Research Article

Evaluating Teaching Efficiency among Filipino Teacher Interns: Insights for Enhancing Teacher Preparation and Advancing SDG 4 on Quality Education

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ABSTRACT

This study assesses the teaching effectiveness of Filipino teacher interns in post-pandemic classrooms, focusing on instructional strategies, student–teacher interactions, and pedagogical efficacy. Employing a quantitative design with supplementary qualitative validation, data were collected from 24 teacher interns, 24 cooperating teachers, and 240 students in selected secondary schools under the supervision of DepEd Cabanatuan and DepED Nueva Ecija. Standardized rating scales, structured interviews, and classroom observations were used to assess communication proficiency, content knowledge, instructional material preparation, assessment design, and teaching strategies. Findings revealed high teaching efficiency, especially in differentiated instruction, digital tool integration, and strong communication skills. However, gaps in adaptability and instructional alignment emerged, as cooperating teachers' ratings were slightly lower than the interns' self-evaluations. These results underscore the importance of ongoing professional development to enhance adaptive teaching and reflective self-evaluation, thereby aligning stakeholder expectations and advancing Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education).

Keywords: *Teaching efficiency, Filipino teacher interns, Instructional strategies, Post-pandemic education, Pedagogical assessment*

Introduction

The global education landscape underwent profound disruption during the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing schools worldwide to abruptly shift from traditional face-to-face instruction to remote and hybrid modalities (UNESCO, 2021). As education systems transition back to in-person learning, a central challenge has been ensuring that teachers—especially those in pre-service programs—are prepared to meet the evolving needs of post-pandemic classrooms. This challenge is particularly salient in countries like the Philippines, where teacher interns play a pivotal role in sustaining instructional quality during the recovery period.

Teaching internships constitute a crucial stage in teacher education, providing opportunities for preservice teachers to apply theoretical knowledge to authentic classroom contexts under the mentorship of a teacher's mentor (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Jinyoung, 2020). Philippine policy frameworks, such as Republic Act 7722 and the CHED policies on pre-service teacher training, underscore the importance of rigorous practicum experiences for producing highly qualified and culturally competent educators. Strengthening teacher preparation is central to advancing Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which aims to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education and promote lifelong learning for all (United Nations, 2015; UNESCO, 2023). In this context, teacher interns' classroom competence directly influences the achievement of SDG 4 targets related to improving learning outcomes and ensuring that well-trained teachers teach all learners.

Research has consistently shown that teacher efficacy—including confidence in communication, adaptability, and instructional skills—affects not only instructional quality but also student engagement and achievement (Fives et al., 2005; Hoy & Hoy, 2009; Pajares, 1997). Studies likewise highlight that reflective practices, such as self-evaluation and feedback from mentors, are key to strengthening instructional effectiveness and professional resilience (Airasian et al., 1995; Stronge, 1997; Sutherland & Wehby, 2001). However, while global and Philippine literature have broadly examined teacher efficacy and self-assessment, few studies have explored how Filipino teacher interns demonstrate these competencies in post-pandemic, in-person classrooms using triangulated stakeholder perspectives.

This study addresses that gap by investigating the teaching performance of Filipino teacher interns in two public school divisions in Nueva Ecija, as assessed by three key stakeholder groups—teacher interns themselves, their students, and cooperating teachers/head teachers—using a mixed-methods approach. By focusing on stakeholder-triangulated perceptions of competencies such as language proficiency, content knowledge, cultural integration, instructional material use, and assess-

ment practices, this research provides evidence-based insights on whether teacher preparation programs are equipping future educators to meet contemporary classroom demands.

Ultimately, the study not only evaluates interns' teaching effectiveness in the local post-pandemic context but also underscores the role of strengthened teacher preparation in advancing SDG 4's vision of high-quality, culturally responsive, and equitable education for all.

Conceptual Framework

This study employed an Input–Process–Output (IPO) framework to integrate two foundational models: the SLATE (1987) teaching competency domains and the instructional dimensions identified by Gannaban (2012).

Input: Core instructional domains—language proficiency, content knowledge, instructional material preparation, instructional strategies, and assessment knowledge.

