

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of the Internship Program and Its Contribution to Program Learning Outcomes

Allen Valera¹, Edwin Estrella^{1,*}, Marilyn deLeon¹, Albert Santos¹, Edric Estrella²

¹ Bulacan State University, Bustos Campus, Philippines

² University of the Philippines Open University, Philippines

*Corresponding author: edwin.estrella@bulsu.edu.ph

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ABSTRACT

Background: Teaching Internship (EDUC 401) provides pre-service teachers with experiential learning opportunities intended to support the attainment of program learning outcomes (PLOs). Examining students' perceptions after completing their practicum provides evidence of the internship's contribution to their academic and professional preparation. **Objective:** This study examined respondents' perceptions of the Teaching Internship course (EDUC 401) and its contribution to the attainment of eight PLOs based on CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 75, s. 2017. **Methods:** The study involved students who had completed their practicum during AY 2025–2026. Data were collected through a Google Forms survey administered from April to June 2026 following ethics clearance from the Bulacan State University Ethics Review Committee. Respondents voluntarily provided demographic information and rated the extent to which experiential learning contributed to each PLO. Proportions, means, and standard deviations were computed for the eight outcomes. **Results:** Overall perceptions were positive, with a mean rating of 4.091 (SD = 1.212) across the eight PLOs. Technology use in facilitating language learning and teaching received the highest rating (M = 4.242, SD = 1.226), while the remaining outcomes clustered closely around the overall mean. Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the internship contributed to the attainment of the desired learning competencies. **Conclusion:** The findings support the contribution of Teaching Internship to PLO attainment and provide evidence for continued attention to internship design, supervision, and curriculum alignment. The study recommends strengthening school-university partnerships, enhancing technology integration, and establishing systematic policies and practices for monitoring and documenting PLO attainment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher Education Institutions primarily exist to produce graduates who can be the cornerstone of nation-building. On their hands lie the delicate tasks of shaping the country's future. Needless to say, teachers need to teach effectively in order to mold the minds of future generations. They ought to improve their learning environments, and their practice must be on par with other leading learning institutions around the world. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has already laid down the program learning outcomes (PLOs) expected of every teacher education graduate as stipulated in CMO No. 75, series of 2017. These are the desired learning competencies: content knowledge, pedagogical skills, communication proficiency, a research orientation, and the use of technology in teaching language and literature. In the series of experiential learning courses, such as Field Study 1 (Educ 306) and Field Study 2 (Educ 307), the Teaching Internship Course (Educ 401) is often considered the capstone of teacher education training. This is the stage where the so-called student teachers apply the theories they learned at the university, establish their practice, and apply the philosophies and pillars of education they were taught there (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Loughran, 2010). This study sought to examine how pre-service teachers, after completing their internship program, perceived its contribution to their attainment of the same.

The experiential learning courses, specifically the teaching internship, are the apex of a teacher education training program for no lame significance. It

is the stage and level where student teachers experience a baptism of fire. It is where the rubber meets the road. It is the crucible of the entire teaching preparation. In this practicum, education students will gain a full understanding of the complexities that arise within the four walls of the classroom. They will realize what classroom management really is, as they begin to negotiate curriculum demands, plan effective instructional strategies, and immerse themselves in the tutelage of their cooperating teachers (Zeichner, 2010). A handful of existing research papers attest that the experiences pre-service teachers encounter in their practicum and the mentoring they receive from their teachers and superiors significantly influence the competence and mastery they acquire in the course (Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009). Hence, it is evident that cooperating schools and cooperating teachers tend to create a lasting impact on the confidence and development of their content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and professional bearing.

This study highlighted several learning outcomes that were adapted from CHED CMO No. 75 (2017) for language and literature teacher education. Graduates are expected to (1) possess broad knowledge of language and literature for effective learning; (2) use English as a global language in a multilingual context as it applies to teaching language and literature; (3) build an extensive reading background in language, literature, and allied fields; (4) demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication; (5) show competence in innovative language and literature teaching approaches,

methodologies, and strategies; (6) use technology in facilitating language learning and teaching; (7) inspire students and colleagues to lead relevant and transformative change in language and literature teaching and learning; and (8) display the skills of a reflective, research-oriented language and literature teacher. Together, these outcomes span content knowledge, pedagogical skill, communication, innovation, technology use, leadership, and research orientation.

