



## School-based practicum and pre-service teachers' self-efficacy: Impact and challenges

 **Awad Faek Altarawneh<sup>1+</sup>**

 **Mahmoud Alkhazaleh<sup>2</sup>**

 **Ziad M. Alkhazaleh<sup>3</sup>**

 **Rula Tahsin Tarawneh<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Teaching and Curriculum, Faculty of Educational Sciences, The Hashemite University, Zarqa 13133, Jordan.

<sup>1</sup>Email: [a.altarawneh@hu.edu.jo](mailto:a.altarawneh@hu.edu.jo)

<sup>2</sup>Email: [MKhazalah@hu.edu.jo](mailto:MKhazalah@hu.edu.jo)

<sup>3</sup>Educational Psychology and Counseling Department, Faculty of Educational Sciences, the Hashemite University. P.O. box 330127, Zarqa 13133, Jordan.

<sup>3</sup>Email: [ziad.kaza@yahoo.com](mailto:ziad.kaza@yahoo.com)

<sup>4</sup>Department of English Language and Literature, Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan.

<sup>4</sup>Email: [dr.rulatarawneh@bau.edu.jo](mailto:dr.rulatarawneh@bau.edu.jo)



(+ Corresponding author)

### ABSTRACT

#### Article History

Received: 10 January 2023

Revised: 16 March 2023

Accepted: 3 April 2023

Published: 14 April 2023

#### Keywords

Challenges

Pre-service teachers

School practicum

Self-efficacy

Teacher education professional diploma.

This study aimed to investigate the effect of school-based practicum experience on the self-efficacy of pre-service teachers (PTs) enrolled in Teacher Education Professional Diploma (TEPD) in Jordanian universities. The study followed mixed methods research. In the quantitative part, an online questionnaire was administered to 134 pre-service teachers (PTs) at the outset of the practicum program. Then it was re-administered to the same sample after completing the practicum. In the qualitative part, semi-structured interviews were conducted after the practicum program to investigate the skills acquired by PTs during the school practicum and to identify the challenges, they faced during the school practicum experience. In the qualitative part, a total of 18 students voluntarily participated in the interviews. Results showed that the school-based practicum experience had a statistically significant effect on the overall mean scores of the PTs' self-efficacy in the pre-and post-applications and each study area (instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement). Furthermore, PTs reported several challenges during the school practicum, including the role of the academic supervisor, the cooperating school, the cooperating teacher, the nature of the TEPD program, and dealing with students.

**Contribution/Originality:** This study is one of the few studies that examined the role of school experiences practicum on pre-service teachers' self-efficacy and identified the challenges they face during training. It provides useful insights to stakeholders and educational policymakers in reconsidering and developing the professional diploma program for teacher preparation and qualification in Jordanian universities.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The teacher is unquestionably the cornerstone of the educational process and one of its most crucial components since s/he is responsible for advancing generations toward achieving the intended goals of education. Emphasis should be placed on his/her professional preparation and bridging the gap between the theoretical and practical skills. Teachers, therefore, should be trained in all mental, emotional, motor, and cultural areas. This would equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their duties according to educational pedagogies and enable them to lead, conduct research, and investigate successfully (Al-Harbi, 2018).

One construct which has received a great deal of educators' and researchers' attention is self-efficacy which is widely believed to significantly impact the learning process (Bandura, 1977; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Self-efficacy was first coined by psychologist Bandura (1977) in his social cognitive theory. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his capacity to execute behaviors, determine the nature of this behavior, and make an effort necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Bandura, 1977). According to researchers, those with higher self-efficacy can persevere in their attempts to succeed, whereas those with lower self-efficacy are more likely to give up after making only a little effort (Bandura, 1977; Huinker & Madison, 1997). The effectiveness of self-efficacy can be seen by evaluating how much effort each person puts into a given activity, how persistent they are in the face of potential setbacks, and how tough they are under pressure. However, it is believed that an individual's effort, tenacity, and toughness increase with their feeling of self-efficacy. Anyone with solid self-efficacy can approach challenges and tasks with composure, sobriety, and self-confidence (Pajares, 2005).

Self-efficacy encompasses a wide range of notions, but they all share a similar meaning. For example, De Leon-Carillo (2007) described it as a person's self-perception of their own capabilities and their belief that they will succeed in completing a task. On the other hand, Zimmerman, Bonner, and Kovach (1996) contends that it is the self-perception associated with completing a particular job successfully rather than the person's belief in the activity's accomplishment. According to Bandura (1977) self-efficacy is a person's confidence in their ability to succeed in a particular situation. He proposed four sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. Mastery experiences are one of the most effective ways to enhance self-efficacy because successful performance or experience positively impacts the individual's belief in his self-efficacy.

