

COMPETENCIES OF BASIC EDUCATION TEACHERS: BASIS FOR TEACHER DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

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ABSTRACT – *Making the educators become equipped with the right competencies and standards ensures effective and efficient delivery of instruction amidst the changing educational landscapes. With this, the study determined the professional judgment and results on the level of Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and Professional Qualification of Teachers in the Basic Education Curriculum through the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) based on the key result areas (KRAs): KRA 1 – Content Knowledge and Pedagogy, KRA 2 – Learning Environment and Diversity of Learners, KRA 3 – Curriculum and Planning, and KRA 4 – Assessment and Reporting. It made use of purposive sampling and considered 16 participating schools from Misamis Oriental. Findings revealed that all KRAs achieved very satisfactory. However, teachers' feedback mentioned that they would like to be more equipped in the teaching and learning processes such as ICT to employ technologically enhanced modalities. These would aid in equipping, embracing, and adapting to the new normal ensuring lifelong learning for the learners.*

Keywords: Teachers' evaluation and results, improving competencies and standards of teachers

1. INTRODUCTION

Designing teacher training requires thoroughly understanding the competencies and standards in crafting a teacher development plan. In addition, being equipped with the proper knowledge and skills ensures the best learning outcomes for the students [1].

In the global setting, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Asia Society, with its Center for Global Education, worked with the academe, educators, and stakeholders to define global competence and standards for education [2]. For the Philippines, the Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) is the instrument for identifying the current competencies and standards that need to be demonstrated by teachers in the basic education curriculum. It also serves as the basis for all learning and development programs for teachers, ensuring that they are adequately equipped to implement the K to 12 programs effectively. Hence, they must possess these competencies and standards in their teaching practice. PPST was based on the National Competency-based Teacher Standards (NCBTS) and adapted to national and global efforts, mainly on K to 12 reform and ASEAN integration. It comprises seven Domains, 37 Strands, and 37 Indicators for each Career Stage [3].

Before designing effective teacher development programs and initiatives, it is essential to determine the competencies and standards practiced by the teachers. It would help identify the gaps in what appropriate teacher training could be provided for them. The study by Roberto and Madrigal revealed that the level of teaching standards, competence, and performance assessed by the principals and teachers themselves were only proficient and satisfactory, respectively. The findings showed a significant relationship between the level of teaching standards competence and performance. Hence, the rating provided by the principals and teachers calls for continuous improvement to bring out the best of the learners. Moreover, it has been shown that teaching standards competence was associated with their teaching performance. If teachers practiced the teaching standards, it would lead to better teaching performance [4].

Furthermore, to respond to the changing educational landscape experienced in this pandemic, such as by providing flexible learning to the learners, teachers must embrace the right skills, knowledge, and attitude in delivering instruction aligned to the competencies and standards set in PPST. Pupils and students need not suspend learning because of this unprecedented phenomenon.

In this light, the study would like to determine and assess teachers' competencies in Basic Education based on the Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) indicators using their Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF). It would serve as baseline information in designing teacher development programs and initiatives in Northern Mindanao and crafting teacher training in the primary education curriculum.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design and Instruments

This study utilized the descriptive research design. All the data gathered were collected, tabulated, and analyzed. The IPCRFs served as the research instrument for this study.

2.2 Setting, Respondents, and Data Gathering Procedure

The study was collected among the 16 basic education institutions (i.e., elementary, junior high school, and senior high school) in Misamis Oriental at the height of the pandemic. These schools responded and participated in providing their IPCRF results.

Upon the release of the letter of approval from the competent authority (i.e., Chairperson of The Northern Mindanao Regional Development Council or RDC-X, Regional Director of DepEd Region 10, and Schools Division Superintendents), these were provided to basic education institutions to gather their teachers' IPCRF results as the basis of proposing and designing teacher development initiatives in the basic education. The focus group discussion (FGDs) was also employed to substantiate the results of this study.

The respondents were the teachers holding plantilla or permanent items in the Department of Education in Misamis Oriental.

2.3 Ethical Considerations

The respondents were oriented about the purpose and scope of the study, the nature and data needed, and the affirmation of their willingness to participate. The researchers secured the informed consent of the participants in getting their IPCRF results and assured them of utmost confidentiality.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study determined the professional judgment and results on the level of Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and Professional Qualification of Teachers in the Basic Education Curriculum through the IPCRF results. The following findings would be the basis for proposing a design for teacher development initiatives in basic education adapting to the post-pandemic.

