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Transformative Teaching through Critical Reflection: A Study of Preservice Teachers in MAPEH Programs

Jasper Jay Nievera Mendoza: *Tarlac State University, College of Education, Lucinda Campus, Tarlac City, Philippines.*

ABSTRACT: *This study analyzed the testimonies of preservice teachers engaged in transformative teaching, guided by Butin's political lens. This lens illuminated the preservice teachers' experiences, enabling them to overcome pressures in the learning environment and recognize the vital role of parents in teaching. The preservice teachers' reflections revealed encounters with parents who complained about their children's grades and those who had not cooperated in school activities. Given their awareness of parents' crucial role in students' academic development, preservice teachers responded positively to these concerns. Preservice teachers incorporated parents' viewpoints into teaching-learning processes, fostering a reversal of antagonism and negative attitudes towards school. Furthermore, preservice teachers encouraged students to express their apprehensions openly, fostering a sense of belonging and ensuring their opinions were considered in teaching plans. Preservice teachers recognized the value of student insights and behavior in re-arranging teaching plans. Transformative teaching and learning promote openness to diverse opinions within the educative process, valuing views in constructing learning experiences.*

Key words*: Butin's political lens, Preservice teachers, Transformative learning, Reflection logs.*

1. Introduction

Preservice teaching serves as a pathway to enhance students' professional competencies, preparing them to enter the workforce. The teaching and learning environment in preservice teaching extends beyond the traditional classroom setting to encompass real-world scenarios. Preservice teachers gain exposure to diverse learning environments, interacting with stakeholders such as parents and government officials at various levels.

Preservice teachers must critically analyze their experiences in these environments to further develop their teaching competencies, particularly in managing interactions with stakeholders, parents, and government officials. They should demonstrate discernment and flexibility, exercising sound judgment when applying learned theories, principles, and strategies in dynamic learning environments where stakeholders may influence the programmed delivery of teaching. Preservice teachers should reflect on current classroom scenarios, employ creativity, and find innovative solutions to address real-world challenges. Educational challenges should potentially transform conventional strategies or approaches to address prevailing issues effectively.

Transformational learning encompasses three dimensions: psychological (alterations in self-perception), conceptual (revision of self-concepts based on beliefs), and behavioral (modifications in lifestyle patterns). This process entails critically examining one's strengths and weaknesses, identifying areas for improvement or adjustment, and recognizing the necessity for reinvention of beliefs and value systems until they become integral to one's lifestyle (Kitchenham, 2008). Furthermore, reflective thinking is paramount in transformative learning. Learners must assume the role of mature individuals capable of self-reflection, interpreting their

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experiences, and making sense of their actions. Reflections facilitate learners in correcting distortions of existing beliefs and embracing new value systems due to their experiences (Mizerow, 2011).

Consequently, reflective thinking leads to transformative learning. In essence, learners must reevaluate and reconstruct their lives. Through reflective thinking, adults develop their own sets of strategies and devise solutions to their challenges. Their experiences, both within and outside the classroom, enable them to critically analyze relevant and irrelevant information critically, thereby shaping a novel approach to problem-solving.

Reflective or critical thinking, as a component of transformational learning, is also one of the learning skills envisioned for development among 21st-century learners by the K-12 curriculum, alongside creativity, innovation, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration (SEAMEO-INNOTECH, 2012; Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012). These skills are essential for achieving functional literacy within society. This underscores the necessity to incorporate transformative learning theory into the classroom at the tertiary and even at the basic educational levels.

Preservice teaching is essential for developing student teachers' technical, pedagogical, and content competencies (Hu and Fyfe, 2010; Mergler, 2012). This exposure to real-life experiences with learners, teachers, parents, and other school stakeholders allows students to handle actual classes and apply the learning theories, classroom management strategies, teaching methods, and instructional strategies they have acquired from their college professors (Corpuz, Salandanan, & Rigor, 2006). Consequently, preservice teaching reinforces classroom learning, demonstrating that students continue to develop teaching competencies through experiential exposure. This training equips them with the necessary skills to master classroom management, a fundamental aspect of teaching (Freeman et al., 2014).

However, field teaching may challenge preservice teachers' knowledge schema, skills, and attitudes. It can reveal that principles and theories learned in teaching classes may not universally apply to all learners, as evidenced by Zeichner (2010) in his study. He concluded that the traditional university-based teacher education paradigm, which posits academic knowledge as the sole authority on teaching, requires transformation into a model that fosters a non-hierarchical interplay between academic, practitioner, and community expertise. This shift is pertinent in today's technologically driven world, where children are born into an environment where technology has revolutionized information acquisition and distribution. Gone are the days when students relied solely on their teachers for new information. Access to information is now readily available at their fingertips, and children, at a young age, possess more excellent proficiency in utilizing technology than their parents or grandparents. Consequently, teachers must adapt to this evolving landscape of information dissemination.

This novel pedagogical approach to teacher education will equip preservice educators with the necessary skills to implement intricate teaching practices. They should be cognizant of taking the lead and complementing what learners already possess to ensure that classroom learning is meaningful and rewarding.

