

PROFILING EDUCATION STUDENTS USING NATIONAL COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHER STANDARDS (NCBTS)

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ABSTRACT – *To date, educational standards have experienced the combination of old and new philosophies and the experimentation of new strategies and designs to provide quality education every learner deserves. Guided by such demands, the universities become highly responsible for producing ideal educators. This study made a profile of the education students based on their learning of the standards of the total education development set in the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS). Utilized in this study were a researcher-made survey, researcher-made NCBTS test, and in-depth interviews with the fourth-year education students in the three private universities in Cagayan de Oro City. The study revealed most of the students' collective rating of NCBTS was POOR. The students were GOOD in Social Regard for Learning, FAIR Learning Environment, FAIR in Diversity of Learners, POOR in Curriculum, POOR in Planning, Assessing and Reporting, POOR in Community Linkages, and FAIR in Personal and Professional Growth. The findings outlined that prospective educators have not fully developed the standard framework for teaching. Hence, curriculum makers consider a yearly evaluation of students' NCBTS competencies and use it as the basis for deliberation.*

Keywords: Education Framework, Education Students National Competency-Based Teacher Standards

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are supposed to educate the young and the future citizens of the country. This creates a challenge to educators in their role of providing an optimal learning experience that goes for quality. Supporting this, Article XIV (1987 Philippine Constitution), requires the state to safeguard and foster quality education at all levels and ensure that everyone has access to education [1].

Republic Act 9155, also known as the Basic Education Act of 2001, dictates providing the highest quality of learning to Filipino learners. Aligning to this mandate, the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 2003 cited the Philippines third from the last. In answer to this, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Teacher Education Council (TEC) have come up with programs and projects meant to improve the quality of teacher education in the country based on the guidelines set in the CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) Number 30 Series of 2004.

To concretize the framework, the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS) was formulated. Seven domains were then identified: 1) social regard for learning, 2) the learning environment, 3) the diversity of learners, 4) curriculum, 5) planning, and 6) assessing and reporting 7) community linkages, 8) personal & professional growth. This educational paradigm proposes the concept that schools should recreate individuals by the provision of concrete experiences that considers nature and nurture [2].

As unending support to this enhancement program, the Department of Education directed the national adoption and implementation of the NCBTS and its integration into the educational system (Department of Education Order number 32, series of 2009).

However, in the recent 2010 Licensure (Board) Examination for Teachers (LET, the Professional Regulations Commissions (PRC) announced that only 31.36% of the elementary 41.75% of the secondary successfully passed the LET given last September 27, 2015. The percentages of passing indicate poor performance.

With NCBTS in teacher education institutions, there is a need to assess the level of the students in terms of NCBTS learned. It is important to know the factors that can contribute to the realization of the goals of the school or the college of education. NCBTS is an integrated theoretical framework that defines the different dimensions of effective teaching which should be experienced by the students taking education courses and should be manifested by teachers teaching these students.

Such need is identified in this study as it sought to make a profile of the education students in three prestigious universities in the city.

The study anchored its framework on the Teacher Education Council's (2009) framework of education known as NCBTS and Gestalt's (1912) theory of learning that considers learners as an integrated whole. NCBTS sets a standard and serves as key principles for the teaching profession. Accordingly, Gestalt believes that learning involves the interaction of the learner and the environment for learning to take place.

NCBTS is the Department of Education's articulation of a new paradigm for quality teaching. In this paradigm, the teacher is a professional who is authorized and obliged to decide and evaluate the educational process of students' achievement of learning goals.

To simplify this, NCBTS is subdivided into two categories: the teacher as the facilitator of learning and the teacher as a learner. The categories are composed of competencies that are

taken from educational theories and empirical research on the learning environment and teaching practices that lead to effective learning. These competencies are articulated into domains, strands, and indicators.

The domain is a distinctive sphere of the teaching-learning process. It is also a well-defined arena for demonstrating positive teacher practices. These domains are implied in Piaget's theory that education involves learning with appropriate environments, curriculum, materials, and instruction that foster the development of learners in terms of their physical and cognitive abilities and their social and emotional needs [3].

The specific dimensions of positive teacher practices under the general conceptual domain are strands: the concrete, observable, and measurable teacher behaviors, actions, habits, actions, routines, and practices. Strands are known to create, facilitate, and support enhanced student learning. Figure 1 illustrates the different domains of NCBTS.

