

Challenges Encountered by Student Teachers in their Class Observation Classes

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Abstract:

This research gathered the findings and came up with the conclusion that majority of the respondents took several days up to one week in looking for classes to observe. Most of the respondents were in a group and mostly are six in a group. The respondents stated that majority of them found in difficulties in dealing with the students due to individual differences as the primary reason. As of the critic teacher, majority of them found difficulties with the attitude of their critic teacher though they found of them as very approachable. Due to these issues that arose during their practicum, they recommended some pointers to the future observers. Prioritize to find classes to observe in an earlier period. Confirm the number of observers in a group approved by different critic teachers. Coordinating teachers should give their students tips and advice in looking for classes to observe. Also, the office of the college should bear in mind the vacant time of the fourth year students to be more convenient with the schedule of their classes to observe. If possible, most subjects should be at the main building so they can fulfill the given period required to them and avoid inadequate classes to observe. The critic teacher must introduce to their students the role and responsibility of the student teacher in order for the student teacher to gain respect from their students. Student teachers should show respect at all times to create a better impression

to your critic teacher. On the other hand, critic teachers must also give back the respect to the student teachers by treating them well so they can work comfortably with each other and have an appropriate interpersonal relationship with one another. The student must possess all positive concept or thinking in order for them to overcome problems encountered before, during and after the program.

Key words: Classroom Observation, Challenges, Teacher Education, Problems, Student Teacher

1. INTRODUCTION

As a student teacher, observation should be used as a tool to obtain factual information that can later be analyzed to gain better understanding of instructional procedures and classroom interactions. This understanding will help the students improve his/her teaching skills.

Observation of a master teacher is one of the best ways to acquire and refine a student's skills. A beginning teacher can learn by observing a successful teacher that can put theory into practice. As pedagogical principles are applied to the science of teaching, a student teacher can better understand the theories and concepts presented in preparatory coursework. Typically, a student spends the first few days observing his/her cooperating teacher before he/she gradually assumes responsibilities. Even as the student teacher assumed increasing responsibility for instruction, there were many occasions to study a mentor teacher. These are perfect opportunities and analyzed strategies used by this cooperating teacher [1].

The student teacher must remember that he/she is a guest in the cooperating teacher's classroom. The purpose of the observation is not to criticize the host teacher but to identify effective strategies and techniques employed by the teacher.

The student teacher also uses the observation to identify potential problems and possible solutions before he/she teaches a specific class. The observation can be used to plan future strategies on how to handle the class properly and address the problematic situation. Observation is the process of studying classroom activities to determine teaching strategies and students' responsiveness. To the teacher, it gives an opportunity for teaching training for the learner to gather data. He is interested in developing the abilities involved in observation as well as enlarging the learner's experience. Thus, it is important that learners should be trained to be a good observant [2].

One of the traditional problems hindering a teacher's classroom instruction has been the lack of valid and accurate information that the teacher could have used in order to facilitate professional growth. Consequently, one of the most important purposes of a systematic classroom observation is to improve the teacher's instruction. Feedback from individual classroom profile derived from systematic observation has been found to help teachers understand their own strengths and weaknesses, and have enabled them to significantly improve the instruction that they provide [3].

This study was conducted by the researchers to determine the issues and concerns faced by the observers and providing them solutions and knowledge on how they will be able to deal with issues and concerns. One of the main objectives of Bachelor in Business Teacher Education (BBTE) is teaching, every student should be exposed and must experience teaching professionally in order for them to gain the title.

As the researchers conducted this study, they find it necessary to know what are the issues and challenges encountered by student teachers in their observation and participation classes. The locale of this study was within the university consisting fourth year students in Bachelor in

Business Teacher Education. The researchers believed that this study was beneficial in determining the issues and concerns encountered by Practicum 1 students.

1.1 Background of the Study

Participant observation has its roots in anthropology and it is used as a methodology which could be attributed to Abu Rayhan Biruni, a Persian anthropologist who carried out extensive, personal investigation of the people, customs and religions of the Indian subcontinent. As other modern anthropologist, he engaged in extensive participant observation with a given group of people, learned their language and studied their primary texts; he also presented his findings with objectivity and neutrality using cross-cultural comparisons [4].

Participant observation was used extensively by Frank Hamilton Cushing in his study of the Zuni Indians in the later part of the nineteenth century. This was followed by the studies of non-Western societies by anthropologist such as Bronislaw Malinowski, Edward Evans-Pritchard, and Margaret Mead in the first half of the twentieth century. It emerged as the principal approach to ethnographic research by anthropologist and relied on the cultivation of personal relationships with local informants as a way of learning this culture, involving by both observing and participating in the social life of a group. By living with the cultures they studied, these researchers were able to formulate firsthand accounts of their lives and gain novel insights. This same method of study has also been applied to groups within Western society, and has been successful in the study of subcultures or groups sharing a strong sense of identity, only by taking part the observers gains access to the lives of the people being studied [5].

The development of participant-observation as a research tool has not been a haphazard process, but instead has practiced a great deal of self-criticism and review. It has, as a

result became specialized. Visual anthropology can be viewed as a subset of methods of participant-observation, as the central questions in that field on how to take a camera into the field, while dealing with such issues as the observer effect. Issues with entry into the field have evolved into separate subfield. Clifford Geertz's famous essay on how to approach the multi-faceted arena of human action from an observational point of view, in *Interpretation of Cultures* uses the simple example of a human wink, perceived in a cultural context far from home [6].

