







# Prepared for the Traditional, Trained in the Virtual: Impact of Online Teaching Practicum on Student Teachers' Readiness

Catherine Jean A. Brillantes<sup>(✉)</sup> , Jovannie M. Sarona , Junette B. Buslon ,  
and Ericson O. Alieto 

Western Mindanao State University, Zamboanga, Philippines  
{gt201900211, sarona.jovannie, junette.buslon,  
ericson.alieto}@wmsu.edu.ph

**Abstract.** Teaching Practicum (TP) is a crucial component of pre-service teachers' education, which serves as a training ground to develop their competencies by providing them with opportunities to acquire hands-on experience in a real-life classroom environment. The migration to online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic altered how student teachers obtained their training, thereby limiting their ability to gain firsthand experience in an actual classroom. Education in the new normal exposed the student teachers to an unconventional situation, providing a fertile ground for investigating the student teacher's TP experiences during the pandemic and, subsequently, their readiness to enter the field as bona fide teachers. The study's findings showed that there were several benefits and drawbacks that student teachers experienced in relation to their online TP. Lower levels of anxiousness when lecturing pupils are one advantage of online instruction. However, being unable to engage with students physically poses a challenge to student teachers' TP. These challenges include problems with monitoring student behavior, reduced attendance rates, and interruptions in online classes due to technological problems. Though most of the teacher candidates affirmed they are prepared to teach in physical classrooms, they also acknowledge that they have missed essential field experiences in their TP.

**Keywords:** Virtual Classroom · Practice Teaching · Readiness · Teaching Practicum

## 1 Introduction

Teaching practicum (TP) is an essential part of the education of pre-service teachers [1]. At its core, the TP aims to raise the effectiveness of prospective teachers in order to prepare them to take on their duties as bona fide teachers in the field [2]. By acquiring essential experiences in the field, the practicum sets the stage for the pre-service teachers to understand the entire breadth of the responsibilities and duties that are expected from them when they become teachers in the immediate future [3–5].

Education in the new normal brought significant changes not only in the delivery of learning to students but also in the training and education of prospective teachers [6]. The essence of practice teaching lies in the acquisition of field-based experiences of the pre-service teachers. However, the closure of academic institutions during the pandemic placed heavy constraints on their education and training [6, 7]. The transition from in-person classes to virtual classrooms confined the practicum experiences of the student teachers to cyberspace, which puts them at risk of being deprived of the opportunity to gain invaluable ground experiences to develop their teaching skills in the practical field [8, 9].

The exposure of the new breed of future teachers to the pedagogical shift from physical classrooms to online learning platforms provided a fertile ground for analysis and investigation [10]. There have been contradictory results from the few studies that have looked into student teachers' online TP experiences throughout the pandemic. In the study of Brinia and Psoni [11], it was reported that the student teachers from a teacher preparation program in Greece had a significant amount of exposure to modern educational tools during their online TP, in which they were able to develop valuable skills in handling students in online learning spaces. However, the student teachers asserted that online TP could not replace in-person instruction, for it offers opportunities like being able to observe students' nonverbal cues, which could provide them a better insight in directing the teaching-learning process inside the class. On the contrary, it was presented in the study by Koşar [12] that Turkish EFL teacher candidates perceived their online TP as ineffective in preparing them as future teachers in their careers. In addition, they also expressed doubts about online TP as a substitute for an in-person teaching assistantship, wherein they disclosed that the remote TP did not fully prepare them in terms of improving their skills and enhancing their professional development.

With regards to the challenges in online TP, the results of the study conducted by Jin [13] uncovered the experiences of three American student teachers during their online TP in early childhood education, which include sustaining active participation among young learners and reinforcing the learning process in the virtual classes since they could not physically observe their students during class sessions. In relation to this, according to the research findings of Babanoğlu [14], it was reported that the main difficulties experienced by Turkish student teachers during their online teaching internship were technical difficulties, like poor internet connectivity and issues related to online learning tools, as well as concerns regarding the students' nonattendance and lower levels of participation in online lectures.

Moreover, the teacher candidates' preparedness for teaching in the new normal not only remains a mystery at large, but they are also the first batch to graduate with their TP done through the online modality without having adequate experience of in-person interaction with their students [9]. Exploring their perspectives regarding their readiness for their future career may reveal an important insight on their experiences and challenges in their online TP, which could be utilized to improve the approaches used in teacher education and, ultimately, enrich the body of literature.

This study sought to address the following research questions:

1. How has distance learning affected the practice teaching experiences of the student teachers?

2. How do the respondents, who performed their practice teaching via online learning, perceive their readiness to join the teaching profession?

## **2 Methodology**

### **2.1 Research Design**

The study aims to identify and interpret the experiences of student teachers in their online TP and their readiness in teaching, as such a qualitative-descriptive approach was utilized. Qualitative-descriptive studies seek to offer a detailed summary and comprehensive understanding of the experiences of individuals within the distinct context of their environment [15, 16]. The purpose of the study design is to gain insights from the participants in order to shed light on a relatively new phenomenon, namely the experiences of student teachers during their practicum in the new normal and how it has affected their readiness to become teachers. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were used in the data collection procedure, and the information gleaned from the interviews was evaluated using thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke [17] asserted that thematic analysis is a versatile and useful method for determining and evaluating recurring themes in the data, which can offer a comprehensive and nuanced presentation of the material.

