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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ASSESSMENT OF THE BACHELOR OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (BEED) STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAM TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STUDENT TEACHING MANUAL (STM)

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ABSTRACT

Student Teaching Program (STP) caps the professional practice in the Teacher Education Curriculum. Hence, STP needs to be assessed in regards to the following components: Program Objectives, Administration, Supervision, Policies and Guidelines, Instructional Activities, and Methods of Assessment towards the development of Student Teaching Manual (STM). The study employed a descriptive method of research using a normative survey technique with documentary analysis. Unstructured interview was used to supplement the data. Results indicated that the level of effectiveness of STP in relation to its component was generally very effective except for policies and guidelines which is only effective. As rated by the stakeholders, supervision was consistently ranked 1st, very effective. It is therefore implied that opportunities for improvement of the implementation of STP could still be explored through the development of a Student Teaching Manual.

INTRODUCTION

Student Teaching caps all educational courses in the Teacher Education Curriculum. It is believed to be the most significant program for field experience in teacher preparation and professional practice. Traditionally labeled as "field experience program", Student Teaching aims to provide systematic and realistic contacts between teacher education students and the tasks involved in teaching. Hence, field experience provides an authentic context in which pre-service teachers gain empirical teaching expertise intertwined with the complexities of the teaching knowledge that helps these pre-service teachers restructure their vocation with greater fervor and commitment. Corollary to the above significance of the Student Teaching Program (STP), stated in the nature and description of Bachelor of Elementary Education STP of the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order No. 11, series of 1999, states that the quality of the educational process depends on the level of education and the professional training of would-be teachers. According to Reganit *et al.* (2004), student teaching is a phase in teacher training which puts to practice the theories and principles and understanding learned by students in the professional course. As such, the impact of the afore cited proposition poses a challenge to all Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) of the Philippines, more specially for those TEIs classified under Center of Excellence (COE) in Teacher Education. Student Teaching is critically an important program to be assessed.

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The journey to meaningful teaching experiences should be made clear to the end users, the student teaching supervisors and the student teachers who are the benefactors of the program. At this juncture, it is likewise necessary among the TEIs to have an in-depth reexamination of the written policies and guidelines set by administrators in the existing STP of the BEED in the ESSU System in order to see the actualities of the program and suggest ways on how to revitalize it. In as much as objective assessment is necessary, the existing STP guidelines of ESSU should be revisited and analyzed carefully. Considerably, after the assessment of the status of STP, it is of utmost importance that weaknesses of the program be identified. Based on the identified needs/weaknesses of the program, the researcher would be working towards the development of a Student Teaching Manual (STM) for BEED Student Teaching Program of ESSU System. The manual would be a vital document which would provide the benefactors (student teachers) with a clearer path towards a meaningful journey to a successful teaching profession. This particular study assessed the Student Teaching Program (STP) of the BEED in the Eastern Samar State University System. Specifically, the study endeavored to answer the following questions:

First, what is the status of the STP of the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) in ESSU System during School Year 2004-2005 Second, what is the assessment of the stakeholders (administrators, cooperating teachers, and student teachers) in the following components of the Student Teaching Program in ESSU System: Program objectives; Administration and supervision; Policies and guidelines; Instructional

activities; and Methods of assessment. Third, what is the level of effectiveness of the Student Teaching Program of BEED in the ESSU System in relation to the aforementioned components?

Fourth, what are the problems/weaknesses encountered by the stakeholders and their level of seriousness in relation to the components of STP of the BEED in the ESSU System. Finally, Based on the identified problems/weaknesses of the STP in ESSU System during School Year 2004-2005, what additional policies and guidelines in the proposed BEED Student Teaching Manual will help improve the program?. The result of this study may serve as a baseline in framing a holistic and integrated STP for Teacher Education Department of different colleges of the ESSU System with due emphasis on the Student Teaching Program. This will particularly give direction to the development of relevant and responsive policies and guidelines in the program for prospective teachers. In like manner, the study will guide other member schools which in the near future will be offering STP. Through the proposed STM, these schools will be treading the path towards Centers of Excellence in Teacher Education Program through the researched-based STM directing the plight of "would-be teachers".

