

Becoming a Physical Education Teacher: Lived Experiences of Bachelor of Physical Education Students during Practice Teaching

Adler B. Aguila¹, Rev O. Espanto², Alexander I. Galang³, John Patrick B. Pablo⁴, Axel C. Robles⁵,
Joyce Anne A. Tominez⁶, Rizen C. Vizconde⁷

Central Luzon State University

Abstract: This qualitative phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of Bachelor of Physical Education (BPEd) students during practice teaching and examined how these experiences contributed to their professional development and emerging teacher identity. Ten BPEd graduates from Central Luzon State University were purposively selected and interviewed using semi-structured questions. Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis framework. Findings revealed that participants initially experienced anxiety, nervousness, and self-doubt but gradually developed confidence through actual teaching experiences. Practice teaching also strengthened their instructional skills, flexibility, resourcefulness, and ability to manage diverse learners and teaching situations. Participants identified learner diversity and classroom management as major challenges, while guidance from cooperating teachers and positive interactions within the school community supported their professional growth. They also emphasized the importance of demonstration teaching, early preparation for classroom management, confidence-building, and professional relationships. Overall, the findings indicate that practice teaching serves as an important bridge between theoretical preparation and professional practice. Authentic teaching experiences, mentorship, and meaningful interaction with learners helped participants develop confidence, practical competence, adaptability, and a stronger professional identity as future Physical Education teachers.

Keywords: practice teaching, Bachelor of Physical Education, professional identity, pre-service teachers, phenomenology

1. Introduction

Physical Education (PE) plays an important role in the holistic development of learners by promoting physical fitness, movement competence, social interaction, discipline, and healthy lifestyles. For future Physical Education teachers, developing these competencies involves not only acquiring knowledge of sports and physical activities but also learning how to communicate, manage learners, plan instruction, and respond effectively to real classroom situations. Thus, becoming a PE teacher requires the integration of theoretical knowledge, practical teaching skills, and professional dispositions.

The Bachelor of Physical Education (BPEd) program prepares future PE teachers through coursework in movement sciences, sports, pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, and instructional planning. However, theoretical preparation alone may not be sufficient to develop professional teaching competence. Practice teaching provides pre-service teachers with opportunities to apply their knowledge in authentic school environments, interact with learners, manage classes, conduct physical activities, and respond to unexpected

situations. Through these experiences, student teachers begin to understand the realities and responsibilities of the teaching profession.

Physical activity research also highlights the importance of motivation and perceived competence in students' engagement in physical activities. Martin et al. (2016) examined motivation and physical activity participation among Filipino college students and highlighted the relevance of motivational and competence-related factors in participation. Similarly, Martin et al. (2017) examined students' motivation profiles as predictors of physical activity participation. These studies emphasize that participation in physical activity is influenced not only by physical ability but also by psychological and motivational factors. Such perspectives are relevant to BPED preparation because future PE teachers must learn to create learning environments that encourage participation, confidence, and engagement among diverse learners.

Research on Philippine physical education has also demonstrated the importance of physical competence in movement-based learning. Santos et al. (2022), for example, examined perceived physical competence and cultural appreciation in online Arnis instruction and found that students' perceptions of their physical competence could be developed even within an online learning environment. This suggests that competence in PE involves more than physical performance; it also includes students' perceptions of their ability to perform, learn, and improve. For future PE teachers, understanding these dimensions is important because teaching physical skills requires the ability to demonstrate movements while also helping learners develop confidence and motivation.

Practice teaching is therefore an important stage in the development of professional identity. Recent research by Park et al. (2026) identified professional identity as an important component of PE teachers' professional development, emphasizing that professional identity encompasses the values, qualities, and professional characteristics that teachers develop alongside their knowledge and skills. Similarly, Tagare (2026), in a phenomenological study of PE teachers in the Philippine context, found that teachers' professional experiences were connected with student growth, mentorship, motivation, creativity, resourcefulness, and supportive school environments. These findings highlight the importance of relational and experiential factors in shaping how individuals understand themselves as PE professionals.

Despite the importance of practice teaching, there remains a need to understand how BPED students themselves experience the transition from university-based preparation to actual teaching. In particular, limited attention has been given to how pre-service PE teachers experience anxiety, self-doubt, learner diversity, classroom management, flexibility, mentorship, and the development of professional confidence during practice teaching. Understanding these experiences is important because the transition from student to teacher involves challenges that may not be fully captured through conventional measures of teaching competence.