As preservice teachers embark on their professional journey, they encounter various stakeholders beyond the learners, such as parents and other community members. They will also face challenges, including conflicts regarding disciplinary practices and differing priorities between parents and learners (Cruickshank et al., 2021; Marz & Kelchtermans, 2020; Melnick & Meister, 2008). These scenarios may not have been encountered in the classroom setting before the preservice teachers' internship.

Consequently, this study was conceived to enhance the field experience of selected preservice teachers in Central Luzon, Philippines. The recent amendments to legislation governing the enforcement of discipline among learners have significantly impacted how teachers ensure that students develop appropriate behavior. Teachers must demonstrate resilience and adaptability in the face of political pressures. This can only be achieved by cultivating a transformative approach in the actual field. A foundational element of resilience and transformative teaching is observing and reflecting on learners and their learning environment. Through critical thinking, educators can develop teaching approaches that address the political challenges and issues encountered in the field.

This study then sought to investigate how educators in educational institutions utilize their reflection logs in planning and executing teaching and learning activities, specifically focusing on the political lens of Butin's model. In particular, it examined the reflective logs of preservice teachers from selected teacher education institutions (TEIs) that offer Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) majors in MAPEH. These reflective

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logs documented the decisions made by the preservice teachers in teaching-learning situations, with the ultimate goal of effectively transferring learning competencies.

1.1. Theoretical Framework of the Study

Preservice teachers must possess critical thinking abilities. They should be able to analyze classroom scenarios in light of the theories they have acquired and respond appropriately. Preservice teachers should recognize that their approaches may need to be adapted to changing circumstances.

Teachers should be reflective and critical thinkers to effectively address teaching and learning challenges in the real world. Critical social theory is a school of thought that emphasizes reflective assessments and critiques of society and culture by drawing upon knowledge from the social sciences and humanities (Corradetti, 2015). Critical theorists believed that examining social conditions would reveal hidden structures. They held the belief that knowledge is power. When individuals recognize their oppression, this understanding motivates them to take action to effect change.

Critical social theory has significantly influenced educational curriculum and pedagogy over the years (De Leon & Ross, 2010). Prominent theorists from the Frankfurt School, including Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), Theodore Adorno (1903-1969), and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979), introduced transformative educational thought and systems (Jessop, 2012). Numerous theorists and philosophers have embraced critical theory in their efforts to effect educational change. Jurgen Habermas, a prominent second-generation critical theorist, has garnered increasing attention for the theory of communicative action, which holds great significance for understanding and defending the role of schools in fostering democratic values and practices (Bolton, 2005). Critical pedagogy, coined by Henry Giroux in 1983, originates from Critical Theory and describes the work of theorists and practitioners with an emancipatory orientation (Guilherme, 2006). Hudson (1999) posits that Giroux's critical pedagogy provided the philosophical foundations for a theory and practice of education critical of established institutions and practices, capable of transforming those institutions and practices, ultimately aiming to transform society itself.

A key aspect of critical learning theory and social learning is reflective thinking. Through reflection, individuals can analyze events and draw logical conclusions. Carrington and Selva (2010) assert that reflective practice should be explicit, direct, thoughtful, and patient, utilizing personal reflection-in-action to interpret one's service, reactions, and interactions with others.

In education, reflective thinking holds paramount importance in the pursuit of high-quality and relevant outputs. Educators can effectively transform their teaching practices by engaging in self-reflection. Facun and Nool (2012) underscore the significance of teachers critically examining their teaching methods for children. Through critical social theory in education, the quality of learning is directly proportional to the depth of analysis possessed by both teachers and students (Jefferson & Anderson, 2017; Leonardo, 2004; Milner, 2013).

In the 21st century, educators are tasked with nurturing critical thinkers who are equipped to address contemporary challenges. Meredith and Steele (2011) emphasize the role of reflective thinking in fostering critical thinking skills among students. John Dewey, the educational theorist who revolutionized teaching strategies through his contemporary perspectives on teaching and learning, advocated for reflective thinking as an active, persistent, and thoughtful process of examining beliefs, knowledge bases, and subsequent conclusions (Greenberger, 2020). Poyraz and Usta (2013) conducted a study investigating the reflective thinking tendencies of 449 preservice teachers enrolled in various public institutions in Istanbul. The findings revealed that reflective thinking is more pertinent in teaching than mere information acquisition. Meaningful learning is grounded in processing, transforming, and reproducing information acquired appropriately within a specific classroom setting. The study's findings also demonstrated variations in reflective thinking abilities among participants based on their upbringing and gender. Furthermore, this study delved into the reflection logs of 21 preservice teachers to ascertain evidence of transformative learning experiences during their actual classroom teaching practice.

Furthermore, recognizing the significance of reflective journals in teaching, Yasin, Rahman, and Ahmad (2012) developed and validated a framework for reflective learning utilizing portfolios. The framework incorporated a rubric to evaluate students' reflections within the portfolios. Consequently, it is imperative that teachers guide students in reflective thinking, which is an integral aspect of critical social learning theory. As part of classroom requirements, reflective thinking should be encouraged by teachers and utilized by students

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to comprehend their classroom activities and document them in diaries or journals (Aquino & Nool, 2019). Lee (2005) posited that reflections are contingent upon the interplay of factors, including personal background, field experience contexts, and the mode of communication employed. Reflections should be evaluated based on both content and depth.