### **2.2 Research Context**

The Western Mindanao State University offers two levels of teaching internships, where student teachers instruct junior high school students using online learning tools, like Microsoft Teams and Google Classroom. Terms such as first and second contacts or deployments were used to describe the two levels of the practicum. The teacher candidates were assigned to different class sections taught by their cooperating teacher, in which they were supervised by their mentors at both levels. Depending on their cooperating teachers' instructions, they were either put into groups or worked independently throughout their practicum. The practicum lasted for 360 hours, or approximately 45 days, in which they met two times a week. In their second level of internship, teacher candidates from External Studies University (ESU), a partner institution of WMSU, joined the student teachers in their practicum. Aside from that, the student teachers were also tasked in their practicum to take class attendance, create lesson plans, table of specifications, conduct activities, quizzes, and examinations for their students, wherein they would also evaluate and compute the grades of their students.

### **2.3 Participants of the Study**

The participants for this study were selected through the use of a purposive sampling method. Furthermore, inclusion criteria were established to ensure that the participants provide the pertinent data necessary to accomplish the study's objectives, which includes the following: (a) the student teacher studied in the BSEd program of Western Mindanao State University; and (b) the student teacher had performed their Teaching Practicum (TP) through online classes exclusively. There were 10 recently graduated BSEd students

who agreed to participate in the interview, of which eight were female interviewees, and the rest were males. Six of the participants majored in science, with four specializing in mathematics. The ages of the participants ranged from 21 to 23, with a mean of 22. Furthermore, all of the student teachers verified in the interviews that their practice teaching had been conducted via online learning. To maintain the anonymity of the participants, they were coded using the word “Interviewee” along with numbers from 1 to 10 in order to identify their responses from each other.

## **2.4 Research Tools**

In order to obtain the necessary data, the researcher developed a semi-structured interview, which was in line with the research questions identified in the study. The research studies of Koşar [12] and Hojeij and Baroudi [8] served as the inspiration for several of the interview questions, which were modified according to the context of the participants’ teaching practices. The interview protocol was validated by three professors from the College of Teacher Education. Afterwards, it was pre-tested twice, with each interview session being administered to two individuals who had similar characteristics to the respondents of the study. As provided by Mikuska [18], pre-testing the interview questions is a crucial step in the research process since it enables the researcher to evaluate whether the questions are feasible and appropriate before beginning the actual study.

## **2.5 Data Gathering Procedure**

After pre-testing the questions, the researcher proceeded with the interviews since there were no issues found with the protocol. The interviews were carried out through online video conferencing instead of face-to-face interviews. Once the participants were contacted, a link to a Google meeting for the interviews was sent to them. Prior to gathering data, the researcher acquired the respondents’ ethical consent to conduct the interview, in which they were notified that the meeting would be recorded. After obtaining the respondent’s consent, the meeting was recorded in order to aid the researcher in transcribing the interviews. The researcher prepared a translated transcription since the interviewees alternated between conversing in English and Tagalog throughout the interview session. The translation employed a naturalized transcription, wherein the text conforms to the standards of written discourse [19]. The translated transcript then underwent a series of rechecking, after which it was reviewed by a research colleague. It was then given to the research adviser for final review.

## **3 Results and Discussion**

This section presents the results of data analysis regarding the two research questions presented in the study, which are the effects of distance learning in the practice teaching experiences of the student teachers and their perceived readiness to enter the teaching field.

The general views of the student teachers regarding their online TP are shown in Table 1, in which there are two recurring themes highlighted by the respondents in the study. The participants offer two contrasting viewpoints regarding how they perceive teaching and learning in face-to-face and online learning modalities.

In the first theme, five out of ten (50%) of the interviewees shared their perceptions about face-to-face instruction, which they found as an irreplaceable mode of learning. The following lines “... *in my opinion, we can never replace the physical classroom setup since I have experienced that way back then. That’s what I can say when we compare it to online class.*” verify the notion that online learning cannot fully substitute face-to-face instruction.

