0.768	430	.081 (ns)
	T2	248	3.52	0.332				
Overall	T1	184	3.71	0.268	0.11	0.127	370.18	.048*
	T2	248	3.60	0.242				

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, ns = not significant

D1 = Importance of Classroom Instructional Planning

D2 = Elements of Classroom Instructional Planning

D3 = Written Classroom Instructional Planning

D4 = Constraints in Classroom Instructional Planning

D5 = General Questions about Classroom Instructional Planning

T1 = Experienced Senior Teachers, T2 = Pre-service Teachers

In order to see clearly, the comparison of mean scores for the perceptions of the experienced senior teachers and the pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning was presented in Figure 1. The minimum mean score is 2.61 and the maximum mean score is 4.36.

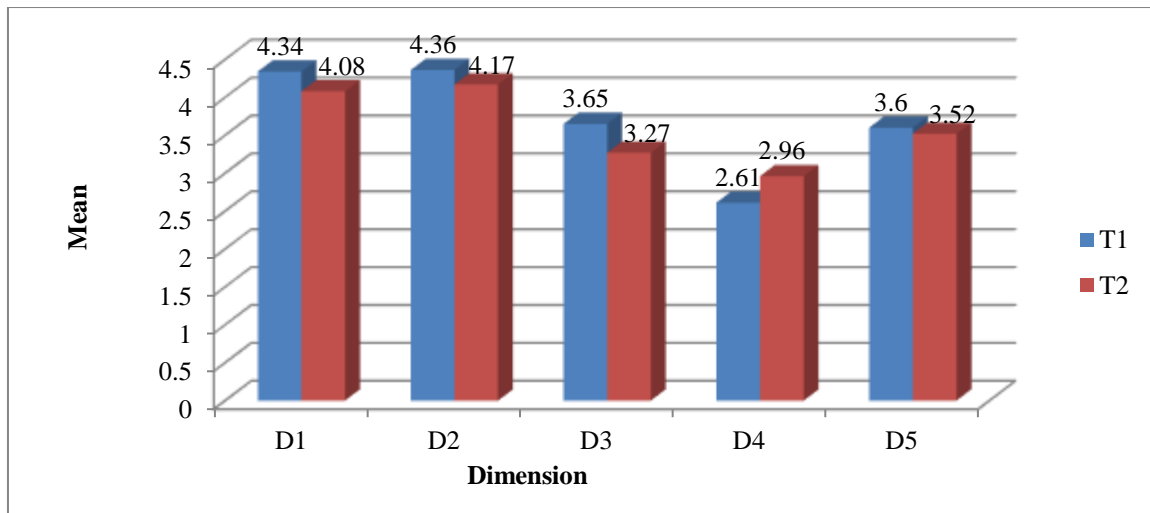


Figure1. The comparison of mean values for the perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning

Findings of Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceptions of Male and Female Experienced Senior Teachers on Classroom Instructional Planning

No significant difference was found between the perceptions of male and female experienced senior teachers on all dimensions about classroom instructional planning (see Table 2).

Table 2. *t* Values for the Perceptions of Male and Female Experienced Senior Teachers on Classroom Instructional Planning

Dimension	Gender	N	M	SD	MD	t	df	Sig.
D1	Male	34	4.19	0.401	0.01	0.134	182	.894 (ns)
	Female	150	4.18	0.369				
D2	Male	34	4.29	0.526	0.04	0.406	43.95	.686 (ns)
	Female	150	4.25	0.438				
D3	Male	34	3.41	0.470	-0.01	-0.07	182	.942 (ns)
	Female	150	3.42	0.361				
D4	Male	34	2.81	0.839	0.25	1.53	42.41	.133 (ns)
	Female	150	2.56	0.692				
D5	Male	34	3.68	0.451	-0.07	-0.95	182	.345 (ns)
	Female	150	3.75	0.385				
Overall	Male	34	3.68	0.365	0.05	0.688	41.26	.495 (ns)
	Female	150	3.63	0.259				

Note. ns = not significant

- D1 = Importance of Classroom Instructional Planning
- D2 = Elements of Classroom Instructional Planning
- D3 = Written Classroom Instructional Planning
- D4 = Constraints in Classroom Instructional Planning
- D5 = General Questions about Classroom Instructional Planning

In order to see at a glance, the comparison of mean scores for the perceptions of male and female experienced senior teachers on classroom instructional planning was presented in Figure 2. The minimum mean score is 2.56 and the maximum mean score is 4.29.

