

Original Research Article

Challenges and Experiences of Pre-Service Teachers in Practice Teaching in the New Normal

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to determine the experiences and challenges encountered by the ASC Pre-service teachers in their internship. The study made use of the mixed approach or combination of qualitative and quantitative approach of research. Results revealed that the mean age of the respondents is 24 years old. As gleaned in the table there were 5 student-respondents with ages more than 25 years old. There were more female respondents (24 or 80.00%) compared with male (6 or 20.00%). Furthermore, there were 19 or 63.33% respondents from the BSE Program and 11 or 36.67% from the BEED Program. They were involved in the various activities of the schools where they had their internship. They had identified positive learning experiences during their internship but encountered challenges and problems along ICT-related problems, time management, skills of the students with new platforms and adjustment to no face-to-face classes.

Keywords: Pre-Service Teachers, Practice Teaching, New Normal, Education

1. INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has challenged and changed the conduct of many aspects of teaching and learning (1) (2). Even though physical restrictions are imposed to prevent the spread of the virus, many school activities need to continue as an essential part of students' learning experience. One of which is the school internship program. In the implementation of the Practice Teaching, HEIs offering teacher education will be guided using the Joint Ched-DepEd Memorandum, Series Of 2020 with The Subject: New Normal Policies and Guidelines on The Deployment of Pre-Service Teachers for Field Study and Teaching Internship. Contained in this memorandum is that during a pandemic that has profoundly altered many aspects of life, the continued effective delivery of education in all levels is, more than ever, of paramount importance. It is imperative for teacher education institutions (TEIs) to respond positively to the distinctive challenge and opportunity presented by the unusual circumstances by delivering courses in innovative and flexible ways suitable to the context of educational institutions, teachers, and students.

Recently, the Commission on Higher Education released the Guidelines on the Implementation of Flexible Learning to ensure continuity of learning at the tertiary level while DepEd issued an order on the Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan considering the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency (3). TEIs and Cooperating Schools must continue to strive to sufficiently prepare the next batch of teachers to teach in the post-pandemic, new normal environment.

Hence, in addition to the current preparations being undertaken to deliver courses by means of flexible modalities, the Field Study and Practice Teaching courses also need to be redesigned in ways that are compatible with the present situation. The need to shift from residential or face to face teaching to

flexible learning in higher education and learning delivery modalities in basic education to This set of guidelines that covers pre-service teachers taking the experiential learning courses under CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) 30, s. 2004 entitled "Revised Policies and Standards for Undergraduate Teacher Education Curriculum." Students taking Certificate in Professional Education or 30 units of education courses, including practice teaching, should follow CMO 30, s. 2004 also. Students in the new are only in their Third Year and will take Field Study and Teaching Internship.

TEIs are enjoined to implement the necessary modifications in the delivery of Teaching Internship and Field Study given their context and available resources. However, Field Study and Teaching Internship courses must be experiential, using the different new normal learning modalities; developmental through coaching and mentoring, and aligned with the Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) and Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). In view of the risks posed by the ongoing pandemic, this supplemental policy on practice teaching and field study of pre-service teachers shall abide by existing health protocols and standards prescribed by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), Department of Health (DOH), and other health and safety regulations implemented by the HEI's respective local government units. In any circumstances that face-to-face contact would be permitted by relevant authorities, minimum public health standards as stipulated in DOH Administrative Order No. 2020-0015 shall be strictly observed. Furthermore, in order to promote the well-being of students and guarantee quality of their learning and exposure and ensure their safety while undergoing internship, TEIs and Cooperating Schools are advised to adhere to the requirements on Student Internship Program in the Philippines per CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 104, series of 2017 and the Guidelines on the Required Health Standards in Basic Education Offices and School per DepEd Order No. 014, series of 2020.