Furthermore, the first theme may come from the notion that f2f instruction is fundamentally different from online learning, which may originate from the assumption that there are distinct attributes in online learning that influence the teaching and learning experiences of teacher candidates. This is supported by Interviewee 9, in which they explained that there are certain factors in online learning, such as the fluctuating internet connection, which affects the TP experiences of student teachers. This following excerpt reinforces this idea:

**Table 1.** General Views of the Student Teachers about their Online TP

Themes	Excerpts
1. Face-to-face instruction as an irreplaceable mode of learning	<p><i>“It is really different in the face-to-face teaching where you can see them.”</i>  <b>(Interviewee 1)</b>  <i>“... there really is a big difference if we had our chance to have a face-to-face practicum, because, you know, it is different when you get to interact with your students and critic teacher.”</i> <b>(Interviewee 2)</b>  <i>“There is a big difference... you can really see the difference if they are learning and they’re not just passively learning like that. It is better if you can really see them working on their tasks...”</i> <b>(Interviewee 4)</b>  <i>“It is still different when you learn in a face-to-face setting, especially in terms of the knowledge that you will acquire.”</i>  <b>(Interviewee 5)</b>  <i>“Well, in my opinion, we can never replace the physical classroom setup since I have experienced that way back then. That is what I can say when we compare it to online class.”</i>  <b>(Interviewee 9)</b></p>

(continued)

**Table 1.** (continued)

Themes	Excerpts
2. Online learning is similar to face-to-face instruction	<p data-bbox="571 259 1024 402"><i>“Although it happened online, but it is still the same. It all boils down to teaching, for example... the lesson plans and instructional materials, you will need all of that whether you are teaching online or face-to-face.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="571 407 726 433"><b>(Interviewee 2)</b></p> <p data-bbox="571 439 1018 546"><i>“... the quizzes and the E-class record as well, they are also similar to face-to-face, although it’s not done on pen and paper, but it’s similar.”</i> <b>(Interviewee 3)</b></p> <p data-bbox="571 552 1003 695"><i>“Even though it was conducted via online learning, you can still apply what you have learned from the book and from teachings before... I think the processes in in-person teaching are the same with online learning.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="571 700 726 726"><b>(Interviewee 5)</b></p> <p data-bbox="571 732 1027 892"><i>“... the only difference of online teaching in the face-to-face instruction is that it is done online. Aside from that, the pedagogy, like how one should instruct the students, the delivery of lessons and your approach in teaching are the same.”</i> <b>(Interviewee 7)</b></p> <p data-bbox="571 897 1016 1040"><i>“... what we did in the online class is actually similar to what we need to do in a physical classroom. It is just that there were some adjustments when it comes to the delivery of our lessons and activities.”</i> <b>(Interviewee 9)</b></p> <p data-bbox="571 1046 1016 1127"><i>“I believe online learning is the same with the physical classes, but face-to-face instruction would take more effort on your part.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="571 1132 738 1158"><b>(Interviewee 10)</b></p>

### Interviewee 9

*“There’s a lot of factors when it is online class. Based on my experience, one of these is the internet connection. Sometimes choppy, just like today, we cannot really understand the lesson properly and we cannot immediately connect to our students physically. So, it is difficult.”*

These results are comparable to the findings in the study of Koşar [12], which found that participants firmly believed that in-person teaching experiences could not be replaced by online teaching since they would be able to obtain more practical experience in actual classrooms. The following lines from Interviewee 5, *“It is still different when you learn*

in a face-to-face setting, especially in terms of the knowledge that you will acquire”, echoes the same sentiment.

The second theme, on the other hand, contends that online learning is not only an alternative to face-to-face instruction, but it also bears similar characteristics with the latter. This is indicative of the fact that six out of ten (60%) of the interviewees held similar opinions. This notion is supported by the following statement:

## **Interviewee 2**

*“Although it happened online, but it is still the same. It all boils down to teaching, for example... the lesson plans and instructional materials, you will need all of that whether you are teaching online or face-to-face.”*

The interviewee noted that there are several aspects in teaching that are similar across online and in-person instruction, such as lesson planning and the preparation of instructional materials, which are important skills to hone regardless of one’s medium of teaching. Moreover, the response of Interviewee 5 corroborates with the idea that the teaching processes in online learning are similar to that of in-person teaching, indicating that the lessons and experience gained via online TP are still applicable in real-life classroom settings. The text that follows demonstrates this:

## **Interviewee 5**

*“Even though it was conducted via online learning, you can still apply what you have learned from the book and from teachings before... I think the processes in in-person teaching are the same with online learning.”*

Though the respondents agree that f2f is an irreplaceable mode of learning, they also acknowledge that online learning still mirrors the flow and procedures of a traditional classroom. In addition, they concurred that the acquired skills from online TP are transferable into practice in actual classroom settings. The contrasting viewpoints offered by the respondents may perhaps point to the fact that there are certain aspects in f2f learning that cannot be replicated in online classes. This includes the concepts presented in Table 2, which involves the students’ attendance, observation of student interaction and behaviors, and the absence of technical issues in the physical setup.

The first research question examines how remote learning has affected the respondents’ experiences throughout their teaching practicum. The first theme revealed that participants felt less pressured to teach because they could not physically see their students when using the online learning modality, as opposed to the traditional setting. Three out of ten (30%) of the interviewees reported that they felt less anxious about the new learning environment. This is highlighted by the passage that follows:

**Interviewee 1**

*“... since we have this new normal online teaching, it lessened that feeling of nervousness because we are not facing them in a face-to-face classroom. In a face-to-face setting there is an additional pressure... you might have a mental block, you might forget what you are supposed to say, along with the look of your students... So, I think that’s one advantage of the new normal in student teaching.”*

Interviewee 1 cited one advantage of having their TP online, which was being able to overcome his anxiety in teaching due to the lack of face-to-face interaction with his pupils. He asserted that there is more pressure on their part as student teachers when teaching in physical classrooms, since there is an increased likelihood of committing errors, such as being unable to articulate one’s thoughts, when facing your students.