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Learning may be defined as a relatively permanent change in behavior that can be explained in terms of practice of experience. The learning process itself cannot be directly observed, but the learner's performance can be observed and recorded. From this we can differ if there was the presence or absence of learning.

Behaviorists have developed stimulus response theories. It stated that if the person responds to stimuli there is learning example in a classroom, if the student teacher gives instruction to class and the students start to ask some questions or tries to respond to it. Therefore, this only shows that they learned and does what the student teacher tells them.

Meaningful reception theory by David P. Ausubel, a psychologist who has tried to explain how people learn from verbal material-both spoken and written has developed a theory known as meaningful reception learning. In this theory, knowledge throughout this, gives the new information as well as the old information special meaning [7].

This meant that the more you speak and write in front of the class the more that they could learn than when making gestures. Most teachers teach by communicating to their students through oral form. This also means that when you let your students speak in front of the class by reporting and

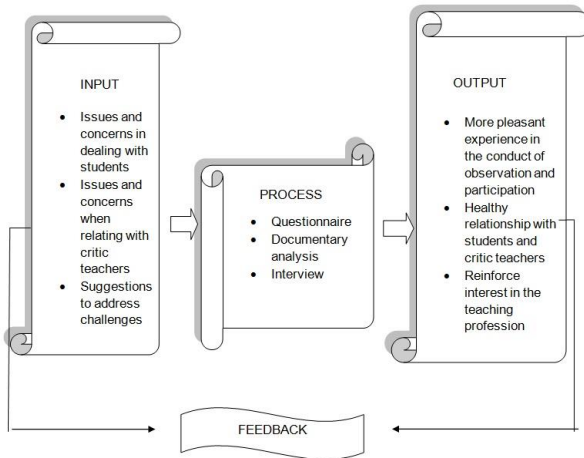
writing their thoughts by giving them essay questions then you will know that they are learning because they begin to express what is in their minds.

Jerome Bruner, another psychologist who supported cognitive theories of learning was more emphatic than Ausubel in terms of the developmental aspect of learning and its implications for teaching, Bruner's theory is known as the Theory of Instruction because it emphasized the teachers' role in the instructional and learning process. Bruner emphasized that one of the important role of a teacher is to provide instructions to their students. According to him, if a teacher assigns a task to his/her students without providing instructions, the student will not have a clear picture of what is expected from them or from their work, whereas if an instruction provided to them, they will be able to know what to do and they will learn the purpose as to why they were doing it or why they were asked to do it [8].

1.3 Conceptual Framework

The goal of the Teacher Observation Program was to facilitate focus, critical, and reflective practice among trainees by enabling them to observe different teaching styles and for them to reflect upon their own teaching. In this case, the focus of this study lies on the issues and concerns encountered by Practicum 1 students during their observation and participation classes. Figure 1 represents the framework of the study. There are variables to consider; the Input, Process, and Output.

Figure 1 Paradigm for Challenges Encountered by Student Teachers in their Class. Observation Classes



The inputs of the study were issues and concerns in dealing with students, when it comes to relating to critic teachers and the suggestions to address challenges.

The process focused on the questionnaire, documentary analysis and interview.

The expected outputs of the study were pleasant experiences in the content of observation and participation, healthy relationship with students and critic teachers and reinforce interest in teaching profession.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the problems encountered by the fourth year BBTE students in Practicum 1.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the issues and concerns encountered by the respondents when looking for classes to observe?
2. What are the issues and concerns encountered by the respondents during the class observation in dealing with students?

3. What are the issues and concerns encountered by the respondents during the class observation when relating with critic teachers?

4. What are the suggestions of the respondents to address these challenges?

1.5 Significance of the study

The result of the study can benefit the people who are directly involved and affected by the challenges encountered by fourth year students in

Practicum 1. Since the result determined the issues and concerns faced by the respondents, this study provided opportunity for school improvements and adjustments to fully attain the objectives of the subject.

Curriculum planners and programs specialists are provided feedback for formulating plans of action to enhance class observations in making it responsive to the growing demands of the community and industry. The result of this study will help them really look into all possibilities of enhancing of the Observation, Participation, and Community Immersion program of the institution. Teachers who gave the earnest desire for self-improvement in the field of teaching found this study beneficial because it enables them to identify the issues and concerns encountered by the student teachers they have to reckon with and the alternative measure that they take to resolve such difficulties by then they were able to help student teachers in more effectively. The results also gave them basis for improving their teaching methods and techniques so the student teachers will be able to gain better knowledge and skills. Students could benefit to this study as they were the objects of the learning process. Findings of this study will be favorable to them because it will bring advancement to appropriate solution that will address the specific achievements to maximum. Appraisal program nearly

always contributes to better teaching. Students are the primary recipients of the action undertaken by the curriculum planners. School administrators and teachers- can be made aware of the need for teachers to grow professionally so they can provide future educators with necessary opportunities for growth. It provided a deeper insight into the issues and concerns encountered by the student teachers thus encouraging them to implement measure that could give them remedy, such as providing adequate instructional materials, equipment, facilities and tools; encouraging faculty development and create a professional atmosphere that will facilitate the efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching learning activities. Hence, this will drive them to become more supportive to the Observation, Participation and Community Immersion program of their respective schools. Parents- are considered as the ones positively affected by the findings of this study, once the teaching skills has been developed and acquired, their children will soon manifest good attitudes in teaching, find joy in dealing and handling students that they will teach. Fortunately, the parents will become proud of their children because of their improved performance.

