



PHILIPPINE NORMAL UNIVERSITY

*The National Center for Teacher Education*

# POLICY BRIEF SERIES

VOLUME 7 | ISSUE 2 | 2023

## **A Review of the Policies and Practices of Select Teacher Education Institutions on Practice Teaching in the Time of the Pandemic and Flexible Learning Delivery System**

**Allen A Espinosa, Ma Arsenia C Gomez, Adonis P David, Ma Victoria C Hermosisima, Ryan V Lansangan, Joanna Marie A de Borja, Joefrey R Chan, and Ernie G Santoyo**



*Photo credit: Joanna Marie A de Borja*

Utilizing a multiple case study, this inquiry reviewed the practices and policies of six TEIs and its alignment to their practices on the ground. Findings uncovered that most of the TEIs claim their policies are based on pre-COVID-19 guidelines on practice teaching but with some modifications corresponding to the situation and requirements of key agencies during the pandemic (e.g., IATF, LGU, CHED, DepEd). The TEIs contextualized the offering, monitoring, and assessment of practice teaching delivery based on their own mandate and charter as TEIs but at the same time mindful of striking the balance among Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) and Local Government Unit (LGU) issuances, Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Department of Education (DepEd) guidelines and regulations, and their respective academic freedom. Most of the policies and practices implemented by the TEIs were seen as responsive and aligned to the needs and situation of stakeholders. To further support the alignment of policy and practice, the study recommended that policies on practice teaching should be put into writing; crafted through a bottom-up approach involving all stakeholders; flexible and reasonably considerate, and address not only current crises but responsive to similar future disruptions.

### Recommended Citation:

Espinosa, AA, Gomez, MAC, David, AP, Hermosisima, MVC, Lansangan, RV, de Borja, JMA, Chan, JR, & Santoyo, EG. (2023). A Review of the Policies and Practices of Select Teacher Education Institutions on Practice Teaching in the Time of the Pandemic and Flexible Learning Delivery System. *Policy Brief Series 7(2)*, pp. 1-6. Philippine Normal University Educational Policy Research and Development Center.



Teaching and learning has changed as a result of social restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Educational institutions shifted their focus on delivering education remotely via Flexible Learning Delivery (FLD) system. In order to maintain the teacher preparation process, Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) were forced to reassess their policies and practices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to meet the demands of flexible learning, practice teaching, a key component of teacher training programs that ties theory and practice together, has undergone a significant transformation. Despite the fact that this transformation led to a calibration of policies and practices based on what is deemed to be appropriate, efficient, and responsive to the pandemic, there are still some difficulties and gaps in ensuring its alignment in the efficient preparation of pre-service teachers in a flexible learning delivery (FLD) system.

Through a multiple case study design, this study reviewed the alignment of the policies to the practices on the ground and identified common, unique, and exemplary practices on practice teaching in the time of the pandemic in the participating institutions. The succeeding sections summarize the key findings of the study encompassing the six major core areas or dimensions emerging from the analysis: (1) institutional policies and guidelines; (2) partnership with cooperating schools; (3) institutional support to practice teachers; (4) capacity building of key personnel; (5) practice teachers' competence; and (6) supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of practice teachers.

### **Teacher Education Institution 1**

The practices and policies employed by TEI 1 capitalized mainly in preparing the pre-service teachers while accommodating their context during the public health crisis as they transition to an FLD system. TEI 1 resorted to the localization of practice teaching by deploying the practice teachers near their residences and conducting capacity building for them and their supervising teachers in view of the existing restrictions. Though the localization of practice teaching and capacity building provided a new opportunity to the institution, the transition to the FLD modality posed challenges on the instructional preparation of the practice teachers responding to flexible platforms; limitations on what can be observed by the cooperating teachers; and practice teachers' dilemma as to the appropriate strategies and classroom routines to be used in FLD set-up.

### **Teacher Education Institution 2**

Pandemic situations posed a challenge in the conduct of practice teaching in TEI 2. Despite the situation, deployment of practice teachers to cooperating schools was implemented through adherence to a relevant set of CHED memorandum. In fact, the institution was not able to identify concrete institutional guidelines and policies for the deployment of their practice teachers. However, following CHED's guidelines and cooperating school's protocols allowed the TEI implement practice teaching and flexible strategies to meet the demands of the pandemic situation. Accordingly, pre-pandemic practices were still adopted as a basis of practice teachers' requirements in accomplishing the course including orientations pertaining to the demands of safety protocols. In the early months of deployment of practice teachers, some groups were deployed in the college department of TEI 2 due to the lack of pandemic-relevant guidelines on dealing with practice teaching outside the campus. In addition, the lack of gadgets and skills in using digital platforms, the complex procedure on orienting and securing parents' permit, health certificate from the institution, and the processing of vaccination of practice teachers had led the supervising teachers to deploy them in the college department instead of basic education institutions. In the absence of concrete institutional guidelines and policies for the deployment of practice teachers, what has become the accepted practices were based on each cooperating school's requirements from the practice teachers following safety guidelines set by both the CHED and the cooperating schools.

