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OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION PRACTICES IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN AKLAN, PHILIPPINES

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Abstract:

Using the CHED-OBE framework under the CMO No. 46, Series of 2012, Typology Guidelines on Outcomes-Based Education, and Institutional Sustainability Assessment Handbook this study seeks to determine the extent of curriculum implementation practices of HEIs in Aklan relative to the curriculum standards as mandated in the CHED-OBE. The use of descriptive method both qualitative and qualitative approaches was utilized to gather data through survey, interview and Focus Group Discussions. Participants in this study composed of the academic heads and faculty of HEIS in Aklan. The results of the study would support the idea that there is an extensive if not outstanding practices of implementation of the CHED-OBE curriculum standards in the HEIs in Aklan and that certain specific outcomes have created good impacts to the educational outcomes of the schools. Despite these, more authentic identifications of the glaring gaps on the more successful implementation can be traced down to the bottom sector of the whole OBE picture, limited participation of the stakeholders in the development of institution's PEOs and VMGs, systems of teaching and learning activities, outcomes-driven assessments and overloading of teachers vis a vis bigger class sizes, lack of training /skill of teachers, support of admin, resources gap evaluation and continuous quality improvement of OBE implementation. Also, the understanding derived from the weaknesses and strengths and the gaps on the curriculum implementations so that institution could adopt sound OBE program interventions to improve the implementation of the OBE curriculum. The result of this study will be utilized by the teachers and curriculum planner and leaders in the higher education institutions in the province of Aklan to enhance their own mechanisms of implementation of OBE and also a guide for those others who attempts to adopt a transition of academic programs from the conventional one to the OBE model.

Keywords: Education, PEOs and VMGs, OBE model, higher education

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to determine the extent of curriculum implementation of OBE relative to the standards and practices as mandated by CHED. Also the understanding derived from the weaknesses and strengths and the gaps on the curriculum implementations so that institution could adopt sound OBE program interventions to improve the implementation of the OBE curriculum. The result of this study will be utilized by the teachers and curriculum planner and leaders in the higher education institutions in the province of Aklan to enhance their own mechanisms of implementation of OBE and also a guide for those others who attempts to adopt a transition of academic programs from the conventional one to the OBE model.

The fact cannot be argued that the quest for national development could be primarily driven by the higher education with outcomes closely linked with the economic route which demands raising quality education. It is within this context and changing globalized environment that higher education is believed to be of valuable role in producing competent graduates to boost our competitive advantages in the national, regional and global market-driven knowledge-based economies. The contribution of research to technological innovations has been proven to be indispensable in the bid for global competitiveness of nations (Tabora, S.J.,2013).

Unfortunately, the surveys on the quality of education in the Philippines showed a glaring negative difference compared to its counterpart countries in Asia and the world. The 2012-2013 survey on World Economic Forum's global competitiveness indicators for technological innovations primarily on scientific productions left the country lowest, behind China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. Thus, the implementation of Commission on Higher Education (CHED)-Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) curriculum has become a primary endeavour for

educational reform among many higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines (Davis, 2003). Despite OBE's appeal, the accountability of educators and curriculum planners to meet public demands for more appropriate curriculum outcomes and quality education system are at stake. They need to know more about the factors that enhance the implementation of innovations (Sizer, 1984). The adoption of OBE in the Philippine is a work on progress and despite CHED's focused regulation to improve the more than 1,600 colleges and universities in the country and its mandate to for educational reform, only a handful of researches and data will describe the effects of OBE implementation in the Philippine educational contexts. It is along these premises that because of the demands of standardization of educational standards, many higher institutions in Aklan also pursued the OBE as early as 2014, not only it is the mandate of CHED but also because OBE is used as a framework of many local academic accrediting agencies of which the HEIs are pursuing accreditation initiatives too.