The findings of the study will serve as a reference to guide researchers to determine what aspects of Practicum 1 needs further study and improvement.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine and present the challenges encountered by the fourth year BBTE students in Practicum 1. Its goal is to understand the issues and concerns encountered by the respondents when looking for classes to observe, in dealing with students, when relating with critic teachers and the suggestions of the respondents to address these challenges.

This assessment was limited to First Semester School Year 2011-2012 and involved as respondents the fourth year BBTE students of PUP Sta. Mesa, Manila. The respondents were asked to answer a questionnaire which will be used as the primary data-gathering instrument; hence, data-gathering will be subjected to the limitation of this tool.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This chapter presents gathered information from literature and studies that have bearing, relevance and direct relation to the work at hand. The gathered information revealed important issues for better understanding and appreciation of this research and to be of value to future researchers.

2.1. Local Studies

One of the supervisory functions of a school head or school master is the “CLASS OBSERVATION” in which most teachers must observe every school year. Teachers are, oftentimes, afraid whenever their supervisor schedules them for observation which sometimes results to nervousness, anxiety, heart attack or even death occurs due to the impact of the activity on some teachers. In principle, class observation is a prescribed requirement for the teaching profession for school heads and superiors for them to help improve the teacher’s performance in the classroom. Nevertheless, this is regarded as contrary to the length of time spent in education and training wherein the teacher is expected to have excelled and pass the eligibility examination to qualify him/her to teach. The observation requirement in the teaching job remains a mechanism to make or unmake a teacher which boosts or stifles his/her morale at the will and caprices of the superior.

The present day innovations with the end purpose of improving a student's academic proficiency impose so much paper work which takes much of the teacher's time. The teacher who had undergone intensive training to become fit to teach but still is being required to undergo "In-service-training" must be given enough freedom to discharge his/her duties and functions in the classroom with efficiency and effectively in order to achieve excellence in the said field as the saying goes, "EXCELLENCE IS NOT BEING THE BEST BUT IT'S DOING YOUR BEST" [9].

Duke said that most student teachers have more to do than the time available to do it. Even the most well-organized student teachers lives with the realization that some activities cannot be undertaken, others cannot be completed, and still others cannot be done as well as he would like. The more you realize that time is a constant source of concern, the less apt you will be to grow frustrated or to be unprepared [10].

2.2 Foreign Studies

The research of Woods and Weasmer indicated that in America, each state requires teacher candidates to successfully complete practicum experiences during the course of teacher education programs. Specifically, the undergraduate major program of study at the participatory university requires over 130 hours of practicum experiences not counting the student teaching internship. Each of the courses in which the participants are enrolled requires 20-25 field placement hours [11].

During practicum, students are expected to plan and implement 2-3 lessons for small and whole group instruction, tutor individual's students with special needs, and collaborate with the cooperating teacher for guidance with instructional and managerial duties. Each student is required to demonstrate instructional planning and management method conducive to optimal learning. The students are evaluated by

the cooperating teachers using an instrument created by a committee of university supervisors [12].

Cheung's research reported the measurement of a teacher's efficiency in Hong Kong and defined it as the extent to which teachers believe they will be successful in influencing how well students learn. "Efficacious teachers are more likely to stay in teaching, put more time into teaching and show greater effort in classroom planning and organization and greater enthusiasm for teaching." Cheung found that female teachers were significantly more efficacious than male teachers that years of experience were weakly but significantly related to levels of efficacy, and that educational level did not have a significant effect on the efficacy level of this group of teachers [13].

Gordon, Leane, and Straiger writing for the Brookings's Institution's Hamilton Project, presented data from another value-added study with similar findings: the students of uncertified teachers perform as well as those of certified teachers, but teacher quality varies widely within each group [14].

Harris and Sass used nine years of data from Florida, linking students' achievement scores to their classroom teachers and studying the effects of teachers' college coursework, precollege entrance exam scores, and in-service training. They found no evidence that teachers with higher college entrance exam scores or who receive undergraduate degrees in the subject they teach are more effective than other teachers [15].

Two recent studies on Cincinnati's teacher-evaluation system provide some initial insights about classroom practices that seem to be linked to better student performance, and evidence that teachers improve as a result of the formal review process [16].

Published in the journal *Education Next*, the first study, by Tom Kane, Eric Taylor, John Tyler, and Amy Wooten, analyzes teacher scores on Cincinnati's evaluation system between the 2000-01 and 2008-09 school years. Under this system, teachers receive four observations and are graded on a 1-to-4 scale on several different standards. The researchers grouped these standards into three main areas: overall classroom practices, classroom management, and using questioning and discussion instructional techniques. They found that a 1-point increase on overall classroom practices led to a seventh of a standard-deviation increase in reading achievement and a tenth of a standard deviation in math achievement [17].

The link between classroom practices and achievement is also a question being studied as part of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Measure of Effective Teaching project. The Gates folks have released some information from MET, but not yet had the analysis of the classroom observations. Arguably, information on classroom practices are the most important of all, since it will help teachers know specifically what they can do to be better at their teaching methodologies [18].