Despite these considerations, Butin (2006) developed a framework for evaluating teachers' journals or reflection logs from a political perspective. The primary focus of this lens is on the concept of social justice and ensuring that inclusive practices are valued or considered. The political lens posits a worldview that acknowledges how social groups influence values and macro power relations within society. Consequently, it raises questions such as ascertaining whether there is an understanding of the necessity for participants and their families to participate in a program or activity. Butin's model was utilized in the study of Tangen et al. (2011), which investigated the development of intercultural competence among Australian preservice teachers. The written reflection logs of preservice teachers were analyzed using four lenses. However, in the present study, only the political lens was employed as a guiding principle in analyzing the reflection logs of preservice teachers. The primary objective of this study was to explore the reflection logs of preservice teachers using the political lens of Butin's model.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study employed the critical social design to analyze and integrate all study components and data, addressing the research objectives. The critical social research paradigm posits that knowledge is constructed through contemporary social interactions (Harvey, 1990). Data collected from participants' reflection logs were grounded in their classroom experiences. Subsequently, knowledge was generated on how MAPEH preservice teachers utilize reflections to enhance their pedagogical competencies and engage in transformational teaching practices.

2.2. Participants and Setting

This study analyzed the reflection logs of preservice teachers in music, arts, physical education, and health education who were exposed to partner schools to facilitate their experiential learning. The reflection logs of 21 students (three from each Teacher Education Institution) in their prescribed field study books were analyzed. The study participants were selected using maximum variation sampling, which enabled the selection of a substantial number of participants, thereby maximizing the representation or diversity relevant to the research questions (Patton, 1990). Seven students were selected as exemplary preservice teachers (one from each Teacher Education Institution); seven students were selected as average performers (one from each Teacher Education Institution); and another seven students were selected as bottom performers (one from each Teacher Education Institution). The researcher requested that the supervisors in each school recommend their exemplary preservice teachers, the average, and the bottom performers based on their General Weighted Average (GWA). The researcher believed that the supervisors from the respective schools were knowledgeable about their participants' academic performance, so their recommendations were considered when selecting students. The limited number of participants allowed for thorough analysis of their reflection logs, enabling the extraction of rich conclusions. The participants represented learners with varying learning styles, including slow learners, average learners, and the best learners, who achieved a balanced approach to studying.

To ensure the anonymity of the participants, their names were not included in their reflection logs. Only their numbers were indicated in their reflection logs. The researcher selected 21 preservice teachers from seven Teacher Education Institutions in Region 3 as the participants.

2.3. Sources of Data

The primary data sources were the participants' reflection logs (based on the questions from the Experiential Handbooks). These participants answered the questions in their handbooks, which detailed their preservice experiences. Qualitative data recording devices include notebooks, narrative field logs, and diaries, in which researchers record their reactions, concerns, and speculations (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2010).

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Furthermore, aside from the questions in the Handbook, additional questions were also included, which served as scaffolds or guides in eliciting reflections that demonstrated how the participants addressed diversity in class, political pressures, and their realizations during their preservice teaching exposure. The researcher crafted these additional questions, enabling the participants to share their experiences in handling cultural diversity and pressures from stakeholders such as parents, cooperating teachers, and principals. These questions were crucial in extracting their thoughts and how they had resolved pressures. These are essential elements in transformational teaching.

The additional questions were formulated in such a manner that they compelled the participants to delve deeper into their thoughts and realizations that norms may vary depending on the school environment and principles, philosophies, techniques, and methods. These may be modified in certain aspects, upheld in others, or require new approaches to educational confrontations. The reflection logs of some preservice teachers revealed their realizations and attempts to transform pedagogies. These served as indicators of their teaching emancipation arising from their actual field exposure.

Additionally, interviews were conducted with some participants to ensure that the researcher captured the participants' thoughts. The researcher scheduled interviews with the supervisors. The interviews extracted substantial information, which deepened the researcher's understanding of the reflections from the participants' logs. The interviews were deemed necessary to clarify brief reflections from some of the participants, particularly since the researcher observed some participants' responses that were substantial but were only presented in bullet forms or phrases. Lastly, the researcher also conducted actual observations with three participants whom he supervised during their preservice teaching.

2.4. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study from the presidents of the Teaching Education Institutions (TEIs) where the study was conducted. The deans were approached to facilitate a meeting with the participants once the study was approved. The researcher provided an overview of the research and sought their consent. Upon approval, the participants were requested to record their Experiential Handbooks weekly and write their journals. For additional questions, participants were asked to reflect on them on a separate paper. In total, there were 19 questions that the participants answered. Five questions were derived from the Handbook, and the researcher formulated the remaining 14.

Data from the participants' reflection logs were collected. The journal coverage encompassed the first two weeks of their exposure. The researcher analyzed these reflection logs using Butin's political lens framework. To substantiate the researcher's analyses, he sought the assistance of two experts. As a result, themes were extracted from the participants' reflections.

