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Research Article

Perceived Influence of Instructional Delivery, Classroom Management Training, and Mentoring on Pre-Service Teachers' Professional Preparedness

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' influence on students is inevitable and enduring. Preservice teachers look up to their teachers as models and coaches at the same time. More often, PSTs' work ethic, styles, and even behaviors are largely influenced by teachers, and they extend them until their first venture into teaching. This study focuses on the factors that contribute to the professional readiness of pre-service teachers, particularly instructional delivery, mentoring, and classroom management preparation. Conducted among fourth-year Bachelor of Secondary Education students at Bulacan State University College of Professional Teacher Education, the research employed a quantitative descriptive-comparative approach using survey questionnaires. The investigation was grounded on the idea that teacher education programs significantly shape the competence and preparedness of future educators, although limited studies have examined these factors within the context of the institution.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and interpret the data, while inferential statistics were used to determine differences in perceived professional preparedness according to gender and teaching specialization. Findings revealed that instructional delivery had a very high level of influence, while classroom management training and mentoring showed high levels of influence on professional preparedness. Overall, pre-service teachers reported a high level of professional preparedness. No significant differences were found when respondents were grouped according to gender and teaching specialization. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening classroom management training, mentoring feedback, and opportunities for pre-service teachers to develop strategies for handling diverse classroom situations.

Keywords: *Instructional practices, Professional readiness, Teacher education, Teaching internship, Teacher preparation*

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Introduction

Students in the teacher education program (TEP) begin to experience real classroom teaching during the last two years of their training. In their third year, they participate in classroom observations and related activities in cooperating schools for their field study course. During their teaching internship, they assume the role of pre-service teachers (PSTs) and perform teaching responsibilities as part of their practicum requirements. These stages are often viewed by students as important for understanding how teaching works in actual classroom situations. During their practice teaching years, PSTs develop skills in lesson planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management through direct classroom interactions with students and mentorship with cooperating teachers (CTs).

In this light, practice teaching is now viewed as an important component of TEP in developing core teaching competencies. It allows PSTs to apply the theories and concepts they learned in their first two years of coursework to real classroom practice. As a result, PSTs further realized that what they learned in class and the real world daily classroom experiences and challenges are not exactly the same, let alone bearable and enticing. Hence, the actual training they go through practice teaching challenges them to think and act professionally and boosts their confidence.

According to Mohamed et al. (2017), professional preparedness among pre-service teachers pertains to their ability to actualize teaching responsibilities effectively through mastery of essential teaching skills. That is why school administration must ensure that teacher education programs must be strategically designed to further enhance the professional readiness of the pre-service teachers. (Ronfeldt et al., 2020) echoed on this premise that PSTs can only get better and be professionally prepared behaviorally, skills-wise, and knowledge-wise if the teacher education program meets their needs.

Segura & Latanga (2025) cited that classroom management, instructional delivery, and mentoring affect the PSTs' professional preparedness. They help future professional teachers confront and respond to the requirements of

practical teaching in a conducive learning environment with applied technical knowledge.

Wordu & Akor (2018) defined instructional delivery as "methods, strategies, approaches, or techniques that a teacher employs to deliver lesson content to learners". Meanwhile, Hollins University (n.d.) emphasizes the important role of teachers in training pre-service teachers construct new knowledge through effective lesson presentation, facilitation of learning, and by incorporating technology and differentiated instruction into the lesson.

Classroom management training involves equipping teachers with strategies to "manage time, space, resources and student roles and student behaviors to provide a climate that encourages learning" (Bonab & Essmati, 2015). Learning how to manage the classroom effectively helps teachers maintain classroom order, create a positive learning environment, and ensure the transfer of learning during instruction. Classroom management training during practice teaching contributes to PSTs' professional preparedness by preparing them to respond to various classroom situations they may encounter as professional teachers. Studies also reveal that classroom management training is a strong predictor of new teacher confidence and retention, although teacher education institutions tend to place different levels of emphasis on it (Kwok, 2023).

Mentoring "involves an experienced teacher providing guidance, support, and professional advice to a less experienced teacher" (Galvez & Azarias, 2024). Cooperating teachers must take advantage of practice teaching moments to mentor the pre-service teachers by scheduling feedback time on teaching strategies, setting an ideal learning environment, and an opportunity to address issues that PSTs may be reluctant to ask. It is also a perfect opportunity to help the students see the reality from theoretical perspectives. Mentoring will, likewise, give the PSTs a deeper understanding of what it takes to deal with every day challenges by listening to their CTs' experience that they can bank on in their future task as professional teachers.

