Assessment of Pre-service Teachers on the Practice Teaching Program: Inputs for Program Enhancement

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Abstract – *Teaching is regarded as the most important of all professions as the other professions highly depend on teachers. As such, proper training of future teachers is of equal importance as it acquaints the pre-service teachers to the reality of the world of work in the classroom. Thus, this descriptive study was conducted to ascertain the assessment of Bachelor of Elementary Education and Bachelor of Secondary Education pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program in one state college in the Philippines. A total of 64 pre-service teachers, 48 BEEd and 16 BSEd, were involved as respondents in the study. Findings of this study revealed that both the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers had favorable perceptions toward the implementation of the Practice Teaching Program as to Orientation Activities, Rapport with the School Community, Practicum Site, Auxiliary Services, and Activities of Pre-Service Teachers. Assessments of the two groups of pre-service teachers on the program along the five aspects did not significantly differ. The study yields vital implications to the Teacher Education Institutions as it encourages them, through their curriculum experts and program implementers, to revisit and enhance their existing Teacher Education Curriculum in order to make it more responsive to the changing needs of the teaching profession. Furthermore, it also encourages the teaching community, especially the pre-service teachers, to take an active involvement in the design, implementation, and evaluation to ensure the successful implementation of the program.*

Keywords: *assessment, pre-service teachers, practice teaching program*

INTRODUCTION

Quality pre-service teacher education is a key factor in any educational system. In the Philippines, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) play a very significant role as they are the ones responsible in the preparation of pre-service teachers who will be assigned in both the primary and secondary education sectors. Improving the quality of Philippine education greatly depends on the service of teachers who must be adequately prepared to perform their varied roles and functions inherent to them. With this, it is of paramount importance that higher standards must be set in formulating the objectives, components as well as processes that shall be included in designing the pre-service teacher education curriculum [1].

According to Salandanan [2], teaching is a multifarious human activity. As an activity, it encompasses various aspects including planning, strategies, organizational structure, and material resources which simultaneously occur during the process of teaching and learning. Teaching is perceived as stimulating, directing, guiding the learner, and evaluating the learning outcomes of teaching. The teacher's role in teaching becomes complex but has given the learner the responsibility of learning [3]. Bilbao [4] adds that teaching requires that its practitioners understand what must be carried out to effect student learning and be well-equipped with the skills needed to perform various tasks.

Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) are institutionalized to offer quality and holistic pre-service education among prospective teachers. They also provide theoretical and practical knowledge and skills on pedagogy. After their sessions at the campus, prospective teachers are then expected to apply their theoretical understanding and appreciations to the field during the practice teaching [5].

Being the last field study course, the Practice Teaching Program provides significant experiences to pre-service teachers. It gives them the chance to immerse in a teacher's life. At this period, they gain experiences on planning, actual teaching, and evaluating student learning. It gives them ample opportunity to develop their competencies as well as

connect theoretical knowledge and practice [6]. It also trains them with the leadership roles they are expected to carry out as regular teachers. It also allows them to perform real tasks in teaching. It also helps them understand the connection between practice teaching inside the campus and the actual work experience they will have in the future. It also assists them to carry on their teaching career with the ultimate aim of educating today's youth. It also helps them gain better understanding on the complexity of teaching as it involves challenging tasks which demand hard work [7]. Furthermore, the Practice Teaching Program is a joint responsibility of the Department of Education, public and private TEIs, cooperating school officials, teachers, and college supervisors. They should all strive to help future teachers gain first-hand experiences in all phases of teaching. They also have to encourage them to know themselves better, understand their students, and develop teaching expertise in analyzing varied teaching problems. Lastly, they also have to help them enhance their teaching competencies and social skills [8].

The inclusion of the Practice Teaching Program in the new Teacher Education Curriculum (TEC) is largely based on Kolb's Experiential Learning theory which is deeply rooted in the works of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget [9]. Being widely used in higher education frameworks and developments, this theory is holistic and focuses on the perceptive, cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of the learner [10]. According to Kolb [9], learning is a four-stage cycle involving several dimensions: concrete experience (feeling), reflective observation (reflecting), abstract conceptualization (thinking), and active experimentation (doing). Each stage provides a foundation for the succeeding learning stage and learners can enter the cycle at any stage but they must possess the abilities required in all stages for learning to be most effective [11]. Kolb [9] adds that educational approaches which fail to address each stage in the cycle also fail to meet the needed conditions for ideal learning. Moreover, it is also a systematic approach to applied learning in which students engage in professional, productive learning activities and in the same way a process whereby students construct knowledge [12].

