

Highly Proficient Teachers' Level of Competency: Basis for Faculty Development Program

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Abstract: *This study aimed at investigating the level of competencies of teachers and to create eventually a proposed faculty development plan for highly proficient teachers. To achieve this aim, the researcher utilized the assessment type of research wherein it had a sample of 90 highly proficient teachers in the School Division of Bulacan during the school year 2020-2021. The collected data were analyzed and treated statistically using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Results revealed that most of the highly proficient teachers were outstanding and very satisfactory. The findings imply that teachers consistently keeping their commitment to hold integrity in teaching and credibility in engaging professional practices. For highly proficient teachers, a higher level of assessment was noted on community linkages and professional engagement, and personal growth and development. The findings imply that the highly proficient teachers can exhibit and model building of relationship among school stakeholders and partners and keep abreast with advance knowledge for professional growth. It appears important to consider that the proposed development teacher training program based on the findings of this study may be given attention by the top management of Schools Division of Bulacan and eventually implement this for the school year 2022-2023.*

Keywords—Level of competency, highly proficient teachers, faculty development program

1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers are challenged day-by-day to become professionally competent to elevate their levels of proficiency. Upgrading their levels of proficiency is an opportunity for the teachers to professionalize themselves and improve their professional practice. This is also another chance for the teachers to enhance their teaching and stimulate the delivery of quality instruction to the learners.

Through quality teachers, the academe can produce the 21st century skills graduates who can drive the country to development and progress.

This is in consonance with the Department of Education vision of producing: Filipinos who passionately love their country and whose values and competencies enable them to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to building the nation, (DepEd Order No. 36, s. 2013). For an author, teachers' professional competence is the teachers' professional knowledge, skills, beliefs and motivation. It is also critical predictor of teachers' professional well-being and success [1]. Another author also underscored that teachers are catalysts of national development and with them, the nation is able to produce and develop learners, who may lead the country to development and progress. Enhancing teachers' quality and upholding quality teaching standards should be given utmost importance for the long term and sustainable nation building [2].

2. RELATED WORKS

To become a competent teacher is so difficult, if you are not committed to the profession. A competent teacher needs to progress holistically to capacitating himself/herself with skills needed to satisfy the qualification of the 21st century teachers [3][4]. Needless to say, it is also hard to upgrade your position from Teacher 1 to Teacher III as proficient teachers; Master

Teacher 1 to Master Teacher 2 or even up to Master Teacher 4, classified as highly proficient teachers. It takes many years before a Teacher I can elevate to the next ladder, which is Teacher II or Teacher III. In fact, there are teachers, who retired as Teacher 1, without any attempt of joining the ranking or submitting his/her credentials for reclassification to Equivalent Record Form (ERF) in Dep Ed. There upon, obtaining the outstanding level in the Individual Commitment Rating Form (IPCRF-RPMS) is another confronting issue to be resolved. Despite several Means of Verification (MOVs) submitted by the teacher, still the teacher failed to reach the highest level of performance.

Meanwhile, a study mentioned that globally, reforms in teacher education have been oriented towards making the preparation of teachers more functional for the development of their competencies [5]. At the same time, much criticisms about such reforms jeopardizing the fundamental humanist traditions in teaching, based on beliefs about non-instrumental values of education have been aired by the concerned teachers.

Clearly, the global reforms in educational system is implemented all over the world [6][7]. For instance, Australia implements the Australian Professional Standard for Teachers (APST) since 2011. The APST has three domains of teaching, which includes the Professional Knowledge, Professional Teaching and the Professional Engagement. Compare with PPST, the Philippines has seven domains [8][9]. Moreover, the APST has seven Standards, which identify what is expected of teachers within three domains of teaching. Teachers' demonstration of the Standards will occur within their specific teaching context at their stage of expertise and reflect the learning requirements of the students they teach. It is only then, that teachers are classified based on four career stages: Graduate Teacher, Proficient Teacher, Lead Teacher, and Highly Accomplished Professional Teachers[10][11].

