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Perspectives and Preparedness on the Outcomes-based Education (OBE) Implication in the Higher Education Institutions of BOHOL

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Outcomes-based education is an approach to education in which decisions about the curriculum are driven by the learning outcomes that the students should display at the end of the course. Philippine Higher Education is at the crossroads, faced with many new demands and challenges brought by the new typology set by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the implementation of the Outcomes-based Education(OBE).The study aimed to determine the preparedness of faculty members and administrators on the perspective of outcomes-based education (OBE) implementation in the higher education institutions of Bohol. Specifically, it sought to determine the knowledge and skills of the respondents in implementing the four basic areas: formulation of learning outcomes, curriculum content and structure, teaching-learning process, and assessment. Findings of the study revealed that the faculty and adminstrators have higher level of knowledge in implementing the four areas of OBE however, teacher's knowledge is less compared to that of administrators. The administrators and faculty members' knowledge translated into skills as both groups claimed to be skillful in implementing the OBE. However, the administrator's assessment of their skills tends to put them at a higher level compared to the teachers. However, both the respondents see the beneficiality of OBE implementation. It is recommended to have continuous refinement of the OBE framework of the school through regular review to be participated by the faculty, adminstrators and other stakeholders to prepare relevant targets aligned to the needs of the community. Faculty development seminar on enhancing faculty knowledge and skills of OBE especially on the formulation of learning outcomes and assessment. Furthermore, it is recommended to conduct related study on the effectiveness of OBE implementation in relation to graduates' employability.

Introduction

To address the demands and challenges of an international community, the higher education in the Philippines is seeking new ways of designing education to improve the existing educational system of the country as well as to prepare students in facing the challenges of the 21st century. The higher education has to re-engineer and take advantage of information technology to globalize and decentralized information. Since, education is increasingly viewed as a commodity to be shaped according to consumers' demand, hence, higher education shifted from an inputs-based to an outcomes-based education (OBE). Stakeholders consider this student-centered and constructive platform as response to quality learning, thus, placing the students at the center of all educational planning which is constructively aligned to the institutional vision, mission, and goals.

The implementation of OBE is the main concern of higher education institutions in the Philippines today to go along with the standards of foreign universities and colleges all over the world (Caguitla,2013; Borsoto et al.,2014). Outcomes-based education is an approach to education in which decisions about the curriculum are driven by the learning outcomes that the students should display at the end of the course. Philippine Higher Education is at the crossroads, faced with many new demands and challenges brought by the new typology set by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the implementation of the Outcomes-based Education(OBE).

In its transformational phase, OBE is the benchmarking concept trending in higher education. It aims to organize a work-integrated education at the program level to link students and faculty with the industry to enrich the teaching and learning activities and prepare young learners for global living.

Thus, the researcher is motivated to conduct this study for educators and management teams in their institutional contexts to determine how accessible and prepared they are for the effective implementation and management of outcomes-based education. The researcher also wants to find out the extent of knowledge of school administrators and faculty members on its operational perspective. Furthermore, this study will provide guidelines to school management for the effective implementation of outcomes-based education (OBE) in the Higher Education Institutions of Bohol.

Literature Review

Education is aimed at creating teaching and learning environments that would bring about desired changes in learners. The outcomes-based education is a newly adopted structure of the Philippine education curriculum. Its main purpose is to produce globally competitive graduates who are prepared enough to cross over international standards of the educational setting and equally the same time of the labor market. This OBE has been weighed up in both theoretical and operational perspective.

According to Spady, what has been lacking is a clear and thoughtful interpretation of what OBE really is, why it is needed, and how it operates. The beginning of the process of curriculum change existed in the manifestation of concerns, needs and dissatisfaction with the curriculum practices of time, creating a need for variation. Necessity springs from a range of sources such as educators and students and the emergence of outcomes-based education in other countries. Students are the concern of parents, business people and politicians who need to ensure that a meaningful education is provided so that students can acknowledge after they leave school.

Among the many advocates of OBE in early years was W. Spady. He defined OBE as a framework which focuses organizing everything in the educational system around the essential for all the students to do successfully at the end of the their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do: organizing curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens. These tasks point to the desired results of education which is the learning outcomes. This outcomes are clear learning results that we want students to demonstrate at the end of the significant learning experiences. They are not values,beliefs attitudes or pedagogical states of mind. Instead outcomes are what learners can actually do with what they know and have learned. They are tangible application of what has been learned to make them reach their full potential and lead fulfilling lives as individuals in the community and at work.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued Memorandum Order No. 46, series of 2012, on the Policy-Standard to Enhance Quality Assurance (QA) in Philippine higher education through an Outcomes-Based and Typology-based quality assurance. The memorandum defines the role of the state in providing quality education to its citizens. This means Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) must offer quality programs that meet the worldclass standards and produce graduates with lifelong learning competencies. Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) are expected to develop human resources with various types of knowledge, competencies, and expertise especially in support of the social, economic and development needs of the Philippines. Universities and colleges were asked to work on revising and aligning their curricular programs using the outcomes-based framework which requires the alignment and consistency of the learning environment with the institutions' vision, mission and goals.