International literature on practicum experience is abundant, but empirical work that puts a number on pre-service teachers' perceived attainment of specific PLOs is still sparse in the Philippine setting. Most studies on similar topics by local writers tend to focus on classroom mentoring relationships, classroom management issues, and related matters. Such studies usually thrived on the conclusion that identification of perceived PLO attainment after completion of the experiential training courses can give a considerable amount of information for program planners. A picture of empirical data paints a tangible story of what the best practices are and what they are not. This study sought to contribute to that knowledge and, hopefully, help fill the existing gap by offering a cross-sectional descriptive study of how one cohort of BSED majors in English and minors in Mandarin perceived the contribution of their practicum experiences to the CHED's program learning outcomes.

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The study aims to examine pre-service teachers' perceptions of the Teacher Education Department's Teaching Internship course and its relationship to the CHED's program learning outcomes. Three questions guided the study: (1) How may the respondents' demographic profile be characterized? (2) How do respondents grade the contribution of their internship to each PLO? (3) What do the mean average scores and tendencies for each PLO suggest about the respondents' perceived strengths and areas needing improvement? It is the writers' aspiration that the findings in this study contribute to program assessment and evaluation, and to continuous improvement at the Bulacan State University Bustos Campus Teacher Education Department, and modestly provide significance to the articulation towards a practicum that is more responsive and effective in the field of teacher education.

Literature Review

The teaching internship course in the teacher education program serves as the culminating professional experience of every teacher education student. This is the stage where the theories and knowledge gained over almost six or seven semesters at the university are put to practical use. It is where rubber hits the road. It is where a professional identity that will lead to a career in the academe begins to take shape (Loughran, 2010). Across the diverse literature on the topic, several recurring themes are focal. Consolidating content knowledge, building an educator's pedagogical repertoire, sharpening classroom management skills, and cultivating reflective practice are among the key areas of concern in many studies (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Zeichner, 2010). Consequently, these areas closely relate to the learning outcomes of CHED CMO No. 75 (2017), which place a premium on both cognitive knowledge and pedagogical competencies.

Content knowledge and reading background. Effective instruction rests on a solid content base in language and literature. Pre-service teachers with broad disciplinary knowledge tend to design more coherent lessons, choose texts more appropriately, and scaffold student learning more effectively (Shulman, 1987). Reading widely in allied fields adds to a teacher's repertoire of texts and contexts (Borg, 2006), and internships that build in content-

focused lesson planning and exposure to varied literary genres appear to support this kind of content consolidation (Grossman et al., 2009).

Language use and multilingual contexts. English's role as a global language in multilingual classrooms brings both opportunity and difficulty for language teachers. Preparing teachers well means addressing how English actually functions in multilingual settings and how teachers can draw on students' full linguistic repertoires to support learning (García & Kleifgen, 2010). Placing pre-service teachers in linguistically diverse classrooms during their internship can sharpen their ability to use English appropriately while still respecting and drawing on students' home languages.

Communication proficiency. Oral and written communication skills are central to language teaching, and the practicum offers repeated chances to practice them through lesson delivery, public speaking, giving feedback, and designing written assessments. Deliberate practice during internships, including repeated microteaching, peer observation, and supervisor feedback, appears to improve communication skills over time (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993).

Pedagogical innovation and methodology. Contemporary teacher education leans heavily on innovative, learner-centered methods. Internships that make room for experimenting with strategies such as project-based learning, differentiated instruction, and formative assessment help pre-service teachers build a more flexible pedagogical toolkit (Richards & Rodgers, 2014) — though this kind of experimentation depends on having a supportive cooperating teacher and reflective supervision to make it safe to try new things.

Technology integration. There has been an unprecedented surge in demand for educational technology in recent years. For as long as the pursuit of its maximization is pursued positively and does not promote indolence and dishonesty, technology integration will surely enhance classroom engagement, add multimodal resources, and improve assessment (Hew & Brush, 2007). Experiences that give pre-service teachers access to these digital skills and tools translate into technology-mediated instruction and will eventually build confidence and competence.

Leadership, transformation, and research orientation. Teacher Education Institutions also aim to develop teachers who are capable of instituting change and engaging in educated inquiry in their delivery and performance. Activities and experiences that include collaborative projects, action research, and, eventually, professional development will surely translate into leadership and a research orientation (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009).

Philippine studies on practicum and internship. Most research papers written by Filipinos in this field and topic are inclined toward these recurring factors. To wit, the perennial culprits are school resources, mentor quality, class size, and students' backgrounds. There is strong evidence that while internship experiences are optimal for building essential skills for competence and confidence, constraints such as limited mentoring time and scarce resources can impede reaching the zone of optimal learning.