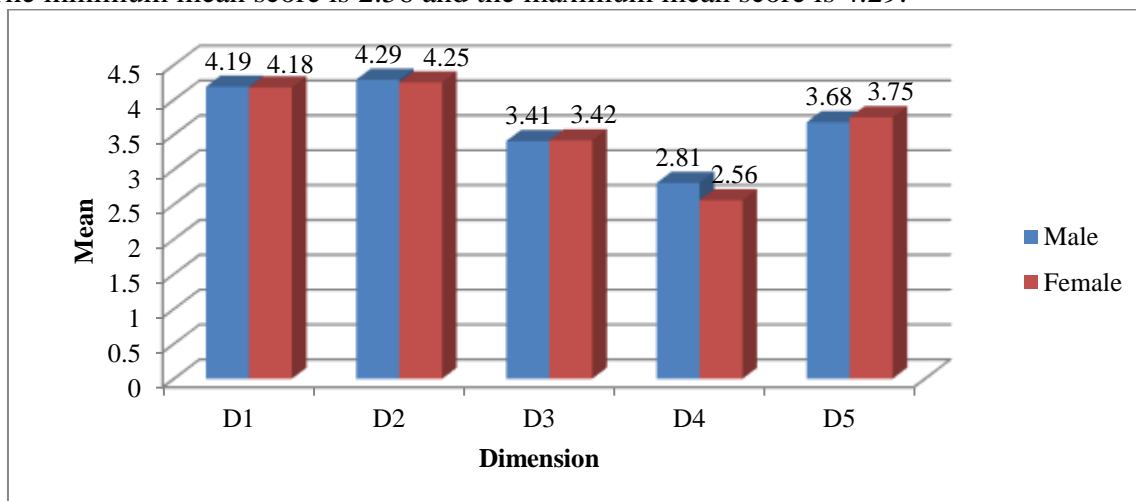


Figure2. The comparison of mean values for the perceptions of male and female experienced senior teachers on classroom instructional planning

Findings of Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceptions of Male and Female Pre-service Teachers on Classroom Instructional Planning

It was found that there was a significant difference between their perceptions on the constraints in classroom instructional planning. But, it was found that there was no significant difference between the perceptions of the male and female per-service teachers on other four dimensions about classroom instructional planning (see Table 3).

Table 3. *t* Values for the Perceptions of Male and Female Pre-service Teachers on Classroom Instructional Planning

Dimension	Gender	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig.
D1	Male	72	4.09	0.334	0.02	0.372	246	.710 (ns)
	Female	176	4.07	0.288				
D2	Male	72	4.11	0.499	-0.09	-1.46	110.38	.146 (ns)
	Female	176	4.20	0.401				
D3	Male	72	3.34	0.381	0.10	1.969	104.34	.052 (ns)
	Female	176	3.24	0.282				
D4	Male	72	3.22	0.770	0.36	3.571	105.79	.001**
	Female	176	2.86	0.583				
D5	Male	72	3.56	0.363	-0.01	-0.38	246	.705 (ns)
	Female	176	3.57	0.351				
Overall	Male	72	3.66	0.284	0.07	1.925	107.08	.057 (ns)
	Female	176	3.59	0.219				

Note. ***p* < .01, ns = not significant

- D1 = Importance of Classroom Instructional Planning
- D2 = Elements of Classroom Instructional Planning
- D3 = Written Classroom Instructional Planning
- D4 = Constraints in Classroom Instructional Planning
- D5 = General Questions about Classroom Instructional Planning

In order to see clearly, the comparison of mean scores for the perceptions of male and female pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning was presented in Figure 3. The minimum mean score is 2.86 and the maximum mean score is 4.2.