2.5. Data Analysis

The qualitative data analysis employed in this study utilized tabulation techniques to extract themes from the participants' reflections. This process involved systematically organizing all reflections by question to facilitate constant comparison of qualitative data, such as the participants' reflections in this study. The tabulation was facilitated by a general matrix, with column 1 containing the participants' codes.

In coding, the researcher assigned capital letters to represent the participants' schools, and Hindu-Arabic numerals were assigned to the corresponding individual participant. For instance, A1 would represent Participant 1 from the best preservice teachers out of seven participants from each school; B1 would represent the second participant from the average cluster in the same school; A2 was the participant from the best preservice teacher from the second school; and so on. The capital letter alphabets denoted the best, average, and bottom clusters, while the Hindu-Arabic numerals represented the schools.

The matrix consisted of five columns. Column 1 reflected the participants' codes. Column 2 presented the participants' verbatim reflections. Column 3 encapsulated the meanings formulated through the researcher's analysis. Column 4 contained the concepts elicited, and the final column generated the themes. Columns 3 to 5 were based on the researcher's interpretations.

Guided by Butin's Political Lens model, the researcher generated categories or themes (using thematic analysis) by continuously reviewing the emerging understandings and clarifying these with two experts. The first expert is a director of Physical Education and experiential learning supervisor at a reputable National Capital Region university. The second expert is also a supervisor in experiential learning and holds an

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undergraduate degree, a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education, a Graduate Degree of Arts in Teaching Physical Education, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership.

As outlined by Stemler (2001), it is imperative for two independent reviewers to meticulously assess the content of materials and develop corresponding features. The primary objective of engaging expert evaluators was to mitigate the researcher's potential bias in evaluating the reflection logs of students. The evaluators, including the researcher, meticulously compared the analyses and engaged in discussions regarding potential variations. This collaborative process significantly enhanced the objectivity of the evaluation. The evaluators were two supervisors overseeing the experiential learning program for preservice teachers. The themes generated directly addressed the research objectives of this study.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

To ensure adherence to research ethics, participants were required to complete a consent form after receiving comprehensive orientation on the study's objectives, procedures, and potential benefits. Their anonymity was safeguarded by refraining from mentioning their names in the research paper. Furthermore, participants were provided with the option to withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, they were informed that they would not receive monetary compensation as participants but were aware of the potential benefits derived from the study. It was emphasized that the framework developed within the study would be instrumental in enhancing the competence of preservice teachers.

2.7. Enhancement of Data Quality

Five qualities, as outlined by Guba and Lincoln (1994), were employed to ensure the quality of the data gathered and the trustworthiness of the findings. Throughout the research process, the researcher adhered to the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These principles necessitated the avoidance of personal bias and ensured that the findings were solely shaped by the participants.

Themes were generated through a combination of techniques, as the reflections were compared. The researcher drew inspiration from Ryan and Bernard (2003), whose study provided valuable insights into the generation of themes from qualitative data. This study employed various techniques, including word repetitions, Indigenous categories, Key, Words in Context, and cutting and sorting. The researcher utilized highlighters to identify frequently used words by the participants and subsequently categorized them under Butin's political lens. The reflections were extracted from the general matrix and pasted onto the appropriate lens in another matrix. Based on the dominant words used by the participants, themes were formulated.

The inquiry audit was utilized to assist two experts in analyzing the data. Data recording was meticulously conducted, including the presentation of verbatim narratives while maintaining the confidentiality of participants' identities during discussions about the data. In instances where the researcher required validation of entries in the reflection logs, interviews were conducted with the concerned participants.

Furthermore, the researcher ensured the coding of reflection logs to guarantee data credibility, transferability, and confirmability. A systematic comparison of responses was conducted to identify differences and similarities, leading to the development of generalizations or conclusions. The study also presented verbatim accounts of the participants to support the findings. Casual interviews with some collaborating teachers and supervisors were conducted to validate the participants' entries in their reflection logs. The results were further discussed with some collaborating teachers and supervisors. Additionally, the researcher consulted with two experts for extensive analysis and unbiased interpretations to ensure data sufficiency or saturation.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Analysis of the Preservice Teachers' Reflection Logs Using the Political Lens of Butin's Model

Teachers are not spared from pressure and stress in the learning environment since they work with various stakeholders. The challenges that preservice teachers experienced are analyzed in their reflection logs via the political lens.

Political lens refers to the preservice teachers' experience or their exposure to political pressures that affected the teaching-learning activities in the school where they were assigned. This also promotes and empowers various participants' voices in social justice (Tangen et al., 2011). The reflection logs of the participants were examined using the political lens, and the results are discussed in the following section.

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3.2. Guiding Students in Developing Varied Talents and Inclinations

Teachers should remain committed to looking after the students' interests and welfare. Rosebrough and Leverett (2016) upheld that transformational teaching begins with putting the students at the center. It means knowing the students' personality, culture, abilities, experience, and aspirations. Teachers who deeply understand their students can provide assistance that can transform their lives.

The participants recognized the importance of putting students above the educational process. Students should have a learning environment that supports independent learning. Teachers are at the back seat but are expected to supplement or guide students toward their growth and development from time to time.

A1 expressed: "I understand that every student has their background knowledge, all I have to do is to add and supplement their ideas in that particular topic and let them grow by themselves."