The educational system continues to evolve, let alone the the types and needs of learners. Consequently, teachers must be

proactive by equipping the PSTs with knowledge and training to cope with changes and remain impactful and relevant. Schools must not only produce graduates of teacher education program but competent teachers who can make instructional sound decisions, and respond to complex classroom challenges.

Interestingly, only limited factual evidences are available on how pre-service teachers perceive the influence of the said education program components on their professional preparedness. Having a clear understanding of the potential benefits of the said aspects will seriously help the PSTs in terms of readiness for the profession. Furthermore, it will also aid curriculum developers and education program planners to revisit their goals and priorities in preparing future professional teachers to be tough, capable, and responsive to the needs of learners.

Therefore, this paper investigates how pre-service teachers' professional preparedness are potentially influenced by instructional delivery, classroom management training, and mentoring.

Specifically, the study seeks to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender and teaching specialization?
2. What is the level of perceived influence of instructional delivery on pre-service teachers' professional preparedness?
3. What is the level of perceived influence of classroom management training on pre-service teachers' professional preparedness?
4. What is the level of perceived influence of mentoring on pre-service teachers' professional preparedness?
5. What is the level of perceived professional preparedness among pre-service teachers?
6. Is there a significant difference in perceived professional preparedness when respondents are grouped according to gender and teaching specialization?

Instructional Delivery and Teacher Preparedness

The significance of enhancing pre-service teachers' competence on instructional delivery

in preparation for their professional readiness has been highlighted in many empirical studies. Research has shown that "pre-service teachers often demonstrate high levels of pedagogical competence" during their training, which supports their teaching performance in classroom settings (Afalla & Fabelico, 2020).

Pedagogical knowledge is also identified as an important factor in preparing PSTs, as it influences their "readiness and competence in performing instructional tasks as future educators" (Absolor, 2023). Similarly, previous studies have also noted that "pedagogical knowledge is a significant predictor of the quality of instruction provided in the classroom" (König & Pflanzl, 2016). These studies highlight the importance of developing pedagogical competencies during practice teaching, as this helps PSTs become more effective classroom teachers.

Teacher education programs help PSTs develop instructional skills necessary for effective classroom practice. Darling-Hammond (2006) claimed that sufficient preparation in instructional delivery is one of the most essential components to ensure quality learning opportunities. Learners are not all the same in terms of knowledge acquisition or learning styles; thus, pre-service teachers must be given adequate opportunities for training in differentiated and active learning styles.

Yost (2006) offered similar perspectives, stressing that teachers with sufficient experience in various instructional methodologies are likely to have successful and fulfilling teaching careers. When pre-service teachers are exposed to various instructional strategies during their practice teaching, their instructional competence is strengthened before they enter the teaching profession.

Even with training in instructional delivery strategies, pre-service teachers may still face challenges and difficulties when delivering lessons in the classroom. Napanoy et al. (2021) noted a number of potential reasons for the said challenges, such as their peers, cooperating teachers, learning environments, and administrative support. On the other hand, Ulla (2016) identified insufficient teaching and learning resources, lack of confidence to handle instructional delivery, and poor classroom

management, as the contributing factors. Picardal & Sanchez (2022) echoed the aforementioned findings, in addition to communication barriers and overwhelming responsibilities during online classes.

In light of those obstacles, school must find ways to review and improve the field study programs for the PSTs to address their recurring concerns. Pre-service teachers, at this point of their academic journey, are highly reliant on the support and motivation they can get from their cooperating teachers, as well as the school administration, to prepare them for their professional career (Huang et al., 2023).

Classroom Management Training

Effective instructional delivery is only one side of a coin. Failure to create and sustain a conducive learning environment by ensuring that learners are inspired to learn and feel safe and protected in the classroom from all forms of harm due to disruptive behavior, can make teacher's preparation and teaching strategies a failure.

Ahmed (2024) stated that "effective classroom management contributes to students' social development through classroom interactions, rules, and learning environments." It further proves that classroom management goes beyond setting and implementing classroom rules. It is also an opportunity for the learners to learn from their mistakes of asserting their will wherever they want to and whenever they want. Poznanski et al. (2018) noted that pre-service teachers often lack sufficient knowledge of classroom management strategies during their early teaching experiences, which is perceived as a major setback in PSTs' professional preparation (Junker, 2018).

Teacher education programs must be intentional as early as the planning stage. It must ensure that teachers have something good to offer to the preservice teachers on classroom management strategies both theoretically and practically.