On January 19 and 21, 2010, the Committee on Teaching Development hosted two informal sessions on effective peer classroom and studio observations. These conversations were facilitated by panelists with training and experience with classroom observations, Laura De Sisto and Dominica Chang, as well as members from the Tenure Reappointment, and Promotion committees. Panelists were in full agreement on at least three specific points: Classroom and studio observation visits have many professional and pedagogical benefits. Pre-tenured faculty members and fellows in particular should try to be observant as early and as often as possible, but all panel participants stressed how valuable the process can be for the observer as well. The primary intent of these visits should be observational, rather than evaluative.

Although peer observation is often thought of as a purely evaluative exercise, the primary motivation for these should be continued pedagogical development. Hopefully, this will encourage newer faculty members to invite such visits early and often, and even tenured faculty members will make use of them for their own professional development. Ideally, visits should be approached as a three-step process: Pre-visit communication. Information is shared about the form and content of the class to be observed. Classroom visit. Panelists strongly suggested that the observer take as detailed notes as possible during the visit. A comprehensive observation might include verbatim transcription of classroom comments, a visual representation of the classroom and discussion patterns, as well as meta-commentary from the observer. Post-visit discussion. All panelists agreed upon the absolute importance of a post-visit discussion [19].

Education has two main components – teaching and learning. One of the aims of education worldwide is the integration of individuals into their respective societies so that they can realize their potential, promote unity, and endeavor for cultural, scientific, political, economic, social, and technological advancement. According to Osakwe, a senator in Delta State, teaching seeks to bring about change in behavior, both in formal and informal settings by communicating and imparting knowledge and skills to learners. Therefore, on the one hand, teaching is interactive in nature, involving an instructor and a learner, using communication to foster learning activities in the classroom. On the other hand, learning is a process of acquiring change. In addition, learning involves the pursuit of goals and the discovery and construction of meaning from the various experiences received, moderated by the individual learners sole perception [20].

In his earlier work, Alexander studied primary education in five cultures, schools and classrooms between 1994

and 1998. The study's context was England, France, India, Russia and the USA. He identified six important characteristics of teaching: teaching as transmission (the passing on of information and skill); teaching as disciplinary induction (providing access to a culture's established ways of enquiry and making sense); teaching as democracy in action (in which knowledge is reflexive rather than received, and teachers and students are joint enquirers); teaching as facilitation (respecting individual differences and responding to developmental readiness and need); teaching as acceleration (outpacing 'natural' development rather than following it); and teaching as technique (emphasizing structure, graduation, economy, conciseness and rapidity). In the context of classroom interaction, the transmission, facilitation and acceleration are very important components for effective learning. For instance, learning in the classroom involves arranging and transferring of information from a source (teacher) to destination (learner). In this respect, effective communication on the part of the teacher is an integral part of effective classroom interaction [21].

According to Brown, who studied at the West Chester University, effective classroom interaction for effective learning encompasses individualized attention by developing a personal relationship with each student. This involves taking time out of each day to communicate individually with students on non-academic matters; that it is important to look at students beyond bodies to be educated, but as people who need to be nurtured. From his study, Brown, proposes that teachers use techniques such as, rarely raising their voices, treating students with respect, being friendly (not necessarily being their friend), welcoming students into the classroom and having mutual respect for students [22].

Observation is important at every stage of a teacher's career. In areas of Asia, professional development has for a

very long time included what is known as demonstration lessons; a master teacher, who has perhaps prepared students with some new strategies, invites many local teachers into their classroom to observe, and following the lesson a question and answer period takes place. All of the teachers involved, regardless of whether they are master teachers or beginning teachers, have the opportunity to dialogue together and learn from one another. This is a more recent trend in North America; schools are now trying to create opportunities for teachers to observe other teachers in their subject area, either in their own school or in other schools [23].

It takes a great deal of confidence in one's self and one's students to transfer the responsibility of learning to the student or even to share some of the responsibility. Many teachers lack the self-confidence to try methods which may expose them to potentially difficult situations. These may occur when students ask unanticipated questions or act in socially unacceptable ways [24].

A classroom with too many students per teacher can pose a problem for a learner. All other things being equal in a classroom, the fewer students per teacher, the better. National Education Association said the optimal number of learners per classroom is 15; however, there are few schools that are equipped to meet this number. Many schools feel fortunate if they can keep classes down to 25 to 30 students. The problem for learners in a classroom with a high student to teacher ratio is that the learner does not receive much one-on-one time with the teacher [25].

2.3 Local Literature

Classroom observation and visitation is as one of the most important functions of supervision. The types of visit practiced in the Philippines may be classified as scheduled, unscheduled, and invitational. The scheduled visit is apt to be formal. The

teacher generally knows well in advance of the scheduled visit and prepares accordingly. The teacher thus prepares materials and instructions to enable the supervisor to analyze the problems he has in mind. There is no waste of time when the supervisor arrives on the scheduled visit. Briefly the disadvantages of the scheduled visit are that it tends to disrupt the regular schedule of the school creating an irregular situation and places the supervisor in the position of a ruler whose coming must be announced in advance for the sake of special preparation.

In the unscheduled type of visit, the supervisor may go to the classroom unannounced. This has more disadvantages. If the teacher is unreliable and untrustworthy, this type of visit may seem necessary to some supervisors. Although unscheduled visit may give the supervisor a true picture of the school, it may easily degenerate into random visitation, either to show that the school has not forgotten it or to catch the teacher off his guard. This type will create an atmosphere of confusion and put the teacher in the emotional tension.