**Table 2.** Effect of Online Learning to the TP Experiences of Student Teachers

Themes	Excerpts
1. Less feelings of nervousness over the new learning setup	<p><i>“... since we have this new normal online teaching, it lessened that feeling of nervousness because we are not facing them in a face-to-face classroom. In a face-to-face setting there is an additional pressure.” (Interviewee 1)</i></p> <p><i>“To be honest, it is quite fine because you are just at home. It was relaxing, at the same time you are not pressured because you cannot see your students.” (Interviewee 6)</i></p> <p><i>“... it’s less embarrassing to teach in an online setting since you can just turn off your camera.” (Interviewee 10)</i></p>
2. Difficulty in monitoring students’ behavior	<p><i>“... the interaction between students and teachers in a physical classroom is really different, because you will know how to communicate with them face-to-face... in this [new] normal setting, they can just turn off their camera, so you will not know what they are doing while you are teaching.” (Interviewee 1)</i></p> <p><i>“...we were not able to see them face-to-face, all the transactions or the things we need to do are held online. So, there really is a substantial difference if we had our chance to have a face-to-face practicum, because it is different when you get to interact with your students and critic teacher.” (Interviewee 2)</i></p> <p><i>“In the interaction between the students and you, as a teacher... there is no feedback, and you can’t direct it... compared to face-to-face instruction, issues like that are easier to deal with because you can immediately give feedback to your students.” (Interviewee 5)</i></p> <p><i>“... during the teaching, you cannot see your students. You will only see the screen, so you have no idea what your students were doing” (Interviewee 6)</i></p> <p><i>“... in this kind of learning platform, we cannot physically see the students. So, this means that I cannot manage them very well since I cannot see them.” (Interviewee 7)</i></p> <p><i>“In this online set up, we are only able to see our students on the screen, so even if they were attending the class, we don’t know what they are doing behind the screen.” (Interviewee 8)</i></p> <p><i>“When teaching, you are the only one who has their camera opened, and you cannot see your students since their cameras were turned off. With that, you cannot be sure if they are really paying attention to you or if they are doing other things.” (Interviewee 9)</i></p> <p><i>“I guess one of the challenges for me is frequently reminding my students to turn in their missing requirements. It was quite tough for me since even if I approached them, they would only view the messages I sent them without responding back, and they would still fail to comply with their tasks.” (Interviewee 10)</i></p>

(continued)



**Table 2.** (continued)

Themes	Excerpts
3. Reduced student attendance rate	<p><i>"I think that the average student attendance during online classes is about 50%, sometimes even lower."</i> (Interviewee 2)</p> <p><i>"... some students have a lot of absences in their records and will only attend classes for the exams since it would be administered online. That is one of the challenges of online learning."</i> (Interviewee 5)</p> <p><i>"... in one section with 50 students, there were only 30 of them who'll join the meeting and the rest will not. So, when you give the module, others can answer, and some will not."</i> (Interviewee 6)</p> <p><i>"It is hard to manage especially since there are only few attendees that would join classes in the section that I handled. The attendance would barely reach 50% since there are only few students who are willing to join the class"</i> (Interviewee 10)</p>
4. Disrupted classes due to technical issues in online learning	<p><i>"... the atmosphere of the lesson was also affected because the momentum was cut off. Instead of properly teaching, the momentum is suddenly lost because of the defective microphones, as well as the slow internet connection."</i> (Interviewee 1)</p> <p><i>"Number one is the poor Internet connection. Number two is the power outages, wherein for example you are in the middle of your demonstration and suddenly there is a power interruption, you cannot do anything but cry."</i> (Interviewee 2)</p> <p><i>"Sometimes, when you have activities and you want students to answer or participate, you cannot hear them because it is also lagging on their end. Also, when you are presenting a video, sometimes it is delayed on their end, or the videos are muted. So, they were not able to do those things in the activity or watch the videos that you have prepared prior to your lecture, which also affects the whole lesson."</i> (Interviewee 3)</p> <p><i>"The first disadvantage that I encountered is the Internet connection...I encountered once when my presentation was not moving, and I was frustrated, and I have low morale that time because it was not good. You must give your best shot during your practicum or practice teaching, right?"</i> (Interviewee 4)</p> <p><i>"... as for my experience, I was in the boarding house, and then during the discussion the internet connection was unstable. During that time, I was asking my student to choose an animal, but I was not able to hear their answer... we did not understand each other, and it was not a pleasant experience."</i> (Interviewee 6)</p> <p><i>"I think internet connection is one of the issues in online learning. There were times that you were in the middle of your lesson and discussing it to the students, and then suddenly the Internet connection fluctuates, so there will be disruptions in your teaching. This means that there will be students who will not understand the lesson, as such you have to go back to the start of the discussion in order for them to fully comprehend what you are teaching."</i> (Interviewee 7)</p> <p><i>"... I think, especially to those students with slow internet connection, they will not be able to understand [the lesson] since it was choppy."</i> (Interviewee 8)</p> <p><i>"During my first teaching in level one, I could hardly push through with my teaching because I experienced internet connectivity problems due to heavy rain. Fortunately, I was able to teach but many students were complaining because it was quite choppy."</i> (Interviewee 9)</p> <p><i>"... there is no guarantee that the students understand the lesson because their internet connection might be unstable or they might not have mobile data, as such the meeting might be choppy on their end. We do not know if they are learning anything,"</i> (Interviewee 10)</p>