Therefore, this study explores the lived experiences of Bachelor of Physical Education students during practice teaching. Specifically, it examines their experiences, challenges, opportunities for professional growth, and the ways in which actual teaching experiences contribute to their confidence and emerging professional identity. By understanding these lived experiences, the study aims to provide insights that may help strengthen BPED preparation, demonstration teaching, mentoring, classroom-management training, and practice-teaching programs.

2. Methodology

Research Design

This study will employ a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore and understand the lived experiences of Bachelor of Physical Education students. According to Creswell and Poth (2016), phenomenology seeks to examine how individuals perceive, interpret, and make meaning of their experiences regarding a specific phenomenon. This approach will be considered appropriate to this study because it aims to explore the lived experiences of bachelor of physical education during practice teaching.

Participants

The participants of this study consist of (10) graduate students under the Bachelor of Physical Education course at a state university in Central Luzon, batch 2025. The sample include (4) male and (6) female graduate students.

Data Collection

Data will be collected through semi-structured individual interviews. An interview guide consisting of open-ended questions will be developed to explore the lived experiences of Bachelor of Physical Education students during practice teaching. With the participants' consent, all interviews will be audio-recorded to ensure accurate documentation and facilitate proper data analysis. Follow-up probing questions will also be used when necessary to gain deeper insights, clarify responses, and capture the participants' perspectives and experiences comprehensively.

Data Analysis

The study employed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis framework:

1. Familiarization with the data
2. Generation of initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

Through repeated thematic analysis of the transcripts, meaningful concepts were coded and clustered into broader categories. These were then refined into central themes representing the participants lived experiences.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to established ethical standards for research involving human participants. Before data collection, participants were informed of the study's purpose, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants. To protect anonymity, pseudonyms and participant codes (e.g., P1, P2) were used. Interview recordings and transcripts were securely stored and accessed only by the researchers. Throughout the study, the researchers ensured the protection of participants' privacy, dignity, rights, and welfare.

3. Results

Experiences during Practice Teaching

Theme 1: Transition from Initial Anxiety to Growing Confidence

The respondents described practice teaching as a significant transition from feelings of nervousness and uncertainty toward greater confidence and readiness. Their experiences showed that actual exposure to classroom teaching allowed them to gradually become more comfortable with their responsibilities as future Physical Education teachers.

"Siguro first impression ko noon e, ayun nakakatakot yung parang kabado ka talaga literal na." P1

"Nung una sobrang nakaka-kaba kasi syempre bagong environment ang papasukin ko and first time ko makakapag turo sa mga bata... nakakakaba sya at the same time nakaka-excite kasi new experience para sa akin." P9

"I would describe the overall experience in my practice teaching journey as super great kase ang dami kong natutunan... which made my confidence into the highest peak ng confidence." P4

"Siguro nung before ako mag start ng practice teaching... natatakot ako syempre duda nako sa sarili ko kung kaya ko ba hanggang sa ayun na experience ko sya kaya ko naman pala talaga." P10

These responses show that anxiety was a common part of the participants' initial practice-teaching experience. However, this anxiety gradually became confidence as they gained actual teaching experience and interacted with real learners. P10's experience particularly demonstrates this transition, as initial self-doubt was replaced by the realization that he was capable of handling the responsibilities of teaching. Likewise, P4 described her experience as highly positive and associated her interactions and experiences during practice teaching with a significant increase in confidence.

This suggests that practice teaching serves as an important experiential stage in preparing BPEd students for their future professional roles, because actual classroom exposure allows them to test their abilities, overcome uncertainty, and develop confidence.

Theme 2: Real Classroom Exposure Develops Teaching Skills and Professional Experience

The respondents emphasized that actual exposure to students, school activities, and teaching responsibilities provided meaningful experiences that could not be fully replicated through university-based demonstrations alone.

"Isa ako sa practice teacher noon na gumawa ng isang show... nag turo kami na paano yung sumayaw, kumanta then minanage na rin namin, kasama namin yung cooperating teacher namin." P1

"Shells I have a more experience specially nong ako ang na-assign na mag-facilitate magturo at mag-correct ng dance form ng formation and ng galaw..." P3

"Yung program na na conduct namin is yung nag palaro kami sa DepEd CLSU yung mga bata... nag conduct kami ng program doon, nag palaro." P1

"Para sa akin sobrang laking tulong sa akin nung araw-araw na interaction sa mga students ko and yung mga advice sa akin ng cooperating teacher ko." P9

The findings indicate that authentic teaching experiences exposed the respondents to responsibilities such as facilitating activities, teaching dance, managing students, organizing programs, and interacting with school personnel. These experiences contributed to their understanding of the actual responsibilities of a PE teacher. The participants' responses further suggest that learning through actual practice was an important component of their preparation, as classroom interactions and participation in school activities allowed them to improve their teaching skills and gain experiences relevant to their future profession.