In contrast, failure to perform negatively affects his belief in self-efficacy. Vicarious experiences provide an understanding of others' modeled attainments, which affect one's self-efficacy beliefs by comparing and evaluating others' successful and unsuccessful performances. Verbal persuasion can convince people of their capabilities if it comes from a credible source, such as close friends and family. Finally, regarding physiological and affective states, stress and anxiety affect an individual's beliefs. Positive feelings about performance increase self-efficacy, while negative emotions reduce the individual's self-efficacy. However, after individuals' self-efficacy beliefs are shaped, they become somewhat resistant to change (Bandura, 1997).

Zimmerman (1995) claims that the higher is the self-efficacy and the higher are the set goals, the lower is the fear of failure, and there is more endurance to attain results. Flammer (1995) believes that whoever has a feeling that his self-efficacy is high, will be more persistent and active in achieving the required goals and tend to have better mental and physical health. On the other hand, as reinforcement is linked to students' self-efficacy, awards encourage students to work hard and boost their self-confidence, and increase their self-sufficiency (Woolfolk, 1998). Additionally, this efficacy develops from the student's actual achievement rather than moral support or encouragement from their teachers and peers. Bandura sees self-efficacy as a reliable indicator of an individual's capabilities and expected behavior (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy correlates with the individual's belief and confidence that he can perform the necessary behavior as demanded by circumstances. The amount of difficulties the person expects he will face is reflected in the evaluation of his self-sufficiency. As a result, the statements of self-efficacy measure must be written based on what the subject can achieve rather than what he will do (Bandura, 2006).

Teacher self-efficacy (TSE) has a considerable role in developing students' positive or negative attitudes towards school. It shapes his performance effectiveness in the classroom, thus, improving the quality of education, class management, and achievement. Furthermore, it urges him to use appropriate instructional methods and strategies to enhance students learning and academic achievements, thus, improving learning and teaching processes (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Garvis and Pendergast (2011) affirm that teachers who have a high level of self-efficacy are more adaptable in their instruction and eager to assist their students who have different

learning levels, in contrast to teachers who have a low level of self-efficacy who are unable to meet the learning needs of students with diverse learning levels.

Furthermore, teachers with a high level of self-efficacy dedicate more time to academic instruction and are more sympathetic to their students who encounter difficulty learning. Likewise, teachers who begin their careers with a higher level of self-efficacy will be more outstanding instructors in their various roles and will be more able to stay in the teaching profession in the future (Soodak & Podell, 1997). Woolfolk (1998) contends that self-efficacy might foretell that a teacher with a high sense of self-efficacy works hard and perseveres longer even when he notices that his students are experiencing difficulty learning because this teacher strives hard to attain success for himself and his students.

Teachers who believe that their instructional abilities and self-efficacy are essential to improving effective instruction and student performance are more successful than those who think they have no power to affect their students' academic performance (Huinker & Madison, 1997). TSE beliefs are teachers' beliefs about their ability to achieve considerable results for their students (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Furthermore, these beliefs can predict the level of TSE and future success in teaching, which positively affects their students' achievement level and inspires them to carry out the required tasks (Cantrell, Young, & Moore, 2003). Although there has been much research on self-efficacy, few have specifically examined how PTs' self-efficacy beliefs are affected by practicum experiences (McDonnough & Matkins, 2010).

Generally, few studies have been conducted in the United States, Canada, and Australia regarding changes in teacher self-efficacy (TSE). They have addressed school practicum as a course for obtaining a university degree (Vignoli, Guglielmi, & Balduzzi, 2018). Although these studies have revealed that TSE may increase during school practicum (Berg & Smith, 2018; Megawati & Astutik, 2018), other studies have shown no change over time (Savasci & Tuna, 2018). Hence, more research is needed in this field.

Due to the accelerated development in the educational field and the requirements of the knowledge era, higher education institutions have worked hard to equip their student teachers with the theoretical and practical skills necessary for completing the educational system's objectives. Therefore, the Teacher Education Professional Diploma (TEPD), established in its first version in the academic year 2020–2021, was eagerly adopted by the faculties of education at Jordanian universities (viz., Jordanian, Hashemite, Mu'tah, and Yarmouk universities).

TEPD for PTs consists of three main courses: The first introduces General Pedagogies of Teaching and Learning. The second is devoted to specific subject pedagogy (Instructional methods). The third includes a school-based practicum, which lasts for (18-20) intermittent weeks, with three school experiences. Student teachers will be trained in two/ three private or public schools under the supervision of the academic advisor (university faculty member) and the cooperating teacher in the chosen school.