Interviewee 6 also shares the same sentiment, in which she stated that she felt more at ease teaching in the online setting because the camera can be switched off.

Despite this apparent advantage in distance TP, the second theme reveals that interacting with students in cyberspace was challenging for the student instructors. Eight out of ten (80%) of the participants reported to have experienced this issue in their teaching internship. The following statements reflect this idea:

### **Interviewee 9**

*“When teaching, you are the only one who has their camera opened, and you can’t actually see your students since their cameras were turned off. With that, you cannot be sure if they are really paying attention to you or if they’re doing other things.”*

As mentioned by Interviewee 9, one of the difficulties with conducting their TP via remote learning is being unable to monitor their students since their webcams are typically switched off during class discussions. She explained that being physically separated from their pupils makes it difficult for them to monitor their behavior, which in turn hinders them from determining whether the students are still learning from the class discussions. In a similar vein, Interviewee 5 notes that since interaction with the students is limited on online platforms, it is more difficult to reach out to students to turn in their missing outputs because there is no assurance that they will be active online at any given time. Moreover, she also stated that they are unlikely to face these concerns in a face-to-face internship since it is easier to monitor and give feedback to students. This is indicated in the following excerpt:

### **Interviewee 5**

*“... it is difficult to contact your students since it is not guaranteed that they would be online all the time even with Facebook or Messenger. You cannot reach out to them immediately. ... some students have a lot of absences in their records and will only attend classes for the exams since it would be administered online... Compared to face-to-face instruction, issues like that are easier to deal with because you can immediately give feedback to your students.”*

The outcomes are consistent with the research conducted by Jin [13], in which student teachers encountered the same challenges during their online internship. The teacher candidates were unable to directly observe the students’ learning processes, and as a result, it was challenging for them to determine when to intervene in the students’ learning process. In addition, Brinia and Psoni [11] also noted in their study that the lack of direct interaction in online learning made it impossible to observe non-verbal cues of communication from the students. Although cameras are used in online classrooms, they

cannot replace the human presence in the classroom. This following excerpt reinforces this notion:

### **Interviewee 6**

*“... during your teaching you’ll see your students’ real emotion or expression. So, in a physical classroom, you will know if they were content with what you have taught, or the other way around. You can see if they’re already bored. In online classes, you cannot see their emotions.”*

With regards to the third theme presented in Table 2, three out of ten (30%) of the participants stated that one of the effects of the new learning modality on their TP experiences was the poor attendance rate of students in online classes. This view is reflected in the following excerpt:

### **Interviewee 10**

*“It is hard to manage, especially since there are only a few attendees that would join classes in the section that I handle. The attendance would barely reach 50% since there are only a few students who are willing to join the class.”*

The findings in the research study of Babanoğlu [14] also confirm that one of the difficulties that student teachers face in their online TP is the reduced student attendance rates on online classes, which affects their internship experiences. One participant mentioned that the nonattendance of students caused lower levels of participation during class discussion, which manifested itself in the inability of students to submit their outputs on time. As a result, this made it difficult for her to finalize the grades of the students she handled in her TP. The following statement indicates this idea:

### **Interviewee 10**

*“It is hard to manage, especially since there are only a few attendees that would join classes in the section that I handle. The attendance would barely reach 50% since there are only a few students who are willing to join the class. In addition, they would also fail to submit their requirements, modules, and weekly activities on time. As a result, ... I had a hard time finishing their grades...”*

The fourth subject of Table 2 investigates the experiences of the interviewees regarding the technological problems in online learning and its effects on the flow of class discussions. Nine out of ten (90%) of the interviewees discussed how technological problems, such as poor internet connectivity, power outages, malfunctioning microphones, and lagging presentations, had caused lessons to be disrupted in their teaching demonstrations. An excerpt from the transcript is provided below:

### Interviewee 1

*“... let’s say, you are enthusiastically teaching the lesson... and then you will call some student, however they were unable to respond because the audio is choppy on their end, or their microphones were not working. Since their microphone was not working, the atmosphere of the lesson was also affected because the momentum was cut off. Instead of properly teaching, the momentum is suddenly lost because of the defective microphones, as well as the slow signal.”*

Interviewee 1 detailed the technological challenges he encountered throughout his internship and how they impacted his TP experiences. He remarked that instead of properly executing his teaching demonstration, online discussions were frequently interrupted by uncontrollable factors, such as the technological issues he had previously outlined. As a result, the momentum of his teaching was also affected. Furthermore, one of the respondents claimed that uncontrollable factors, such as slow internet connectivity, malfunctioning devices, and power outages, would be highly improbable to be encountered in a face-to-face setting. An excerpt from the respondent is presented below:

### Interviewee 2

*“... there is a huge difference if our internship was conducted face-to-face. Firstly, in a face-to-face setup, we do not have to worry about uncontrollable issues like internet connection and power interruption...”*

This is consistent with the findings presented in the study of Babanoğlu [14], wherein technological problems, including poor internet connectivity and computer-related malfunctions, were some of the challenges that student teachers had to deal with while performing their TP in distant learning.