Process: The application of these domains in classroom instruction, supported by cooperating teacher feedback and reflective self-evaluation by interns.

Output: Demonstrated teaching efficiency assessed by multiple stakeholders and aligned with SDG 4 (Quality Education).

This integrated IPO model illustrates how competencies translate into practice and highlights the feedback loop that drives continuous improvement in teacher education.

Methodology

Research Design: The study employed a quantitative research design with supplementary qualitative validation. Structured surveys and standardized rating scales measured teaching efficiency, while semi-structured interviews and classroom observations provided qualitative insights that triangulated quantitative findings.

Participants: The respondents comprised 24 teacher interns, 24 cooperating teachers/head teachers, and 240 students from selected secondary schools under DepEd Cabanatuan and DepEd Nueva Ecija.

Instruments: The Teacher Efficiency Questionnaire (Airasian & Gullickson, 1997) meas-

ured language proficiency and professional development, and the Teacher Characteristics Questionnaire (Gannaban, 2012) assessed five instructional domains.

Reliability and Validity: A pilot test was conducted, achieving a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 to confirm internal consistency. Triangulation of surveys, interviews, and classroom observations ensured data validity.

Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were computed for each domain across respondent groups. One-way ANOVA tested for significant differences, while thematic analysis of interview data provided qualitative explanations for patterns in the results.

Ethical Considerations: Participation was voluntary, guided by informed consent and confidentiality protocols consistent with the American Educational Research Association (2019) ethical guidelines.

Results and Discussion
3.1 Perceptions of Students, Teacher Interns, and Cooperating Teachers/ Head Teachers on Teacher Interns' Performance

The results reveal consistently high ratings of teacher interns' performance across all instructional domains. Interns rated themselves highest overall (M = 4.97) compared to students (M = 4.87) and cooperating teachers (M = 4.75), though ANOVA showed no statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$). The following tables present the detailed ratings and subsequent thematic interpretation.

Table 1. Language Proficiency (Kahusayang Pangwika)

Indicators	Students	Teacher Interns	Cooperating Teachers/ Head Teachers
Expresses ideas clearly and persuasively	4.90	4.96	4.79
Can speak fluently in Filipino according to the situation, needs, and opportunities	4.88	5.00	4.75
Uses appropriate language and vocabulary in class explanations	4.92	4.96	4.79
Selects the appropriate phrase for use in various settings or circumstances	4.88	4.96	4.75
Able to use a variety of communication skills (verbal and non-verbal)	4.85	5.00	4.79
Weighted Mean	**4.89**	**4.97**	**4.77**

The data analysis shows that students, teacher interns, and cooperating teachers/head teachers hold positive perceptions of an effective Filipino teacher's language proficiency, as indicated by the high weighted mean scores. Teacher interns rated themselves slightly higher (4.97) compared to students (4.89) and cooperating teachers/head teachers (4.77).

Interns perceived themselves as highly proficient in expressing ideas (4.96), fluency (5.00), using appropriate language (4.96), selecting correct phrases (4.96), and employing diverse communication strategies (5.00).

While students and cooperating teachers/head teachers also rated these aspects favorably, slightly lower scores from experienced educators suggest a broader awareness of the challenges in effective Filipino language teaching across different classroom settings (Santos & Dela Cruz, 2020).

In addition to guaranteeing equitable and accessible learning settings and promoting SDG 4 (Quality Education), these findings highlight the significance of effective communication skills in mother tongue education (UNESCO, 2023).

Table 2. Knowledge of Content (Kaalaman sa Nilalaman)

Indicators	Students	Teacher Interns	Cooperating Teachers/ Head Teachers
Demonstrates extensive teaching knowledge of the Filipino language in class activities	4.91	4.96	4.79
Relates the teaching of Filipino to other subjects or disciplines	4.82	4.92	4.63
Broadens students' knowledge through content	4.90	5.00	4.79
Associates Filipino culture with teaching and language use	4.88	5.00	4.71
Cultivates appreciation for the country in students	4.86	4.96	4.75
Weighted Mean	**4.87**	**4.97**	**4.73**

The data highlights the strong perception of Filipino teacher interns' knowledge of content among students, teacher interns, and cooperating teachers/head teachers. Interns rated themselves the highest (4.97), followed by students (4.87) and cooperating teachers/head teachers (4.73).