However, the school-based practicum highlights the significance of school experience in a student teacher's transition from being a learner who acquires knowledge and abilities to a teacher who transfers experiences to students. According to Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009) student teachers have the opportunity to practice teaching in a natural classroom setting during their school training. They also gain the experience and skills necessary for teaching before beginning their careers. Savasci and Tuna (2018) contend that the practicum program gives the student teacher self-confidence, high levels of self-satisfaction, and a sense of stability as a result of establishing positive relationships with the school staff.

Despite the significance of the school experience for student teachers and its crucial role in preparing them for the next stage of their careers, especially their teaching skills, there are hurdles they must overcome during the training period that may limit their benefit. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the school-based practicum's effects on the student teachers' degree of self-efficacy. It also sought to identify student teachers' most significant challenges during their training. Thus, this paper attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of the school-based practicum experience on the self-efficacy of PTs enrolled in the TEPD?
2. What skills and knowledge have PTs mastered during their school-based practicum experience?
3. What challenges have PTs faced during their joining the school-based practicum experience?

## 2. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

### 2.1. Approach

The current research followed the descriptive analytical method through a mixed method research design comprising quantitative-qualitative analysis in several stages.

### 2.2. Sample

Total of (134) pre-service teachers, who were enrolled in the TEPD, participated in this study, of which 18 were males (13.4%) and 116 were females (86.6%). It is worth noting that the study sample consisted of PTs who joined the TEPD in Jordanian universities for the academic year 2021-2022. Pre-service teachers with bachelor's degrees in mathematics, science, Arabic, or English were only included in the study sample. They were asked to complete an online questionnaire at the beginning of the school year before the practicum program began (pre-test) and again after completing the training stage (post-test). It is worth noting that the academic year started on September 20, 2021, till June 6, 2022.

After completing the practicum program, 18 participants volunteered to participate in semi-structured interviews to address the second and third study questions, which focused on the knowledge and skills that the student teachers have mastered as well as identifying the challenges that the students encountered during the school experience.

### 2.3. Instrument

After reviewing the theoretical literature, the researcher developed an online questionnaire to measure self-efficacy by developing the instrument (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) based on Bandura (1977), measure it after translating and adapting it to suit the Jordanian school environment. The questionnaire consisted of three domains regarding the teacher's profession: the field of instructional strategies (9) items, classroom management (8) items, and student engagement (9) items. The questionnaire included in its initial form (26) items with a five-point scale expressing the level of practice "very high", "high", "medium", "low", and "very low". Consecutively, the score assigned for each level was (5, 4, 3, 2, 1).

The researcher benefited from Tashman and Al-Mastarihi (2019); Al-Harbi (2018); Abu Latifa and Issa (2011) in developing the second instrument (semi-structured interview). The interview included two open-ended questions: "What skills and knowledge have the PTs, who had joined the TEPD, mastered during the school-based practicum experience?", "What challenges have they faced during the school-based practicum experience?" Experienced and competent teachers and specialty supervisors reviewed the instrument to verify its validity.

### 2.4. Instrument Validity and Reliability

The validity of the questionnaire was checked by presenting the instrument to a committee of specialized faculty members and those interested in the field of study. They were asked to express their opinions about whether the statements of the instrument measured what it was supposed to measure. All their suggestions were considered. The instrument's reliability was validated by calculating the internal consistency coefficient using the Cronbach-alpha equation, and its value was (0.94). Therefore, this value was deemed acceptable.

The content validity of the interview card was checked by presenting it to a specialized committee. Then, all appropriate modifications were performed. First, the interview reliability was verified using a pilot sample (n=5).

The allocated time for interviewing each volunteered participant was (15-25) minutes. Then, a week later, the participants were re-interviewed using the same questions and method. The first and second interviews were then computed, and the results were compared to verify the reliability of the students' answers; however, the two analyses were (89%) identical.

### 2.5. Procedures

The goal of this research was to determine the effect of school experience on the self-efficacy of PTs enrolled in the TEPD, as well as to gain a thorough understanding of the most crucial skills and knowledge in which they had become proficient in, and to pinpoint the challenges they had encountered during the school experience. Data were collected using an online questionnaire and individual interviews. Quantitative and qualitative methods were applied to answer the study questions. The online questionnaire was administered to the volunteer participants in September 2021 with the launch of TEPD to prepare and qualify teachers in the four public universities: the University of Jordan, Yarmouk University, Mu'tah University, and Hashemite University.