The invitational type is one wherein the supervisor is given a definite invitation to see a classroom or an entire school for certain purposes. This type of visit has many advantages. The supervisor is evidently wanted for the purpose of analyzing practices and results. This fact makes the invitational visit decidedly worthwhile. It shows a wholesome however would be inadequate. Sometimes the supervisions himself should take initiative.

In our schools today, the school administrator who is in charged with the responsibilities for instructional leadership is often the principal or the head teacher. Traditionally scheduled surprise visits are made only twice a year. Observation madder during the visit become the basis for brief written statements on the teacher professionally competence. At best, these drop-in visit to classroom produce only a little more preparation and

effort from some teachers than they should make it if they had no classroom contact with administrations [26].

The pre-service training is an important factor that dictates the quality of graduate teachers. Studies show that weak exposure of the student teachers to actual classroom situations translate into poor classroom teaching method. Other identified ineffective teacher practices on guides as in the manuals: heavy emphasis on rote method rather than understanding; learning environment that elicits passive pupil behavior' underdevelopment of critical thinking and problem solving skills poor oral and written communication skills in English; lack of attention to individual learning needs; and the under-use of group methods to foster cooperative learning.

One educator says "the best teacher to teach the students are the students themselves." In general, pre-service education must equip would-be teachers with personal, interpersonal, and technical skills. Attuned to the technological, geographical and sectoral changes in our midst that are comparable to international standards, more skills are now demanded of teachers.

To address these concerns, Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 30's 2004 entitled "Revised Policies and Standards for Undergraduate Teacher Education Curriculum" provides a set field study course that are intended to provide students with practical learning experiences in which they can observe, verify, reflect on, and actually experience different components of the teaching-learning processes in actual school setting. The experiences begin with field observation and gradually intensify until student teachers undertake practice teaching.

The pre-service learning provides concrete opportunities for the student teacher to learn new skills, to think critically and to test new roles in an environment, which encourages risk taking and reward competence. One of the important task of

deans and teachers of colleges of education must not fail to attend to as an element in achieving better teaching and learning is to regularly monitor and review the teacher education program [27].

The best rule for the student teacher to follow in his relations with students is to hold the same relationship with students that the supervising teacher maintains. This means that he should be a friend and a helper, but that he should be careful about becoming too familiar with his students. Since the student teacher is usually quite young- in fact, often very little older than the youth with whom he works- it is particularly easy for him to become too familiar with them and thus decrease the probability of his having a successful student-teaching experience. Young people prefer their teachers to act as adults. They desire and appreciate better the friendship and assistance of someone whom they respect and admire [28].

The potential for developing good future classroom teachers is enhanced by the sincere desire of cooperating teachers and student teachers to work together to achieve teaching proficiency in student teachers, while maintaining effective classroom instruction for students [29].

Student teacher takes advantage of the maximum benefits from their student teaching experience. Moreover, to ensure that the student teachers will derive maximum benefits from their student teaching experience, only the most capable teachers, preferably master teachers should be chosen as mentors or cooperating teachers [30].

There is a need to have an actual first-hand experience in the field of teaching on the part of a student teacher. However, in doing this, an expert in the person of the cooperating teacher should guide a student teacher to impart this novice teacher the experience he/she thinks is effective in a diverse list of strategies and methods of teaching. In student

practicum, student teachers often adopt the classroom management style and attitudes of their cooperating teachers.

Equally important is the interpersonal relationship between the cooperating teachers and their student teacher. The student teacher will need to have a genuine feeling of being wanted and accepted. Assisting in assuming real professional responsibilities should be given to the student by their senior partners. Interest and enthusiasm of the teacher trainers for student teachers is important in creating the whole some climate within which the future teacher may grow. The basic relationships calls for the supervising instructors and cooperating teachers to serve as leaders who would be suggesting, guiding, demonstrating, counseling, and evaluating. In the student teaching experiences, the cooperating teacher is generally considered as the key figure in working with the college trainee [31].

2.4 Foreign Literature

Leu, author of *Teacher Effectiveness*, reviewed literature on quality education, finding that there is little agreement on the meaning of term. However, “Researchers has shown that one important feature of quality is that it can be locally defined, at the school and community level, not just of the district and national level.” Despite cast cultural differences in the world regarding what is designed from schooling and school outcomes, “Teachers and classroom process are now front and center, and they generally agreed to be the key to education quality.” Based on her review of the literature, Lue provided list of qualities to be found in good teachers. Qualities of good teachers 1) sufficient knowledge of subject matter to teach with confidence 2) knowledge and skills in a range of appropriate and varied teaching methodologies 3) knowledge of the language of instruction 4) knowledge of sensitivity to, and interest in young learners 5) ability to reflect in teaching

practices and children's response 6) ability to modify teaching/learning approaches as a result of reflection 7) ability to create and sustain an affective learning environment 8) understanding of the curriculum and its purposes, particularly when reform programs and new paradigms of teaching and learning are introduced 9) general professionalism good morale and dedication to the goals of teaching 10) ability to communicate effectively 11) ability to communicate enthusiasm for learning to students 12) interest in students as individuals, sense of caring and responsibility for helping them learn and become good people, and sense of comparison 13) good character, sense of ethics, and personal discipline 14) ability to work with others and to build good relationships within the school and community [32].