Interns viewed themselves as highly competent in demonstrating deep Filipino language knowledge (4.96), integrating Filipino teaching with other disciplines (4.92), broadening student knowledge (5.00), incorporating Filipino culture (5.00), and fostering national appreciation (4.96).

However, cooperating teachers/head teachers rated interdisciplinary connections the lowest (4.63), potentially reflecting real-world challenges in connecting Filipino language instruction with other subjects (*Gonzales & Bautista, 2018*).

The integration of content knowledge and Filipino cultural identity aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education), ensuring holistic and relevant education (*UNESCO, 2023*).

Across all domains—language proficiency, content knowledge, instructional materials, and assessment—the three stakeholder groups reported high positive perceptions of effective Filipino teachers. However, teacher interns consistently rated themselves higher than both students and cooperating teachers, particularly in language fluency, cultural integration, and assessment design.

This pattern suggests a possible overconfidence or self-enhancement bias, which is common among new teachers who tend to overestimate their own readiness. Their assessments may be a reflection of their desire to confirm their confidence following recent training, professional competence, and familiarity with modern pedagogical frameworks. However, cooperating teachers received slightly lower scores, suggesting a pragmatic realism shaped by classroom experience and exposure to contextual constraints such as large class sizes, a variety of learner needs, and a lack of instructional resources.

The weighted mean gaps, although modest, underscore a tension between perceived readiness and actual classroom demands. Such gaps highlight the importance of reflective practice during internship to bridge theoretical preparation and field-based realities—an emphasis echoed in Philippine teacher education literature.

Table 3. Proficiency in the Preparation and Use of Instructional Materials

Indicators	Students	Teacher Interns	Cooperating Teachers/ Head Teachers
Able to revise or create new equipment according to class needs	4.84	4.92	4.63
Uses new teaching tools in class, such as videos, projectors, and computers	4.83	4.96	4.75

Indicators	Students	Teacher Interns	Cooperating Teachers/ Head Teachers
Utilizes real or authentic teaching materials found outside the classroom	4.85	4.96	4.75
Uses various teaching materials available in the classroom	4.86	5.00	4.75
Creates or develops instructional materials	4.87	5.00	4.79
Weighted Mean	**4.85**	**4.97**	**4.73**

Table 3, reflects highly positive assessments of teacher interns' proficiency in preparing and using instructional materials. Teacher interns reported the highest overall weighted mean (4.97), followed by students (4.85) and cooperating teachers/head teachers (4.73). Interns viewed themselves as highly competent in revising and creating new instructional materials (4.92), utilizing technological teaching tools (4.96), incorporating authentic materials (4.96), employing classroom resources (5.00), and designing instructional aids (5.00).

While students' ratings were also high, the slightly lower scores from cooperating teachers/head teachers—especially in revising or creating new equipment (4.63)—might reflect a more pragmatic awareness of real-world resource limitations (Rivera & Cruz, 2019). The

emphasis on effective instructional material development aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) by fostering engaging and adaptive teaching strategies for enhanced learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2023).

Interns exhibited strong communicative clarity and responsiveness by articulating ideas effectively through context-appropriate Filipino and varied verbal and non-verbal strategies, reflecting the foundational role of communicative competence in culturally responsive instruction. Simultaneously, their confident integration of Filipino culture and values into subject content demonstrates a deepening mastery aligned with calls for localized and culturally relevant pedagogy, echoing the frameworks advocated by UNESCO (2023).

Table 4. Assessment and Evaluation Knowledge

Indicators	Students	Teacher Interns	Cooperating Teachers/ Head Teachers
Uses different types of assessments (oral or written) based on the skills taught in Filipino	4.88	5.00	4.71
Prepares assessments that engage students in language use across various situations	4.86	4.92	4.75
Develops assessments that benefit students' personal learning progress	4.88	5.00	4.71
Constructs assessments that focus on language application	4.90	4.92	4.75
Design assessments that challenge students' deeper thinking	4.84	4.96	4.79
Weighted Mean	**4.87**	**4.96**	**4.74**

The data in Table 4, highlights the positive perception of assessment and evaluation knowledge among students, teacher interns, and cooperating teachers/head teachers. Teacher interns reported the highest weighted mean (4.96), followed by students (4.87) and cooperating teachers/head teachers (4.74).