The perceptions of the student teachers with regards to their readiness in teaching are shown in Table 3. The responses of the participants in the study led to the development of four themes.

Eight out of ten (80%) of the respondents gave a favorable response with regards to their perceptions of readiness to enter the teaching profession. Interviewee 10 shared that she felt well-prepared to teach in a face-to-face setup since the competencies that she acquired in online TP, which includes lesson planning and managing a class, are useful and still applicable in the actual classrooms. This is evident in the following excerpt:

### Interviewee 10

*“During the internship online, we learned a lot about teaching, in lesson planning, and managing a classroom. So, same with face-to-face setup, if we were in the physical classroom, we will be able to apply those. So, we’re very prepared.”*

The second theme discusses the skills that were acquired by the interviewees in their TP, which may contribute towards their positive beliefs regarding their readiness to teach.

Nine out of ten (90%) of the interviewees confirmed that their online TP helped them acquire the necessary competencies to be able to teach in a classroom. This is evident in the response of Interviewee 3, in which she stated that the different skill sets she has learned from the online TP can be integrated into practice in real-life classrooms.

### Interviewee 3

*“I have also learned different skills in my online internship such as lesson planning, instructional planning, as well the strategies, digital tools, and instructional materials to integrate during class.”*

The third theme discusses the doubts that the interviewees hold regarding their readiness to teach. Seven out of ten (70%) of participants agreed with this notion. As reported by Interviewee 2, though she felt that the internship helped her to be equipped to teach in a real classroom, the authentic experiences in the field were not available in their online TP. The other respondents also had similar opinions, in which they stated that their

**Table 3.** Teacher Candidates’ Perception of their Readiness in Teaching

Themes	Excerpts
1. Affirmative Beliefs Towards their Teaching Readiness	<p><i>“I think I am more than ready. I am ready to teach in a real-world scenario and I will bring those experiences that I have acquired during my student teaching days into a real-world classroom.” (Interviewee 1)</i></p> <p><i>“... I believe that it [the TP] has equipped or prepared us to teach in a real classroom setup, like there are a lot of things that we learned.” (Interviewee 2)</i></p> <p><i>“I do feel confident that I can manage a class... Though we lacked classroom management in our internship, I can still say that I am ready to teach in a real classroom setup.” (Interviewee 3)</i></p> <p><i>“I think I’m ready, because ... the virtues, the things that I’ve said I acquired during online classes, you can still apply it even in a face-to-face setting.” (Interviewee 4)</i></p> <p><i>“I would say I am confident that these skills that I have would be sufficient in handling or teaching a class. However, I believe that there is still room for growth and improvement for me to better enhance my skills in managing a class that I will handle in the near future.” (Interviewee 7)</i></p> <p><i>“I think I am ready. A hundred percent ready to face the real classroom or teaching... I think my knowledge and skills are enough for me to face the real classroom.” (Interviewee 8)</i></p> <p><i>“... I feel nervous, and I always overthink, but I know that somehow, I am ready ... I know that I still need to develop more confidence because it still has not achieved its full potential. However, I know that along the way, I will be able to gain that soon.” (Interviewee 9)</i></p> <p><i>“I can say that I am 90% ready because I think the procedure in online internship is just the same in the real field.” (Interviewee 10)</i></p>

(continued)