Aside from Kolb's Experiential Learning theory, "Communities of Practice" is also embraced as a theoretical framework of this study. As described by Lave and Wenger [13], it is a framework which focuses on the social aspects of learning and investigates how pre-service teachers make an induction into the school community. Similar to teaching, each profession has a socio-historical context having its own routines, practices, and conventions [14]. Adopting a socio-cultural approach to learning, its central theme is learning through active engagement and participation [15]. Lave and Wenger [13] state further that learning is an integral part of the generative social practice in the world that we live in and does not only occur in the individuals' minds. Community members learn from one another by sharing their experiences.

Several studies show that pre-service teachers encounter various issues and challenges during their practice teaching. In the study conducted by Ekundayo, Alonge, Kolawole, and Ekundayo [16], it was revealed that proper orientation was not always conducted among pre-service teachers before they were officially having their practice teaching exercises. Meanwhile, Yassin [17] found that pre-service teachers faced several problems such as the long distance of the practicum site from the students' homes, lack of guidance from principals, cooperating teachers, and supervisors in teaching and doing other-related activities, and lack of respect of some school community members to pre-service teachers. Nwanekezi, Okoli, and Mezieobi [18] also disclosed that poor learning environment in practicing schools like congested classrooms and poor ventilation as well as rejection of pre-service teachers by school community members were some of the problems which confronted pre-service teachers. Furthermore, Yassin [19] in another study conducted, revealed that student-teachers did not receive adequate assistance in using varied teaching and learning resources, sufficient explanation of the required practicum skills as well as appropriate guidance which helped them become more motivated to implement classroom activities and auxiliary services.

According to Beltran as cited by Mazo [8], the success of practice teaching largely depends on the personal and social qualities of pre-service teachers. Its success as well depends on how well pre-service teachers are trained by cooperating teachers in teaching effectively, managing the class, disciplining the learners, and performing other related functions. This explains why cooperating teachers who are designated to assist pre-service teachers must also possess the competencies required in honing the pre-service teachers' pedagogical skills [20].

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In view of the foregoing scenario, this descriptive research was conducted to ascertain the assessments of

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the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program in terms of (a) Orientation Activities, (b) Rapport with the School Community, (c) Practicum Site, (d) Auxiliary Services, and (e) Activities of Pre-service Teachers. Furthermore, it also attempted to test the significant difference between the assessments of the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers on the program and provide inputs that will help enhance the implementation of the Practice Teaching Program in the college.

METHOD

Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive evaluative method of research to gather the needed data on the assessment of pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program of the School of Teacher Education in J.H. Cerilles State College-Dumingag Campus, Dumingag, Zamboanga del Sur during the Second Semester of School Year 2015-2016.

According to Ariola [21], descriptive evaluative method is used to obtain judgment on the goodness of the existing program. It is also directed to whether or not a particular program achieves its goal or not and to simply find out whether the criterion is met or not.

Research Respondents

The respondents involved in this study were the 48 Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) and 16 Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) pre-service teachers who had undergone practice teaching during the Second Semester of School Year 2015-2016. The BSEd pre-service teachers included were taking English, Mathematics, and MAPEH as areas of specialization. A total of 64 pre-service teachers composed the respondents of this study. In determining the actual number of participants, no sampling technique was used because all pre-service teachers were included as respondents. Informed consent was also accomplished by the respondents to guarantee compliance to ethical standards. To establish anonymity among the respondents involved, the researcher assigned specific codes to all the respondents and assured them that the answers they had provided on the questionnaire-checklists would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Data Gathering Instrument

This study employed the questionnaire-checklist as the main instrument that was used in gathering the needed data from the identified respondents of this investigation. The Practice Teaching Evaluation Form (PTEF), developed by Borabo & Borabo [22], was utilized by the researcher in this study to determine the assessments of the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program of the School of Teacher Education in J.H. Cerilles State College-Dumingag Campus. The said instrument consisted of the following aspects of the Practice Teaching Program, namely: Orientation Activities, Rapport with the School Community, Practicum Site, Auxiliary Services, and Activities of Pre-service Teachers.

To ascertain the assessment level of the pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program, a five-point adjectival scale was utilized.