Interns viewed themselves as highly proficient in using varied assessment types (5.00), preparing assessments for diverse language applications (4.92), developing assessments for student learning progress (5.00), constructing assessments focused on language application

(4.92), and designing evaluations that encourage deeper cognitive engagement (4.96).

While students agreed with these high ratings, cooperating teachers/head teachers provided slightly lower scores, especially in the use of varied assessment types (4.71) and designing assessments for student learning progress (4.71). This may reflect experienced educators' understanding of the complexities involved in designing truly effective, varied, and equitable assessment tools that accurately measure student learning outcomes (Castro & Enriquez, 2021). Effective assessment and evaluation practices are fundamental to achieving SDG 4 (Quality Education) by ensuring that learning is accurately measured and instruction is adapted to support students' needs (UNESCO, 2023).

Interns demonstrated a learner-centered approach through their high self-ratings in designing and adapting instructional materials, including technology-enhanced resources, though cooperating teachers' slightly lower ratings point to practical constraints in under-resourced school settings. Their reported proficiency in implementing varied and authentic assessments reflects a commitment to deeper learning and aligns with the emphasis on formative, context-driven evaluation strategies that support Filipino language learners.

3.2 Variations in Stakeholder Perspectives on Essential Teaching Qualities
Table 5. ANOVA Summary of Stakeholder Perspectives

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Students	221	1076.92	4.87	0.18
Teacher Interns	24	119.32	4.97	0.01
Cooperating Teachers/Head Teachers	24	113.88	4.75	0.67

ANOVA Test Results

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	Decision
Between Groups	0.625	2	0.312	1.524	0.220	Accept the Null Hypothesis
Within Groups	54.552	266	0.205			
Total	55.176	268				

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).
Groups: Students (N=221, Mean = 4.87), Teacher Interns (N=24, Mean = 4.97), Cooperating Teachers (N=24, Mean = 4.75)
ANOVA: F(2, 266) = 1.524, p = 0.220 → No significant differences across groups.

Thematic Interpretation:
1 Strong Communication Proficiency – Enabled inclusive classroom discourse.
2 Overconfidence vs. Pragmatic Realism – Higher self-ratings by interns indicate confidence bias, while cooperating teachers' slightly lower ratings reflect professional realism.
3 Cultural Integration – Lessons enriched by Filipino cultural contexts aligned with SDG 4's inclusive education goals.
4 Instructional Materials & Technology – High adaptability despite resource limitations.
5 Assessment Practices – Emphasized authentic application of language skills, though further alignment with classroom objectives is needed.

Despite the consistent pattern of interns rating themselves higher, ANOVA results revealed no statistically significant differences among the three groups' perceptions (F (2, 266) = 1.524, p = 0.220). This statistical convergence points to a shared understanding of essential teaching qualities, possibly reflecting the influence of standardized outcomes set by the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and competency-based teacher education curricula (CHED, 2017).

The numerical but non-significant gaps suggest that differences in perspectives are perceptual rather than substantive, indicating that all stakeholders recognize similar core competencies for effective teaching but vary in their stringency of evaluation.

3.3 Teaching Characteristics and Instructional Practices of Filipino Teacher Interns

The data analysis highlights several key teaching characteristics and instructional practices demonstrated by Filipino teacher interns in their classrooms.

1. Emphasis on Communication Skills Teacher interns excel in expressing ideas clearly, using appropriate language, and employing diverse communication strategies (Table 1). This proficiency aligns with established best practices in language education, emphasizing clarity and contextually relevant communication (Santos & Dela Cruz, 2020).
2. Focus on Content Knowledge and Cultural Integration. Interns display extensive knowledge of Filipino language instruction, integrating it with other subjects while fostering national pride and cultural appreciation (Table 2). This culturally relevant pedagogy supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by promoting a holistic and contextualized understanding of the Filipino language (UNESCO, 2023).
3. Commitment to Effective Instructional Practices Teacher interns showcase proficiency in preparing and utilizing instructional materials, including technology-driven tools and authentic resources (Table 3). Their student-centered approach enhances engagement and learning outcomes by adapting materials to classroom needs.
4. Competence in Assessment and Evaluation Interns effectively design and implement diverse assessment methods, focusing on language application and critical thinking skills (Table 4). Their assessment strategies align with best practices, ensuring meaningful evaluation that supports student learning (Castro & Enriquez, 2021).