Qualitative studies that focused on strategies to prepare pre-service teachers to integrate technology into their lessons (4). A meta-ethnography approach was utilized to locate, critically appraise, and synthesize the results of these studies. Based on an extensive search in the Web of Science, 19 articles were included in this synthesis. The results were divided into two parts: (a) key themes explicitly related to the preparation of pre-service teachers (e.g., using teacher educators as role models, learning technology by design, scaffolding authentic technology experiences), and (b) conditions necessary at the institutional level (e.g., technology planning and leadership, co-operation within and between institutions, training staff). On the other hand, other study shows pre-service teachers' attitudes towards computer use (5): A Singapore survey pointed out that the success of any initiatives to implement technology in an educational program depends strongly upon the support and attitudes of teachers involved. It has been suggested that if teachers believed or perceived proposed computer programs as fulfilling neither their own or their students' needs, they are not likely to attempt to introduce technology into their teaching and learning. In many developed countries, nearly all schools are equipped with the infrastructure to conduct ICT mediated teaching and learning. Positive teacher attitudes towards computing are critical if computers are to be effectively integrated into the school curriculum.

21st-century skills refer to skills that today's students are expected to possess for successful future careers (6). The ways students perceive these skills or what kind of dispositions they have in this regard are significant. The study focuses on students' perceptions of three areas related to 21st-century skills: learning skills, collaboration dispositions, and skills to use ICT. The results show that the three areas evolved in different ways. Learning skills and collaboration dispositions show up as yearly assessments that remain at the same level, with small differences among respondents, unlike skills to use ICT with bigger yearly changes. The measured areas also appear as separate entities throughout the bachelor's studies, with small or non-significant correlations. These results reveal important new perspectives on how pre-service teachers perceive 21st-century skills and how perceptions evolve during teacher education. Digitalization of the educational process for the training of the pre-service teachers (7). That's why the priority areas for educational institutions are: digitalization and innovation; globalization (establishing of an intercultural environment); mobility of students, pupils, teachers, lecturers; distance and online learning; informal learning and MOOC technologies. The conditions of the pandemic put the heads of educational institutions up to reconsidering and changing approaches to the educational process. Accordingly, the digital educational environment of educational institutions was changed and adapted, i.e., a digital analogue of physical institutions.

The main objective of this study was to determine the experiences and challenges encountered by the ASC Pre- service teachers in their internship.

Specifically, it sought answer to the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 age
 - 1.2 sex
 - 1.3 course?
2. What is the frequency of execution/ demonstration during the practice teaching?
3. What are challenges encountered by the pre-service teachers?
4. What are experiences of the pre-service teachers in practice teaching/ internship?
5. What are problems during their internship program?

2. METHODOLOGY

The study made use of the mixed approach or combination of qualitative and quantitative approach of research. The study was conducted at Apayao State College Luna Campus. The respondents of the study were 30 pre-service students of Apayao State College

The main instrument used in this study was a questionnaire based on Joint Ched-Deped Memorandum, Series Of 2020 with The Subject: New Normal Policies And Guidelines On The Deployment Of Pre-Service Teachers For Field Study And Teaching. Interviews were conducted to substantiate the data needed in the study.

Descriptive Statistics were employed in the study like frequency and percentage on the profile of the respondents, execution/ demonstration during the practice teaching and challenges encountered by the pre- service teachers.

On the other hand, weighted mean was computed on the activities participated by the respondents using the scale:

Scale		Descriptive Scale
3	-	Always (A)
2	-	Sometimes (S)
1	-	Never (N)

Thematic analysis was conducted on the responses along experiences of the pre-service teachers in practice teaching/ internship and problems during their internship program.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex and course. The mean age of the respondents is 24 years old. As gleaned in the table there were 5 student- respondents with ages more than 25 years old. There were more female respondents (24 or 80.00%) compared with male (6 or 20.00%). Furthermore, there were 19 or 63.33% respondents from the BSE Program and 11 or 36.67 % from the BEED Program.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents According to Profile

Profile	Freq	Percentage
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1. Age		
22 years old	8	26.67
23 years old	6	20.00
24 years old	6	20.00
25 years old	5	16.67
26 years old	1	3.33
28 years old	1	3.33
31 years old	1	3.33
32 years old	1	3.33
33 years old	1	3.33

Mean Age = 24 years old

2. Sex		
Male	6	20.00
Female	24	80.00
3. Course		
BSE	19	63.33
BEED	11	36.67

2. Number of Execution/ Demonstration Teaching, WHLP Prepared and Grade Level Handled

Based on figure 1, there were 18 respondents or 60% conducted 2 executions/ demonstrating teaching. The other respondents had more than two executions during their internship. While in Figure 2, there were more respondents who prepared more than ten WHLP during their practice teaching and handled combination of Grade levels (Figure 3).