The same questionnaire was applied to the sample at the end of the program in June 2022. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted to investigate the most effective skills and knowledge in which the PTs had become sufficiently confident to practice, and to identify the challenges they faced during the school experience. An interview card was developed including the following questions: "What skills and knowledge have the PTs, who had joined the TEPD, mastered during the school-based practicum experience?", "What challenges have they faced during the school-based practicum experience?". The researcher contacted the participants to schedule an appropriate date and place for the interview. Each interviewee was interviewed separately after getting permission to record the interviews. To ensure accuracy and prevent losing any information, the interviewees' responses were written down during the interview and recorded using an audio recorder. After that, their responses (written/recorded) were compared. The data was then coded and summarized by data segmentation after the researchers had reviewed it multiple times. Specifically, open coding was used, where the concepts and traits mentioned by the respondents were coded and arranged as they were taken during the interviews.

After reading the ideas in the open coding and reaching through them to the general features and characteristics that these ideas fall under, the axial coding process was carried out. Once at the main areas, the sub-ideas were inserted within them to reach the general features and produce them in their final form. Finally, the researchers made sure that the sub features were the same as pronounced by the interviewee.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study were based on data collected from 134 PTs who joined the TEPD program, who responded to a 26-item online survey and participated in semi-structured interviews to provide information about the influence of school experience on self-efficacy. To answer the first question, what is the impact of the school-based practicum experience on the self-efficacy of PTs enrolled in the TEPD? Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program, version 26, using a t-test paired sample as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Results of the paired sample t-test of the pre and post-test of the level of PTs self-efficacy (N = 134).

Domain		M	SD	Std. error mean	T	Sig.
Instructional strategies	Pre-test	3.19	0.62	0.05	-6.85	0.00*
	Post-test	3.57	0.59	0.05		
Classroom management	Pre-test	3.00	0.79	0.07	-7.78	0.00*
	Post-test	3.67	0.65	0.06		
Student engagement	Pre-test	2.97	0.64	0.06	-8.77	0.00*
	Post-test	3.61	0.65	0.06		
TSE total scale	Pre-test	3.05	0.59	0.05	-8.55	0.00*
	Post-test	3.62	0.59	0.05		

Note: \*P < 0.05.

The school experience practicum for PTs was designed to increase their self-efficacy in student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies. In this respect, the researchers conducted a paired sample t-test to investigate the efficacy of the school experience practicum on PTs' self-efficacy. Findings demonstrated that PTs' scores in the pre-test of Instructional strategies ( $M= 3.19$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ ) and post-test ( $M = 3.57$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ ) were significantly different from each other,  $t(133) = -6.85$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . However, their scores in the pre-test scores of classroom management self-efficacy ( $M= 3.00$ ,  $SD = 0.79$ ) and post-test scores ( $M= 3.67$ ,  $SD=0.65$ ) were statistically significant, where  $t(133) = -7.78$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Regarding the students' engagement area, the pre-test scores ( $M= 2.97$ ,  $SD = 0.64$ ) and post-test scores ( $M= 3.61$ ,  $SD=0.65$ ) were statistically significant at  $t(133)=-8.77$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Results also showed a similar trend for the TSE total scale scores (Pre-test:  $M = 3.05$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ ; Post-Test:  $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ ),  $t(133) = -8.55$ ,  $p < 0.05$ .

The first research question was to determine how PTs who attended the TEPD program perceived their level of self-efficacy following their participation in the school practicum. The significant gains in all subscale scores from the pre- to post-tests suggested that they had more robust views about their self-efficacy after they had finished their school experience practicum. This finding emphasizes the necessity for pre-service teachers to have chances to develop such beliefs because self-efficacy beliefs are relatively hard to alter once acquired (Bandura, 1977). Furthermore, the study's findings imply that these opportunities are provided via the practical component of the academic program.

Teacher self-efficacy is described as a teacher's perception of their ability to effectively carry out learning and teaching duties to increase students' engagement and academic achievement (Bandura, 1977). As previously stated, teacher self-efficacy is connected with teachers' motivation to exert more effort and devote more time to their student's academic progress (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Furthermore, more effective teachers excel at effective instructional strategies, classroom management, and student participation in learning activities (Bandura, 1997). Moreover, research evidence has shown that teacher self-efficacy is critical in influencing students' affective, social, emotional, and academic growth by providing optimal classroom motivation (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

As a result, this study aimed to investigate the impact of a school experience practicum on pre-service teachers' efficacy beliefs, which may contribute to the development of strong self-efficacy in learning and teaching. The findings have revealed that the school experience practicum of the TEPD significantly impacted the development of teacher self-efficacy beliefs. After 18 weeks of school experience practicum, there was a statistically significant rise in pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs compared to their pre-test scores. Wolters and Daugherty (2007) investigated how pre-service students' efficacy perceptions evolved during teacher education programs. The findings revealed that field experience had a slight positive effect on prospective teachers' self-efficacy for instructional strategies and classroom management but had no impact on self-efficacy for student engagement.