### **Teacher Education Institution 3**

TEI 3 ensures that the policies for practice teaching were subjected to a series of meetings, consultations, and reviews of the existing guidelines and policies of CHED and DepEd, which were observed by relevant stakeholders. This was done in order to guarantee that the deployment protocols of practice teachers are properly implemented. As a result, the policies are adherent to the pandemic-related guidelines set by the key government agencies and partner schools; allows expansion of partnership to both public and private schools; provision for the use of university facilities and educational resources to practice teachers; conduct of webinar for practice teachers and online training for supervising teachers; regular communication feedback system, and evaluation through digital platforms. At its core, the policies and practices have been found to be adaptable and highly responsive to the needs of the situation taking into context the difficulties experienced during the pandemic practice teaching.



#### Teacher Education Institution 4

TEI 4 primarily considered the quality and relevance of practice teaching experiences by ensuring that learning and practice are within the various contexts of the stakeholders. The existing committee for practice teaching was expanded during the pandemic to involve various key stakeholders in revisiting and enriching policies and guidelines on practice teaching and making them responsive to the contexts and needs of practice teachers and their learners. Considering the context and conditions of practice teachers, a number of policies and practices were revisited. These included the practice teaching requirements such as the total number of hours of teaching and classes handled, data privacy and internet etiquette, mental health and psychosocial support, and student teacher awards. Overall, the policies and guidelines, including the practices of all stakeholders involved in the conduct of practice teaching were noted to be appropriate and responsive to the contexts and needs of practice teachers during the pandemic.

#### Teacher Education Institution 5

In keeping with the pursuit of continuous education and better outcomes for practice teaching despite the COVID-19 pandemic, TEI 5 sets its responsive policies and practices in the context of modifying pre-existing policies and practices. Amplified with strong adherence to the application of information and communications technology (ICT) approaches in flexible learning, it utilizes full online modality to do practice teaching. The pandemic set the TEI 5's practice teaching delivery system to become more adaptive and systematic in its planning and implementation. The common issues and concerns caused by the pandemic were taken into account for the safety of the academic community based on the health protocols set by the regulators. As a result of the modification, the practice teachers gained more flexible teaching-learning experiences, and became more adaptive and resilient during practice teaching.

#### Teacher Education Institution 6

Policies implemented during the height of the pandemic were generally responsive and considerate of stakeholder's pressing situations especially the practice teachers. Policies on the counting of Practice Teaching hours and the wearing of prescribed practice teaching uniforms were modified and relaxed respectively to address the needs on the ground. Although restricted by a series of lockdowns and discouraged to do in-person transactions in the campus,

the university allowed limited visit of practice teachers and cooperating teachers after weighing the effects of total virtual practice teaching. The institution recognized that failure to provide the necessary experience and skills particularly to prospective Montessori teachers would defeat the purpose of practice teaching especially when classes become in-person again. However, although the institution tried its best to provide substantial practice teaching experiences even in the midst of a pandemic, the virtual set-up missed out on developing other important skill sets of a teacher. Moreover, the virtual set-up also lessened the usual learning opportunities provided by the in-person practice teaching. Aside from the reduced learning opportunities inside the actual classroom, the practice teachers did not get any experience teaching in the public schools, something that could have given the practice teachers a more challenging but educational environment. Although the pandemic posed several challenges, the virtual practice teaching provided the institution a good opportunity to introduce and use the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) as the basis of the Classroom Observation Tool.

#### Common, unique, and exemplary practices across the TEIs under study

##### Common Practices

Majority of the TEIs involved in the study implemented the pre-COVID-19 existing policies with a few modifications to adhere to the IATF, LGU, CHED and DepEd policies. Stakeholders were oriented about the processes involved in practice teaching and the consideration of the pandemic-related guidelines most especially in terms of the public health protocols.

Generally, institutional support to practice teachers is evident. Case in point is the provision of material, technical, and psychosocial aspects of support. These supports were drawn from consultations with the practice teachers.

Material and technical support include resources and facilities relevant to the conduct of flexible instructional deliveries while psychosocial includes some coping strategies in dealing with the pandemic.

Overall, capacity building to both practice teachers and supervising teachers became evident through webinars and meetings that are consultative in nature. These capacity building activities are initiatives under the flexible learning delivery systems such as instructional preparation needed in various modalities.