Based in Table 2, the respondents have different participation in the activities during the practice teaching. Some pre-service teachers had always participated, while in others sometimes and others none. They had opportunities to observe the teaching-learning process in Flexible Learning and in different Distance learning Delivery Modes, attend to orientation on protocols on module, Assist the cooperating teacher in the printing & packaging of instructional materials/modules, assist the CTs in preparing class activities/ WHLP, design templates for various assessment tools with suitable scoring rubrics, and assist the CTs in parent-teacher meeting/ conferences.

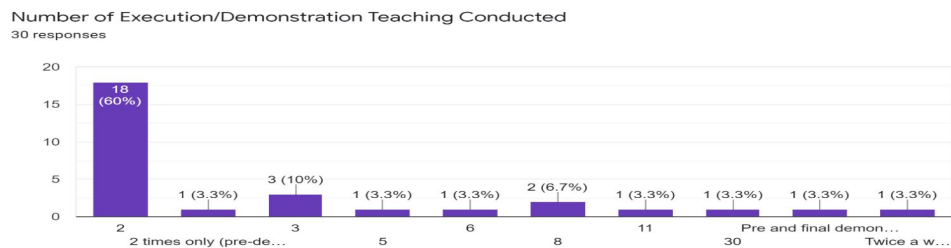


Figure 1. Number of Execution/ Demonstration Teaching Conducted

4. Attend to orientation on protocols on module					
4.1. preparation by the school.	28	2	0	2.93	A
4.2. Distribution by the school.	28	2	0	2.93	A
4.3. retrieval and other learning modality employed by the school.	28	2	0	2.93	A
Category Mean				2.93	A
5. Assist the cooperating teacher in the preparation of presentations and learning materials to be used in classes.	28	2	0	2.93	A
6. Develop contextualized instructional materials appropriate for the teaching demonstration modality.	22	8	0	2.73	A
7. Assist the cooperating teacher in the printing & packaging of instructional materials/modules	29	1	0	2.97	A
8. Prepare Weekly Home Learning Plan	29	1	0	2.97	A
9. Submit the WHLP to the cooperating teacher for further input and recommendation	28	2	0	2.93	A
10. Finalize the WHLP based on the CT's recommendations.	28	2	0	2.93	A
11. Assist the Cooperating teacher in the monitoring and implementation of the Weekly Home Learning Plan.	27	3	0	2.90	A
12. Prepare report in the implementation of the Weekly Home Learning Plan to be noted and reviewed by the Cooperating teacher	26	4	0	2.87	A
13. Assist the CTs in preparing class activities/ WHLP	27	3	0	2.90	A
14. Facilitate LDM class activities with minimum supervision from the CTs	21	8	1	2.67	A
15. Design contextualized learning activities aligned with the MELCs	21	7	2	2.63	A
16. Assist the cooperating teacher to create assessment materials related to the lessons, applicable to various distance learning delivery modes.	23	7	0	2.77	A
17. Design templates for various assessment tools with suitable scoring rubrics.	16	12	2	2.47	A
18. Design templates for reflection activities on the teaching-learning process.	20	8	2	2.60	A
19. Assist the cooperating teacher in checking students' outputs.	28	2	0	2.93	A
20. Assist the cooperating teacher in accomplishing school forms	16	12	2	2.47	A
21. Assist the CTs in parent-teacher meeting/ conferences.	16	9	5	2.37	A
22. Provide support by being volunteer tutors as part of auxiliary service for learners with difficulties.	18	8	4	2.47	A
23. Participate in local and international webinars and other online professional services	10	20	0	2.33	S
24. Prepare an electronic portfolio of various teaching-learning experiences and processes.	17	8	5	2.40	A
Overall Mean					A