These participants have knowledge schema based on previous exposures. This schema broadens as they continue to explore, socialize, and affiliate with people around them or as they continue to read. The role of a transformational teacher is to help learners build functional and practical knowledge they can use to cope with their environment, solve problems, or make sense of their existence. This was elucidated by Meyer, Land and Baillie (2010) in their assertion that transformative learning involves experiencing deep structural thoughts, feelings, and actions and allowing these experiences to alter or modify things for their survival. Transformational learning will enable students to use their knowledge bank to invest more in other learning experiences to live sufficiently in a complex world. Teachers are there to provide a learning milieu where students can accumulate additional knowledge and skills that will arm them to solve difficulties in their daily encounters.

As students attempt to develop, teachers need to help them inventory their strengths and weaknesses. Teachers should know their students well to develop them according to their abilities and interests (Samuels, 2018). The study participants knew this principle, and they were able to respond accordingly.

A transformational teacher personalizes attention and feedback. He is after transforming the lives of individuals in a class. Transformative teaching requires a fresh approach to teaching and learning. It should be much more self-conscious about its objectives and methods. It should adopt a learner-centered rather than an instructor-centered approach (Pachler et al., 2019; Slavich & Zimbardo, 2011).

In addition, C2 wrote: "I should be patient enough to be able to handle the different attitudes of my students." C2 acknowledged the value of patience in handling different attitudes of students instead of imposing on them universal standards. Tolerance of diverse attitudes allows students to freely interact and use their uniqueness to influence teaching and learning. This was affirmed by Willis (2007) as she argued that educators should not expect to work with consistently well-behaved, enthusiastic, and successful learners who are quietly seated in rows. Teachers should anticipate that learners are unique, and their uniqueness brings about a broader learning environment where students can learn from one another.

Moreover, B2 expressed: "As a teacher you should be observant to the needs of your students. I will treat them equal regardless on their religion, sex and culture."

Teachers should be observant and sensitive to the needs of the learners as expressed by the participant. Regardless of the circumstances of the learners, they have to be treated equally. B2 vowed to treat her students equally irrespective of their religion, sex and culture and to discern their learning needs. In a follow-up interview with B2, she stated that knowing the needs of the students will help her determine what to supplement to improve their knowledge and skills in MAPEH.

All students expect teachers to listen, consider, and thoughtfully reply to their ideas even when others seem annoying or challenging. Teachers are expected to respond not only to students whom they like but also to other students. The importance of this so-called fairness in class was highlighted in the study of Whitley et al. (2000). The study found that 90% of students surveyed thought fairness was inappropriate to some degree, while 45% thought it was inappropriate in all circumstances. The value of fairness in producing transformed students was emphasized by Molinari et al. (2013) in their study, which found that perceptions of being treated fairly increased students' academic achievement, learning motivation, and a sense of class belonging. On the contrary, perceived teacher unfairness produces a negative influence on students' achievement (Chen & Cui, 2020), student self-concept, interest, and importance within subjects (Helm et al., 2020). It is then essential that teachers promote and maintain fairness for all students in the classroom. If students feel they are not being treated fairly, they tend to display negative behavior such as anger, isolation, hostility and resistance to follow instructions (Chory-Assad & Paulsel, 2004).

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Likewise, the importance of fairness as a teacher was highlighted by Berry (2008). Students should be treated fairly to avoid complain from one gender or group of students. Students pick up on this quickly, so be careful not to be labeled unfairly. Thus, teachers need to show fairness in dealing with their students.

Moreover, added that teachers should be good models of fairness (Lumpkin, 2008) since students tend to mimic and idolize them. In doing so, students would be motivated to participate and perform well in class. Motivating students to actively participate in learning indicates successful teaching because highly motivated students tend to achieve academic success (Dedi, 2018; Rahardjanto, Husamah & Fauzi, 2019).

On account of the reflections analyzed, transformative teaching and learning require proactive involvement of teachers and their responsiveness for students' uniqueness and needs. For the teachers, treating students warmly and fairly create positive behavior and thus stimulate their involvement in the teaching-learning process. That is to say, multitude of positive notes can be accounted by a teacher if fairness and equity in treatment and attention would be imposed within a class.

3.3. Enhancing Communication Skills to Appeal to Learners

Communication is indispensable in the teaching-learning process (Halimah & Sukmayadi, 2019). Aside from capitalizing on learners' uniqueness in broadening learning, expert content teachers should possess communication skills that allow them to transfer the cognitive dimensions of teaching into visible instructional behaviors that are clear, organized, understandable, and effective (Lane, 2008). Effective communication is not only about pronunciation, intonation, or articulation. It involves the teacher's classroom techniques and interaction that develop students' thinking and internalize the process of every lessons.

The reflections of some participants acknowledged the importance of communication in teaching MAPEH. The reflections provide evidence that the participants recognized the importance of good communication skills in the classroom to achieve successful teaching.

According to B4: "A good teacher is an effective communicator. However, one should show its skill for the student to see that he can apply his lesson through physical activities. Teachers can show more than tell. I need to have skills in how to play sports and skills for teaching and coaching."