Challenges and Opportunities in Developing Professional Identity

Theme 1: Managing Diverse Learners as a Challenge in Developing Teaching Competence

The participants identified learner diversity and classroom management as major challenges during practice teaching. They encountered students with different personalities, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, and behaviors, requiring them to adjust their approaches to meet different learner needs.

"Siguro yung difficulties, yung sobrang gulo ng mga bata at parang hindi ko kayang i-manage." P1

"Siguro yung pagiging diverse ng learners kase iba iba sila ng strengths and weaknesses." P3

"Yung pinaka naging challenge para sa akin is kung paano ko ihahandle yung mga bata... na mayroong iba't ibang ugali." P9

"Marami ka ng estudyanteng pakikisamahan, iba-iba ang pag-uugali, iba-iba ang pag-iisip." P3

These statements demonstrate that managing diverse learners was not simply a classroom-management concern but also an opportunity for the respondents to develop their teaching competence. P1 recognized that facing difficult students helped him become more confident in establishing authority, while P9 explained that continuously handling students with different personalities gradually taught her how to deal with future learners.

The findings therefore suggest that learner diversity became a practical training ground for developing adaptability, classroom-management skills, and teacher confidence.

Theme 2: Flexibility and Resourcefulness in Responding to Teaching Demands

The participants also experienced situations that required them to become flexible and resourceful. They recognized that the role of a PE teacher extends beyond conducting physical activities and includes responding to unexpected situations, handling different subjects, and working with limited facilities or resources.

"Talagang ang lahat ang ma-e-experience mo kapag nasa field ka na." P3

"Kailangan mong maging resourceful... gagawa ng paraan para ma-execute mo yung task na pinapagawa mo sa kanila." P3

"Hindi lang basta turo-turo lang, madami talaga syang role as a teacher hindi lang teacher minsan MC, minsan doctor kapag may nai-injured na estudyante... minsan guidance counsellor ka din." P2

"Siguro yung pagiging flexible ko... hindi lang naman pure P.E ang tinuturo... nandyan parin yung music and arts." P10

These responses indicate that practice teaching allowed the participants to recognize the multidimensional nature of teaching. PE teachers may need to respond to different classroom situations, teach beyond their major area, manage activities, and address unexpected student needs.

Thus, flexibility and resourcefulness became important characteristics in the participants' developing professional identities. Rather than viewing unexpected situations solely as difficulties, the respondents recognized them as experiences that prepared them for the realities of the teaching profession.

Theme 3: Guidance and Interaction Strengthen Professional Growth

The respondents emphasized the important role of cooperating teachers, students, principals, and other school personnel in their development as future teachers. Their interactions provided guidance, feedback, correction, encouragement, and opportunities for professional learning.

"Ang unang-una nakinig ako doon sa payo ng aking CT. Lahat ng mga sinasabi niya sinunod ko lang hanggang sa na-overcome ko yung mga challenges namin." P2

"Buti nalang nandon parin yung Cooperating Teacher ko para i-guide ako." P3

"Sila yung naging lakas ko para ma-overcome yung fear sa pagtuturo... dahil din sa kanila... nag-s-sink in sa akin na kaya ko palang maging teacher." P2

"Yung interactions between Cooperating Teachers and community... nandun parin yung pag-guide nila sa akin, nandun parin yung pagsaway nila sa akin pag nakikita nilang medyo nalilihis ako." P10

The findings show that professional identity was developed through interaction with members of the school community. Cooperating teachers served as mentors who guided the respondents in classroom management, decision-making, and professional conduct. Meanwhile, interactions with students helped the participants recognize their capacity to teach and influence learners.

Therefore, professional growth occurred through a combination of actual teaching experience and social interaction within the school environment.

Theme 4: Overcoming Self-Doubt through Experience and Practice

Self-doubt was another recurring experience among the participants. Several respondents questioned their readiness and ability to become PE teachers, particularly before deployment or when faced with demanding classroom situations. However, actual teaching experiences gradually helped them overcome these doubts.