Scale	Weight Continuum	Verbal Description	
5	4.21-5.00	Excellent	(E)
4	3.41-4.20	Very Good	(VG)
3	2.61-3.40	Good	(G)
2	1.81-2.60	Fair	(F)
1	1.00-1.80	Needs Improvement	(NI)

Statistical Treatment of Data

To obtain accurate interpretation of the data gathered from the pre-service teachers who were identified as respondents in this study, the researcher utilized the Weighted Average Mean (WAM) and the Z-test as statistical tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the data on the assessments of the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program as to Orientation Activities.

For BEEd pre-service teachers, the data show that "Orientation of the pre-service teachers by the practicum supervisor on practice teaching" obtains the highest WAM of 4.40, described as "Excellent". Meanwhile, "Orientation of pre-service teachers by the cooperating teachers" and "Familiarization of pre-service teachers on school facilities" earn the same WAM of 4.20; followed by "Orientation of pre-service teachers by the cooperating principals" and "Orientation on school rules and policies," 4.05, which are all described as "Very Good". Other orientation activities yield varied WAM but they are described as "Very Good". The average mean of 3.98 suggests that the "Orientation Activities" conducted during the program are assessed by the BEEd pre-service teachers as "Very Good".

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Table 1. Assessment of Pre-service Teachers on the Practice Teaching Program in terms of Orientation Activities

Orientation Activities	BEEd		BSEd	
	WAM	AE	WAM	AE
1. Orientation of pre-service teachers by the practicum supervisor on practice teaching	4.40	E	4.25	E
2. Orientation of pre-service teachers by cooperating principals	4.05	VG	4.15	VG
3. Orientation of pre-service teachers by cooperating teachers	4.20	VG	4.30	E
4. Familiarization of pre-service teachers on school facilities	4.20	VG	4.10	VG
5. Orientation on school rules and policies	4.05	VG	3.95	VG
6. Required practice teaching forms	3.85	VG	3.90	VG
7. Practicum experiences of pre-service teachers	3.80	VG	4.10	VG
8. Consultation time with the cooperating teacher	3.75	VG	3.85	VG
9. Assistance in writing lesson plans	3.90	VG	3.70	VG
10. Providing feedback on pre-service teachers' competencies	4.00	VG	3.85	VG
11. Meeting with the cooperating teacher on scheduled basis	3.80	VG	3.95	VG
12. Giving instructions on classroom routines	3.95	VG	4.05	VG
13. Providing assistance in making instructional materials	3.85	VG	4.10	VG
14. Giving instructions in checking papers and other assigned tasks	3.90	VG	4.10	VG
Average Mean	3.98	VG	4.03	VG

For BSEd pre-service teachers, the data reveal that "Orientation of pre-service teachers by the cooperating teachers" gains the highest WAM of 4.30; followed by "Orientation of pre-service teachers by the practicum supervisor on practice teaching," 4.25, which are both described as "Excellent". Meanwhile, "Orientation of pre-service teachers by the cooperating principals" yields the WAM of 4.15; followed by "Familiarization of pre-service teachers on school facilities," "Practicum experiences of pre-service teachers," "Providing assistance in making instructional materials,' and "Giving instructions in checking papers and other assigned tasks," 4.10, which are all described as "Very Good". Other orientation activities obtain varied WAM but are also described as "Very Good". The average mean of 4.03 suggests that the "Orientation Activities" done during the program are also assessed by the BSEd pre-service teachers as "Very Good".

Analysis of the foregoing findings clearly shows that both the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers have favorable perceptions on the conduct of orientation activities during their practice teaching exercise. The findings also suggest that they view orientation as an essential and meaningful activity that will help them become more aware and prepared in teaching. Orientation activities serve as best avenues especially for practicum supervisors and cooperating teachers to act as mentors to student-teachers while having their practice teaching. According to Feiman-Nemser [23], mentoring is the best mechanism for supporting practice teaching in both compulsory schools and higher education contexts. Hudson [24] strongly stresses that mentors are influential in the development of prospective teachers and discloses that mentors' personal attributes, pedagogical knowledge, and feedback are effective on the development of prospective teachers. Moreover, Lim and Chan [25] point out that mentors can be role models for prospective teachers in terms of appreciation of the teaching profession.

Table 2. Assessment of Pre-service Teachers on the Practice Teaching Program as to Rapport with the School Community

Rapport with the School Community	BEEd		BSEd	
	WAM	AE	WAM	AE
1. Rapport with school administrators	4.05	VG	4.25	E
2. Rapport with cooperating teachers	4.10	VG	4.10	VG
3. Rapport with students	3.90	VG	4.00	VG
4. Rapport with parents	3.70	VG	3.85	VG
Average Mean	**3.94**	**VG**	**4.05**	**VG**

Table 2 displays the data on the assessment of pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program with regard to Rapport with the School Community.