While B4 believed that demonstrating skills is more effective in teaching MAPEH, he also acknowledged that a good teacher is a good communicator who is characterized with the ability to clearly explain the concepts and skills being taught. Good communication makes learning easier, helps students achieve goals, increases opportunities for expanded learning, strengthens the connection between student and teachers, and creates an over-all positive experience (Fadli & Irwanto. 2020). Apropos to that, Slavich and Zimbardo (2012) characterized transformative education to be one where a good relationship exists between the teachers and learners. Good relationship starts with sparking good communication. If learners clearly perceive their role in the classroom, family and community, there is a good chance for transformation to occur (Blunt, 2007).

B7 also expressed: "First of all, I want to develop my communication skills so that it will be easy for me to talk to students without any hesitation and to make sure that the exchange of ideas will be continuous. I observed that my students were not able to execute correct positioning of arms and feet in playing, because I did not clearly instruct them and had not properly demonstrated the steps."

The participant, B7, desired to develop good communication skills to be able to relate well with the students. He observed in his PE class that because of unclear instruction, students were not able to demonstrate the expected. Consequently, this convinced him to improve his communication skills especially since language would always be his tool in disseminating information to his students. This could be considered as a positive move as this is a signal that he was a reflective novice teacher who tried to lay the cards on the table with the choices that he had to take in order for him to improve and to last in the teaching field.

Accordingly, excellent communications skills enable the physical education teacher to explain activities to the students. A Physical Education teacher should be sage in the class. Guiding and coaching physical activity is an essential part of physical education. Therefore, the physical education teacher should also be articulate in the field. Communicating the rules of the physical activity in the class and the techniques utilized by the students to perform a physical activity are both important instructional qualities of a Physical Education teacher (Bähr & Wibowo, 2012; Zach, 2020). Based on the responses of the participants, they knew quite well the importance of good communication skills in teaching MAPEH.

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3.4. Dealing with Parents Optimistically to Forge Strong Partnership

Parents are important support in the teaching–learning process. They have to partner with the teachers in developing learners in school (Sylaj, 2020). Leach (2011), in fact, stated that parental engagement model is the most important step communities and schools can take to help parents leveraged their role into meaningful change and improvement. However, a lot of schools today struggle for increased parental involvement, cooperation and support (El Nokali, Bachman & Votruba-Drzal, 2010). This poses a challenge in the flow of teaching and learning and may cause disruption in the momentum of class. Despite of that, teachers should be able to handle these situations.

Dealing and meeting with parents is one of the greatest challenges for teachers (Fantilli, & McDougall, 2009). Teaching is not only dealing with students but also involving in an active engagement with parents. Effective teaching is involving parents no matter how difficult some may seem to be (Young, 2019). The more parents are engaged in the education, the higher is the achievement of the learners.

The participants' reflections with regard to their experience with parents. Most of the parents' complaints were about the grades of their children or their attendance. Some were not satisfied with the evaluation of the teachers. They expressed doubts about the computation. Some participants who shared similar experience in their classes are shown below:

"…Dealing with parents the difficulties I experience is their son daughter didn't inform their parents that they have failed subjects, that's why other parents complaining without knowing the real reason why their children have failing grade. I explained about their grades." – A7

"Sometimes parents could be really difficult to talk with. There are many complain about his/her child whether it's about the grade or reasoning on why the students can't attend the class. I have to explain." – C3

"When I was discussing on my first afternoon class, one parent among my students came and ask what happened to the grade of his child." - A3

Dealing with parents could be challenging like in the cases expressed by participants A7, C3 and A3. Parents who came to the participant had a common complaint which was regarding the grades of their children. They had expressed doubts about the computation of the grades. They expected higher grade for their children. They went to school to ask how teachers computed grades. Similarly, Mendler (2006) shared his encounter with teachers with varying experiences with difficult parents. Teachers gave descriptions of the parents such as angry, annoying, unreasonable, complaining, disagreeable, aggressive, and others. Such was the experience of A7. Parents went to school to complain about the grades of their children. It was easy for A7 to respond negatively but had chosen to settle the conflict positively.

Talking to parents could heap coals of fire. Teachers should always be above their emotions when dealing with parents. Teachers are encouraged to view parents' behaviors in a positive way. They are instead assertive not aggressive, strong-willed instead of being disagreeable, and persistent instead of annoying. Transformative teachers should be able to deal with parents effectively in such a way that both ends satisfied, happy and build a stronger relationship (Appelbaum, 2009; Mendler (2006).

In addition, teachers may also encounter parents who will not complain about grades, but who do not feel attending school activities such as meetings or programs important in the academic development of their children. C7 wrote: "When not cooperating with the teacher about the child's performances in school, I encourage them to attend."

The experience of C7 affirmed the findings in Brannon's study (2007) which revealed that parental involvement declines in middle school. Preservice teachers in this study also handled high school students. They observed that only few parents regularly attended Parents-Teachers Meeting and activities. However, C7 exerted effort to encourage parents to attend school programs. C7 talked to the parents about the importance of their support to boost the performance of their children in school.