The first domain is Social Regard for Learning. This requires a teacher to act as a role model for students to value learning. One indication is to be positive examples for students. In other words, teachers are expected to transmit clear messages not just on academic concepts but also on acceptable social behavior [4].

One indication is their observance of the law as concretely expressed in following school rules and regulations. Modesty, punctuality, and impartiality also facilitate learning as they help teachers become attractive to learners.

The Learning Environment is another domain in learning. These are the physical and psychological contexts. As concurred, the physical environments facilitate learning to become accessible. Lage, Plat, and Treglia (2000) support this contention. They mentioned that the instructor's teaching style can facilitate students' learning and interest in the subject matter [5].

Next is the Diversity of Learners. Culture is a necessary consideration in education. Maximum effectiveness of all school personnel, including teachers and other curriculum developers, requires an understanding of the context in which a school resides. This statement means that school is an institution created by and for society.

The fourth domain Curriculum Content and Pedagogy encapsulates the entire learning plan for students. Instructional strategies, technologies, and resources are involved in the development of each learner

Planning, Assessing & Reporting, is the fifth domain in NCBTS. Two essential words are essential in this domain: planning and analysis. University and college educators are expected to have these two thinking skills because constant planning and analysis are involved in dealing with individuals. Besides, the best persons to plan in a given educational system are those who are directly involved [7].

The sixth domain is School, Home, and Community Linkages. Afe [8] contends that education is a vital weapon to

incorporate a person into his society. Since self-realization and national consciousness are reflective a person must have the elements reflected into his behaviors as part of his cultural identity, his national consciousness and responsibility.

The last domain is Personal Growth and Professional Development. According to Darch [9] how teachers look at their very own selves greatly affects students' learning. Teachers can change lives. Former United States President Barack Obama said in his speech that educators, being facilitators of knowledge, can change people, society, and even the entire world. The NCBTS framework sets standards and serves as fundamental principles in making good citizens in a pleasant world.

To guide teachers in the practice of their profession, NCBTS has to direct their constant evaluation of behavior and values aligned to the ideals of NCBTS. Walsh [10] concurs that training alone does not constitute education. Teachers must exemplify a reflective attitude and a critical mind. Duffield [11] added that it is necessary to integrate these things into the other aspects of life.

Similarly, Gestalt theory proposes that education involves getting the holistic view of the learner. Gestalt believes that the whole is greater than just the sum of the parts [12]. From this proposition, he expressed that both the teaching and the learning environments are explored in a teaching endeavor to make learning happen. In a broader sense, teachers play a very transformational role in the formation of students as they are responsible for guiding the students' learning. In turn, these learners, are the processors of the opportunities given to them to utilize the learning opportunity.

The main principles of the Gestalt Theory include the following concepts: first, teachers should encourage their students to discover the relationship of the elements that make up a problem; second, inconsistencies, gaps, or disturbances are essential stimuli in the learning process; and third, the laws of the organization should propel educational instruction. It suggested that learners acquire knowledge by discovering things in their holistic view and the relationships underlying each part and consequently accept or discards knowledge gained.

Gestalt's theory is very much like the NCBTS framework as it explores individual learners in terms of their nature, their environment, and the influences of other aspects of education that are instrumental in the success of any learning engagement.

1. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design and Instruments

This study explored to give a profile and analyzed the competencies of education students in terms of teaching ideas based on the framework of National Competency-Based Teacher Standards. It employed a quantitative descriptive design which was supported by the results of focus group discussion.

2.2 Setting, Respondents, and Data Gathering Procedure

This study considered three private higher education institutions. Employing proportionate simple random sampling, the researcher subjected 156 respondents to take the researcher-made questionnaire. Upon calculation using Kuder Richardson 21 (Kr21), the value of (r) provided a reliable result at 0.78.

To further investigate the findings of the gathered data from observation and recording of events, the researcher gathered qualitative data by conducting an in-depth interview. Lowest and top performers were considered for an in-depth interview. Participants were selected according to their NCBTS scores.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

To start the study, the researcher asked permission from the administration of the universities and coordinated with them on the possible schedule. The students were gathered and were informed of the conduct of the study. They expressed their consent in writing by affixing their signature.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The education students have GOOD to a VERY GOOD grasp of the Social Regard for Learning. Essentially important is to highlight that about 43 percent of the students demonstrated VERY GOOD while about 33 percent got GOOD learning in this domain. This means that education students had different views about their social regard for learning. The same result also suggests that some students are still confused about the role of teachers as facilitators of knowledge acquisition.