The post-lesson conference is thought to be both essential to the training and to the development of professional knowledge for student teachers. While this is generally accepted, some studies suggest that major impediments restrict the professional growth of student teachers during post-lesson conferences.

In a study by Bertone, et al., miscommunication between the cooperating teacher and student teacher was observed during post-lesson conferences. While most of the discussion conducted during the post lesson conference was characterized by agreement, interviews conducted after the post-lesson conference revealed that issues of disagreement remained. One of the major difficulties faced by the student teacher in

Bertone's study was receiving and applying constructive criticism. It was observed that when the cooperating teacher defined difficulties or suggested solutions, the student teacher took it as a question of her identity as a teacher. One solution to this problem is for cooperating teachers to present observations of classroom difficulties to student teachers in a way that is reasonable. As Bertone and others described, the

student teacher accepted prescribed alternative actions when she was convinced that the cooperating teacher's suggestion was supported by good reasons [33].

According to Rorisson, D. (2010), by transcending the stereotypes of "failing" student teachers who do not achieve traditional benchmarks, this new lens highlights the complexity, diversity and inequality of experiences through listening to the voices of the student teachers and their mentors. By valuing context and focusing on progress and development rather than absolute attainment, teacher educators are challenged to reflect on their own role as mentors and educators through seven guiding principles of practicum learning. These guiding principles of practicum learning are the result of significant observation in the practicum classroom followed by critical analysis of data provided as narrative. A more humane, trusting and respectful attitude towards assessment is suggested as is a more critical view of learning to teach [34].

According to Hultman, Glenn, Schoultz, J. & Stolpe, K. 2011, the study illuminates the relationship between the theoretical and practical aspects of Teacher Education in Sweden and how the pre-service teacher makes meaning of the process. Questions are asked about how visible the process actually is, and whether the learning is really understood by outsiders. The role of the relationship between the pre-service teacher and the pupil is highlighted [35].

According to Zeichner, K. (2012), even the move into schools to increase the "practice based" nature of initial teacher education is not always successful and although there are models now introduced that successfully integrate and focus the process of learning teaching practice, care should be taken not to "package and reify teaching products in a ways that undermine the intellectual and professional aspects of teaching". Zeichner is concerned that the 'teacher as technician'

move ignores the social and relational aspects of teaching, and stresses the importance of situational and cultural knowledge [36].

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods used and employed in the data collection process, the administration of the research instrument, the respondents and the statistical treatment of data utilized.

3.1 Research Method Used

Descriptive method of research is where the researchers present it in a descriptive manner. The descriptive research designs enable researchers to describe or present the picture of a phenomenon or phenomena under investigation. It is the opposite of another form of research methodology called “Analytical”.

3.2 Research Locale

This study was conducted at the College of Education of Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Manila Campus, during the first semester school year 2011-2012.

3.3 Population Frame and Sample Scheme

Sloven’s formula was used in order to determine the total number of respondents which is given as follows:

$$n \geq \frac{N}{1+Ne^2}$$

wherein:

n = the size of the sample

N=the size of the population

e = the margin of error

$$n \geq \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

$$= \frac{249}{1 + 249 (0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{249}{1 + 249 (0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{249}{1 + 0.62}$$

$$= 153.7 \text{ or } 154$$

3.4 Sampling Technique

Descriptive method of research is where the researchers present it in a descriptive manner. The descriptive research designs enable researchers to describe or present the picture of a phenomenon or phenomena under investigation. It is the opposite of another form of research methodology called “Analytical”.

3.5 Description of the Respondents

The respondents of the study, Challenges Encountered by Fourth Year Practicum 1 Students, were selected fourth year students taking up Bachelor in Business Teacher Education of the College of Education, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Manila Campus with the subject Practicum 1 during the first semester school year 2011-2012. There are 154 or 62% of students out of 249 fourth year student population that were identified as respondents of the study.

3.6 Instrumentation

The questionnaire was used to contribute to the accomplishment of the main objective of the study. Before coming up with the final questionnaire, the researchers consulted their adviser first.

The researchers designed the questionnaire to meet the purpose of this study. It contained four essential parts namely, looking for observation classes, dealing with students, relating with critic teacher, and suggestions to address those challenges. The instructions were cleared to the respondents as to how and what to do with the questionnaire. Information sought made up the body of the questionnaire. Answers obtained from the survey questionnaire provide insights to the major problems of this research study such as the issues and concerns encountered by the student teachers from their observation and participation classes, the issues and concerns encountered by the student teachers while dealing with their students, the issues and concerns encountered by the student teachers which relates to their critic teacher, and the suggestions on how to address these challenges.

3.7 Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers target respondents were the selected fourth year BBTE students taking up Practicum 1.

YEAR AND SECTION	NO. OF STUDENTS	NO. RESPONDENTS
4-1D	37	23
4-2D	33	20
4-3D	43	27
4-1N	33	20
4-2N	31	19
4-3N	35	21
4-4N	37	23
TOTAL	250	153

The researchers consulted the secretaries in each section that they will be conducting a survey. The researchers gave a specific number of questionnaires to each secretary and they agreed to distribute it to their classmates in order for the researchers to gather data. The researchers took two days to complete the needed number of respondents that are going to answer the questionnaire.