Freeman et al. (2017) maintained that teachers must be prepared to create classroom environments that support both academic learning and positive student behavior. It involves organizing classroom activities and establishing expectations for student behavior,

according to Evertson & Weinstein (2017). It is also amplified in the study of Flower et al. (2016) that improvement in teachers' ability to manage student behavior. is attributed to classroom management training.

There are no better opportunities for the preservice teachers to learn and acquire various effective classroom management strategies than spending quality time with their cooperating teachers for casual and formal training, mentoring, and modeling. Many PSTs could not gain their full potential as future professional teachers due to lackluster classroom management.

Wolff et al. (2020) stressed the importance of effective classroom management as one of the key competencies required for effective teaching and learning while Egeberg et al. (2021) linked effective classroom management skills to teacher's confidence and preparedness in managing student behavior.

Mentoring and Professional Development

Many studies have been conducted about the positive significant impact of mentoring across professions and organizations. Through mentoring, teachers and students develop a certain level of professional dynamics that the latter can eventually use in preparation for their professional career.

According to Gülbak et al. (2024), the major resource of student teachers to improve their teaching techniques are the mentor teachers. They further emphasized that mentor teachers are privileged to perform social functions such as counseling and giving moral support to their students.

Meanwhile, Ellis et al. (2020) claimed that a good mentoring practice is too pivotal as it could determine whether or not PSTs will succeed professionally. Furthermore, they also maintained that mentors can help students to be more equipped and resolute in the performance of their tasks in the future when they take mentoring seriously.

Interestingly, Tabali and Monasterio (2024) revealed that despite their awareness of their significant role as mentors to their PSTs, mentors claimed that they are not prepared to perform their duties and lack the necessary training and guidance from the institution.

They further claim that they simply bank on their personal teaching experience rather than employing the fundamentals of mentoring. This has caused tension between the school administration and mentors due to the unreasonable expectations from the teachers, despite limited administrative support, the study further revealed.

Perception of Professional Preparation

There are high expectations from the graduates of various fields. They are expected to have developed good work ethic, use strategies to address work-related challenges, and practice interpersonal skills to get along with diverse people within and outside their workplace.

Preservice teachers know for themselves if they are prepared enough for the job they have invested in for four years, not to mention the challenges and accountability that await them. Çelik, H., & Zehir Topkaya, E. (2023) claimed that PSTs have individual perceptions of the level of teaching readiness, specifically their professional role, levels of confidence and effectiveness, and understanding of their field of specialization.

Competence and readiness are foundations of professional readiness. Arista et al. (2022) pointed out that one is competent when he possesses the knowledge and skills, along with the right attitude needed in a specific profession. Similar to the teaching profession, preservice teachers know for themselves if they are equipped with qualities mentioned earlier, making them more confident and adaptable to the demands of the actual teaching world.

Teacher education programs can significantly help both teachers and preservice teachers fulfill their aspirations of supplying school institutions with highly prepared and competent teachers persistently.

According to Ramirez (2020), any teacher education institution has the potential to produce educators who can compete and meet global standards by ensuring that teacher education programs are relevant and proactive. This is echoed by the study of Shaukat and Chowdhury (2021), emphasizing that PSTs with a clear awareness of what it takes to be

professionally competent can become competent teachers at all levels.

Preservice teachers' self-perceived level of professional preparedness may significantly affect how they see themselves in the actual teaching environment. Their level of perceived level of preparation can be a determinant on how much interest they gain and sustain moving forward to their teaching career.

Crosswell & Beutel (2012) asserted that PSTs overall experience on the training ground can significantly influence how they perceive their readiness to teach and how long they will remain committed to the profession. The school must be made aware of the potential loss of interest of PSTs to finish the practicum program due to insufficient guidance and motivation, especially during challenging episodes. As quoted, "Beginning teachers really have two jobs to do – they have to teach, and they have to learn to teach" (Crosswell & Beutel, 2012).

Gender Factor in Professional Preparedness

There are existing studies opining that gender may be a factor on how preservice teachers perceive teaching in light of classroom management, instructional delivery, and mentoring. Those studies, however, offer varied and inconsistent results in terms of its impact on the preservice teachers, along with their professional preparation.

Scherer et al. (2023) revealed that gender is not a constantly strong factor to explain varied impressions towards teaching-related results. On the other hand, Altakhaineh et al. (2020) maintained that gender has been significantly identified as a factor in terms of communication style.

Meanwhile, Muega-Geronimo and Carlos (2023) reported that female participants showed higher levels of belief in their capacity compared with their opposite sex. The study further revealed that female PSTs are better prepared to take the licensure examination than male participants, indicating that female preservice teachers are more prepared for their future professional career. In addition, it indicates that students who have higher confidence in their capacity perform better academically.