The heart of this domain is the principle that teachers "serve as positive role models of the values in pursuit of learning and of the effort to learn" Therefore, every teacher must exemplify the ideals through actions, speeches, and attitudes [13]. The question which was least answered in this domain was that of asking students on their stand on what was more important between modesty and resourcefulness. Most of the students considered resourcefulness over modesty. They failed to realize that learning is not the only thing that matters in education. Embedded in learning are the values that go with knowledge acquisition. This is what the respondents failed to identify in the options.

In the field of teaching, competency in the Learning Environment, the second domain is another important factor. The learning environment refers to the social and physical environment. Students' consideration in this domain will help make learning appropriate to students. In the study, it was revealed that on average, students had a FAIR competency in this domain

It is striking to note, that the question that identified the indicator on communicating higher learning expectations to each learner was the least answered, having only 8% of the correct response. Suggestively, the students had difficulty judging when it is right to consider the learners' capabilities. They overlooked the need to bring each learner's level to its full potential while considering how much they can do.

During the in-depth interview one of the conversations with the respondents, one claimed that the questions were quite

tricky because of poor analysis. Her evaluation was diverted to that concept of grouping students according to the current assessment without giving possibilities of how much an individual can become given the right opportunities using the said present assessment as simply the springboard.

Still, other important observations that contributed to the FAIR performance of the students in this domain is the question of how to gauge the effectiveness of teaching. Only some of the students got the correct response. Students' responses indicated that learning does not only provide an avenue of simply acquiring knowledge. In addition, it motivates a person to learn something for himself and to be encouraged to have other things to discover. This response belongs to the second strand in the learning environment. All the other options in this question were limited only to the concept of learning as mere knowledge of things but not in going beyond what one still has to gain.

In another question that asked how a teacher would design an environment conducive for learning, only 60 percent correctly answered the question. This result suggests that more than half of the students did not know how to create a healthy psychological climate for learning (another strand in Domain 2 of NCBTS). The implication to the result suggests the process of educating students in their decision of becoming teachers who are truthful to their vocation. According to deLespinasse [14], this is a commonly misconstrued question in making decisions. That is, to proceed to the plan or to prioritize the situation that needed immediate action.

The third domain is the diversity of learners. In this context, the learners' uniqueness as individuals becomes the basis for the success of both teaching and learning activities. Thus, the teacher's responsibility is to ensure that each learner in the class is part of the class design. Manchanda [15] says, "A good teacher recognizes that each pupil has a different talent lying hidden and unexplored.

Education students got a FAIR performance in this domain. The results of the indicators suggested that they understood well the concept of the diagnosis. This can be explained by the students' exposure to evaluation forms that asked for strengths and weaknesses.

The same is true for another indicator that looked into the consideration of learners as holistic beings. From the result, the students had a narrow concept of the nature of man. Most respondents still did not fully understand that teaching entails several aspects.

In the fourth domain, the Curriculum, 44.23 percent of the students exhibited a POOR rating while about 31 percent had a FAIR rating in this domain. The results further revealed that the question about the students' wise use of time got the highest percentage (55.7%) of a correct response. The result conveyed that more than half of the respondents have acquired knowledge on the wise utilization of instruction.

Considering that the respondents were already in the fourth year, expectedly, they had acquired the skill. For, college study involves good time management to survive [16].

In addition, the poor performance of the students in the Curriculum domain can be explained by other indicators that acquired a low percentage of correct responses. For one, 41.03 percent of students correctly answered indicator 16 which asked for a design in sociology class. The question was short; however, the options were combinations of concepts that would show how well a teacher teaches students.

A similar problem exists in the question that again asked for combining tools for learning with objectives. There was only 35.90 percent of the students who got the correct answer. This indicated that the majority of the students were not able to communicate clear learning goals to the student, which is a manifestation of the Curriculum domain of NCBTS.

In another question that asked for the strand in the curriculum which requires teachers to select teaching methods, learning activities, and instructional materials or resources appropriate to learners, only 22.44 percent of the students showed competence. The result indicated that students did not fully grasp the concepts in the curriculum.

Another indicator that asked how a teacher aligns objectives to lessons got the least number of right answers. Only 19.23 percent of the students responded correctly. The question asked in this item made use of a sample of the philosophy syllabus. This was instrumental to their incorrect choice because philosophy was less related to their course, though they had it as a minor subject. Piaget [17] construed that most adults might have some difficulties deciphering problems that have vital importance to them.