Van Schagen Johnson, La Paro, and Crosby (2017) investigated early practicum experiences in early childhood teacher education programs. Students who felt they were a good fit for their mentor teachers reported improved classroom management and student engagement self-efficacy. Collaborations between teacher training programs, mentor teachers, and prospective student teachers are critical to the effectiveness of field experience in this regard. As a result, Oh (2011) proposed that the motivation and competencies of pre-service teachers are essential factors for improving their teaching self-efficacy. In line with earlier findings, the development of teaching efficacy is linked to student teachers' content knowledge, teaching abilities gained during field experiences, and observations of children's learning in dealing with daily issues (Berg & Smith, 2018; Oh, 2011; Yeung & Watkins, 2000).

To answer the second and third questions, "What skills and knowledge have PTs mastered during their school-based practicum experience?", "What challenges have PTs faced during their joining the school-based practicum experience?" The researchers classified the data they obtained from interviews following the thematic analysis method. To determine the most significant knowledge and skills that student teachers have acquired with

confidence, the participants were asked to respond to the statement, "I feel confident because since I joined the school experience, I have effectively developed the following knowledge and skills." The responses were summarized as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 shows the subjects' responses in order. "Planning" topped the options by (100%), while the "practical application of learning theories" option obtained the lowest percentage (56%). It is observed that student teachers are sufficiently confident in their planning knowledge. For example, one participant reported: *"Before I entered the sector, I assumed that the teacher should only be aware of mathematical knowledge, but I soon realized that the teacher needs many things, including planning, without which he would be unable to thrive in his vocation"*. As seen in the second axis, school experience boosted teachers' self-confidence. A total of 17 teachers (94%) stated they got more confident in dealing with students during schooling.

**Table 2.** Frequencies and percentages of subjects' responses to the interview question, arranged in descending order.

Item	Frequencies	Percent
Applying the Planning effectively	18	100%
I have become a self-confident learner and teacher	17	94%
Attention to understanding students' needs/differentiation	17	94%
Building relationships with the school community (Teachers, administration, students)	16	89%
I contemplate teaching practices	16	89%
The role of the teacher is the facilitator and guide of the educational process	15	83%
Understanding the role of the teacher and working to develop professional performance and teaching skills continuously	15	83%
Making the student the focus of the educational process	14	78%
Evaluation and assessment	13	72%
Knowledge of teaching and learning strategies and pedagogy	13	72%
Knowledge of research, curriculum, and learner development	11	61%
Applying behavior management	11	61%
The practical application of learning theories	10	56%

However, the effect of school experience on how student teachers understand students' needs/differentiation was evident, as 17 participants (94%) indicated that they could apply differentiation across students. A female participant stated, *"I feel the need to prepare varied activities,"* for instance, and *"I now understand how crucial it is to consider each student's unique characteristics and how crucial it is to plan various activities to encourage differentiation among students."*

The application of learning theories in practice was the least exciting subject. However, 10 participants (56%) had adequate knowledge of learning theories and their use. One of the students gave the following example: *"The constructivist theory is very significant in the classroom because the instructor emphasizes active learning practices and the role of the student, which will make learning effective."* According to 8 respondents (44%), one of the challenges was the student teachers' inadequate understanding of how to use learning theories. One student stated, *"I understand the constructivist theory and its ideas, but I do not know how to apply it or the tactics that enable me to employ this theory in the classroom."*

The third question of the study was: "What challenges have PTs faced during their joining the school-based practicum experience?" To find its answer in the interview, the interviewees were specifically asked: "What were the most challenging aspects of your schooling experience?" Table 3 reveals the challenges that PTs faced during the school experience: the academic supervisor, the cooperating teacher, the nature of the TEPD, and the cooperating school. The study's findings are consistent with those of Tashman and Al-Mastarihi (2019); Al-Harbi (2018); Habayeb (2016); Abu Latifa and Issa (2011) according to which students faced a variety of difficulties, including those related to the academic supervisor, the cooperating teacher, the structure of the practical education program, and the cooperating school. Participants' responses to each axis were addressed independently as follows:

### 3.1. First: Challenges Related to the Academic Supervisor

Interviewees' responses revealed their challenges regarding the academic supervisor and how he dealt with them. For example, one of the students reported, "the academic supervisor did not visit me during the first school experience except for once and did not provide me with the strengths and development points that I needed." In addition, one female PT said, "the academic supervisor did not come until the end of the semester and did not give me any beneficial advice." In classroom management and dealing with students, I am a student who needs guidance because I have never practiced teaching before."