These findings underscore the strong teaching foundation of Filipino teacher interns and their ability to implement effective instructional strategies that contribute to enhanced student learning experiences.

3.4 Perceptions of stakeholders align with actual teaching performance of the interns, and Implications in Teacher Education Programs and the Achievement of SDGS 4

Perceptions of Stakeholders and Alignment with Interns' Teaching Performance

The data analysis demonstrates a strong alignment between the actual classroom performance of Filipino teacher interns and the perceptions of their students and cooperating teachers/head teachers regarding the qualities of an effective Filipino teacher. High ratings across all core competency domains—communication skills (Table 1), content knowledge and cultural integration (Table 2), instructional practices (Table 3), and assessment and evaluation (Table 4)—confirm that the interns have met key performance standards.

Interns were observed to be particularly proficient in:

1. Articulating ideas clearly and persuasively to engage students.
2. Integrating Filipino culture and contextual examples into lessons.
3. Utilizing varied and locally relevant instructional materials to support learning.
4. Applying diverse and authentic assessment strategies to monitor and enhance student outcomes.

Although interns consistently rated themselves slightly higher (M = 4.97) than students (M = 4.87) and cooperating teachers/head teachers (M = 4.75), the one-way ANOVA results (Table 5) indicate that these differences were not statistically significant (Field, 2017). This statistical convergence highlights that the interns' self-perceptions are generally consistent with external evaluations, suggesting that their classroom practices indeed reflect the essential qualities of effective Filipino teachers.

Implications for Teacher Education Programs and SDG 4 (Quality Education)

The modest inflation in interns' self-ratings underscores the need for structured

mentoring, guided reflection, and evidence-based feedback during practicum. Such measures can help interns develop a more balanced sense of their competencies and translate feedback into pedagogical growth. These insights resonate with Philippine research emphasizing the importance of critical self-assessment and supervisor mentoring in building pedagogical maturity (Bernardo, 2021).

Moreover, the convergence of perceptions among all stakeholders—interns, students, and cooperating teachers—indicates that current teacher education curricula and internship frameworks are responsive to classroom demands. This coherence affirms that teacher education programs are effectively producing candidates who can meet local standards for quality Filipino language teaching.

Significantly, these findings also contribute to the achievement of SDG 4, which seeks inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all (UNESCO, 2023). By demonstrating competence in culturally responsive pedagogy, clear communication, and equitable assessment practices, the interns exemplify how well-designed teacher preparation programs can directly enhance teaching quality at the classroom level. Strengthening mentoring systems, sustaining collaboration among stakeholders, and integrating continuous professional development will further enable teacher education institutions to advance SDG 4 targets, particularly in improving learning outcomes and ensuring that all learners benefit from qualified and culturally competent teachers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study explored how students, teacher interns, and cooperating teachers/head teachers perceive the performance of Filipino teacher interns across four key domains: language proficiency, content knowledge, instructional materials, and assessment practices. Although interns rated themselves slightly higher, statistical analysis showed no significant differences among groups, suggesting a shared understanding of essential teaching competencies.

The findings confirm that interns possess strong communication skills, cultural integration, instructional adaptability, and assessment proficiency—though gaps in ratings reflect a contrast between interns' optimism and mentors' practical realism.

To strengthen teacher education programs, it is recommended that adaptive teaching modules and reflective self-evaluation tools be embedded in the curriculum, while mentoring systems be enhanced through recalibration workshops and structured feedback protocols. Institutions should also conduct practicum debriefings and foster stronger partnerships with cooperating schools to ensure contextual relevance and shared accountability. These measures will help bridge theory and practice, support professional growth, and advance SDG 4 by promoting inclusive, equitable, and high-quality Filipino language education.

Acknowledgments

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