CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the introductory explanation of the research which covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of the key terms, and the organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

Teaching practicum is an influential aspect of teacher education that provides real teaching experiences for student teachers (also known as pre-service teachers) (Köksal & Genç, 2019; Wilson, 2006). Teaching practicum is considered as a means of training and preparing pre-service teachers to be professional teachers. In the teaching practicum, pre-service teachers will have an opportunity to apply their coursework knowledge, theories, and best practices to real-world teaching situations. Hence, the main objective of the teaching practicum is to provide pre-service teachers with hands-on teaching experience in the classroom.

Teaching practicum is beneficial for pre-service teachers in influencing their teaching experience. As stated by Pandee et al. (2020), experience in the teaching practicum will influence pre-service teachers' future careers development as teachers. However, at the same time, teaching practicum is often regarded as one of the most challenging, stressful, and frustrating aspects of a teacher education program for pre-service teachers (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009). Since during the teaching practicum, pre-service teachers will be required to behave like real teachers by preparing lesson plans in advance of each teaching session, selecting appropriate teaching strategies, managing classrooms, familiarizing themselves with school resources and regulations, and adapting to the school system (Huang & Waxman, 2009). Therefore, they may find it difficult to deal with those classroom issues.

Teaching practicum usually requires pre-service teachers to work at schools, such as in elementary, middle school, or high school. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the teaching practicum, which should have been a school-based teaching practicum, suddenly became an online teaching practicum. A shift to

fully online teaching is a new occurrence, especially for teaching practicum activities (Waswa & Celik, 2021). Unlike face-to-face practice, teaching in an online setting requires different preparation, including employing strategies to engage students in the course content, delivering material with consistent and effective communication, and using technology tools to teach (Barbour & Unger, 2014). In this circumstance, pre-service teachers may be posing unique challenges in terms of preparation and experience since they have insufficient time to prepare online materials and little professional development in teaching online. Many of them may possess limited skills, knowledge, and confidence to shift to online teaching and learning. Having the necessary knowledge and abilities to teach is not enough for teachers, especially pre-service teachers; they also need to have the conviction that they can successfully perform the required tasks in teaching, particularly under challenging circumstances, such as during this Covid-19 pandemic (Artino Jr., 2012). Thus, it is undeniable that during the teaching practicum, they may be questioning themselves about how well and how confident they are in their ability to do teaching activities. Therefore, as pre-service teachers, who mostly still lack experience, developing academic competence to teach is important, but perceiving abilities to teach is crucially important. This matter deals with self-efficacy.

Derived from Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is a theoretical construct that indicates individuals' perception of their capability to complete certain tasks, which influences their decision-making process (Bandura, 1977) Self-efficacy refers to "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Self-efficacy denotes people's confidence in their ability to control their motivation, thought processes, affective states, and actions (Bandura, 1997). When people have high self-efficacy, it means they are confident in their ability to perform the task successfully, which will make them more motivated, have a stronger belief in their ability, and are likely to try and take that action. In contrast, when people have low self-efficacy, it means that they are not confident in their ability to do the activities successfully, which will make them less motivated, have a stronger doubt in their ability, and are likely to avoid the actions they should do. However,

self-efficacy is not an evaluation of what has been done but rather a judgment about what can be done (Goddard et al., 2004). It is not something of how one's ability to do a task, but instead it is how someone perceives their own ability to complete that task (Sharp et al., 2016). Therefore, self-efficacy is people's beliefs about their capabilities which is not concerned with the number of skills but with what they believe they can do with their skills to achieve desired outcomes.

In the educational context, particularly in the teaching context, self-efficacy is known as teacher self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy is a judgment or belief of a teacher's capability to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Teacher self-efficacy indicates teachers' confidence in their ability. Teacher self-efficacy determines teachers' effectiveness in teaching and their teaching and learning quality. Thus, self-efficacy, particularly teacher self-efficacy, potentially becomes a determinant of success in someone's future career, including pre-service teachers as future teacher candidates.

Parallel to the importance of teacher self-efficacy, it is worth noting that teacher self-efficacy is most malleable and impressionable during the teaching practicum (Bandura, 1997; Pendergast et al., 2011). Teacher self-efficacy will influence how pre-service teachers prepare their professional placements, how they teach, how they see teaching as their future profession, and how they consider their decision to continue teaching (Farhadiba & Wulyani, 2020). Once pre-service teachers' self-efficacy is formed, it will be resistant to change (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Therefore, it is most appropriate for pre-service teachers to develop a high sense of self-efficacy during their teaching practicum in order to prepare their teaching careers.