"Halos buong journey ko yata... doubt ako sa sarili ko." P2

"Tingin ko sa sarili ko hindi talaga ako capable na mag practice teaching kasi hindi talaga ako ready, nag doubt talaga ako sa sarili ko non." P9

"Siguro nung before ako mag start ng practice teaching... duda nako sa sarili ko kung kaya ko ba hanggang sa ayun na experience ko sya kaya ko naman pala talaga." P10

"Sila yung naging lakas ko para ma-overcome yung fear sa pagtuturo." P2

The responses suggest that self-doubt did not remain constant throughout the practice-teaching journey. Instead, actual teaching, mentoring, and interactions with learners helped the respondents recognize their

capabilities. This indicates that confidence and professional readiness were gradually developed through experience rather than being fully established before deployment.

Insights and Recommendations for the BPEd Practice Teaching Program

Theme 1: Strengthening Teaching Preparation Through Intensive Demonstration Teaching

The respondents emphasized the importance of strengthening demonstration teaching and providing students with more opportunities to practice teaching before entering their actual internship.

“Focus on your demo teaching, gawing seryoso lahat ng demo sa mga major subjects to gain more confidence pag dating ng practice teaching.” P9

“Siguro yung demo teaching namin yun talaga pinag-focusan kasi alam ko namang magiging bala ko 'to pag dating ng internship ko.” P9

“Kailangan pa nating ma-improve yung pagtuturo talaga. Kasi karamihan is doon lang naka-focus, pero meron din kasi sa pagtuturo.” P1

“May demo na agad during sa initial and final demo before magpunta ng field talaga ng practice.” P2

The findings indicate that while BPEd students receive strong preparation in sports and physical activities, participants believe that teaching competence should receive equal emphasis. Demonstration teaching provides an opportunity for students to practice lesson delivery, classroom management, communication, and confidence before facing actual learners.

Theme 2: Earlier Preparation for Classroom Management and Real Teaching Situations

The respondents recommended that preparation for actual classroom situations should begin earlier in the BPEd program. Their experiences revealed that classroom management, learner diversity, lesson planning, and communication become particularly important once students enter actual practice teaching.

“Yung mga subjects na... before tayo sumabak sa practice teaching mayro'n tayong field study. So doon pa lang talagang nahubog na kami.” P2

“Kailangan pa nating ma-improve yung pagtuturo talaga.” P1

“Ang kailangan talaga is ituturo mo siya.” P1

The participants' experiences suggest that students may be technically knowledgeable in sports and physical activities but still require stronger preparation in how to teach those skills to diverse learners. This distinction is important because the actual practice-teaching experience required them not only to demonstrate physical competence but also to explain, manage, motivate, and adapt to students.

Theme 3: Confidence, Preparation, and Professional Relationships as Foundations for Practice Teaching

The respondents also emphasized personal preparation and positive professional relationships as important factors in succeeding during practice teaching.

“Ang advice ko is ngayon pa lang dapat maalam na kayo sa inyong subject area... maging confident. Kasi as a teacher, ikaw na yung tinitingala nila sa harap. So mag-prepare and dapat marunong makisama.” P3

“Wag tamarin gumawa ng lesson plan at maging masaya sa pagtuturo.” P3

“Maging close sa cooperating teacher... and makisama sa lahat ng makakasalamuha mo kapag nasa practice teaching journey ka.” P3

These responses demonstrate that preparation for practice teaching extends beyond technical teaching skills. The participants viewed confidence, preparation, commitment to lesson planning, positive relationships with cooperating teachers, and willingness to work with others as essential elements of a successful practice-teaching experience.

4. Discussion

The findings show that practice teaching was a transformative experience for the BPEd participants. Although they initially experienced anxiety and self-doubt, actual teaching gradually increased their confidence

and readiness. This supports Park et al. (2026), who emphasized the role of professional experiences in developing teachers' professional identity. Tagare (2026) likewise highlighted the importance of mentorship, student interaction, and supportive school environments in the professional development of PE teachers. Authentic classroom exposure also helped participants develop teaching skills, adaptability, and resourcefulness. Through facilitating activities, teaching dance, managing learners, and organizing programs, they were able to apply university-based knowledge to real situations. These experiences demonstrate that professional competence develops through the interaction of theoretical knowledge and practical experience. Learner diversity and classroom management were identified as major challenges. Participants encountered students with different behaviors, abilities, and needs, requiring them to adjust their teaching approaches. These challenges became opportunities to develop flexibility, communication, and classroom-management skills. This is particularly important in PE, where teachers must manage active and diverse groups while ensuring participation and safety.