Conversely, all pertinent literature on the topic suggests that the quality and structure of internship programs at every Teacher Education Institution both positively and negatively influence pre-service teachers' achievement with respect to the CHED's PLOs. The present study builds on the plethora of thoughts and conclusions with an honest resolution of how one cohort of BSED majors in English, minoring in Mandarin, perceived the contribution of their internship experiences to specific program outcomes.

II. METHODS

Research Design

The present study employed a descriptive cross-sectional design to investigate pre-service teachers' perceptions of their Teaching Internship Course (Educ 401) and its apparent contribution to the CHED's program learning outcomes. A cross-sectional approach captured latent perceptions regarding the culmination of the experiential training program and yielded pertinent data that fed directly into the assessment and evaluation.

Respondents in the Study

The sample consisted of 33 Fourth-Year Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) students majoring in English and minoring in Mandarin from the Teacher Education Department of the Bulacan State University Bustos Campus. The

respondents had just completed the Teaching Internship Course (Educ 401) during the SY 2025–26. The BulSU Ethics Review Committee (BulSUERC-2026-0050-01) approved the study before the data gathering process began. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. All the respondents gave informed consent before completing the survey.

Instrument

The survey instrument used in the study was developed from the PLOs of CHED CMO No. 75—2019, specifically those related to language and literature teacher education. The questionnaire had two parts. To wit, Part A collected demographic information of the respondents. Secondly, Part B sought respondents' agreement with the statement, "The teaching internship course has contributed to my attainment of this program outcome," separately for each of the eight PLOs. The writers collected the data using a five-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree. The data collection period lasted from April to June 2026.

Procedure

Once ethical clearance was granted by the university ethics committee (BulSUERC-2026-0050-01), data collection began with the targeted respondents eligible for the study. These were pre-service students who had just completed their OJT. The data collection lasted for two months. Completed responses from the electronic platform were checked for consistency and completeness, then encoded in a statistical software package for analysis and interpretation. No identifying data and information were collected to keep responses anonymous and bias-free.

Data Analysis

The study's authors computed descriptive statistics for the demographic variables. For each PLO item, proportions for each response category (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). Subsequently, the averages and standard deviations were computed to summarize the central tendency and variability for each PLO. Ultimately, a general weighted mean score across all eight areas yielded an overall index of perceived contribution. Given the descriptive purpose of this research venture and its modest sample size ($N = 33$), the authors did not conduct inferential statistics. However, the writers focused on descriptive interpretation set against the existing literature in the field.

III. RESULTS

Profile of Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the study's respondents. The population was heavily female (90.9%), with most respondents aged 20–22 (75.8%) and single (93.9%).

Proportion of the Sample Across Levels of Agreement for Each Learning Outcome

Table 2 shows the proportion of the sample after choosing each response category across the eight PLOs. For most areas, the majority of pre-service teachers chose Strongly Agree or Agree. The use of technology to facilitate language learning and teaching had the highest combined Strongly Agree/Agree proportion, at 87.9%. However, the other areas also received strong positive endorsement.

Mean Scores and Variability for Each Learning Outcome

Table 3 shows the mean scores and standard deviation for each program learning outcome. The general weighted mean across all items was 4.091 ($SD = 1.212$). This score indicates that the respondents in this study agreed that the internship course contributed to their attainment of the outcomes prescribed by the Higher Education Commission. The table also shows that the highest mean score was for the use of technology in facilitating language learning and teaching ($M = 4.242$, $SD = 1.226$). This was seconded by inspiring students and colleagues to lead relevant and transformative change ($M = 4.152$, $SD =$

1.228). The remaining items converged toward a mean score of 4.000, indicating a fairly consistent pattern of concurrence, although there is still some spread in responses.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents of the Study

Characteristic	n	%
Sex		
Female	30	90.9
Male	3	9.1
Age range		
20–22 years	25	75.8
23–25 years	6	18.2
≥26 years	2	6.1
Civil status		
Single	31	93.9
Married	2	6.1