Practically, the career stages of the teachers speak of difficulty in terms of education, training, handworks and commitment [12].

In addition, a scholar studies on classroom management and teachers ‘performance and was found out that there was significant relationship between conflict management styles and secondary school teachers’ performance [13]. The data also exhibited the positive correlation of integrating, obliging and dominating styles with teachers’ performance while avoiding and compromising style had negative effect on teachers’ performance.

The study obviously demonstrated conflict between management and teachers’ performance and assessment of competencies is part of the educational system, that implemented by the school administrators boiling down to the proficient and highly proficient teachers. While, there must be an interplay between organization structure and culture if teachers are to learn together [14]. Collaboration between teachers produces a number of benefits with significant impacts on their professional lives, thus playing an important role in professional teacher development strategy. The professional lives of teachers are also part of becoming proficient or highly proficient teachers but there are instances, when the teachers are unaware of the complexities of such academic ranks. This only means that proper channeling of communication is very vital in this aspect. In fact, participation and discourse practices can enhance teacher learning by supporting professional critique, reflection, and collaboration [15].

Hence, the Department of Education is continuously monitoring and upgrading all the possible provisions to equip the teachers with capacity to become more competent, competitive and professional, which is prepared for the delivery of quality instruction to the students in the 21st century.

Dep Ed Order No. 42, s. 2017 entitled, The National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers; states that, Dep Ed recognizes the importance of professional standards in the continuing professional development and advancement of teachers based on the principle of lifelong learning. The agency is committed to supporting teachers and takes cognizance of unequivocal evidence that good teachers are vital to rising student achievement. As embedded in the Order, quality learning is contingent upon quality teaching and enhancing teachers’ quality becomes of utmost importance for long term and sustainable nation building.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to assess the level of professional competency of highly proficient secondary teachers and their performance through the Individual Performance Commitment Review Form or IPCRF and eventually craft a Faculty Development Program for School Year 2022-2023.

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of competency of highly proficient teachers be assessed in terms of:
 - 1.1. content knowledge and pedagogy;
 - 1.2. learning environment;
 - 1.3. diversity of learners;
 - 1.4. curriculum and planning
 - 1.5. assessment and reporting;
 - 1.6. community linkages and professional engagement; and
 - 1.7. personal growth and professional development?
2. On the basis of the result of the study, what Faculty Development Plan may be proposed to further improve the professional competency levels of teachers?

4. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized an assessment type of research. This refers to the collection of data to describe or better understand an issue and to use the data for the purpose of describing, predicting, and controlling as a means toward better understanding the phenomena under consideration, and evaluation refers to the comparison of data to a standard for the purpose of judging worth or quality. This type of research design is the most appropriate design for this study because it aimed to assess the level of professional competency of highly proficient secondary teachers and eventually craft a Faculty Development Program for School Year 2022-2023.

The public secondary school teachers were respondents of the study. The teachers were selected since the researcher is a major and a former teacher. Definitely, it would be easier for her to request and/or approach the teachers thru their head teachers as regard data collection. To date, there are nine hundred (900) secondary teachers in the Schools Division of Bulacan. These teachers come from the four educational districts (EDDIS) in the province of Bulacan. EDDIS I; has 24 schools, EDDIS II has 28 schools; EDDIS III: has 30 schools, and EDDIS IV has 11 schools. These teacher-respondents provided the copy of the accomplished standard tool on the competency level of teachers. The respondents are all teachers employed in the School Year 2020-2021.

On the other hand, there are a total of 90 highly proficient teachers and considering the limited numbers of the Master Teachers, all of them served as participants in the study.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of Competency among Highly Proficient Teachers

Table 1
Level of Competency among Highly Proficient Teachers

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Content Knowledge and Pedagogy	4.38	Competent

Learning Environment	4.47	Competent	to develop the learners' pride of their language, heritage and culture.				
Diversity of Learners	4.36	Competent					
Curriculum and Planning	4.43	Competent					
Assessment and Reporting	4.44	Competent					
Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	4.50	Highly Competent					
Personal Growth and Professional Development	4.59	Highly Competent					
Total	4.45	Competent					

Table 1 revealed that the level of competency of highly proficient teachers got a Competent rating as shown by the mean percentage score of 4.45. Specifically, this was displayed by the following KRA: content knowledge and pedagogy (4.38), learning environment (4.47), diversity of learners (4.36), curriculum and planning (4.43), assessment and reporting (4.44), community linkages and professional engagement (4.50), and personal growth and professional development (4.59).