The responses of the respondents were individually collected, tabulated, analyzed, evaluated and encoded and were made to a presentation, interpretation and analyzing of the data gathered.

3.8 Statistical Treatment

The descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used to treat the data in the study for a clearer explanation of the gathered data. The data collected from the selected respondents was organized, summarized, analyzed, interpreted, and computed. The frequencies of the responses to the items of the questionnaires were interpreted through textual presentation. The study adapted the formula of percentage to provide relative distribution of the respondents. These helped the respondents answer the questions in finding observation classes, in dealing with students, and relating with critic teacher.

The percentage value is computed using the formula:

$$P = \frac{f(100\%)}{N}$$

wherein:

P = percentage value

f = frequency of respondents

N = total no. of respondents

Sloven's formula was used in order to determine the total number of respondents which is given as follows:

4. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents all the data gathered individually by the researchers through the use of the survey questionnaire. The presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered shall

reveal the challenges encountered by the fourth year Practicum 1 students in the first semester school year 2011-2012 of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

These challenges include the issues and concerns of the respondents in looking for classes to observe, in dealing with their students and when relating with their critic teacher. The researchers asked and gathered suggestions from the respondents on how to address those challenges. The data gathered, analyzed and interpreted shall provide the researchers with implications and insights that shall have significant bearing in formulation of the outcome and recommendations for this study.

The following discussion shall attempt to answer the statements of the problem in Chapter 1 based on the gathered data revolving around the challenges encountered by the selected BBTE fourth year Practicum 1 students of the College of Education of the first semester school year 2011-2012 at Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

Table 1. The Frequency and Percentage of the respondents in terms of Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
MALE	76	49.4
FEMALE	78	50.6
Total	154	100.0

The table illustrates that there are more female respondents than male. Out of 154 respondents, 78 are from group of female.

Table 2. The Frequency and Percentage of the respondents in terms of Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
19-20	67	43.5
21-22	70	45.5
22 AND ABOVE	17	11.0
Total	154	100.0

The table shows most of the respondents ages 21-22 with 70 respondents followed by ages 19-20 with 67 respondents and lastly, 17 respondents ages 22 and above.

Table 3. The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in terms of days spend in looking for classes to observe.

Number of Days	Frequency	Percentage
Two days	6	3.89%
Three days	2	1.29%
Five days	16	10.39%
One week	70	45.45%
Two weeks	28	18.18%
Others(more than two weeks)	30	19.48%
Did not answer	2	1.29%
Total	154	100%

The table shows that the majority of the respondents took one week in looking for classes to observe with 70 or 45.45%, while 30 or 19.48% of the respondents were able to find their observation classes in more than two weeks, followed by two weeks with the total of 28 or 18.18% of the respondents. Some of the respondents spent five days with a frequency of 16 or 10.39%, a few number of the respondents spent two days with 6 or 3.89%, a small number of the respondents spent three days with 2 of 1.29%, and there were 2 or 1.29% respondents that did not respond through the use of the survey questionnaire with a total number of 153 respondents.

Table 4. The Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents in terms of if they observed as a group

Did you observe in class or group	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	148	96.10%
No	6	3.90%
Total	154	100.00%

The table presents that the majority of the respondents with 148 or 96.10% observed classes as a group and 6 or 3.90% did not observe classes as a group.

Table 5. The Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents in terms of their number in a group

If yes how many are you in a group	Frequency	Percentage
Two	7	4.54%
Three	10	6.49%
Four	17	11.03%
Five	36	23.37%
Six	54	35.06%
Others	24	15.58%
Did not respond	6	3.89%
Total	154	100%

The table shows that most of them were six in a group with 54 or 35.06%, followed by five members in a group with a frequency of 36 with a percentile of 23.37, and more than six members were 24 or 15.58%. Some of the respondents were four in a group with 17 or 11.03%, while few of the respondents were three in a group with 10 or 6.49% of the total respondents , a small number of the respondents were two in a group with 7 or 4.54%, and 6 or 3.89% of the respondents did not respond.

Table 6. The Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents in terms of having difficulties encountered in dealing with your students.

Have you encountered difficulties in dealing with your students?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	132	85.71%
No	22	14.29%
Total	154	100.00%

The table presents that based on the data gathered by the researchers, most of the respondents encountered difficulties in dealing with students, a total of 132 or 85.71% and 22 or 14.29% answered that they did not encountered difficulties in dealing with their students.

Table 7. The Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents in terms of difficulties encountered.

If yes, how do you find it difficult?	Frequency	Percentage
Number of students you observe	35	19.55%
Individual differences	117	65.36%
Lack of self-confidence	16	8.94%
others (pls. specify)	11	6.15%
Total	179	100.00%

This table shows that the majority of the respondents found that dealing with students, 117 or 65.36%, was difficult because of individual differences. Some of the respondents found difficulties with the number of students in the classroom with a total of 35 or 19.55%, while a few of the respondents found difficulties because of their lack of self-confidence, 16 or 8.94%, and other difficulties such as noisy students, lack of classroom management of critic teachers, and lack of respect of students to their student teachers with the total of 11 or 6.15% of the total respondents.

It is argued that a sound relationship between the teachers and the pupils needs to be based on two qualities: the pupil's acceptance of the teacher's authority, and the establishment of the mutual respect and rapport. It looks at the way in which establishing a positive classroom climate forms an important aspect of effective teaching in promoting an expectation towards learning and in minimizing pupil misbehavior.