Table 2
Proportion of Respondents Across Levels of Agreement

Program Learning Outcomes	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Possess broad knowledge of language and literature for effective learning.	45.5%	42.4%	0%	0%	12.1%
Use English as a global language in a multilingual context as it applies to the teaching of language and literature.	39.4%	45.5%	3.0%	0%	12.1%
Acquire an extensive reading background in language, literature, and allied fields.	39.4%	45.5%	3.0%	0%	12.1%
Demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication.	42.4%	42.4%	3.0%	0%	12.1%
Shows competence in employing innovative language and literature teaching approaches, methodologies, and strategies.	48.5%	39.4%	0%	0%	12.1%
Use technology to facilitate language learning and teaching.	57.6%	30.3%	0%	3.0%	9.1%
Inspire students and colleagues to lead relevant, transformative changes to improve the teaching and learning of language and literature.	51.5%	33.3%	3.0%	3.0%	9.1%
Display skills and abilities to be a reflective and research-oriented language and literature teacher.	48.5%	36.4%	3.0%	0%	12.1%

Table 3
Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for PLOs

Program Learning Outcomes	Mean	SD
Possess broad knowledge of language and literature for effective learning.	4.091	1.259
Use English as a global language in a multilingual context as it applies to the teaching of language and literature.	4.000	1.250
Acquire an extensive reading background in language, literature, and allied fields.	4.000	1.250
Demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication.	4.030	1.262
Shows competence in employing innovative language and literature teaching approaches, methodologies, and strategies.	4.121	1.269
Use technology to facilitate language learning and teaching.	4.242	1.226
Inspire students and colleagues to lead relevant, transformative changes to improve the teaching and learning of language and literature.	4.152	1.228
Display skills and abilities to be a reflective and research-oriented language and literature teacher.	4.091	1.284

The general mean across all PLOs was 4.091 with $SD = 1.212$

IV. DISCUSSION

This study, entitled Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions of the Internship Program and Its Contribution to Program Learning Outcomes: A Descriptive Cross-Sectional Study of College Students at Bulacan State University Bustos Campus ventured to see how a cohort of BSEd major English and minor in Mandarin, discern their Teaching Internship course's (EDUC 401) contribution to the attainment of the program learning outcomes set by the Commission on Higher Education. The results of the survey indicate a generally positive conclusion. This means that the scores clustered around 4.0 on a five-point scale, with a general mean of 4.091 ($SD = 1.212$).

Furthermore, this indicates that the pre-service teachers selected "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" for most PLOs. This further suggests that they found the experiential course an effective way to make objectives concrete and tangible.

The results of this study are consistent with international and local literature emphasizing that the internship program is central to consolidating a pre-service teacher's knowledge and skills (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Grossman et al., 2009). The comparatively high mean for technology use ($M = 4.242$) suggests that the pre-service teachers found ample and tangible opportunities to bring technology into language instruction and language learning during their practice. Moreover, this is consistent with a broader trend toward technology-enhanced pedagogy in teacher education. Such a scenario will surely enable pre-service teachers to access digital resources and design technology-mediated lessons. This will ultimately help pre-service teachers become more confident and competent in their chosen profession (Hew & Brush, 2007).

The positive scores for PLOs tied to pedagogical innovation and leadership, competence in innovative approaches, and inspiring students and colleagues indicate that the internship supported more than just technical teaching skills. It goes without saying that the course may also have shaped broader professional dispositions. Internships built around collaborative projects, chances to lead classroom activities, and structured reflection can foster this kind of leadership and transformative practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). The apparent perceived gains of the pre-service teachers here are noteworthy, given the program's emphasis on preparing teachers who can effect change in the minds of the future generation.

A considerable number of respondents chose Strongly Disagree in several areas (12.1% in most cases), and the standard deviations (roughly 1.226–1.284) indicate real variation in their lived experiences. The fact that some pre-service teachers strongly disagreed suggests that not every internship experience provided positive opportunities to attain the program learning outcomes. Many underlying variables may affect respondents' experiences at a particular cooperating school in the Department of Education. This only shows that prior research has established that the quality of internship experience varies by placement site, cooperating teacher, and head teachers' dispositions. Moreover, this variation affects what pre-service teachers actually learn (Zeichner, 2010).

The absence of Neutral responses in some areas, paired with the presence of Strongly Disagree responses on several items, shows a somewhat dichotomized set of experiences. Many pre-service teachers clearly benefited from the internship program, while a handful have had experiences that contributed negatively to their training. Possible reasons for such an eventuality include differences in the accommodation and support that cooperating teachers offered, school resources, class composition, and the extent to which student-teaching supervisors at the TEIs facilitated the internship practice. These factors are well documented in the literature as shaping practicum quality (Grossman et al., 2009; Loughran, 2010).