Table 1. Results of the KRAs from the IPCRF

KRA	KRA1	KRA2	KRA3	KRA4
Mean	4.38	4.37	4.35	4.29
SD	0.38	0.33	0.32	0.37
Desc	VS	VS	VS	VS

According to the professional judgment of their school head, peers, and combined self-rating scores, the basic education institutions attained an overall rating of very satisfactory. This has presented the required means of verification (MOV) listed in the effectiveness, quality, efficiency, and timeliness performance indicators in the KRAs.

In Lagrisola's study, it was gleaned from the results that the Department of Education used the IPCRF to empower teachers to use their skills in the teaching-learning process among public elementary and secondary schools. Its goal in using this system is to adequately measure the output of each teacher using the documented proof of evidence compiled as an individual portfolio [5].

As solid points, KRA 1 exemplified recognition of the importance of content knowledge aligned to the curriculum by applying theories and principles of teaching and learning. Hence, they could perform such things as but not be limited to the practical applications of content knowledge as indicated in the curriculum and lesson plans highlighting the integration of content knowledge within and across subject areas.

For KRA 2, providing and establishing safe, secure, fair, and supportive learning environments that promote learner responsibility and achievement and are responsive to learners' diversity created a learning-focused climate and efficiently managed learner behavior both in the physical and virtual spaces. An example of this was effective teacher management of learner behavior using the following strategies, which were not limited to providing motivation, praising the learners, setting house rules/guidelines, etc.

In KRA 3, this focused on interacting with the national and local curriculum requirements that needed authentic learning tasks and applied the principles for effective teaching and learning processes.

KRA 4 showed skills in applying various assessment tools and strategies in monitoring, evaluating, and providing feedback, which used assessment data in multiple ways to inform and enhance academic programs.

All these areas obtained very satisfactory ratings, which suggested improvement to achieve outstanding remarks. In addition, they provided feedback through the FGDs that they needed to enhance the application of their professional knowledge in planning, designing, and working with colleagues to provide learners with the necessary feedback about learning outcomes that inform the reporting cycle and enable teachers to select, organize, and use sound assessment processes. Moreover, it was also observed that teachers' workload was beyond the regular requirements. This included administrative responsibilities and quasi tasks that they could not achieve work-life balance because of multiple tasks due to a shortage of personnel and more than 40 pupils or students class size. Teachers' workload led to burnout and work performance. It showed that teaching has been a rewarding but demanding profession. The findings revealed that teachers have a high workload. Their burnout level also increased. They added that workload has a significant impact on the level of burnout experienced by teachers. Workload affects teachers' performance as well [6].

The discussions with the teachers in this study also showed similar results wherein they could only partially perform these expected deliverables due to overlapping responsibilities. Even though they achieved very satisfactory remarks, there were challenges to adapting to the new modalities in teaching, such as the flexible delivery of instruction (e.g., blended learning, hybrid, and hyflex), which required demanding preparations to ensure that learning never stopped among the learners.

4. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The competence of educators significantly influences the quality of education and the student's learning outcomes. Hence, investing in professional development among teachers is necessary to ensure they are aligned with the standards, adaptable to change, and foster active student engagement.

In this study, they were all very satisfactory in all areas. Still, they provided feedback that they needed to be more equipped to optimize ICT use, particularly on the blended learning, hybrid, and hyflex modalities. It also transpired in the discussion that they experienced multitasking that could affect both professional and personal productivity.

As a recommendation, institutions could revisit the roles and responsibilities of teachers for more manageable responsibilities and achieve work-life balance. For teacher development initiatives, schools could create programs to be integrated into their learning action cell (LAC) sessions, such as but not limited to self-paced learning spaces through massive open online courses (MOOCs) to be updated with the latest and global trends on the delivery of instruction maximizing the available ICT and educational apps or tools and other free learning platforms. If the budget warrants, the administration could improve the institution's internet infrastructure and digital facilities. Lastly, teachers could collaborate with their colleagues to conduct more action research in crafting authentic learning activities, instructional materials, and online assessments to demonstrate the desired knowledge, skills, and attitudes among learners and become future-ready graduates.

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