For BEEd pre-service teachers, the data reveal that "Rapport with cooperating teachers" garners the highest WAM of 4.10; followed by "Rapport with school administrators," 4.05; "Rapport with students," 3.90; and "Rapport with parents" 3.70, which are all described as "Very Good". The average mean of 3.94 implies that the BEEd pre-service teachers assess their "Rapport with the School Community" as "Very Good".

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Meanwhile, for BSEd pre-service teachers, the results show that "Rapport with school administrators" earns the highest WAM of 4.25, described as "Excellent"; however, "Rapport with cooperating teachers, students, and parents" are only assessed as "Very Good" as shown on their varied WAM obtained. The average mean of 4.05 denotes that the BSEd pre-service teachers assess their "Rapport with the School Community" as "Very Good".

In an in-depth analysis made, the previous results apparently indicate that both the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers perceive their relationship with the school community members while having their practice teaching as favorable. They also consider establishing rapport with school community members as an important way of making themselves more aware and better prepared in teaching. Thus, the foregoing results affirm Nguyen's [26] claim that school culture and social relations have a significant influence on how prospective teachers view themselves based on others' perceptions of their potentials as teachers. Wang [27], in a study, reports that learning to cooperate with teachers and other school community members and adopting a department culture are the social skills that pre-service teachers should develop. Rozella and Wilson [28], meanwhile, reveal that pre-service teachers change their beliefs and practices by collaborating with their cooperating teachers and other community members. Graham [29] states further that the school community members' consciousness and recognition of their roles and responsibilities strongly support prospective teachers' development.

Table 3. Assessment of Pre-service Teachers on the Practice Teaching Program along Practicum Site

Practicum Site	BEEd		BSEd	
	WAM	AE	WAM	AE
1. Accessibility of the practicum site	4.25	E	4.15	VG
2. Safety and security of the practicum site	4.10	VG	4.10	VG
Average Mean	**4.18**	**VG**	**4.13**	**VG**

Table 3 shows the data on the assessment of pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program along Practicum Site. The data show that "Accessibility" is rated by the BEEd pre-service teachers as "Excellent" as reflected on the WAM of 4.25 while "Safety and security" are assessed as "Very Good" with the WAM of 4.10. The average mean of 4.18 denotes that the "Practicum Site" is appraised by the BEEd pre-service teachers as "Very Good". Meanwhile, the given data also reveal that "Accessibility" and "Safety and security" of the Practicum Site are assessed by the BSEd pre-service teachers as "Very Good" as shown on their WAM of 4.15 and 4.10, respectively. The average mean of 4.13 signifies that the BSEd pre-service teachers assess the Practicum Site as "Very Good".

Analysis of the foregoing findings reveals that both the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers have favorable perceptions on the schools selected as practicum sites. They also agree that an accessible, safe, and secured practicum site is essential to the success of the Practice Teaching Program as well as to the development of their well-beings as prospective teachers. As pointed out by Altun [30], school environment is one of the crucial factors which affects pre-service teachers' personal and professional development. He stresses further that the uniqueness of the school context plays a vital role in the teaching-learning process, as schools are viewed differently school community members. Furthermore, Caires, Almeida, and Vieira [31] reveal that in teaching, pre-service teachers make constant attempts to acknowledge, interpret, and give meanings to the values, routines, and communicative patterns to slowly integrate into the school ethos.

Table 4. Assessment of Pre-service Teachers on the Practice Teaching Program in terms of Auxiliary Services

Auxiliary Services	**BEEd**		**BSEd**	
	WAM	**AE**	**WAM**	**AE**
1. Quality of auxiliary services rendered	4.15	VG	4.10	VG

Table 4 presents the data on the assessment of pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program in terms of Auxiliary Services. The results reveal that both the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers assess these auxiliary services as "Very Good" as supported by the obtained WAM of 4.15 and 4.10, respectively.

In the analysis made, the previous results vividly indicate that both the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers perceive the auxiliary services rendered as satisfactory. They also view these auxiliary services as essential in broadening their understanding as well as in developing their competencies as future teachers. As strongly stressed by Higgins and Compeau [32], the availability of reliable auxiliary services has a major influence on pre-service teachers' perceived judgment on their capabilities. They state further that institutions and other school stakeholders should aim to give

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continuous auxiliary services to pre-service teachers to enhance their self-efficacy beliefs.