Professional Preparedness and Field of Specialization

There are no constant findings among the existing studies claiming that preservice teachers' major fields of specialization influence their professional preparedness. Some claim there is significant effect; some there is none. Despite the fluidity of findings, it is worth noting a few of them.

Khalid et al. (2017) concluded in their study that majority of the PSTs were described as highly prepared and well-prepared to embark on their professional career. Considering that it is the perception of majority of the participants, the influence of major fields is insignificant. The same results were earned in the study of Niyibizi (2025), where majority of the respondents expressed their low self-efficacy level in handling the teaching demands. The results may be opposite but they both claim that major fields insignificantly influence the level of preparedness.

Materials and Methods

This part of the study explains how the research was carried out. The methods and procedures used were described in the following sections: (a) the research design, (b) the participants, (c) the instruments of the study, (d) the data gathering procedures (e) data analysis, and (f) ethical considerations.

Research Design

This study used a quantitative descriptive-comparative research design. The research design allowed the study to examine two aspects: (1) the perceived levels of influence of instructional delivery, mentoring, and classroom management training among pre-service teachers, as well as their perceived level of professional preparedness; and (2) differences in perceived professional preparedness when respondents were grouped according to gender and teaching specialization.

Participants

The participants of the study were 220 fourth-year pre-service teachers from the College of Professional Teacher Education, main campus of Bulacan State University. At the time of data collection, the respondents were

enrolled in the practice teaching or teaching internship course of their teacher education program. Their areas of teaching specialization included English, Filipino, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Values Education. Both male and female pre-service teachers were used in the study.

A purposive sampling technique was applied used to ensure that only PSTs who had already started classroom teaching in their respective cooperating schools were included in the study.

Instruments of the study

Data were gathered through a survey questionnaire designed to look into pre-service teachers' perceptions of instructional delivery, classroom management training, mentoring, and their overall professional preparation. The instrument was designed in three parts: Part 1 includes the demographic information of the respondents, like gender and field of specialization. Part 2 is about the perceived of instructional delivery, classroom management training, and mentoring on professional preparedness. Finally, part 3 assessed the perception of pre-service teachers on their professional preparedness.

Using a five-point Likers scale, items on both parts two and three were rated with responses ranged from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). To ensure validity, clarity, and relevance of the questionnaire, experts in teacher education reviewed it before the collection of data.

Procedures

The data collection took place on the second semester of 2024-2025 while the pre-service teachers of the College of Professional Teacher Education (CPTED) were completing their duties as practice teachers at the main campus of Bulacan State University

The survey instrument was distributed in two modes, physical copy or Google Forms, depending on the preference and accessibility of the respondents. Participants were given sufficient time to accomplish the questionnaire. After which, they were collected and compiled for analysis. The study was limited only to survey

responses, and did not include experiments and interventions.

Data Analysis

Initially, data were carefully checked to ensure they are complete. Responses were assigned codes as follows: 5-Strongly Agree, 4-Agree, 3-Neutral, 2-Disagree, and 1-Strongly Disagree. Using SPSS, responses were entered into a spreadsheet and analyzed.

For the summary of the respondents' demographic profile and describe the perceived level of influence of instructional delivery, classroom management training, and mentoring, as well as their level of perceived professional preparedness, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were computed.

The computed mean scores were interpreted based on the participants' perceived influence and professional preparedness. The following ranges were used to interpret and describe the level of perceived influence of instructional delivery, classroom management training, mentoring, and pre-service teachers' professional preparedness: 4.21–5.00 Very High, 3.41–4.20 High, 2.61–3.40 Moderate, 1.81–2.60 Low, and 1.00–1.80 Very Low.

The study used inferential statistics to know if differences exist in pre-service teachers' perception on professional preparedness with regard to gender and field of specialization. Gender differences were tested with the use of independent sample t-test. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the differences across teaching

specializations. A 0.05 level of significance was used in interpreting all analyses.

Ethical Considerations

Participants were informed on the purpose and procedures of the study before the survey was conducted. Consent was requested before the voluntary participation. Moreover, participants were also reminded of their right to withdraw anytime they want to. Finally, participants were assured of the protection of their privacy and anonymity and confidentiality of their responses.

Results and Discussion

This section shows the results related to the PSTs' experiences in their practice teaching and teacher education program. The sequence of the research questions was used for the discussion.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The total number of fourth-year pre-service teachers who participated in the study was 220, broken into 160 (72.73%) females and 60 (27.27%) males. They represented various teaching specializations which includes English (33.64%), Science (20.00%), Social Studies (17.27%), Mathematics (16.36%), Filipino (12.27%), and Values Education (0.45%).