The present study is anchored on the assessment of an existing educational program which included its components as well as the delivery of such components. In this study, the STP of ESSU System was assessed. An adaptation model from the most common program evaluation model, otherwise called as Context-Input-Process-Product (CIPP) was utilized in the study. The Context-Input-Process-Product (CIPP) Model was forwarded by Daniel Stufflebeam which was devised in 1985. This CIPP approach to evaluation is rooted in its definition of evaluation as the process of delineating, obtaining and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives (<http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklist/cippchecklist/htm>). Evaluation in the study is a term used synonymously with assessment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a descriptive method of research using a normative survey technique to assess the Student Teaching Program of the BEED in the Eastern Samar State University (ESS) System. The study was descriptive since the researcher aimed at assessing the existing condition of the BEED Student Teaching Program of the ESSU System. Knowledge of the existing condition is essential and requires standards of assessment. The researcher used this method to provide accurate observation and objective assessment to gather the data. In support, explained that descriptive research is concerned with the analysis of the relationship between non-manipulated variables and the development of generalizations, principles or theories that extend its conclusion beyond the sample observed or variable tested. Moreover, normative survey technique was employed in this study as it was concerned with ascertaining the conditions which prevailed in group cases/variables chosen from the study. Normative survey is essentially a strategy or technique of quantitative description of the general characteristics of the group. Any study which establishes standards of what is prevalent is a normative survey technique. Descriptive research design was deemed appropriate since the study would gather information on the present day policies, procedures, activities and processes of the

STP in the ESSU System. Likewise, documentary analysis was also utilized to gather data on the profile of the BEED student teaching program, existing guidelines, syllabus and other pertinent documents needed in the study. Unstructured interview was used to supplement the data gathered through the self-made questionnaire. The total number of stakeholders/respondents were 389 which were classified accordingly. From the total number of respondents, administrators (43 or 11%) who were the deans, program heads, STP supervisors and coordinators in the Department of Education who oversee the program, cooperating teachers (171 or 44%) from the elementary schools that provided the teaching experience to student teachers, and student teachers (175 or 45%) who were bonafide BEED college students enrolled in student teaching. These respondents were utilized based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study. Furthermore, accessible respondents, according to are the respondents who are readily available at the time of administration of research instrument. The study made use of the following descriptive statistics: percentage, mean, and ranking. Percentage was used to determine the profile of the status of Student Teaching Program. Mean was used to determine the objective assessment of the respondents on the status of STP in relation to its components. Moreover, this was utilized to identify the level effectiveness of STP implementation and the problems encountered by the respondents during the program, as well as the level of seriousness of the problem/weaknesses of the problems. Ranking was used to identify the weaknesses of the program encountered by the stakeholders in relation to the STP components. The weaknesses identified were addressed through new policies and guidelines which were incorporated towards the development a Student Teaching Manual (STM) of the BEED in the ESSU System.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The highlights of the study on the status of STP indicated that: ESSU – Main had more BEED student teachers enrolled in STP than ESSU – Salcedo. ESSU – Main and ESSU – Salcedo had adequate numbers of cooperating teachers. The majority of the high performing schools in the Province of Eastern Samar were utilized as cooperating schools/ laboratory schools. ESSU – Main had fewer numbers of student teaching supervisors, while ESSU – Salcedo had just enough numbers of student teaching supervisors to monitor student teachers' performance. An ideal ratio was observed between cooperating teachers and student teachers at both campuses. The ratio of student teacher supervisors to student teachers in ESSU – Main was not proportionate as compared to the ratio of student teaching supervisor and student teacher in ESSU – Salcedo. The assessment of the STP by its stakeholders in relation to its major components was implemented. In particular, the administration had evidently managed the STP as they were supportive in the implementation of the program. The supervision of the STP was implemented very evidently which was attributed to the cooperating teachers' competence in supervising student teachers' performance. STP was evidently governed by policies and guidelines which needed to be added towards the development of a STM to address the problems/weaknesses encountered by the stakeholders to improve the program. The instructional activities in the STP were evidently provided to student teachers to improve teaching competence. The methods of assessment were evidently set for the STP to assess student teachers' performance.