Parents at times could be challenging like what the preservice teachers had encountered. They complained about grade computations. This scenario could have led to conflict if teachers were unable to handle it properly. Parents will always want the best for their children and are ready to fight for their personal biases. However, the participant talked to them nicely and explained how they had arrived at the grades of their children. In situations like this, teachers should build strong relationship with parents by establishing open communication and trust because they are vital elements necessary in transforming and developing learners. Communication opens the gates towards transparency and openness which will potentially encourage parents to get involved (Whitaker, 2015).

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Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 78-92
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On the other hand, instead of scuffling with parents to attend school meetings, C3 chose to take it on the positive side by encouragement or motivation. One participant, in fact, claimed that she used texting as a strategy to encourage a parent to attend a meeting. She believed that texting would make parents feel important. Compared to written invitation, calling someone over the phone or sending a text message is more personal. When parents feel their importance in school, there is a high possibility for them to participate.

3.5. Transformative Leaders Assert their Ideas and Influence Other Teachers and Other Stakeholders

Optimism and positive attitude usher in vibrant learning environment. Teachers should be committed in creating a classroom environment which allows vitality and fervor and lessen tension among the students. The classroom atmosphere should be enriching with students who are exhilarated to learn.

Supervising teachers and superiors play a crucial role in guiding the preservice teachers as they continue to sharpen their teaching skills (Weiss & Weiss, 2001). They have to provide an enriching environment where preservice teachers strengthen their prior knowledge and lead them towards construction of broader knowledge schema. In contrary, data from the reflection of the participant showed their encounters or issues with their superiors. They encountered challenges with their principals and cooperating teachers. But they found ways to overcome their situation.

B3 and A6 wrote: "If my cooperating teacher is on his bad mood, I used to tell him "tay badtrip ka nanaman relax" (dad, you are in bad mood again, relax), and when he heard me his(he) smile and after how many minutes he is in good mood again.." – B3

"I really don't have any problem with my cooperating teacher, the only problem I observe is I find hard time in following their (her) suggestions in my teaching. I talk to her to clarify and ask her If I can use another activity." – A6

The reflections showed how the participants handled their problems with their superiors. B3 was able to reverse the bad mood of his cooperating teacher, while A6 succeeded in carrying out activities she planned which her superior initially opposed. Both participants explained their opinions to their superiors and asked them the liberty to use alternative teaching approach and they were permitted to do so.

According to Hogg (2015), transformational leaders know how to take the right risks and make difficult decisions. They have to trust their instincts, which more often than not, result to positive outcomes. In the case of B3, he took a risk in cracking a joke while the cooperating teacher was in a bad mood and he was successful. For A6, she would have followed what her cooperating teacher wanted with reference to the teaching strategies and activities but she made a decision to stick on what she prepared. She sought permission from her superior and she got her support.

The University of Queensland (2016) provided guidelines in supervising the preservice teachers. Among the salient provisions of the guidelines is to make preservice teachers feel welcome in the school and in respecting the concept that they bring their own knowledge bases, skills and preferred teaching styles. Supervisors should balance corrective feedbacks with praise in order to support the preservice teachers' confidence. Supervising teachers in the schools where the participants were deployed should be reminded of their role in further developing the teaching knowledge, skills and attitude of the preservice teachers so that their experience will inspire them to achieve excellence in teaching. Given the responsibility to handle students, these preservice teachers should be recognized as teachers in preparation, and under the supervision and control of experts.

Along with that, parents and superiors are the two groups of stakeholders whose support to the teaching and learning process is very significant. However, they can also create pressure to the preservice teachers. Parents have the tendency to doubt the grades of their children. Some would not even cooperate with the teachers during scheduled meetings. On a positive note, these preservice teachers found transparency and genuine communication in settling parental challenges.

In addition, preservice teachers from time to time refer to their superiors for scaffolding on teaching plans and strategies. Preservice teachers had their lesson plans checked by their cooperating teachers. The superior's inputs were considered. However, some preservice teachers had strategies that they believe would be more effective other than what their superiors tell them. Preservice teachers were assertive and were able to convince their superiors.

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3.6. Transformational Teaching is a Two-way Process

Teachers are expected to discern the thoughts and needs of the students in order to design appropriate lessons and enrichment activities that promote the development of the learners (Almuqayteeyb, 2021). In this study, the participants realized that they need to understand how students learn in order to effectively transfer competencies to them. Similarly, Cutler (2016) showed the importance of knowing the students well in order to provide them a fulfilling learning exposure.

The participants realized that the key to successful teaching is to understand how one learns and use strategies that will aid in reaching their potential. It is the kind of teaching that puts students at the heart of the educative process.

One reflected: "I should have the thorough knowledge and understanding on my specialty area which is MAPEH. I should also know how my students will learn. I should reach out to them." – A2

The reflection showed how the participants take into account their understanding of the students in order to help them grow. Reaching out to students is going beyond classroom teaching. It entails knowing them deeper in order to help them grow. The Educational Research (1990) asserted that students tend to gravitate towards learning activities that are compatible with learning styles. It is the responsibility of the teachers to know how their students learn well and arrange activities that cater to their preferences.

3.7. Transformational Teaching Shuns Partiality

Teachers get to know the learners in five common ways: get to know them as language learners, get to know them as literacy learners, get to know them as content learners, get to know them as cultural learners, and get to know them as digital learners (Corpuz et al., 2006).