Participants were at a similar stage of preparation within the teacher education program since all of them are on their fourth year. This information presents background for a better understanding how pre-service teachers perceive their professional preparedness.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Gender and Teaching Specialization

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	60	27.27
	Female	160	72.73
Teaching Specialization	English	74	33.64
	Filipino	27	12.27
	Mathematics	36	16.36
	Science	44	20.00
	Social Studies	38	17.27
	Values Education	1	0.45

Perceived Level of Influence of Instructional Delivery on Professional Preparedness

Table 2 shows the perceived level of Influence of instructional delivery on professional preparedness of the pre-service teachers. The overall mean score was **4.25**, which indicates a

Very High level of perceived influence on PSTs' professional preparedness. All indicators obtained mean scores above 4.18, with the highest ratings given to the *use of technology in instructional delivery* (M = 4.36) and the *organization and structure of lessons* (M = 4.27).

Table 2. Perceived Level of Influence of Instructional Delivery on Professional Preparedness

Classroom Management Training	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. The instructional methods used in my teacher education courses are effective.	4.26	Very High
2. My instructors present content clearly and understandably.	4.24	Very High
3. The teaching strategies used by my instructors encourage active learning.	4.18	High
4. Lessons are delivered in a well-organized and structured manner.	4.27	Very High
5. I am able to apply the instructional methods I learned during lectures.	4.24	Very High
6. The use of technology in instructional delivery enhances my learning experience.	4.36	Very High
7. Course content is aligned with the needs of real classroom teaching.	4.24	Very High
8. My instructors model good teaching practices during classes.	4.23	Very High
9. Instructional activities engage me in critical thinking and problem-solving.	4.25	Very High
10. Overall, instructional delivery in my program contributes to my professional readiness.	4.26	Very High
Total	4.25	Very High

These ratings reflect that respondents consistently perceive instructional strategies, use of technology in instruction, clarity of content, and lesson organization as strong components of their training in the teacher education program and practice teaching experiences. Such perceptions indicate that instructional delivery supports the professional preparation of PSTs.

The current study's findings are consistent with the comprehensive review of pre-service teacher preparation practices conducted by Dunst et al. (2019), which identified teaching methods, instruction, and faculty instructional practices as high-impact components of teacher preparation programs. Another point raised is the role of web-based and structured instructional practices in supporting teaching quality and classroom organization. Both the current study and Dunst's review emphasize the importance of technology integration and

clear lesson organization as key elements in preparing PSTs for classroom teaching.

From these results, teacher education programs may benefit from continuing to strengthen instructional delivery, particularly in the use of technology and lesson organization. Greater attention and emphasis may also be given to various learner-centered teaching strategies to encourage learners' active participation even more. Opportunities to experience well-structured instructional practices during practice teaching may further strengthen PSTs' professional preparedness and confidence.

Perceived Influence of Classroom Management Training on Professional Preparedness

Ratings related to classroom management training are shown in Table 3. The overall mean score of **4.20** falls within the **High** level of perceived influence on professional preparedness.

Overall, the PSTs generally perceive classroom management training as an important and supportive component of their professional preparation.

Several indicators received Very High ratings. These include *building positive relationships with students* (M = 4.32), *maintaining a safe and inclusive classroom environment* (M = 4.28), and *improving overall teaching readiness* (M = 4.29). This pattern indicates respondents' confidence in setting up classroom structure,

maintaining discipline, and encouraging positive interactions with students.

Meanwhile, in terms of confidence in handling difficult classroom situations (M = 3.98), there was a slightly lower rating recorded, despite the fact that said indicator remains within the High range. In comparison with other challenging classroom management skills, respondents appear less certain when dealing with them.

Table 3. Perceived Level of Influence of Classroom Management Training on Professional Preparedness

Classroom Management Training	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I was taught ways practical ways to manage the student behavior.	4.24	Very High
2. I am confident to handle difficult classroom situations.	3.98	High
3. I can create rules and routines for disciplinary measures.	4.18	High
4. I know how to build positive relationships with students.	4.32	Very High
5. I manage time and classroom transitions effectively.	4.14	High
6. I was trained how to confront different learning needs.	4.14	High
7. I was trained on maintaining a safe and inclusive classroom environment.	4.28	Very High
8. My traing prepared me how to prevent and address classroom conflicts.	4.21	Very High
9. I have enough training about implementation of classroom management strategies.	4.17	High
10. Generally, classroom management training has made me prepared to teach.	4.29	Very High
Total	4.20	High

Ozkanal (2023) cited in his study that PSTs' experience during practice teaching can affect their confidence in actual teaching. He believes that school experience and practice teaching are designed to increase the pre-service teachers' participation in classroom activities under the supervision of mentor teachers and to prepare them for the professional environment. He also believes that PSTs get abetter idea of handling various classroom situations by observing experienced teachers.