Moreover, as traced from the responses, it was found that most of the students answered that the objective should be modified to fit the requirements. This option caught most of the respondents, undermining that designing a curriculum starts from the set targets. In other words, the requirements must be based on the said goals; not otherwise.

This generally poor performance signified the respondents' inability to fully understand the concept of aligning the objectives to the activities. As some of them narrated during the interview, they almost had a "stiff neck" because most of the items demanded thorough reading.

In terms of the fifth domain, planning, assessing, and reporting, nearly half of the respondents (73 out of 156) got a POOR rating. This has some relevance to the poor rating they got in the fourth domain, the curriculum.

It follows that if they have difficulty aligning objectives of a syllabus, they would naturally be grappling in planning and assessment. Five indicators were used to determine this learning. An indicator that asked the question on the diversity of student strategies got the highest percentage of correct responses (62.82%). It indicated that most of the students had gained some techniques in teaching.

However, the indicator that asked about monitoring and providing feedback to learners got a low percentage score (16.03). The question called for identifying the right reason for action made. It further illustrated that since educational planning as defined by [18] is the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development, it can be inferred that this domain requires a

student to be knowledgeable and have an analytical mind. This makes the task of answering this item complex.

The sixth domain is Community Linkages. An important consideration in education is how future teachers can associate with the community in facilitating learning. This is a question that needs to be addressed before education students leave the portals of their school. Hence, the domain Community Linkages has an important role in the formation of future teachers.

In the study, the students' rating in this domain was almost equally distributed between POOR (38.46%) to FAIR (35.26%) performance. To note, 38.46 percent of the respondents scored POOR and 35.26 percent scored FAIR. Only 18.59 percent of the respondents were GOOD while the remaining 7.69 percent were described as VERY GOOD.

The seventh domain, the last domain is Personal and Professional Growth. Overall, the result depicted that the students had FAIR learning in this domain. For clarifications, 32.69 percent did FAIRLY while 32.05 percent fared POORLY. However, the question that distinguished whether one builds professional links with colleagues to enrich teaching practice signified that more than half of the respondents had exemplified GOOD linkage with others in the teaching field.

Inversely, question number 35, Which of the following statements exemplify an epitome of a teacher? got the lowest percentage of correct responses. To be exact, only 10.90 percent got the right answer. This is the last question in the test. The desired goal of this item is to reflect the extent of the attainment of learning goals. Most students did not get the right answer. It was a response that did not center only on the achievement of the teacher's goal but on the students' goal and the teacher's efficacy in carrying out a learning task.

Also, the result indicated that the students still possessed in them disinterestedness as they were still young. Thus, the focus on one's self was still predominant while the regard for others came only secondary. This was also an indication of a low sense of efficacy because the teacher was not looking into whether his teaching was successful or not; rather he looked into whether he was done with his task or not. Nieto; Tolar [19] revealed that many teacher candidates had low self-efficacy levels. Duffield [20] had this revelation when he cited Fuller (1969). Also, he mentioned that these teachers were more inclined to prioritize their survival rather than the intricacies of teaching.

The preceding discussions suggest that there was a need for future teachers to go out from this childish behavior of egocentrism to know what it meant to be REAL teachers. Moreover, the utilization of NCBTS as a guide for reflection will help future teachers transcend from their survival state to a more meaningful teaching profession.

4. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

All in all, the seven domains comprise the whole evaluation of the students' learning and skill in NCBTS. Most of the students (62.18%) had a Fair rating, 36.54% had a Poor rating and only 1.25 % were Good in the whole test. The indicators

reveal that students were GOOD in social regard for learning. As students, they must have made some observations in their experience on the importance of learning. On the other hand, students were POOR in curriculum and planning, assessing, and reporting.

The result of the in-depth interview with the top and bottom-performing students disclosed that Assessment and the Teaching Profession were among the common subjects mentioned by the students to have helped them a lot. It was also noted that their observation during Field Study was very important in their reflections and acquisition of knowledge, skills, strategies, and principles. While it is true that most of them did not choose to take education courses, the majority shared that they have learned to like the course.

The findings of the study suggested an undeveloped NCBTS among students.

Also, few of them even suggested that NCBTS be given to them as a refresher course in their third and fourth year in college as most of them said that they learned it only during their first year in college.

Hence, NCBTS should be used as the basis for evaluating future teachers' weaknesses to be addressed and the strengths to be enhanced to form them into the ideal teacher, one who is imbued by the seven domains that affect a learner, the learning process, and the learning itself. NCBTS should create a personality not only knowledge. Later, when this personality is lived then, it is expected to influence others.

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