Spady (1994) proposes three basic assumptions: all learners can learn and succeed; success breeds success; and teaching institutions control the conditions of success. This means OBE systems build everything on a clearly defined framework of exit outcomes. Curriculum, instructional strategies, assessment and performance standards are developed and implemented to facilitate key outcomes. In OBE, curriculum, instruction and assessment should be viewed as flexible and alterable means for

accomplishing clearly defined learning ends. Outcomes-based model focus on increasing students' learning and ultimate performance abilities to the highest possible levels before they leave school.

The four principles of OBE contribute to the functioning of the system by directly shaping how each of the four operational functions is carried out. Clarity of focus directly influences direction setting; expanded opportunity directly shapes delivery of instruction; high expectations drives documentation results; and design down directs the program design function.

Based on Bloom's mastery learning theory, with sufficient opportunities and support from appropriate learning environment, materials and guidance, most learners are successful in their learning task. In OBE prerequisite knowledge and skills are ascertain to attain learning outcomes, time frame is flexible to attain goals, different media and materials will be used to create enriched teaching-learning contexts and formative evaluation to provide feedback for both teaching and learning improvement.

In the context of outcomes-based teaching learning, it is a holistic approach where educators are required to identify the outcome of teaching - the intended learning outcomes or what the learner is supposed to be able to do and at what standard. The focus of OBE shifts from teaching to learning. The model has a student-centered approach where teachers act as a facilitators. Study guides help the learners to organise their learning activities, and group work, continuous assessment and self-assessment are major features. The framework is holistic in its outcomes focus. Although the learning objectives are aimed at learning at grass-roots level, they are linked to goals and aims at higher levels. Attaining learning objectives is therefore not an end in itself; it provides building blocks for achieving higher-level outcomes.

Thus, Higher education Institutions (HEI's) seriously interested in implementing OBE should probably do both strategic design and strategic planning, but in a definite order and with a clear purpose for making the connections. General forms of strategic planning have districts define their mission,values and needs. Strategic design should come first because their exit outcomes needs to serve as the driving force for whatever implementation planning follows. Outcomes-Based action planning must be done among HEI's to have focus and alignment of all the HEI's priorities and plans and drive the strategic devisions necessary for assessing that OBE implementation be successful.

Naicher (1999) , emphasized that prior to its implementation plan it is important to understand the various mechanism of OBE. Since understanding forms the basis of implementation. Thus, before we discussed on the effective implementation of OBE, we must first think about educator's understanding of OBE.

Hence, educators play a major role towards the implementation of OBE as such it is important that they know what is required in an OBE classroom. Understanding influences practice. To say that educators understand OBE, they should be able to accommodate OBE concepts such as outcomes, premises and principles and assessment standards in their classroom practices. Their capacity to think logically can be realized when they are able to plan and present their classroom practices following these concepts in different situations (Killen, 2003).

Melch (2000), states that what "we know is determined by how we come to know. Educators have come to know more about OBE through in-service training workshops. Malcohm (2000), argues that some educators were left confused after attending such workshops. It seems as if the workshops were not adequate to equip educators with skills to facilitate OBE in classroom.

Oliver 2002, specified that the success of outcomes-based learning system depends on how well it is understood. It is essential that those involved in teaching, training and human resources development understand the ways in which traditional education and teaching approaches must be capitalized and enriched to effect outcome-based learning.

The quality of an educational system can be judged from at least three perspective: the inputs to the system, what happens within the system, and the outputs from the system. Those who were interested in outputs will focus their attention primarily on finances, resources, and infrastructure and may use economic rationalism as the judgments about the quality or value of the system. Those interested in outcomes, will focus their attention primarily on the products or results of education (Killen, 2000).

To meet the challenges of the new educational approach, teacher's roles have been reconceptualized. Teacher's need to be supported to make the paradigm shift that is required to understand OBE its purpose and to understand the necessary competencies that are essential for fulfilling the expanded roles of the educator(Laguador & Dotong,2014).

One of the premises of OBE is that schools and teachers control the conditions that determine whether or not students are successful at school learning. Contemporary views of learning as a self-regulated activity argue that students also bear significant responsibility for their learning, so that ultimate responsibility is seen as shared between school-teacher-student and parents/caregivers.