The challenges of the pandemic evidently led to the fast-tracked upskilling of ICT competence among practice teachers. However, a number of skills have been sidelined like classroom management and communication skills. With greater reliance on many practice teaching-related activities using technology, they improved their skills in using videoconferencing platforms, integration of technology and instruction, and the utilization of the various features of the learning management system. Moreover, ICT-based tools were used for assessment, supervision, and monitoring. Items, criteria, type of tools were modified/revised based on the learning modalities used.

### Unique Practices

TEI 3 was able to formulate concrete and codified practice teaching guidelines during the pandemic. These guidelines were crafted in the context of the pandemic including the screening of the practice teachers, support system, monitoring, and evaluation.

TEI 5 strategically selected partner schools that use blended learning. Their practice teachers therefore were exposed to instructional preparation and teaching in a blended learning approach that have not been usual in pre-pandemic practice teaching scenarios.

TEI 2 opted for practice teachers to do practice teaching at the tertiary level. With the absence of deployment guidelines in the initial implementation of practice teaching, they opted to expose the practice teachers in the tertiary level as an alternative to the usual basic education partnership.

TEI 6 used the pandemic as an opportunity to align their classroom observation tool to the PPST. Although the pandemic posed several challenges, the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) was used by TEI 6 in crafting their classroom observation tool to align the same in the context of FLD.

### Exemplary Practices

Despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic, TEIs have been proven to be more resilient, flexible, and considerate of the situations experienced by the academic community. This was manifested by their rapid and differentiated response during the emergency situations brought by the pandemic.

TEIs which are more strategic in establishing collaboration with the existing and emerging partners will thrive in crisis and serve as models. With the perceived uncertainty in the early part of the pandemic, it provided opportunities for the

TEIs to explore fresh horizons through the expansion of its partnership while ensuring the needs of the stakeholders.

TEIs which are quick to respond to the immediate needs of their constituents are those regularly conducting needs assessment, formal or informal, which were used as a basis to provide the necessary support (e.g., material, technical, and psychosocial support).

TEIs were able to sustain the process of supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of practice teachers while transitioning to an online platform. Though the utilization of the online platform was available even before the pandemic, it was maximized and even perceived to be an efficient and practical means in the delivery of the practice teaching-related activities.

### Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn from the findings of the study:

Most of the TEIs were not able to develop policies on practice teaching specific to the pandemic. Current policies are based on pre-COVID-19 guidelines on practice teaching with some modifications corresponding to the requirements of key agencies during the pandemic (IATF, LGU, CHED, DepEd).

The TEIs modified the policies to be aligned with the realities of the field given the scope and magnitude of the learning disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most of the TEIs were able to contextualize the offering, monitoring, and assessment of practice teaching delivery based on their own mandate and charter as TEIs at the same time mindful of striking the balance among IATF and LGU issuances, CHED and DepEd guidelines and regulations, and their respective academic freedom.

### Recommendations for policy and practice

The following recommendations for policy and practice are offered based on the findings of the study:

Policies on practice teaching during health crisis or emergency should be put into writing.

- Reference for similar future disruptions. TEIs must be responsive not only to the COVID-19 pandemic but also to other similar disruptions in learning delivery that might happen in the future and preparation for such includes the plan for PTs.

- For revisiting and updating. Existing policies and manuals directing the conduct of practice teaching from the Philippine TEIs based on the CHED and DepEd issuances have to be formally revisited and updated to include COVID-19 scenarios and other public health issues that might affect the teaching and learning delivery especially in the basic education level.
- For consultation with and dissemination to the stakeholders. Since the conduct of practice teaching is never a work of a single institution, there is a great need for the stakeholder involvement in the entire process to prosper from planning, consultation, formulation, and most especially dissemination of agreed intervention and enrichment programs especially the best practices proven by scientific studies.

Policies should be crafted through a bottom-up approach involving all stakeholders.

- TEIs should closely coordinate with cooperating schools both public and private. The use of bottom-up approach in the conduct of practice teaching allows collaboration between/among stakeholders; in the case of public schools, the TEIs should forge a strong partnership with the DepEd. As the biggest employer of teachers and education provider, DepEd offers a very good laboratory school for practice teachers.
- TEIs should encourage feedback from cooperating schools including CTs and officials. Since cooperating schools and their CTs are the ones in the field and running the ground, it is best that suggestions and inputs be sourced directly from them. This feedback could be utilized for a more relevant, responsive, and contextualized practice teaching program.

Policies should be flexible and reasonably considerate.

- TEIs should be proactive, flexible, and considerate in its policy-making and decision making. To a point, it has to be written and documented but not contradicting governing policies. The opportunity to be flexible and considerate will bring about a sense of creativity and a certain level of commitment from PTs themselves.

Policies should not only address current crises but should be responsive to similar future disruptions.