**Table 3.** (continued)

Themes	Excerpts
2. Online learning helped in the acquisition of skills transferable to real-world classrooms.	<p>“... these experiences that I acquired or the lessons that I have learned on how to communicate or interact with students, I am really putting it in my heart... So, I think I can really use those experiences when I get to teach in a real-world classroom setting.” <b>(Interviewee 1)</b></p> <p>“It was only during my internship that I was able to learn a lot of things, for example, the lesson plan. I think it is only my third time to create a lesson plan, and the ones that I submitted to my critic teacher, I immediately received good feedback that I was ready to teach in the real world.” <b>(Interviewee 2)</b></p> <p>“I have also learned different skills in my online internship such as lesson planning, instructional planning, as well the strategies, digital tools, and instructional materials to integrate during class.” <b>(Interviewee 3)</b></p> <p>“... managing the classroom is a transferable skill, as well as setting up the classroom environment, and also gauging the expectation of your students from the first to the last meeting...” <b>(Interviewee 4)</b></p> <p>“...in the online practicum, the skills that we were able to improve are the construction of instructional materials. Since it is online, the instructional materials must be impressive. So, our skills in lay out have really enhanced.” <b>(Interviewee 6)</b></p> <p>“... these skills that I have mentioned earlier are also transferable in a real-life classroom, especially the communication skills. For me to have better connections and a stronger relationship with my students, I need to be more open to communicating with them in order to foster a more conducive classroom.” <b>(Interviewee 7)</b></p> <p>“Although we only experienced an online internship, I still acquired enough knowledge and skills that I can use in real world teaching, such as lesson planning. So, within those three months, I think I have mastered my skills in lesson planning, assessment preparation, and dealing with students.” <b>(Interviewee 8)</b></p> <p>“Moreover, my communication skills have improved the way I deliver the lesson. Then, I also grow personally through gaining patience and confidence to face the class and teach with enthusiasm.” <b>(Interviewee 9)</b></p> <p>“My communication skills were greatly enhanced, along with my pedagogical skills. I am very grateful that we’re given the chance to handle a class in the ILS because the skills that we learned, like the way of teaching and the flow of instruction, would be very applicable especially now that we are applying for work.” <b>(Interviewee 10)</b></p>

(continued)

**Table 3.** (continued)

Themes	Excerpts
3. Missing hands-on experience in the field	<p><i>“I think the disadvantage for me is that our experience as a student teacher is not complete since it was done online... Fixing those problems and learning the teaching strategies should have been done while we were still student teachers. However, since we were not able to, we will have to face those in a real-world scenario.” (Interviewee 1)</i></p> <p><i>“... of course, that is the goal of the internship, which is to prepare us or to equip us as in the real classroom setup, although we were not able to experience what we need to experience in a real classroom setup.” (Interviewee 2)</i></p> <p><i>“I think it’s important to know how to handle the students, especially their behavior during class, which I didn’t experience during virtual classes.” (Interviewee 3)</i></p> <p><i>“We were not able to experience the real environment during teaching, we did not experience facing the students and handling how they behave.” (Interviewee 4)</i></p> <p><i>“... it was quite challenging because we are in the middle of a pandemic, and on our part, we lack hands-on experience... We do not have an idea in general on what will be applicable, and what methods would be appropriate to use.” (Interviewee 5)</i></p> <p><i>“... I believe that our practice teaching would have been better if we were able to acquire hands-on or authentic experience in the field, wherein we were able to do things in a tangible way.” (Interviewee 7)</i></p> <p><i>“...our teaching internship is done via online, as such I was unable to experience the students’ behavior... employing classroom management to students, and how to discipline them because you can’t tell it to them face-to-face...” (Interviewee 8)</i></p>
4. Concerns over being more accustomed to online learning than f2f teaching	<p><i>“... in a real-world scenario, not everyone can make a PowerPoint presentation, or not all schools can provide projectors... How will I adjust myself since I am more familiar in using PowerPoint presentations?” (Interviewee 1)</i></p> <p><i>“... I have no idea what it is like to be a student teacher in an actual classroom or an actual setup. So, on our part, we only had experience teaching in an online environment...” (Interviewee 2)</i></p> <p><i>“... I have only experienced teaching in a virtual setup and not in a real classroom.” (Interviewee 3)</i></p> <p><i>“...I think I am not truly ready because I was accustomed to PowerPoint presentations... So, I think that will become my problem, in terms of facing the students, speaking to them while writing the problem or solution, and the time management, of course, since it is an online class...” (Interviewee 4)</i></p> <p><i>“We are a quite nervous especially now that we are looking for a job... Our demonstration would be performed via face-to-face, yet we were trained in an online setting, so it is another adjustment aside from the adjustments we already made in the technologies, in the preparation of IMs.” (Interviewee 5)</i></p> <p><i>“... I am not ready to see the students and be in a classroom with them, meeting their gazes. It is like I am not ready to that kind of set up because I got used to online.” (Interviewee 6)</i></p>

experiences felt incomplete since they were not able to practice teaching in authentic contexts.

### **Interviewee 2**

*“... of course, that is the goal of the internship, which is to prepare us or to equip us as in the real classroom setup, although we were not able to experience what we need to experience in a real classroom setup.”*

The last theme discusses the concerns of student teachers about being more accustomed to online learning than in-person teaching, which may affect their readiness to teach. Six out of ten (60%) interviewed expressed their concerns in in-person teaching since they are more familiar with virtual teaching. Interviewee 2 explained that since she was only able to experience her TP in an online setup, teaching in the actual classroom may take more adjustments on her part. The following excerpt reinforces this notion:

### **Interviewee 2**

*“... I have no idea what it is like to be a student teacher in an actual classroom or an actual setup. So, on our part, we only had experience teaching in an online environment...”*