However, this focus of responsibility issue provides an example of how different people interpret OBE in different ways. For example, Sue Willis, in support of OBE, argue that both schools and students must take responsibility for students' learning, and further, that part of each school' s responsibility is to teach students the self-regulatory skills that will enable them to take on such responsibility.

Gagne (1985), (as cited by Killen, 2013) postulates that the proof of learning shows by a difference in a learners' performance before and after participating in learning situation. He claims that the presence of the performance does not make it possible to conclude that learning has occurred, but instead, it is necessary to show that there has been a change in performance. In other words, capability for exhibiting the performance before learning requires consideration as well as the capacity that exists after learning. Thus, the teachers' fundamental task is to get students to engage in learning activities that result in achieving intended outcomes (Killen, 2013). With OBE, administrators and faculty members can work closely with students.

OBE can be a way of getting beyond meaningless percentages and grades, aiming for education for life beyond school, giving children and young adults a broader and more transformative education. However, some think that the use of standardized test is fundamentally unfair for schools to require the same level of work or to use achievement tests for racially disadvantage students. Regarding the outcomes, based on the survey conducted in Hongkong, many people dislike because they think the standard are too easy, too hard or wrongly conceived. Furthermore, some teachers find their grading workload significantly increases (Lui and Shum , 2003).

However, Outcomes-based education has not been successful in public education in Western Australia. It was found out that the implementation on OBE pose significant problems and potentially lead to the decreased knowledge and performance in upper school classes or high school classes. Eventually, the Western Australian Government abandoned most of its OBE system in January 2007 (Lui and Shun, 2003). Similarly, Oklahoma State Department of education's effort in 1992 to connect to OBE also was met with failure. Many outcomes listed throughout the Oklahoma OBE curriculum pertain to feelings, rather than academic achievement (Phyllis Schafly Report 1993, in Lui and Shun,2003).

Although OBE has not been successful in public education in several countries, it has been successful in the medical fields in higher education in the US.Students had the highest level of confidence of all UK medical students that their medical school education prepared them well for their first postgraduate year   (Lui & shun , 2003).

The quality of an educational system can be judged from at least three perspective: the inputs to the system, what happens within the system, and the outputs from the system. Those who were interested in outputs will focus their attention primarily on finances, resources, infrastructure and may use economic rationalism as the judgements about the quality or value of the system. Those interested in outcomes, will focus their attention primarily on the products or results of education (Killen, 2000).

These developments were closely related to the Federal Government's drive for national economic efficiency, which itself reflected a worldwide emphasis on accountability including calls for schools to produce measurable "outputs" commensurate with the public money invested (Killen, 2000).

One of the attractions of OBE is that it can provide administrators with some level of control over the outcomes of education, and at the same time provide teachers with a large degree of freedom to select the content and methods through which they will help their students achieve those outcomes.

Outcomes-based education implies that program needs to be planned, desirable learning outcomes are to be identified and considered in the formulation of the plans. Course content, learning activities, and assessment are designed to be consisted with the achievement of the desired learning outcomes. Evidences is then gathered to determine whether the desired

outcomes are being achieved. This evaluation provides feedback to ensure that elements in the teaching and learning environment are acting to facilitate the mastery of the desired outcomes (Am J Pharm Educ. 2009).

For a curriculum to succeed in achieving the intended learning outcomes, each element needs to be related to the other elements in a coherent manner. When educators plan curriculums or teachers plan lessons for their classes, they eventually start by classifying the purposes. Advocates of OBE say that traditional schools are really time-based. Teachers and Administrators may want students to learn something, but they typically allocate a certain amount of time to study. For schools to be fully outcome-based, they must organize so that outcomes are fixed, and time and other resources needed to achieve the outcomes are viable.

Furthermore, for OBE to succeed it must penetrate the whole system. It must begin with the institutional outcomes down to the learning outcomes. The institutional outcomes reflect the vision and mission statements, the philosophy and the core values of the institutions. These institutional outcomes are supposed to take flesh in every graduate; thus, the institutional outcomes are referred to as graduate attributes.

Methodology

The study employed the descriptive type of research wherein the quantitative data were gathered using a survey questionnaire to identify the extent of knowledge and skills of the administrators and faculty members among the private and public higher education institutions on the perspective of Outcomes-based education implementation in the tertiary education institutions in the province of Bohol. Two sets of researcher-made questionnaire based on the book of Spady on OBE critical issues and concern are distributed to the 57 administrators and 197 faculty members. Weighted mean was used to interpret the extent of knowledge and skills of the respondents on the perspective of Outcomes-based education implementation. To determine the mean differences between the responses of two groups the t-test was also used.