Table 5. Assessment of Pre-service Teachers on the Practice Teaching Program as to Activities of Pre-service Teachers

Activities	BEEd		BSEd	
	WAM	AE	WAM	AE
1. Preparation of daily lesson plans	3.90	VG	3.90	VG
2. Participation in the school activities of the practicum site	4.05	VG	4.05	VG
3. Preparation of instructional materials	3.85	VG	3.98	VG
4. Conducting demonstration lessons	3.90	VG	3.89	VG
5. Assistance in classroom routines	3.70	VG	3.78	VG
6. Structuring of bulletin boards	3.80	VG	3.90	VG
7. Preparation of seatwork	3.75	VG	4.00	VG
8. Preparation of quizzes	3.80	VG	3.90	VG
9. Preparation of other required activities	3.70	VG	4.00	VG
Average Mean	3.83	VG	3.93	VG

Table 5 displays the data on the assessment of pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program as to Activities of Pre-service Teachers. For BEEd pre-service teachers, the data show that "Participation in the school activities of the practicum site" yields the highest WAM of 4.05; followed by "Preparation of lesson plans" and "Conducting demonstration lessons," 3.90; and "Preparation of instructional materials," 3.85, which are all described as "Very Good". Other activities earn varied WAM but are all described as "Very Good". The average mean of 3.83 signifies that the BEEd pre-service teachers assess the activities they have participated during the Practice Teaching Program as "Very Good".

For BSEd pre-service teachers, the results show that "Participation in the school activities of the practicum site" yields the highest WAM of 4.05; closely followed by "Preparation of seatwork and quizzes" with the WAM of 4.00; and "Preparation of instructional materials," 3.98, which are all described as "Very Good". Other activities identified are also rated as "Very Good" even though they only differ on their WAM obtained. The average mean of 3.93 implies that the activities conducted and participated by the BSEd pre-service teachers during the Practice Teaching Program are also assessed as "Very Good".

Analysis of the foregoing findings clearly elucidates that the two groups of the pre-service teachers have favorable perceptions on the conduct of the different activities during the Practice Teaching Program. They also believe that the conduct of these activities helps broaden their understanding on the multifarious roles of teachers as well as enhance their competencies in performing various tasks and responsibilities inherent to their roles as teachers. As stressed by Sammons and Speight [33], practice teaching must embed both instruction and activities that provide pre-service teachers the opportunity to discover their beliefs, develop an awareness and understanding of today's diverse learners and classrooms, and learn how to be culturally responsive to school community members. They should also be motivated to implement activities to systematically and carefully reflect on and evaluate their experiences, create connections between new and old information, explore solutions to problems, and create new ideas [34]. Moreover, they also have to witness and participate in the various activities and rituals of their cooperating teachers in the field while participating in the authentic activity of teaching. They also have to become involved in the broader aspects of the whole teaching community. As such, they are appropriating the existing culture of that particular school [35].

Table 6. Summary of Data on the Assessment of Pre-service Teachers on the Practice Teaching Program

Aspects	**BEEd**		**BSEd**	
	WAM	**AE**	**WAM**	**AE**
1. Orientation Activities	3.98	VG	4.03	VG
2. Rapport with the School Community	3.94	VG	4.05	VG
3. Practicum Site	4.18	VG	4.13	VG
4. Auxiliary Services	4.15	VG	4.10	VG
5. Activities of Pre-service Teachers	3.83	VG	3.93	VG
Overall Mean	3.99	VG	4.06	VG

Table 6 shows the summary of data on the assessments of the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program in terms of the following aspects: Orientation Activities, Rapport with the School Community, Practicum Site, Auxiliary Services, and Activities of Pre-service Teachers. The data clearly reveal that among the five aspects, "Practicum Site" obtains the highest WAM of 4.18 for BEEd and 4.13 for BSEd pre-service teachers; closely

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followed by "Auxiliary Services," 4.15 and 4.10; "Orientation Activities," 3.98 and 4.03; "Rapport with the School Community," 3.94 and 4.05; and lastly, "Activities of Pre-service Teachers," 3.83 and 3.93, respectively. All these aspects obtain varied WAM but they all receive the same corresponding verbal interpretation of "Very Good".