Program coordinators from the TEIs should carefully revisit their internship policies and practices, focusing on strengthening consistency across cooperating schools. There ought to be a more careful coordination and correspondence between the internship coordinator and cooperating teachers, clearer expectations for mentoring and supervising that will focus on formative feedback exchange. The TEIs should also continue investing in IT resources and training for pre-service teachers and faculty of instruction at the university to sustain and deepen that integration. The minority of negative responses should prompt a reassessment of pre-service teachers' experiences. This entails conducting a debriefing or supplementary microteaching session, peer mentoring, or alternative supervised teaching opportunities in order to negate the trauma and negative exposure.

Locally researched internship experiences of pre-service teachers have the same tenor of conclusions. This study's quantitative description contributes to the established body of knowledge by providing measurable indicators of perceived PLO attainment. Such a fact will reinforce the case for contextually sensitive changes and improvements that address both systemic constraints and underlying problems present in cooperating schools.

V. LIMITATIONS

The descriptive cross-sectional design used by the writers, compounded by a modest sample size ($N = 33$) drawn from the university branch, limits the generalizability of the conclusions. Relying heavily on confessed experiences

and perceptions is useful for policy evaluation. However, results will not give an objective measure of PLO attainment. Furthermore, the absence of qualitative data and surveys hinders the explanation of underlying factors in assessing respondents' perceptions. Moreover, this is something that future researchers can help illuminate through mixed-methods research with a larger sample size.

Even with the aforementioned weaknesses and limitations, the present study offers a focused, empirically grounded look at how pre-service teachers perceive their internship course's contribution to the CHED's program learning outcomes. Integrating the institutional tables and descriptive statistics into the manuscript provides curriculum planners, program managers, and other stakeholders with concrete indicators to continuously improve the quality of the country's teacher education program.

VI. CONCLUSION

This descriptive cross-sectional study established that BSEd English major in Mandarin students from the Teacher Education Department of Bulacan State University–Bustos Campus who completed Teaching Internship (EDUC 401) during the first semester of AY 2025–2026 generally perceived their practicum experiences as contributing positively to the attainment of the Commission on Higher Education's program learning outcomes (PLOs). This finding is supported by the overall mean rating of 4.091 ($SD = 1.212$), with technology integration receiving the strongest perceived contribution. Nevertheless, the other PLOs were also rated favorably. The variability in respondents' ratings, including the presence of some negative responses, indicates that unfavorable experiences occurred across some cooperating school placements.

Based on these findings, the study recommends enhancing mentoring and supervisory quality through the systematic selection, orientation, and professional development of cooperating teachers to promote consistency in mentoring practices across cooperating schools. Supervisory support should likewise be standardized by strengthening the monitoring and assessment of pre-service teachers, with particular emphasis on formative feedback, reflective dialogue, and alignment between university expectations and actual school practices. Technology resources and training should also be strengthened through continuous investment in information technology tools and targeted workshops for faculty members, pre-service teachers, and cooperating teachers to enhance computer-aided instruction.

Contingency support and debriefing mechanisms should be provided for pre-service teachers who encounter less favorable practicum experiences. These may include peer mentoring, additional microteaching sessions, and alternative supervised teaching opportunities designed to help address experiences that may hinder the attainment of intended learning outcomes. Future research should also employ mixed-methods designs incorporating qualitative interviews or focus group discussions to examine the reasons for variations in perceptions across different cooperating school placements.

Addressing these recommendations can help teacher education institutions establish a more consistent and effective internship environment that supports pre-service teachers' professional development and attainment of the full range of program learning outcomes. Strengthening mentoring, supervision, technological support, contingency mechanisms, and evidence-based monitoring can further ensure that internship experiences remain meaningful, equitable, and aligned with the intended outcomes across cooperating school placements.

Author Contributions

The authors collectively conceptualized the review, developed the search strategy, synthesized the evidence, interpreted the findings, prepared the language support framework, and approved the final manuscript.

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Ethics Approval and Informed Consent

The BulSU Ethics Review Committee (BulSUERC-2026-0050-01) approved the study before the data gathering process began. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. All respondents gave informed consent before completing the survey.

Competing Interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

Data Availability

All evidence discussed in this paper can be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Declaration of AI Use

A generative artificial intelligence tool was used to assist with language refinement, structural organization, and consistency checking during manuscript preparation. Scholarly claims and bibliographic details were checked against source records, and responsibility for the final content rests with the authors.

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