Proposed Development Program for Highly Proficient Teachers

Based on the findings of the study, Table 2 presents the proposed development program to further improve the competency of highly proficient teachers:

Table 2
Proposed Development Program

KRA	Strategies	Objectives	Person/s Involved	Resources	Timeline	Expected Outcome
Content Knowledge and Pedagogy	Teachers' Conference after the Classroom Observation on the Use of Mother Tongue, Filipino and English	Model and support colleagues in the use of Mother Tongue, Filipino and English to improve teaching and learning, as well as	Mentees, Mentors and Coaches or the Master Teachers	N/A	September 2022 to February 2023	Better or Improved Classroom Observation Results

Learning Environment	Echoing and Implementation of policies, guidelines, and procedures from the top management	Exhibit effective strategies that ensure safe and secure learning environments to enhance learning through the consistent implementation of policies, guidelines, and procedures	Teachers, Master Teachers, and School Heads	MOOE Fund, Internet Allowance	Year Round	Narrative Reports on Successful Echoing and Dissemination of Information
	Seminar-Orientation on Handling Learners from Indigenous Groups	Develop and apply teaching strategies to address effectively the needs of learners from indigenous groups.	Proficient Teachers, Mentors and Coaches, School Heads, Curriculum Implementation Division Supervisors	Canteen Fund, Internet Allowance	November 2022	Culturally Sensitive Lesson Plans – Validated by the CID Supervisors
	Development of Strategic Intervention Material or SIM	Develop and apply effective strategies in the planning and	Teachers, Advisers, Subject	Canteen Fund	Year Round	Strategic Intervention Material or SIM to

		management of developmentally sequenced teaching and learning process to meet curriculum requirements and varied teaching contexts.	Teachers			be submitted in Division and Regional and National Competitions		Growth and Professional Development	International Research Conferences and Conventions and Paper Presentations	professional networks to share knowledge and to enhance practice.	Highly Proficient Teachers			Attendance, Recognition, Appearance on International Research Conferences and Paper Presentations
Assessment and Reporting	Workshop of Localized Learning Assessment Tools	Interpret collaboratively monitoring and evaluation strategies of attainment data to support learner progress and achievement.	Teachers, Advisers, Subject Teachers, Master Teachers	MOOE Fund Food and Snack Allowance	August 2022	Localized Learning Assessments								
Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	Creation of Proposal for Brigada Eskwela 2022 entitled, "Breaking Walls-Building Bridges"	Exhibit commitment to and support teachers in the implementation of school policies and procedures to foster harmonious relationships with learners, parents and other stakeholders.	Internal and External Stakeholders	MOOE Fund	July 2022 to August 2022	Brigada Eskwela Program Proposal								
Personal	Attendance to	Participate in	Proficient and	Canteen Fund	October 2022	Certificate of								

6. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The level of professional competencies of highly proficient teachers were generally high. For highly proficient teachers, a higher level of assessment was noted on community linkages and professional engagement, and personal growth and development. The findings imply that the highly proficient teachers can exhibit and model building of relationship among school stakeholders and partners and keep abreast with advance knowledge for professional growth.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Highly proficient teachers are also challenged to further improve the area on diversity of learners. They may pay attention on stricter implementation of guidelines and policies related to handling and teaching learners with unique learning styles and utilizing their exceptional talents.

2. It appears important to consider that the proposed development teacher training program based on the findings of this study may be given attention by the top management of Schools Division of Bulacan and eventually implement this for the school year 2022-2023.

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