Results and Discussion

Respondents' knowledge on the Key Areas of Outcomes-based Education (OBE) Implementation

The result reveals that the administrators have greatly extensive knowledge on the formulation of learning outcomes. However, the faculty appear to have relatively lesser knowledge on this area. Generally, the knowledge of school administrators in the four basic areas of OBE is relatively higher than that of the faculty. The result implies that the efforts of the administrators and management team in providing series of seminars on OBE for the faculty members greatly help in understanding the implementation of the basic areas of OBE in instruction. However, since the bulk of the implementation belongs to the faculty members, more emphasis on developing their knowledge and skills not only in delivering and documenting each process properly but also in formulating the learning outcomes so that the needs of the stakeholders in the labor market must be address

Respondents' Skills on the Key Areas of Outcomes-based Education Implementation

The findings reveal that both the administrators and the faculty have greatly extensive skills in the teaching-learning process. While on the area of formulation of learning outcomes, has relatively lesser among the four areas of OBE. The skills of administrators and faculty members in the formulation of learning outcomes is greatly extensive. Generally, the respondents claimed more skillful in aligning the course learning outcomes to the program outcomes than the formulation of the intended learning outcomes of the institution. On their skills in the designing of curriculum content and structure, the respondents claimed to have skills in facilitating students' learning to enhance knowledge and skills into high level of performance, however, they need more skills in enhancing the course syllabi to show relationship to the different levels of learning outcomes.

Furthermore, on the outcomes-based teaching learning process skills of the administrators and faculty members is greatly extensive especially on emphasizing values and attitudes in the teaching-learning activities. However, in facilitating learning activities for different types of learners in the diverse environment skills are relatively lesser. The respondents also claimed to have greatly extensive skills in assessing students' knowledge. However, in developing rubrics to assess the attainment of the institutional and program outcomes, respondents' skills need enhancement.

Difference in the Respondents' Knowledge on the Implementation of Outcomes Based Education (OBE)

There is a significant difference in the administrators' and faculty understanding of the perspective on the implementation of the four basic areas of outcomes-based education. Although both groups have claimed to have great extensive knowledge on the perspective of OBE, the administrators' knowledge is significantly higher compared to that of the faculty.

In the area of the formulation of learning outcomes, there is a significant difference between the administrators' and faculty members' knowledge. The result implies that administrators have greater knowledge on formulating the learning outcomes compared to the faculty members. Although the teachers claimed that they have greatly extensive knowledge on the learning outcomes but their knowledge is relatively lesser than that of the administrators.

In the area of curriculum content and structure and outcomes-based teaching-learning process, there is a significant difference between the administrators' and faculty knowledge. The difference indicates that the administrators deeply understand the concept of outcomes-based teaching- learning process. Since OBE implementation is in its infancy, most of the trainings and seminars were participated by the school administrators for its planning stage of the implementation. Thus, the faculty members are less knowledgeable on the process of implementation than that of administrators.

Moreover, in the area of outcomes-based assessment, significant difference between the administrators' and faculty members' knowledge on the outcomes-based assessment also exist. This finding is indicative that the administrators are more knowledgeable when it comes to outcomes-based assessment than the faculty members, implying that the faculty members needs more trainings and orientation on OBE especially in the formulation of assessment task.

Difference in the Respondents' Skills on the Implementation of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE)
The study reveals that there is a significant difference between the administrators' and faculty   assessment in terms of the formulation of learning outcomes, in which the former has higher knowledge compared to the teachers. Meanwhile, there is also a significant difference between the school administrators and faculty members' skills in the teaching-learning process. This result is indicatives that the administrators are more skillful in the teaching-learning process compared to the faculty members who are expected to work together to design the appropriate teaching-learning activities that would facilitate the attainment of the learning outcomes.

Furthermore, a significant difference also exists between the two groups of respondents in terms of their skills in outcomes-based assessment. It indicates that the administrators are more skillful on how to assess the different levels of learning outcomes compared to the faculty. Assessment system in OBE requires greater skills on the part of the teacher since assessment of outcomes in the course level must be carried out first to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching-learning activities and assessment task in achieving the institutional outcome.

Conclusion
Based on the foregoing findings of the study, the study concludes that there is significant difference in the knowledge and skills of administrators and faculty members on the perspective of outcomes-based implementation. The administrators have higher level of knowledge in implementing the four areas of OBE, which are on the formulation of learning outcomes, designing curriculum content and structure, delivery of the instructional process and assessment of outcomes. The teachers' knowledge is greatly extensive; however, it is less compared to that of the administrators.

The administrators and the teacher's knowledge are translated into skills as both groups of respondents claimed to be skillful in implementing the OBE. However, the administrator's assessment of their skills tends to put them at a higher level compared to the teachers. Furthermore, both the respondents see the beneficiality of OBE implementation and claimed to have the skills in carrying out their tasks.

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