The immersion of pre-service teachers through classroom activities, along with guided observation could help them develop their confidence in handling challenging classroom situations. Meanwhile, Du Plessis and Razmjoe (2025) noted that facing actual classroom complex situations remain challenging despite

teaching observation and guidance from their cooperating teachers.

In conclusion, findings of the studies further highlighted the importance of guided real classroom situations during practice teaching. Those opportunities help strengthen the PSTs' confidence in handling difficult classroom situations.

Influence of Mentoring on Professional Preparedness of Pre-service Teachers

Table 4 presents the summary of the respondents' ratings on the influence of mentoring during practice teaching. The overall mean score of **4.19** falls within the **High** level of perceived influence on their professional preparedness.

Table 4. Level of Perceived Influence of Mentoring on Professional Preparedness

Mentoring	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I have regular contact with a mentor during my teaching practicum.	4.08	High
2. My mentor provides timely and helpful feedback on my teaching.	4.15	High
3. My mentor encourages me to reflect on and improve my teaching practices.	4.24	Very High
4. I feel comfortable discussing challenges and concerns with my mentor.	4.17	High
5. My mentor models professional teaching behavior.	4.19	High
6. I have learned valuable teaching strategies through mentorship.	4.22	Very High
7. My mentor helps me set goals and evaluate my progress.	4.17	High
8. The mentoring relationship has increased my self-confidence as a teacher.	4.21	Very High
9. I feel supported by my mentor during my teaching experiences.	4.17	High
10. Overall, mentoring has played a vital role in my professional preparation	4.26	Very High
Total	4.19	High

While majority of the respondents view the effect of mentoring on their professional preparedness positively, the overall ratings have not reached the Very High level. Specifically, the highest ratings were given to *mentoring's vital role in professional preparation* ($M = 4.26$) and *mentor's encouragement to reflect on and improve teaching practices* ($M = 4.24$). These ratings highlight the contribution of mentoring in supporting professional preparation and reflective practice.

Meanwhile, the following indicators remained within High range: regular contact with mentors during practicum ($M = 4.08$), receiving timely feedback ($M = 4.15$), and guidance in setting goals and evaluating progress ($M = 4.17$). Despite the high range, there are still areas that need to be strengthened, particularly in maintaining regular mentor interaction and feedback.

Goldshaft (2024) echoed those information by stating that mentoring is a perfect opportunity for mentor teachers to personally guide the PSTs on pedagogical aspects. She stressed that mentoring during post-lesson feedback sessions must be constantly available and flexible for a productive and engaging conversation.

In addition, Hudson (2016) believes that modelling, feedbacking, and open discussions of classroom experiences are significant components of a mentoring session or teacher education program for the pre-service teachers. When exercised with diligence and genuine concern, mentoring can significantly help PSTs make informed decisions in the course teaching career.

The above studies underscore the crucial role of continuous mentoring and feedbacking during practice teaching. Constant guidance from experienced teachers is guaranteed to enhance the instructional delivery of PSTs, let alone their level of preparedness for actual professional teaching career.

Perceived Level of Professional Preparedness of Pre-Service Teachers

Table 5 presents the perceived overall professional preparedness of the respondents. The computed mean of **4.04** puts the perceived responses in **High** category. Throughout the indicators, majority of the respondents ranked themselves as prepared for professional teaching after the completion of their pre-service training.

Despite the positive ratings, none made it to the Very High range, which could mean that respondents are aware that they are competent in many areas but need to be better before accepting the role of a professional teacher.

The following two indicators obtained lower ratings: *Preparedness for collaboration*

with other educators and school staff obtained a mean score of 3.98, while readiness to address the diverse needs of students obtained 4.02. These domains may require more time for mentoring and exposure to collaborative school and classroom activities.