3. Challenges encountered by the Preservice Teachers.

Table 3 presents the challenges encountered by the preservice student- respondents. The challenges included the non-readiness of preservice teachers of alternative learning modes especially on modular, virtual interaction and they were not exposed with Gmeet usage and Zoom usage. Other challenges were on hand-on activities online, struggled in technological integration, lack experience in utilizing technology, limited social development, deliver content via video clips was challenging, Limited internet access faced by students and Poor internet connection. the role of internal factors (e.g., attitudes towards computers and internet, self-confidence, and knowledge) and external factors (perceived support) on the level of information and communication technology (ICT) usage in Turkey (8). Most pre-service teachers reported that they use only basic ICT applications for educational purposes. Internal and external factors were found to be related to each other and to ICT usage level. In addition, study indicate that pre-service teachers might have difficulty with integrating technology into the teaching and learning process. This situation stems from the fact that their knowledge levels regarding technology integration are low. The rapid development of technology in recent decades, it has been widely recognized that pre-service teachers should be prepared to adequately integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into their educational practice (4). Teacher training institutions (TTI) are thus expected to provide pre-service teachers with the necessary competencies to teach with ICT. In other words, pre-service teachers' ICT competencies can be set as one of the primary benchmarks for teacher education programs.

Table 3. Challenges encountered by the Preservice Teachers

Indicators	Freq	Percentage
1. Not all pre-service teachers projected a high level of readiness along:		
1.1 modular approach in teaching	29	96.67
1.2 virtual interaction	20	66.67
1.3 Gmeet usage	14	46.67
1.4 Zoom usage	13	43.33
2. Videotaping and broadcasting lessons	21	70.00
3. Not able to conduct enough hand-on activities online	18	60.00
4. Pre-service teachers should learn to multitask	29	96.67
5. Not ready to create different activities to cater for students	16	53.33
6. Struggle in technological integration	22	73.33
7. Struggle in material preparation	17	56.67
8. Lack experience in utilizing technology	17	56.67
9. Limited skills in using digital materials	18	60.00
10. Limited of interaction among fellow pre-service teachers	16	53.33
11. Limited social development	23	76.67
12. Limited personal development	20	66.67
13. Deliver content via video clips was challenging	22	73.33
14. Use of messenger was challenging	14	46.67
15. Usage of PowerPoint presentation with voice over is difficult	22	73.33
16. Limited constructive guidelines to help pre-service teachers to integrate technology	23	76.67

17. Limited internet access faced by students	26	86.67
18. Mobile data pack to use the platform for virtual classrooms	24	80.00
19. Limited micro-teaching where some of them also acted as students.	24	80.00
20. Poor internet connections	28	93.33

4. Experiences of Preservice Teachers

There are a variety of experiences that preservice teachers may have as they prepare to enter the teaching profession (9). Some may complete field experiences or student teaching placements, where they can observe and work with experienced teachers in a classroom setting. This can be a valuable learning experience, as it allows preservice teachers to see firsthand the challenges and rewards of teaching, as well as to develop their own teaching skills and techniques.

The pre-service teachers had identified positive experiences during their internship or practice teaching, other had few difficulties and faced some problems. Four respondents mentioned that their practice teaching experience was challenging being a pre-service teacher “ It was fun and challenging” , “It is challenging for me but sometimes while we have online class the connection is poor”, “ For me it is challenging because sometimes there’s a lot of things that I need to do at a time” and “ It was very challenging in a way that you learned lot of things”. Some of the respondents mentioned that “it was an exciting and joyful journey”.

The respondents also participated in orientation and conference. According to them, these were conducted during the first day in cooperating school. The other experiences included “Exposure on forms, module printing and had a chance to execute demonstration teaching including attendance the n the In-Service Training of Teachers and Red Cross Training”, “Observation on processing of making student’s learning materials after being oriented by the school principal with the guidance of cooperating teachers in downloading- editing- evaluating- printing - sorting and distribution. In making class activities, we should make at least four maximum activities per week, and one summative exam to evaluate what they learned about the topic we had given. In making test assessment, we should consider the ability and level of our learners and the questions we give must be related to the topic we’ve given to them. We used video-based IMs in our first demonstration, and actual for the final. Our portfolio is more on experience we had during our Preservice, and with the guidance of the school principal and our Cooperating Teacher”. “Exposure to action research”, “My experiences along the following can be said as good, the pre-observation conferences are good, the best class routines are not so implemented well due to the modular form of teaching, the preparations of instructional is quite stressful but enjoyable, class activities were well-designed suits to the comprehension of grade 7, assessment practices were well applied, demonstration teaching made me quite nervous but it was successful despite my health issue on that time, networking and linkage are not so good but manageable, classroom-based action research has been well done , the portfolio is well completed and sustainable. Post-conferences are well done also!”.