**Table 3.** Descriptive analysis of the challenges reported by subjects.

Field	Responses	Frequency	Percent
Academic supervisor	A lack of visits from the academic supervisor and poor communication with him during the school experience.	5	28%
Cooperating teacher	The cooperating teachers' insufficient training and experience.	8	44%
	Failing to activate the cooperating teacher's role adequately.	8	44%
The nature of the TEPD	The application of learning theories in practice.	8	44%
	Difficulty using the virtual learning environment and uploading lectures and activities to it.	2	11%
	Academic stress and tension.	7	39%
	Academic writing and particular evaluation criteria and linking them to school experience.	6	33%
	Fill out school experience forms.	5	28%
	Short time allotted for writing assignments, academic readings, and diploma requirements during school experience.	9	50%
	Lack of clarity of teachers' standards and student-teacher evaluation criteria.	5	28%
Cooperating school	The environment in the schools of school experience and the lack of educational and technological resources.	5	28%
	The distance between student teachers' residence areas and schools of school experience.	4	22%
	Asking student teachers to do work outside the scope of training and exhausting them with what is not required of them.	5	28%
	Trainees' ignorance of school regulations.	5	28%
	Poor cooperation between the university and schools of school experience and cooperating teachers.	6	33%
Dealing with students	Students' lack of interaction and their shyness from engaging in-class activities with the trainees.	7	39%
	Difficulty dealing with students with learning difficulties and those with special needs.	5	28%

The participants' responses make it evident that one of the challenges they faced was the academic supervisor. They felt that there was no relationship between them because of the lack of visits, and they believed that he exclusively concentrated on the faults they made. This outcome is in line with [Khawaldeh, Ahmeda, and Al-Hijazi \(2010\)](#) who demonstrated that student teachers struggle with the academic supervisor's lack of communication and strict instructions to the trainees, negatively affecting them. It also accords with the findings of [Al-Bhairi \(2011\)](#) who found that student teachers suffer from the academic supervisor's absence and his emphasis on weakness during the field visit rather than development. However, this result can be attributed to the academic supervisor's lack of knowledge of his role as a supervisor. In addition, the large number of trainees prevents the academic supervisor from visiting the student teacher more frequently.

### 3.2. Second: Challenges Related to the Cooperating Teacher

Following the findings of the interviews with the student teachers, it is known that the collaborating teacher function was not active in the school. Both the cooperating teacher and the student teacher were unaware of their

respective roles; therefore, neither was aware of the other. For instance, one of the students said, *"My teacher does not use modern teaching methods and prohibits me from implementing the ways that I wish to use with the students in the classroom."* Another PT stated, *"The cooperating teacher makes me teach the student alone and leaves the classroom, as he has no role with me"*. The PTs' responses make it evident that the collaborating teacher's position in the classroom was not active. This is challenging because student instructors require the cooperating teacher's supervision, instruction, and follow-up.

This result is consistent with [Khawaldeh et al. \(2010\)](#), which showed the cooperating teachers' reliance on the student trainees and failure to carry out their assigned duties. It also agrees with the studies ([Al-Anazi, 2015](#); [Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2009](#)) which showed the cooperating teachers' lack of cooperation with the student-teacher during the school experience and his absence of guidance. This outcome can be linked to the cooperating teacher's weakening position as a collaborating teacher due to the partnering university's poor preparation of the cooperating teacher and the teacher's heavy workload within the school.

### 3.3. Third: Challenges Related to the Nature of the TEPD Program

The results of the interviews demonstrated numerous challenges facing PTs because of the structure of the TEPD program. For example, one trainee reported, *"I find the virtual learning environment difficult to utilize and the delay in uploading lectures and activities to it"*. In addition, one of the students said, *"I do not know how learning theories may be utilized during training at school"* while another noted, *"We suffer from the pressure of the written assignments necessary during training and academic stress."*

Even though six of the PTs said that *"implementing academic writing assignments and special evaluation criteria and how to link them to the school experience is one of the most difficult things,"* many of them said that *"filling out the forms during the school experience is one of the difficulties they face as they were not trained to fill it out or There is someone in the school who can fill it in."*

PTs see the professional diploma program as a challenge. This result can be attributed to the program's novelty and status as an experimental program at universities. As a result, some students believe that this program is burdensome and exhausting due to its requirements, including the conditions to fill out the school experience forms on a daily and weekly basis and submit them to the academic supervisor, as well as the challenge of applying teachers' standards and integrating them during the school experience and the program's evaluation criteria.