Generally, the overall mean of 3.99 for BEEd and 4.06 for BSEd clearly reveal that the Practice Teaching Program is assessed by the two groups of pre-service teachers as "Very Good". Moreover, the results strongly imply that both the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers have favorable perceptions on the Practice Teaching Program as the best training ground for pre-service teachers like them where they could apply their theoretical knowledge as well as gain practical experiences which can be very useful when they will be in the real world of teaching someday. According to Perry [36], practice teaching is an essential part of the pre-service teacher education program as it becomes the first opportunity that prospective teachers could have in order to experience the real world of teaching. Furthermore, as stressed by Lingam [37], the success of beginning as well as in-service teachers does not only depend on the theoretical knowledge they have but also on the meaningful practicum which affords them the needed skills and behaviors that would enhance their desirable teaching practices.

Table 7. Significance of the Difference Between the Assessments of the BEEd and BSEd Pre-service Teachers on the Practice Teaching Program

Respondents	Mean	SD	Z-Value	
			Computed	Critical
BEEd	3.99	0.12	3.29	3.96
BSEd	4.06			

Table 7 presents the analysis on the significance of the difference between the assessments of the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program.

As displayed, the result distinctly reveals that the computed Z-value of 3.29 is less than the critical Z-value of 3.96 at the 0.05 level of significance with the standard deviation of 0.12, and the means of 3.99 and 4.06 for BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers, respectively. Hence, there is an enough evidence to accept the null hypothesis and establish no significant difference. The foregoing result clearly implies that the assessments of the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers on the Practice Teaching Program along the five aspects do not significantly differ.

Inputs for Enhancing the Practice Teaching Program

Although the overall findings explicate the favorable perceptions of the pre-service teachers toward the program, it cannot be denied that the findings have also provided important inputs that can be used to enhance the implementation of the program. These include the following:

Firstly, existing plans and policies of the Teacher Education Curriculum of the college must be revisited and enhanced in order to make the curriculum more responsive to the needs of the profession and for its effective and efficient implementation. With the implementation of new educational policies such as the MTB-MLE, its curriculum must be up-to-date and must include the teaching of concepts and strategies that pre-service teachers need to teach effectively;

Secondly, additional program coordinators must also be designated by the college to allow close monitoring and supervision of the pre-service teachers during the conduct of the Practice Teaching Program. These program coordinators must also be highly trained to equip them with the competencies needed in guiding and assisting the pre-service teachers as well as in ensuring success in the implementation of the program;

Thirdly, the college must also ensure the strict implementation of the retention as well as elimination policies to maintain its standards. Strict implementation of these policies also helps curriculum specialists and program implementers to carefully look into how the program caters the demands and needs of new breed of teachers in the teaching profession; and

Lastly, pre-service teachers should also be included in designing, implementing, and evaluating the program for them to develop that sense of ownership and accountability in the implementation of the program. They must also be given adequate technical assistance during the program in order for them to be fully equipped and be successful in their respective teaching careers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The findings of this study generally reflect both the BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers' favorable perceptions on practice teaching as an indispensable part of the Teacher Education Development Program (TEDP). Assessed along the five aspects, the Practice Teaching Program is primarily regarded by the pre-

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service teachers as the best avenue for them to apply the theoretical knowledge they have learned in real classroom settings. Although Haigh, Pinder, and McDonald [38] still consider practice teaching a challenge as it does not fully prepare prospective teachers for actual classroom teaching, Starkey and Rawlins [39] stress that practice teaching will only be successful when pre-service teachers are constantly monitored, supervised, and guided in order to help them become better prepared. Furthermore, these findings also yield significant implications particularly to the teacher education institutions as well as to the teaching community. The awareness and understanding of how the Practice Teaching Program is implemented somehow provide a workable guide that greatly helps teacher education institutions, specifically curriculum specialists and implementers, devise more responsive and effective teaching and learning frameworks.

The study, however, has several limitations. Firstly, considering that the sample size is limited only to BEEd and BSEd pre-service teachers of a particular state college, its findings may not generally replicate the viewpoints of the pre-service teachers about the Practice Teaching Program in other state colleges and universities. To achieve a more comprehensive generalization of the findings, it is suggested that parallel studies having a wider scope can be conducted by future researchers. Secondly, to provide a clearer picture of the implementation of the program, it is suggested that an extensive study, involving program implementers and other stakeholders as respondents as well as using other data collection instruments and procedures such as interviews, focus group discussions, and observations, can also be undertaken. Survey questionnaires, as used in the study, are seen to have only collected the superficial data and not the nuances that have also transpired and have been experienced by the respondents themselves.

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