During the demonstration, some pre-service student- respondents also got nervous. A respondent claimed that “based on my experience in my pre-observation conference I was so nervous because many professional teachers’ were there to observe me in my pre-demonstration and final demonstration. But lucky, I was so grateful because the teacher -in-charge appreciated me because my output is unique”. Other respondents claimed that “during the pre-observation is such a great blessing because we finished our pre demo teaching. Where teachers made us so proud of ourselves because of positive comments and advice”.

In terms of alternative modalities, some claimed difficulties in radio-based instruction and video lesson, challenge in the preparation of the lesson, editing, and timeframe, challenge in preparing WHLP for the first week of my preservice teaching, preparation of IM’s.

Other experiences include “implement and prepare the WHLP every week, distribution and retrieval of learning modules and always observe school protocols. Submit my WHLP and DLP on time, attend school orientation and execute teaching demonstration”, “discover strength and

weaknesses specially in using technologies”, “handle divergent students and how they cope up with this new normal learning, and “attending meetings, online class”.

The experiences of preservice teachers can be both challenging and rewarding, as they work to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to become effective teachers (10) (11). It is important for preservice teachers to be proactive in seeking out opportunities for learning and professional development, as these experiences can be critical to their success as teachers.

5. Problems encountered by the preservice teachers

The respondents had problems during the internship particularly ICT -related problems, Time management, Skills of the students with new platforms and adjustment of the no face-to-face classes.

For ICT- related problems , these were identified by the respondents “ sometimes the internet is slow”, “ We just have trouble on the printing of materials due to lack of printers”, “sometimes when we have activity the internet is slow and sometimes poor”, “ Limited knowledge on audio-based at video lesson instruction”, and “ problem that I encountered was having an online class, but the internet is poor and your students are 5-10 out of 35 who joined you. Though we have a group chat where I update them for distribution and retrieval of modules”. Pre-service teachers may have concerns related to integrating information and communication technologies (ICT) into their teaching practices (12). For example, they may be uncertain about how to effectively use technology to support student learning or how to troubleshoot technical issues that may arise in the classroom. Additionally, pre-service teachers may be concerned about their own technological skills and knowledge and may feel that they need to improve in this area to effectively integrate technology into their teaching (13). It is important for teacher education programs to address these concerns and provide pre-service teachers with the support and resources they need to integrate ICT confidently and competently into their teaching.

On skills of the respondents and adjustments of no pupils/ students during demonstration, some claimed that “ my problem with demonstration teaching is the lack of students to be taught in front of a practice , the mode of demonstration is video- based lesson, editing of the video for the best performance”, “ my experience in class routine since pandemic we have no students to teach ,we have to print their modules and record their outputs “, “Class routines, we make a greetings and welcoming each other while waiting for other students to join our google meet” and “ we didn't experience to teach in the field/ actual classroom”.

In terms of time management, some respondents claimed that they “struggled answering portfolio, it takes a lot of time to finish”, “limited time for me to accomplish my portfolio. Because I must re-edit my first video lesson and I am also preparing for the final video lesson

4. CONCLUSION

The preservice teacher- respondents were generally female and at the right age for college. They were involved in the various activities of the schools where they had their internship. They had identified positive learning experiences during their internship but encountered challenges and problems along ICT -related problems, time management, skills of the students with new platforms and adjustment to no face-to-face classes.

CONSENT

All authors declare that 'written informed consent was obtained from the patient (or other approved parties) for publication of this case report and accompanying images. A copy of the written consent is available for review by the Editorial office/Chief Editor/Editorial Board members of this journal.

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