Table 1. Level of Effectiveness of the BEED Student Teaching Program (STP) in Relation to its components

Components	Administrators Mean Rank VI	Cooperating Teachers Mean Rank VI	Student Teachers Mean Rank VI	Mean Total VI Rank
Program Objectives	4.45 3 VE	4.13 2E	4.162.5 E	4.243 VE
Administration and Supervision	4.56 1 VE	4.28 1 VE	4.18 1 E	4.341VE
Policies and Guidelines	4.16 5 VE	4.04 5 E	4.10 5E	4.15E
Instructional Activities	4.42 4 VE	4.10 4 E	4.15 4E	4.22 4VE
Methods of Assessment	4.50 2 VE	4.12 3 E	4.16 2.5E	4.262 VE
Overall	4.41 VE	4.13E	4.15E	4.23VE

Legend: 1:00-1.80 Not Effective at All (NEA); 1.81-2.60 Effective to a Little Extent (ELE); 2.61-3.40 Effective to Some Extent (ESE); 3.41-4.20 Effective (E); 4.21-5.00 Very Effective (VE).

Moreover, the level of effectiveness of STP in relation to its component was generally effective, with a total mean of 4.23. As rated by the stakeholders, administration and supervision was consistently ranked 1st, with a total mean rating of 4.26 (Very Effective), and the other components were all rated very effective too. Program objectives were effective, with a mean of 4.24, instructional activities had a mean of 4.34, the mean of policies and guidelines was 4.1 and methods of assessment showed a mean rating of 4.26. Although the majority of the components were very effective, except for policies and guidelines which is only effective, it is implied therefore that opportunities for improvement of the implementation of STP could still be explored. The data on the level of effectiveness of STP in relation to its components are illustrated in Table 1. Generally, the problems/weaknesses that had prevailed in program objectives and needed to be examined were the lack of dissemination of the STP objectives, lack of clarity in the statement of STP objectives, and lack of understanding of STP objectives among student teachers, cooperating teachers, and administration. The problems/weaknesses of administration were centered on the lack of in-service training for student teaching supervisors and cooperating teachers, no distinct office for student teaching in campus, and the inability of STP administration to plan for a rich and practical program for student teaching.

The problems/weaknesses which were encountered by the stakeholders on supervision were the insufficient number of supervisor visits to cooperating schools and student teachers, lack of innovative supervisory approaches/techniques shown by cooperating teachers and student teaching supervisors, and the large number of student teachers handled by student teaching supervisors. The prevailing problems/weaknesses of policies and guidelines which needed to be addressed in the proposed Student Teaching Manual (STM) were centered on the inconsistent implementation of some STP policies and guidelines, poor mechanism for the dissemination of STP policies and guidelines, and unwritten policies and guidelines. The problems/weaknesses of instructional activities were centered on the limited exposure of student teachers to seminars and conferences on innovative approaches to teaching, insufficient number of hours spent for actual teaching in one's field of specialization, and inadequate time provided for observation in one's field of specialization/ concentration. The primary problems/weaknesses of methods of assessment which needed to be resolved in the STP were the failure of the student teaching supervisors to observe due to some academic loads in the college, limited number of post-conferences with supervisors/ cooperating teachers, and laxity supervisors/ cooperating teachers to assess/evaluate student teaching performance. After an objective analysis of the problems/weaknesses of the STP, and in due considerations to the need of developing a Student Teaching Manual (STM), additional

policies and guidelines have been suggested for the said manual. Moreover, this manual will be a very significant contribution to the Eastern Samar State University (ESSU) and other Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in the Visayas Region.

Recommendations

On the bases of the results and findings drawn from the study, the researcher offered the following recommendations:

1. ESSU, through the College of Education/Teacher Education Department, should sustain the collaboration and partnership with the Department of Education to elevate the status of the Student Teaching Program in the province.
2. Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in Eastern Samar/other places in the Visayas Region should likewise conduct periodic situational analyses in order to restructure student teaching program to cater to the specific needs of teachers in the locality.
3. ESSU Administrators in the Student Teaching Program should revisit and restructure the major components of the STP in coordination with other stakeholders to address the identified problems and weaknesses in the study in order to incorporate new policies in the newly developed Student Teaching Manual
4. The ESSU System, through the College of Education/Teacher Education Department, should validate and recommend the newly developed BEED Student Teaching Manual for the approval of the Board of Regents. This manual contains the additional STP policies and guidelines and other parts which are essential to improvement of STP.
5. The newly-developed STM for the Bachelor of Elementary Education in the ESSU System should be used to improve the Student Teaching Program
6. Researchers should conduct further studies relative to assessing and evaluating teacher preparation programs in the province/region.

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