### 3.4. Fourth: Challenges Related to the Cooperating School

Some trainee students thought the school's administration did not fully grasp their position as trainees. One of the female trainees, for instance, said, *"The school administration assigns me to fill the classes in place of the absent teachers"*, knowing that they were trainees and have written and reflective assignments as well as other work from class observations, but the school did not comprehend that. Likewise, ignorance of the regulations and laws set by the school, where one of the students said: *"the administration did not explain to us the system used inside the school"*. For example, one trainee pointed out, *"I took the students out to the schoolyard in one of the workshop classes, and then the school principal told me it is forbidden to take the students out to the yard in the workshop classes."*

Furthermore, a female trainee had a problem with one of the parents because she did not know about his daughter's health condition in the class and because the school did not inform her about the student's condition. In addition, one of the participants said, *"The school does not provide us with a place to rest during our free time, as is the case with the primary teacher."* One of them added, *"I think that the classroom environment provided by the school administration is not suitable for modern teaching practices."*

These examples demonstrate how the trainees perceived the collaborating school as one of their most significant challenges. This outcome can result from the school administration's lack of understanding of the professional diploma program; their ignorance of the value of the student teacher's training and school experience;

and their failure to assist him in reaping its benefits. The coordination and cooperation between the university and the partnering schools also suffer from a lack of strength. This study's findings align with (Khawaldeh et al., 2010) which demonstrated that one of the issues facing student teachers is the school administration's ignorance of the nature of the practicum program.

### 3.5. Fifth: Challenges Related to Dealing with Students

The trainees were aware that there was a challenge related to the students. For instance, one of participants stated, *"I find it tough to manage the students because some of them are reluctant to participate in class. The presence of such pupils with special needs in the classroom is difficult to handle."* A different trainee claimed, *"I suffered from teenage students, as I did not get used to how to deal with them."* Another student claimed, *"We face a problem with students with learning difficulties because we do not know how to deal with them, and there is no teacher with them, and we did not study any course about this type of students and how to teach them"*.

The aforementioned highlights the fact that dealing with students is difficult for the trainers due to the type of students and their age group. The findings of this study align with those of Al-Behairi (2011) which discovered that in addition to students who are falling behind academically, trainees also deal with issues involving students with learning disabilities and quarrelsome and shy students. In addition, Al-Harbi (2018) confirmed that student teachers encounter difficulties during their practice of practical education in schools, problems with the academic supervisor, cooperating teacher, dealing with students, and dealing with the school administration are also represented.

### 3.6. Study Limitations

One of the limitations to consider when evaluating the current study's findings was the sample of PTs enrolled in the TEPD at Jordanian universities. It was a modest sample size though drawn from four Jordanian universities, with 134 pre-service teachers volunteering to participate in the study. As a result, it was imperative for us to be careful about the generalizability of the findings.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The study's findings showed that the school experience practicum courses had profoundly shaped a particular sample of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy views. In addition, the researchers demonstrated that the school experience practicum course significantly impacts the participants' efficacy beliefs because high teacher efficacy is linked considerably to better student outcomes and positive teacher behaviors. The results also showed that teacher efficacy is critical in enhancing teacher education and encouraging the effectiveness of the authentic learning experience.

The researchers also suggest evaluating the professional diploma program's structure, improving communication channels between student teachers, cooperating schools, and universities to look for solutions to the challenges that student teachers expressed and formulating a proposed vision to deal with these challenges more transparently and practically. And that considers the current era's requirements, teaching methods and technology.

The researchers propose organizing workshops for student teachers prior to practicum experience on lesson planning and implementation techniques, handling disruptive students, and interacting with students with learning disabilities. In addition, they recommend organizing academic supervisor training sessions and creating a thorough, understandable guidebook for practical instruction that spells out the roles and responsibilities of the collaborating teacher, the academic supervisor. The school principal, along with conducting research and similar studies on the difficulties the school experience program faces incorporating different samples and other variables.