Even so, C2 wrote: "As a teacher, you must know your students' skills, interests, strengths and weaknesses. Treat students as individuals whose identities are complex and unique. Teachers must not play favoritism. They have to be just and fair to all. They must vary your teaching methods to take advantage of different learning styles. For example, you can use visual or dramatic presentations or value personal knowledge and experience when students share it."

Knowing the students' strengths and weaknesses shows the competence of teachers of their role likened to that of a "doctor" who is expected to diagnose patients' illness. Patients rely on the expert opinion of the doctor and adhere to management prescriptions for successful treatment. Such is the role of a transformational teacher. He/She has to be competent in assessing students' strengths and weaknesses and push them to move further. Teachers should provide intervention measures to help students overcome their weakness and develop areas where they are good at. This transformational teacher serves as a bridge for a learner to walk on in achieving his aspirations and dreams. Also, this teacher should ignite that drive within the heart of every student and make sure that he/she instills the most accurate and proper knowledge and values since he/she serves as the loco parentis of the learners. Teachers should not play favoritism. They need to be impartial and make each student feel valued.

Using the political lens in analyzing the reflection logs of the preservice teachers, some showed how they were able to conquer conflicts in the actual learning environment. They were able to put into the equation dominant or passive students and parents so that everyone is heard and feels an important part of the teaching-learning process.

4. Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

Preservice teachers found their exposure to the actual field as an avenue for transformative teaching and learning. They appreciated the knowledge and skills which they acquired from their instructors prior to their field experience. Eliciting and building on prior knowledge is a central tenet of a learning theory associated with teaching for understanding. The more experiences the preservice teachers have, the more opportunities they have to store academic background knowledge in preparation for actual work.

Preservice teachers realized that they have to put all students above the educative process. Learners' uniqueness is a foremost consideration in building pedagogy. They have to be conscious of the vital role of good communication to forge good relationship between and among teachers and students. Good relationship among all the elements in the learning environment without partiality will foster warmth and openness which will pave the way towards transformative teaching and learning.

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The reflections of the preservice teachers uncovered their experiences with some parents who complained about the grades of their children and some who had not cooperated in school activities. Because the preservice teachers were aware of the vital role of parents in the academic development of the students, they managed to respond to them in a positive way.

Moreover, preservice teachers considered the inputs of their superiors but they were also slowed to implement what they believe are appropriate strategies given a scenario in the classroom.

Preservice teachers realized that they could re-arrange teaching plans based on the insights shared by their students or their behavior. Transformative teaching and learning fosters openness to opinions of all elements of the educative process and put premium to views in constructing learning experiences.

Preservice teaching, indeed, is a promising avenue for transformative learning through reflective thinking and meaningful observation of the behavior of students, their learning preferences and connection to their personal lives. It is the peak of the student teachers' exposure before they soon join the pool of professional teachers. They have the opportunity to influence students to make sense of themselves and realize their role and significance in improving the community where they belong.

The researcher acknowledged some limitations of the study. Firstly, the researcher failed to observe all the participants in their classrooms to record his own observations. His observations were only confined to three participants whom he handled in the preservice teaching. Secondly, no information was generated from the cooperating teachers; parents and students were not also interviewed. Thirdly, the researcher mainly based his analyses on the data from the reflection logs of the preservice teachers. These limitations should be addressed in a similar study in the future to come up with a more credible and conclusive generalizations.

The classroom experience of preservice teachers should be meaningful, and they should be fully equipped with personal and professional qualities which are necessary propellers toward transformative learning. Accordingly, preservice teachers should be keen observers and reflective of their daily encounters with the students. They have to be cognizant about what makes teaching and learning more rewarding, what leads daily classroom experience towards inclusion of differing leanings and preferences, and what makes learning effective in drawing together forces towards developing inclinations of learners in Music, Arts, Physical Education and Health.

Facilitating transformative learning requires instructors to construct learning experiences; through which, the preservice teachers can explore epistemic change as a result of reflection and contemplation. Reflection papers in the activities of students specializing in teaching should frequently be a part of assessment to develop their sense of criticism of the events happening in their environment. These papers should include propositions from students on their generated measures to solve conflicts or problematic issues to strengthen theory problem-solving abilities.

The researcher was not able to cover some aspects, which could be considered as pertinent in this study, like the non-inclusion of other school stakeholders such as parents, teachers and cooperating teachers in the data gathering. The researcher also observed only three participants in the actual classroom in making his own judgement of the performance of the preservice teachers. In view of these limitations, future studies may be conducted to enable more comprehensive gathering of data from all the stakeholders so that the reflections of the preservice teachers may be validated. This will enable deeper understanding and appreciation of the ability of the preservice teachers for transformational teaching. The deeper is the understanding of the teachers' ability for transformative teaching, the better curriculum will be designed for preservice teaching that will allow preservice teachers to be more reflexive of the events in their learning environment.

In addition, researchers may also conduct future studies that will look into the impact of teachers' ability to use their reflections in designing teaching plan to learners' outcomes. After all, the noble goal of teaching is to transfer knowledge and skills to the learners to empower them to transcend beyond classroom learning.

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International Journal of Educational Studies
Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 78-92
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