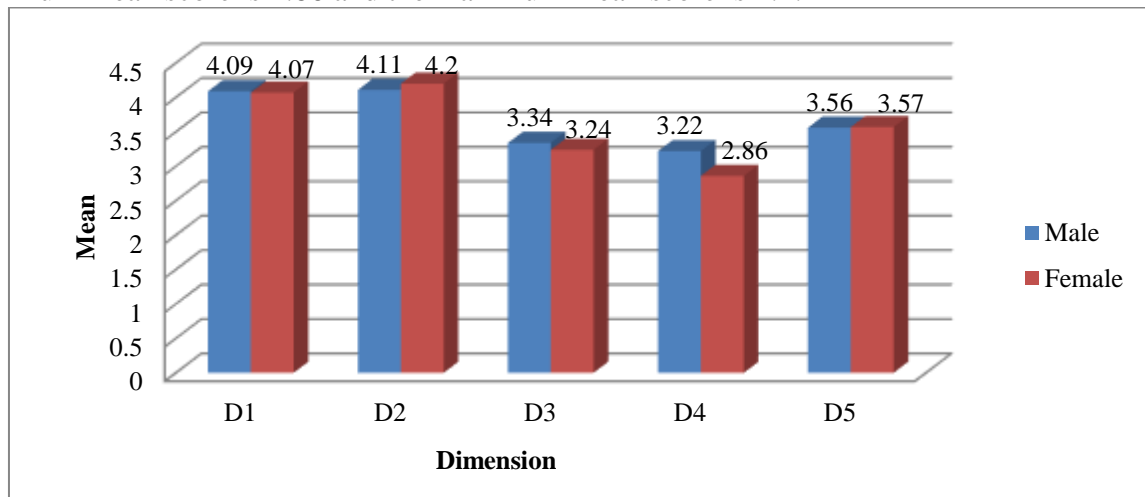


Figure3. The comparison of mean values for the perceptions of male and female pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning

Discussion and Suggestions

Discussion

The basic purpose of this study was to find out the difference between the perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning. Some other specific purposes were to study the perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning, to explore the difference between the perceptions of male and female experienced senior teachers as well as pre-service teachers and to give suggestions for the improvement of teaching and learning situations based on the results of the study.

The research findings showed that there was a significant difference between the perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning. No significant difference was found between the perceptions of male and female experienced senior teachers as well as pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning.

Suggestions

Research is an unending process and every research work provides clues for further investigation. Therefore, further investigations may be made on the basis of the result of this study. A longitudinal study is needed to undertake to confirm and validate the findings of the study. A comparative study should be conducted by different ranks of teachers (e.g. senior teachers and junior teachers) and with different townships. This research study was consisted of only five dimensions. Further research should be conducted by many other dimensions. Moreover, there are many other variables affecting the teachers' perceptions on classroom instructional planning. The present study was compared by only two variables (rank and gender). Further research should be carried out by using other variables such as teaching experience, qualification, age and marital status.

Conclusion

This study aims to find out the difference between the perceptions of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers on classroom instructional planning. The findings of this study of experienced senior teachers and pre-service teachers of Sagaing explained that classroom instructional planning is very effective aspect of teaching-learning process. The perceptions of male and female of both groups were, more or less, same. Some differences were found in the perceptions of the groups. Therefore, it can also be concluded that teaching experience can affect the perceptions of teachers on classroom instructional planning, but gender has no impact on it.

Therefore, administrators should be alert to the need of effective lesson planning. There should be flexibility in timetable for the use of classroom instructional planning. Conferences and workshops should be held on regular basis for classroom instructional planning. Moreover, in-service programs should be developed to strengthen the planning skills of school teachers.

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