Table 8. The Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents in terms of characteristics of critic teacher.

Characteristics to critic teacher.	Frequency	Percentage
Approachable	131	18.30%
Kind	98	13.69%
Supportive	86	12.01%
Responsible	114	15.92%
Fair	68	9.50%

Patient or Hardworking	75	10.47%
Resourceful	62	8.66%
Helpful	77	10.75%
Irresponsible	5	0.70%

The table shows that most of the respondents stated that their critic teacher was approachable with 131 or 18.30% from the 716 answers of the respondents. Followed by responsible with 114 or 15.92%, kind with 98 or 13.69%, supportive with 86 or 12.01%, helpful with 77 or 10.75% while patient and hardworking with the same number of 75 or 9.48%, fair with 68 or 8.60%, resourceful with 62 or 8.66% and a small number stated other characteristics such as irresponsible or contrary to positive traits with 5 or 0.70%.

Table 9. The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in terms of having difficulties in relating with critic teacher.

Difficulties in relating with critic Teacher	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	97	62.99%
No	57	37.01%

The table shows that the majority of the respondents with 97 or 62.99 % encounter difficulties in relating to critic teacher and 57 or 37.01% and 57 or 37.01 do not encounter difficulties in relating with critic teacher.

Table 10. The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in terms of difficulty in relating with their critic teacher.

	Frequency	Percentage
Personality	43	44.32.9%
Age	7	7.21%
Attitude	44	45.36%
Methodologies and Classroom Management	3	3.09%

The table presents that majority of the answers of the respondents stated that they are having difficulties with the attitude of their critic teacher numbering to 44 or 45.36%. Followed by the personality of the critic teacher with 43 or 44.32%. Some of them stated that they were having difficulties with the age of their critic teacher, 7 or 7.21% and a small number stated other difficulties such as teaching methodologies and classroom management with 3 or 3.09%.

5. CONCLUSION

In looking for classes to observe, majority of the respondents took one week while some of them answered more than two weeks, followed by two weeks, five days, and two days, a small number of them spent three days and others did not respond. Most of the respondents encountered difficulties in dealing with their students. Majority of them revealed that it is because of the individual differences of their students, some stated that it is because of the number of students in each classrooms, and few of them found difficulty because of their lack of self-confidence and other found difficulties because of noisy students, lack of classroom management of their critic teacher and because of lack of respect of their students. For the number of respondents who observed classes, majority of them revealed that they are in group, specifically, most of them were six in a group, followed by five members in a group, more than six per group, four members and three members per group, and small number of them was two in group and others did not respond.

The respondents encountered difficulties in dealing with the attitude of their critic teacher. Most of them stated that their critic teacher was approachable, followed by the attitude of responsible and kind. Some declared that their critic teacher was supportive, helpful, patient and hardworking. Some

answered that their critic teacher was fair and resourceful. A small number of respondents answered that their critic teacher was irresponsible and contrary to positive traits. Being patient was the most essential thing to consider in facing those issues and concerns as suggested by the respondents and some suggested to have self-confidence or believing yourself. Few suggested consideration towards the students, followed by the suggestions to always project professionalism, do the best you can in everything, be sociable with students and people around you. They also suggested that the office of the college should be the one giving classes to observe for the student teacher and the teacher must be responsible in helping the student teacher while conducting the Practicum 1 and that they must stay calm to enjoy the moment.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the problem encountered by most of the respondents is the time consumed in looking for classes to observe, it is greatly recommended to prioritize in finding classes to observe in an early period. Also, the result of the survey shows that the student teachers prefer to observe classes with their peer or in group. We suggest that the program should indicate the number of observers in a group approved by different critic teachers. Coordinating teachers should give their students tips and advice in looking for classes to observe. The office of the college should bear in mind the vacant time of fourth year students to be more convenient with the schedule of their classes to observe. If possible, most subjects should be at the main building so they can fulfill the given period required to them and avoid inadequate classes to observe.

With regards to the issues and concerns encountered by the respondents in dealing with their students. Majority of the respondents encountered problems such as the individual

differences of the students handled. We recommend that the teacher should provide appropriate information about the students for the student teacher to understand these differences and able to assist the needs of the students. The critic teacher must introduce to their students the role and responsibility of the student teacher in order for the student teacher to gain respect from their students. The student teacher should learn and adapt the professional and personal attributes of the teacher and must be able to demonstrate the ability to handle planning, organization and other necessary skills that a teacher should do to be able to motivate his or her students.

The survey shows that the critic teachers possess characteristics such as approachable, responsible, kind. However, the same survey shows that some student teacher encountered problems with the critic teachers such as difficulty with the attitude, personality and the methodology. All these problems are present in all individual. We cannot choose the behavior and attitude of people we work with. But respecting one's differences can help in building a harmonious workplace.

As challenges part of our daily life, the respondents give suggestions to the future observers on how to address these challenges. Based on the survey done, majority quoted that being patient when dealing with problems is essential that one should consider, followed by self-confidence and believe in oneself. It is recommended that the student teachers must possess positive concept or thinking in order to overcome problems encountered before, during and after the practice teaching. The department head must also be concern about the problems raised by the student teachers. They must help their students in shaping themselves how to be a good teacher in the future.

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