Table 5. Perceived Level of Professional Preparedness of Pre-Service Teachers

Professional Preparedness	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. My teacher education program has prepared me to handle the responsibilities of a professional teacher.	4.11	High
2. I can effectively use the skills and knowledge my teacher used to teach us.	4.04	High
3. The combination of instructional delivery, classroom management, and mentoring has strengthened my teaching ability.	4.09	High
4. I feel equipped to plan, deliver, and assess lessons effectively.	4.02	High
5. I am ready to meet the diverse needs of students in the classroom.	4.02	High
6. My overall experience as a pre-service teacher has been positive and enriching.	4.09	High
7. I have developed the professional habits and mindset necessary for a successful teaching career.	4.02	High
8. I am prepared to collaborate with other educators and school staff in a professional setting.	3.98	High
9. Overall, I believe I am professionally prepared to begin my teaching career	3.98	High
Total	4.04	High

The aforementioned concerns about addressing diverse learners were also reflected in Stites et al. (2018). In their study, PSTs reported feeling underprepared to create meaningful and inclusive experiences for learners with diverse needs. The authors also pointed out that many PSTs felt they needed more actual teaching experience in inclusive settings. Given this, teacher education programs might consider giving PSTs more actual exposure to inclusive classroom settings and more practice, so they can feel more confident in dealing with learners with different needs.

Further evidence is provided by Shen and Bowen (2025), who found that many preservice teachers felt unprepared to teach students with diverse learning needs. The authors noted that PSTs often need more opportunities to practice adapting instruction in inclusive

classrooms. Exposure to diverse learning environments during practice teaching may help strengthen PSTs' confidence and readiness for professional teaching.

In relation to the objective of examining professional preparedness, it is seen in the results presented in Table 5 that respondents tend to view themselves as being prepared to assume teaching roles, though it has not yet reached the highest rating in all aspects. Lower ratings were seen in indicators related to collaboration with other teachers and responding to different learner's needs. These skills often develop through repeated experience in actual school environments rather than through coursework alone.

Providing PSTs with more opportunities to participate in collaborative activities and to

work in classrooms with different types of learners may help strengthen these areas. Experiences of this kind may support a stronger sense of preparedness as PSTs move from teacher preparation toward the actual demands of classroom teaching.

Differences in Perceived Professional Preparedness by Gender

An independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference in perceived professional preparedness between male and female pre-service teachers.

Table 6. Independent Samples t-Test of Perceived Professional Preparedness by Gender

	Female	Male
Mean	4.303125	4.101666667
Variance	0.850367531	1.251014124
Observations	160	60
Pooled Variance	0.958799407	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	218	
t Stat	1.359081918	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.087762493	
t Critical one-tail	1.651873373	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.175524985	
t Critical two-tail	1.970905601	

As shown in Table 6, the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant with results values of $t(218) = 1.36, p = 0.176$. The female PST respondents obtained a slightly higher mean score ($M = 4.30$) compared to the male PST respondents ($M = 4.11$) but the difference did not reach the 0.05 level of significance.

The t-test results suggest that gender does not appear to be a determining factor in how PSTs perceive their readiness for the teaching profession, as both male and female PSTs reported almost similar levels of professional preparedness.

The finding of the study is in contrast with the results of the study by Karaca (2019) which found a statistically significant difference in the professional preparedness perception of male and female PSTs. However, the reported effect size was only at the minimal ($\eta^2 = .02$) that suggests that while gender differences were detectable, their practical impact was limited.

In the current study, the non-significant result may be due to similar training experiences and institutional support given to both male and female PSTs in the teacher education program. This may have resulted to similar perceptions of readiness and professional preparedness. Furthermore, the study's finding supports

the idea that learning experiences and program quality may have a stronger influence on professional preparation rather than gender alone.

Differences in Perceived Professional Preparedness by Teaching Specialization

The perceived level of professional preparedness was also examined according to teaching specialization. Mean scores were first compared across the different specializations to observe possible differences. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then used to determine whether the identified differences were statistically significant.

Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Professional Preparedness by Teaching Specialization

Descriptive statistics of perceived professional preparedness across the different teaching specializations are presented in Table 7A. Due to insufficient sample size for meaningful variance comparison, resulting in an analyzed sample of 219 respondents, the single respondent under the Values Education specialization was excluded from the ANOVA analysis. Among the groups, English majors reported the highest mean score ($M = 4.37, SD = 0.89$), followed by Science ($M = 4.35, SD = 0.83$) and Social Science

(M = 4.29, SD = 0.88). Mathematics majors also showed a high level of perceived preparation (M = 4.12, SD = 0.92). On the other hand,

Filipino specialization obtained the lowest mean score (M = 3.86, SD = 0.80).