## **4 Conclusion**

The current study aims to explore the views of prospective teachers regarding their experiences in the online TP, as well as their preparedness to teach in the actual classrooms. Overall, there were mixed reactions when it came to the online TP of the student teachers. Although the respondents concur that face-to-face instruction is irreplaceable in the education of the teacher candidates, they also acknowledge that both online and in-person learning modalities are similar in a way that the abilities learned in the online TP are transferable and may be used in face-to-face teaching. The online TP was regarded positively by the majority of the participants in this study, wherein they shared that it helped them acquire the necessary skills and competencies to be able to teach in actual classrooms. Moreover, they also reported that the new learning modality helped them overcome their nervousness in teaching their students during their internship, since they do not have to directly face them. Despite these apparent benefits in their online TP, the student teachers also disclosed the difficulties that they had encountered in their internship. These challenges include difficulty in monitoring students' behavior, reduced student attendance rates and the disruption of classes due to technical issues distinct in online learning. Aside from that, many of them felt like they missed essential experiences in the field, which would have provided them with the necessary training and knowledge to navigate classes in the actual classroom environment. Concerns over being more familiar with online learning over face-to-face instruction were also raised by the student teacher since they would have to face another wave of transition in the learning setup when in-person teaching would be implemented again.



## References

1. J. Castañeda-Trujillo and A. Aguirre-Hernández, “Pre-Service English Teachers’ Voices About the Teaching Practicum,” *HOW*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 156–173, 2018.
2. K. Ariza-Quiñones, L. Hernández-Polo, K. Lesmes-Lesmes and E. Molina-Ramírez, “Pre-service EFL Teachers’ Experiences in Their First Teaching Practicum: A Collaborative Autoethnography,” *Profile: Issues in Teachers’ Professional Development*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 193–207, 2022.
3. A. Burns, P. Danyluk, T. Kapoyannis and A. Kendrick, “Leading the Pandemic Practicum: One Teacher Education Response to the COVID-19 Crisis,” *International Journal of E-Learning & Distance Education*, vol. 35, no. 2, pp. 1–25, 2020.
4. B. Msangya, S. Mkoma and W. Yihuan, “Teaching Practice Experience for Undergraduate Student Teachers: A Case Study of the Department of Education at Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania,” *Journal of Education and Practice*, vol. 7, no. 14, pp. 113–118, 2016.
5. F. Tuli and G. File, “Practicum Experience In Teacher Education,” *Ethiopian Journal of Education and Sciences*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 107–116, 2009.
6. S. Korucu-Kış, “Preparing student teachers for real classrooms through virtual vicarious experiences of critical incidents during remote practicum: A meaningful-experiential learning perspective,” *Education and Information Technologies*, vol. 26, no. 6, p. 6949–6971, 2021.
7. M. Wells, “Preparing Teachers during a Pandemic: Virtual Practicum in an Undergraduate Literacy Course,” *Teacher Educators’ Journal*, vol. 14, pp. 61–82, 2021.
8. Z. Hojeij and S. Baroudi, “Engaging Pre-Service Teachers in Virtual Field Experience During COVID-19,” *International Journal of Distance Education Technologies*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 14–32, 2021.
9. J. Hill, “Pre-Service Teacher Experiences during COVID 19: Exploring the Uncertainties between Clinical Practice and Distance Learning,” *Journal of Practical Studies in Education*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 1–13, 2021.
10. O. Bradbury, T. Stewart, A. Barker and J. Rowe, “Building Pre-Service Teacher Capabilities through Remote and Flexible Placement - A New Narrative,” *Teacher Education in the 21st Century - Emerging Skills for a Changing World*, pp. 1–12, 2021.
11. V. Brinia and P. Psoni, “Online teaching practicum during COVID-19: the case of a teacher education program in Greece,” *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, vol. 14, no. 2, p. 610–624, 2021.
12. G. Koşar, “Distance Teaching Practicum: Its Impact on Pre-Service EFL Teachers’ Preparedness for Teaching,” *IAFOR Journal of Education*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 111–125, 2021.
13. M. Jin, “Pre-service Teachers’ Online Teaching Experiences During COVID-19,” *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 2022.
14. M. P. Babanoğlu, “Online ELT Practicum: Views of Student Teachers, Cooperating Teachers and Faculty Supervisors,” *Education Quarterly Reviews*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 455–471, 2021.
15. L. Doyle, C. McCabe, B. Keogh, A. Brady and M. McCann, “An overview of the qualitative descriptive design within nursing research,” *Journal of Research in Nursing*, vol. 25, no. 5, pp. 443–455, 2019.
16. V. A. Lambert and C. E. Lambert, “Qualitative Descriptive Research: An Acceptable Design,” *Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 255–256, 2021.
17. V. Braun and V. Clarke, “Using thematic analysis in psychology,” *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 77–101, 2006.

18. E. Mikuska, “The Importance of Piloting or Pre-Testing Semi Structured Interviews and Narratives,” in *Research Methods Cases Part 2*, SAGE Publications Lt, 2017, pp. 1–12.
19. L. D. S. Nascimento and F. K. Steinbruch, ““The interviews were transcribed”, but how? Reflections on management research,” *RAUSP Management Journal*, vol. 54, no. 4, p. 413–429, 2019.

**Open Access** This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