- TEIs should retain or improve their ICT infrastructure to accommodate blended learning. One of the problems faced by both the cooperating schools and the TEIs is the poor ICT infrastructure since most schools, prior to the pandemic, did not invest in its ICT for education. This is a direction that must be taken by all Philippine HEIs and not only TEIs if the look ahead is towards an education that will withstand future disruptions no matter how vague and uncertain the impact of such on our institutions might be for now.
- TEIs should provide sustainable capacity building programs on digital literacy for both practice teachers and supervising teachers. Digital literacy is the currency we pay for learning in this post-pandemic time. That is why it is important for classroom managers, virtual or otherwise, to be fully capacitated in the ever-changing dynamics of ICT, multimedia, and even performance media in education. Mastery of the said fields will better serve the new generation of learners who are now digital natives.

### *About the Authors*

**Allen A Espinosa** is an associate professor of science education and director of the Educational Policy Research and Development Center of the Philippine Normal University. His current research interests span a broad range of topics including policy research in education, teacher education, information disorder, and social justice in education.

**Ma Arsenia C Gomez** is an associate professor of social science education at the Faculty of Behavioral and Social Sciences and a Faculty Researcher at the Educational Policy Research and Development Center of the Philippine Normal University. Her current research interests include Muslim education and contemporary issues in education.

**Adonis P David** is Professor of Counseling and Psychology at the College of Graduate Studies and Teacher Education Research in the Philippine Normal University where he currently serves as the Vice President for Research, Planning and Quality Assurance. His current research interests center on the psychological well-being of teachers and counselors, gender and education, and career development.

**Ma Victoria C Hermosisima** is a professor of educational measurement and evaluation at the Educational Policy Research and Development Center of the Philippine Normal University. Her current research interests are in the field of educational psychology, teacher education, and educational policy research.

**Ryan V Lansangan** is a faculty at the University of Santo Tomas where he currently serves as the Science Learning Area Coordinator of the Junior High School Department. His current research interests include assessment and science education.

**Joanna Marie A de Borja** is a senior lecturer of science education at the Department of Teacher Education of the City College of Calamba. Her current research interests include science education and action research.

**Joefrey R Chan** is a Senior High School Master Teacher II at Manuel G. Araullo High School of the Department of Education-Manila. Currently, his research interests include brain-based and science education research.

**Ernie G Santoyo** is a full-time senior high school STEM teacher at the Department of Education-Batangas Province. His current research interests include Chemistry teaching and action research.



### **The PNU Educational Policy Research, and Development Center**

The EPRDC is a specialized research center in the University focused on policy research and studies on teacher education. It is established to provide research-based policy recommendation to policy makers. It also serves as the clearing house for all data relevant to teacher education in the Philippines and beyond.

#### **Vision**

The Philippine Normal University through the EPRDC aims to be innovation hub of teacher education research and educational policy studies.

#### **Mission**

To strengthen the culture of excellence in teacher education research and educational policy studies.

#### **Objectives**

The EPRDC shall manage the University's research production, enhance human resource capabilities, and share expertise to other Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in the area of teacher education research

#### **Strategies**

1. Establish and maintain a web-based university research portal that facilitates automated research management system and which also serves as the database of teacher education policies and teacher education research in country and Southeast Asia.
2. Share research expertise and competence in teacher education research with other TEIs throughout the country;
3. Develop and disseminate the University research agenda
4. Design and implement the research capability program for faculty and staff;
5. Manage University's research production particularly the conduct of educational policy studies in education and teacher education; and
6. Serve as the implementing arm for research incentives and research ethics review.

#### **Values**

SYNERGY (Working collaboratively as a team)  
 EFFICIENCY (Delivering research services efficiently)  
 EXCELLENCE (Achieving high quality research outputs)  
 PRODUCTIVITY (increasing research production of the University)

The **Policy Brief Series** aims to provide observations, analyses, and insights by PNU faculty and researchers on various educational policy issues. The views contained in the policy briefs are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the University.

The **Policy Brief Series** is published monthly by the **Philippine Normal University Educational Policy Research and Development Center** (PNU-EPRDC). The PNU-EPRDC oversees the editing, compiling, and printing of the policy brief.

#### **Editors**

Term 2, SY 2022-2023

**Allen A Espinosa, PhD**

*Director*

**Edna Luz R Abulon, PhD**

**Tito C Baclagan, PhD**

**Ma Victoria C Hermosisima, PhD and**

**Ma Arsenia C Gomez, PhD**

**Praksis A Miranda, PhD**

**Nina Christina L Zamora, PhD**

*Faculty Researchers*

**Lorephil P Carloman**

**Maria Luz V Rantael**

*Support Staff*

**PNU Educational Policy Research and Development Center**

Room 204, Pedro Orata Hall

Philippine Normal University, Manila, Philippines 1000

<https://www.facebook.com/pnueprdc>