Table 7A. Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Professional Preparedness by Specialization

Specialization	n	Mean	SD
English	74	4.37	0.89
Filipino	27	3.86	0.80
Mathematics	36	4.12	0.92
Science	44	4.35	0.83
Social Science	38	4.29	0.88

As seen in the table, the mean scores obtained by the different specializations ranged from 3.86 to 4.37. This indicates that PSTs across all specializations generally see themselves as professionally prepared, although there are noticeable differences in mean scores. The findings reveal that English majors feel more ready professionally than PSTs in the other specializations. This may be related to the nature of English teaching that often involves student interaction, frequent discussion-based activities, and several opportunities that involve engaging students in communicative tasks during practice teaching.

The ADE Ad Hoc Career Report (2024) remarks that English majors cultivates transferable skills, like “analyzing information, communicating effectively, thinking critically, and adapting to different situations.” The report emphasizes that those students have the ability to “synthesize information from different sources and express ideas clearly in various contexts.” No wonder they have a higher level of professional preparedness as reported in this study.

Contradictory, The lowest mean score was obtained by Filipino majors. Bihasa et al. (2024) took note of the struggle of Filipino majors as they transition from practice teaching to the actual teaching profession. The study revealed that “PSTs lacked practical classroom experience during their training, which could make their transition to professional teaching more difficult.” Generally, no particular studies that support this result but there are systemic and training-related factors that can make some Filipino majors feel less professionally prepared.

Leonardo et al. (2026) investigated on how well does pre-service teacher preparation align with classroom competency expectations in Northern Luzon. The study revealed that there is “misalignment of teacher specialization with deployment. In addition, there is overwhelming burden of non-instructional tasks, and the inadequacy of experiential learning. While TEIs are integrating technology and research into their curricula, graduates still face serious challenges with classroom management and differentiated instruction.

The challenges experienced by the PSTs in the teaching practice included limited time for teaching practice, insufficient instructional materials, the classroom management demands, and conflicting schedules during practice teaching. These conditions may influence how prepared PSTs feel when entering the profession.

Although respondents from different teaching specializations rated themselves as professionally prepared, differences in classroom exposure and experiences during practice teaching may still affect their level of confidence in carrying out teaching functions. This is where enough opportunities must be provided to PSTs in applying what they have learned in real classroom contexts before they actually start teaching in the professional setting.

One-Way ANOVA of Perceived Professional Preparedness by Teaching Specialization

The ANOVA results for perceived professional preparedness across teaching specializations are shown in Table 7B. The table reveals an **F value of 1.31** with a **p value of .26**. Because the p value is higher than the 0.05 level of significance, the differences between the

groups of pre-service teachers in terms of specialization are **not significant**. Despite the variation mean scores, the ANOVA results indicate

that pre-service teachers across various specializations generally report similar levels of professional preparedness.

Table 7B. One-Way ANOVA of Perceived Professional Preparedness by Specialization

Source of Variation	df	F	p
Between Groups	4	1.31	.26
Within Groups	214		
Total	218		

A potential factor for this results is that PSTs generally receive the same preparation in the teacher education program. They all undergo the same field study activities and meet practice teaching requirements regardless of their majors. As a result, they develop teaching competencies such as lesson planning, classroom management, and student assessment. Because of the shared experiences, pre-service teachers have most like the same perceptions of their professional readiness.

Mahinay et al. (2024) revealed in their study that pre-service teachers generally rated their level of professional preparedness highly because they believe that they possess knowledge, skills, values, and attitude to be so.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that PSTs are adequately prepared to assume their tasks professionally throughout instructional delivery, classroom management, and mentoring.

Of the three components, the most significant influence on professional preparedness based on the perception of the participants is instructional delivery. Nonetheless, teachers are encouraged to give the PSTs' more training and guidance on learning strategies. Meanwhile, building positive relationships with learners and creating safe learning environments were overall identified as positively influential in classroom management, although they faced challenges in handling difficult classroom situations. PSTs also claimed that mentoring was helpful, especially in their professional development and reflective practice. However, the study revealed that more consistent contact and feedback from mentors is necessary.

The study also shows that PSTs need to be more equipped in addressing diverse learners'

needs and promoting collaboration. Additionally, gender was not regarded as a significant factor in terms of professional preparedness, but the same cannot be said in terms of specializations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. More guidance and training are recommended to ensure PSTs are capable of handling challenging classroom situations, as evidently shown in the results, which have acquired the lowest rating. The new program may include case discussions, simulations, and more authentic exposure during field study.
2. For further enhancement of professional growth and reflective practice, mentoring programs must be intentional with constant and guided feedback mechanisms by way of structured, regular meetings between mentors and PSTs.
3. Collaborative and inclusive teaching must be given more attention across teacher education institutions by offering training and academic activities that will prepare pre-service teachers to competently attend to diverse learners' needs and authentic classroom scenarios.

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