**Funding:** This study received no specific financial support.

**Competing Interests:** The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

**Authors' Contributions:** All authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study.

## REFERENCES

- Abu Latifa, R., & Issa, S. (2011). Difficulties facing practical education students at the University of Jordan at the practical training university. *Dirasat: Educational Sciences*, 38(2), 2224-2236.
- Al-Anazi, S. (2015). Problems facing students of the practical education at the University of Shakra' from the point of view of the student-teachers themselves. *Journal of the College of Basic Education for Educational and Human Sciences, University of Babylon*, 7(23), 3-21.
- Al-Behairi, M. (2011). Problems facing student teachers in the practicum course and their relationship to some variables. *Journal of the Faculty of Education - Ain Shams*, 2(35), 195-219.
- Al-Harbi, B. B. A. (2018). Obstacles to field training from the point of view of student teachers at the college of education at the University of Hail: A case study. *Journal of Culture and Development* 19(132), 163-196.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control* (1st ed.). New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for constructing self-efficacy scales. In F. Pajares & T. Urdan (Eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents*. In (Vol. 5, pp. 307-337). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.
- Berg, D. A., & Smith, L. F. (2018). The effect of school-based experience on pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. *Issues in Educational Research*, 28(3), 530-544. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1949-8594.2011.00132.x>
- Cantrell, P., Young, S., & Moore, A. (2003). Factors affecting science teaching efficacy of pre-service elementary teachers. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 14(3), 177-192. <https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1025974417256>
- De Leon-Carillo, C. M. (2007). Prospective teacher's pre-and post-practicum beliefs on teaching. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 4(1), 25-40.
- Flammer, A. (1995). Development analysis of control beliefs. In A. Bandura, (Ed.), *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. In (pp. 69-113). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Garvis, S., & Pendergast, D. (2011). An investigation of early childhood teacher self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching of arts education. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 12(9), 1-15.
- Habayeb, A. H. (2016). The difficulties of educational practicum as seen by students at the faculties of educational sciences at the Palestinian universities. *Educational Science Studies*, 43(3), 1251-1265.
- Huinker, D., & Madison, S. K. (1997). Preparing efficacious elementary teachers in science and mathematics: The influence of methods courses. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 8(2), 107-126. <https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1009466323843>
- Khawaldeh, M., Ahmeda, F., & Al-Hijazi, S. (2010). The practicum challenges facing student teachers in child education at Queen Rania college for childhood at Hashemite University. *Damascus University Journal*, 26(3), 737-781.
- Kiggundu, E., & Nayimuli, S. (2009). Teaching practice: A make or break phase for student teachers. *South African Journal of Education*, 29(3), 345-358. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v29n3a129>
- McDonnough, J. T., & Matkins, J. J. (2010). The role of field experience in elementary pre-service teachers' self-efficacy and ability to connect research to practice. *School Science and Mathematics*, 110(1), 13-23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1949-8594.2009.00003.x>
- Megawati, F., & Astutik, Y. (2018). Teaching practicum: Investigating EFL pre-service teachers self-efficacy. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 7(1), 125-136. <https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v7i1.1500>
- Oh, S. (2011). Pre-service teachers' sense of efficacy and its sources. *Psychology*, 2(3), 235-240. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2011.23037>
- Pajares, F. (2005). Overview of social cognitive theory and self-efficacy. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 68(3), 1-5.
- Savasci, F., & Tuna, S. (2018). Effects of field experience and teaching practice on prospective science teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 5(8), 232-246. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2527062>
- Soodak, L. C., & Podell, D. M. (1997). Efficacy and Experience: Perceptions of Efficacy among Pre-service and Practicing Teachers. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 30(4), 214-221.

- Tashman, G., & Al-Mastarihi, H. (2019). Problems facing practical education students at Al-Israa University during the field training. *Journal of Psychological and Educational Sciences. Algeria: University of El-Oued, Algeria*, 5(2), 56-74.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17(7), 783-805. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0742-051x\(01\)00036-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0742-051x(01)00036-1)
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2007). The differential antecedents of self-efficacy beliefs of novice and experienced teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(6), 944-956. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.05.003>
- Tschannen-Moran, M., Hoy, A. W., & Hoy, W. K. (1998). Teacher efficacy: Its meaning and measure. *Review of Educational Research*, 68(2), 202-248.
- Van Schagen Johnson, A., La Paro, K. M., & Crosby, D. A. (2017). Early practicum experiences: Pre-service early childhood students' perceptions and sense of efficacy. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 45(2), 229-236. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0771-4>
- Vignoli, M., Guglielmi, D., & Balduzzi, L. (2018). Application to practice during practicum as a key player in determining the development of self-efficacy among pre-service teachers. *Journal of Psychological and Educational Research*, 26(2), 132-153.
- Wolters, C. A., & Daugherty, S. G. (2007). Goal structures and teachers' sense of efficacy: Their relation and association to teaching experience and academic level. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 99(1), 181-193. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.99.1.181>
- Woolfolk, A. E. (1998). *Educational psychology* (7th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Yeung, K. W., & Watkins, D. (2000). Hong Kong student teachers' personal construction of teaching efficacy. *Educational Psychology*, 20(2), 213-235. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713663713>
- Zee, M., & Koomen, H. M. (2016). Teacher self-efficacy and its effects on classroom processes, student academic adjustment, and teacher well-being: A synthesis of 40 years of research. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4), 981-1015. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315626801>
- Zimmerman, B. J. (1995). Self-efficacy and educational development. In A. Bandura, (Ed.). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. In (pp. 202-231). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Zimmerman, B. J., Bonner, S., & Kovach, R. (1996). *Developing self-regulated learners: Beyond achievement to self-efficacy*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

*Views and opinions expressed in this article are the views and opinions of the author(s), International Journal of Education and Practice shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability etc. caused in relation to/arising out of the use of the content.*