The findings also relate to Martin et al. (2016) and Martin et al. (2017), who emphasized the importance of motivation in physical activity participation. For future PE teachers, understanding learners' motivational differences is important in creating engaging and supportive learning environments. Similarly, Santos et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of perceived competence in Philippine PE, suggesting that confidence and competence can develop through practice and supportive learning experiences.

Mentorship was another important factor in participants' development. Cooperating teachers provided guidance, feedback, encouragement, and correction, helping participants overcome challenges and strengthen their confidence. The findings therefore support the importance of strong relationships between pre-service teachers, cooperating teachers, and the school community.

Finally, participants recommended stronger demonstration teaching, earlier preparation for classroom management, confidence-building activities, and professional relationship development. These recommendations suggest that BPED programs should provide more opportunities for microteaching, classroom-management practice, lesson planning, and structured feedback before field deployment.

Overall, the findings indicate that practice teaching serves as an important bridge between university preparation and professional teaching. Through authentic experiences, mentorship, and interaction with diverse learners, participants developed confidence, practical competence, flexibility, and an emerging professional identity as future PE teachers.

5. Conclusions

The findings revealed that the journey of Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) practice teachers is a transformative passage marked by initial anxiety and self-doubt that gradually yields to professional confidence. Direct exposure to authentic classroom and field environments serves as the primary engine for this growth, bridging the gap between theoretical coursework and the dynamic realities of actual teaching. Through handling diverse learner behaviors, stepping into versatile roles beyond traditional instruction, and adapting to resource constraints, pre-service teachers cultivate crucial professional competencies, adaptability, and instructional resilience. Furthermore, active mentorship from cooperating teachers and positive integration into the school community act as vital catalysts, supporting pre-service educators in overcoming self-doubt and solidly shaping their emerging professional identities. Ultimately, practice teaching shifts student teachers from passive learners to confident, reflective, and multidimensional PE educators.

6. Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, higher education institutions should restructure the BPED curriculum to incorporate intensive, micro-teaching demonstration sessions earlier in the academic program to bridge the gap between sports mastery and actual instructional delivery. Teacher education institutions ought to enhance pre-fieldwork preparation by integrating targeted modules on real-world classroom management, handling diverse learner behaviors, and flexible instructional strategies under limited resources. Program coordinators

should establish structured orientation and collaborative mentorship frameworks with cooperating teachers to ensure supportive, constructive feedback mechanisms throughout deployment. Lastly, pre-service PE teachers are advised to actively build professional rapport within their assigned school communities, engage continuously in reflective lesson planning, and embrace unexpected field challenges as critical opportunities for professional identity development.

7. References

1. Alugar, R. (2025). Between the lines of theory: The theory-to-practice transition experience of practice teachers in real-classroom settings. *International Journal of Education, Technology and Science*.
2. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a>.
3. Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. SAGE Publications.
4. Martin, J. T., Santos, M. E., & Tubera, J. G. (2017). Students' motivation profiles as predictors of physical activity participation. In *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Sports Science, Health and Physical Education* (pp. 349–353). SciTePress. <https://doi.org/10.5220/0007060903490353>.
5. Martin, J. T., Tubera, J. G., Monta, V. D., Naguiat, E. S., Yambao, M. J. C., Tullao, M., et al. (2016). Motivation and physical activity participation of Filipino college students. *Asia Life Sciences*, 25(1), 245–254.
6. Park, J., Yun, S., & Choi, E. (2026). Professional identity of physical education teachers: What are the key components? *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 45(1), 41–51. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.2024-0078>.
7. Santos, M., Martin, J., Sigua, E. M., & Manuel, S. (2022). Effects of online teaching on perceived physical competence and cultural appreciation of the Philippine martial arts “Arnis.” *Ido Movement for Culture. Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology*, 22(5), 48–54.
8. Tagare, R. L., Jr. (2026). Becoming a PE teacher: Meaning making and lived experiences in the Philippine context. *Sportis: Scientific Journal of School Sport, Physical Education and Psychomotricity*, 12(2), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.17979/sportis.2026.12.2.12819>.

INFO

Corresponding Author: **Rev O. Espanto**, Central Luzon State University.

How to cite/reference this article: **Rev O. Espanto, Adler B. Aguila, Alexander I. Galang, John Patrick B. Pablo4, Axel C. Robles, Joyce Anne A. Tominez, Rizen C. Vizconde, Becoming a Physical Education Teacher: Lived Experiences of Bachelor of Physical Education Students during Practice Teaching, Asian. Jour. Social. Scie. Mgmt. Tech. 2026; 8(5): 90-97.**