Knowing that pre-service teachers' sense of self-efficacy has strength in influencing their future teaching careers, the issue becomes important and needs to be explored more. The issue of pre-service teachers' sense of self-efficacy has been discussed widely by several researchers (Atay, 2007; Bakar et al., 2012; Balcı et al., 2019; Celik, 2021; Demirel, 2017; Farhadiba & Wulyani, 2020; Ma & Cavanagh, 2018; Megawati & Astutik, 2018; Nugroho, 2017; Rahmawati, 2017; Safitri, 2019; Ucar & Bozkaya, 2016; Waswa & Celik, 2021). However, most of

the studies focused on school-based teaching practicum. It means that studies that are focused on investigating pre-service teachers' sense of self-efficacy in the online teaching practicum have received little attention, especially in the current situation where the Covid-19 pandemic is still evolving.

This study, therefore, seeks to fill the gap of the previous studies to investigate pre-service teachers' sense of self-efficacy in the online teaching practicum, as well as the factors influencing their self-efficacy.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the explanation in the background of this research, this study is conducted to answer the following question:

1. How is pre-service teachers' self-efficacy during the online teaching practicum?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Concerning the research questions above, this study aims to investigate pre-service teachers' sense of self-efficacy in the online teaching practicum, as well as the factors influencing their self-efficacy.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study covers further explanation about pre-service teachers' perceived self-efficacy during the online teaching practicum. The main focus of the research is narrowed down into two limitations. First, measuring pre-service teachers' self-efficacy in their experience during the online teaching practicum. Second, finding out the factors that influence their self-efficacy based on the four sources of self-efficacy by Bandura (1997). Moreover, this study mostly uses the theory of self-efficacy by Bandura (1997) and the theory of teacher self-efficacy by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998, 2001) as the main frameworks of this study. This study only involved pre-service teachers majoring in English Education who have done the teaching practicum for at least three months in the 2020/2021 academic year. To answer the research question, the researcher collected the data using questionnaires and interviews.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study investigates pre-service teachers' sense of self-efficacy in the online teaching practicum, as well as the factors influencing their self-efficacy. The result of this study is expected to be significant for several aspects. Firstly, this study is expected to give further insight regarding pre-service teachers' sense of self-efficacy and its factors in the online teaching practicum, particularly in the English teaching context. Secondly, the results of this study can provide information about how pre-service teachers perceived their self-efficacy in completing their teaching practice in the online teaching practicum. This study is also expected to help pre-service teachers evaluate their ability and prepare better for their teaching performance in the future. Thirdly, this study may be beneficial as a reference for further research on investigating pre-service teachers' sense of self-efficacy during the teaching practicum, especially during the online teaching practicum in English teaching.

1.6 Clarification of the key Terms

To avoid misconception of terms that will be frequently used in this study, this section will clarify the following terms:

a. **Self-Efficacy** is a person's beliefs about their capabilities that denotes their confidence in doing certain activities.

b. **Teacher Self-Efficacy** refers to a teacher's beliefs about their teaching capabilities in implementing instructional strategies, engaging students, managing the classroom, and using technology for teaching to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task.

c. **Pre-service Teachers** are students who are enrolled in a teacher education program to become professional teachers known as in-service teachers. Pre-service teachers in this study refer to student teachers majoring in English Education and have done the teaching practicum.

d. **Online Teaching Practicum** refers to the teacher education program conducted online, which provides opportunities for pre-service teachers to apply theories and abilities to teach in real classrooms.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This paper is organized into five chapters. Each chapter is provided with several subtopics to give further elaboration of the given issue. The chapter is arranged as follows:

The first chapter, known as the introduction chapter, elaborates the background of the study, statement of the problems (known as research questions), purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of the key terms, and the organization of the paper.

The second chapter discusses the theoretical framework, which presents relevant theories, related theories, and related studies that underpinned this study. The theories in this study include (1) the concept of teaching practicum, as well as online teaching practicum, (2) the theories of self-efficacy, (3) teachers' self-efficacy, (4) pre-service teachers' self-efficacy during the teaching practicum, and (5) the previous related studies.

The third chapter focuses on the research methodology used in this study, covering research design, participants of the study, data collection techniques, and data analysis procedures.

The fourth chapter explains the findings and discussion of the study from the collected data, which focuses on answering the research questions.

The fifth chapter delivers the conclusions of the study, which summarizes the findings and discussion in the fourth chapter, and suggestions for further research. Moreover, the limitations of the study are also presented to gain further information about the research.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has presented the research overview by deliberating the background of the study, research question, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of the key terms, and organization of the paper. The next chapter will present the literature review related to the present study as the foundation to extend a clear framework to be investigated.