This study identified the extent of practices of the HEIs in Aklan of the curriculum standards of the CHED – OBE Curriculum and was able to shed light on the actual practices of the HEIs, their strengths and weaknesses in implementations which could be attributed to the success or failure of the implementation, using qualitative and quantitative measures.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This study utilized a descriptive survey method where both quantitative and qualitative analysis will be employed. Descriptive research is unique in the number of variables employed. Just like the other types of studies, descriptive method can include multiple variables for analysis , yet unlike other methods, it require only one variable (Borg&Gall, 1989). PCA (Principal Component Analysis will also be utilized to factor in the best variable that leads to the positive implementation of the OBE curriculum among the HEI's in Aklan. Since the primary aim of this research was to identify the extent of current practices of HEI's in Aklan following the OBE-CHED curriculum standards, a mixed method was used to gather evidence that would support the inquiry. A researcher-made questionnaire was prepared guided by the OBE-CHED framework and a variety of related studies to support other components of the survey-questionnaire.

In addition to the survey instrument, an in-depth interviews with selected participants composed of teachers and academic heads and a small focus group discussions was also conducted. The results of the survey were analysed and interpreted. Descriptive statistical tools were utilized such as frequency count, percentages, mean, and weighted mean. To determine the practices used by the teachers and institution to implement OBE curriculum standards, the weighted mean was used. To determine the factors related to the positive implementation of OBE in the different higher education institutions, the weighted mean was used. And to determine what is the best factor related to the positive implementation of the OBE curriculum among the HEIs in Aklan, Principal Component Analysis was utilized.

RESULTS

Extent of CHED-OBE Curriculum Practices Implemented by HEIs in Aklan

Table 1 shows the summary of ratings for the HEI's level of OBE curriculum implementation following the seven standards of CHED-OBE Curriculum.

It can be gleaned from the overall results, that the selected HEIs' implementation of CHED-OBE curriculum standards got an overall mean of 4.27 or verbally described as Very Good. The data would imply that the HEIs if not outstanding have sufficiently implemented the standards on the curriculum implementation. However, looking the specific standards, it can be observed that the standard, a clearly defined mission statements and publicly derived exit outcomes with the weighted mean of 4.52 or described as Outstanding is the strength of implementation of the HEIs in Aklan, whereas in terms of the standard; a system of continuous quality improvement , its weighted mean of 4.09 or Very Good would imply that it is the least implemented in terms of continuing system of quality assurance and improvement of the CHED-OBE Curriculum implementation.

Table 1. Summary Results of the Extent of Implementation of OBE-CHED Curriculum Standards among HEIs in Aklan

Category	Weighted Mean	Description	Rank
Clearly defined Vision, Mission and Goals and publicly derived exit outcomes	4.52	Outstanding	1
Well-articulated curriculum framework of Program Educational Outcomes, Course Outcomes and Unit Outcomes	4.31	Very Good	3
Constructive Alignment of Curriculum Map	4.46	Very Good	2
A System of Teaching and Learning Activities	4.18	Very Good	5

Legend:

An Outcomes-Based Learning Assessment, Performance Standards and Reporting	4.19	Very Good	4
A well-placed system of Program Educational Evaluation and Review	4.16	Very Good	6
A system of Continuous Quality Improvement	4.09	Very Good	7
Overall Mean	4.27	Very Good	

Range		**Description**
4.51 – 5.00	-	Outstanding
3.51 – 4.50	-	Very Good
2.51 – 3.50	-	Good
1.51 – 2.50	-	Fair
1.00 – 1.50	-	Poor

Factors to Positive Implementation of CHED-OBE Curriculum

In the attempt to better understand the success determining factors on the positive implementation of OBE Curriculum among HEIs , taking it from the perspective of the academic heads and teachers, they were asked to indicate the extent to which several change factors improved and produced certain positive effects in the implementation of OBE in their own respective schools.

Table 2 summarizes the ratings of HEIs on the ten potential factors related to positive implementation of OBE. Strong faculty program was ranked first as the best rated factor (weighted mean of 5.78-moderaely agree) while support and pressure from the administration was the lowest rated factor (weighted mean of 5.04). Other factors rated as moderately agree were effective workshops and trainings on OBE (weighted mean of 5.73), sufficiency of resources and financial support (weighted mean of 5.52), hiring of good consultants on OBE curriculum (weighted mean of 5.51), and a healthy school climate that support experimentation and innovation in implementing OBE (weighted mean of 5.69). While other factors rated as slightly agree by schools were; committed and skilled key players in the implementation (weighted mean of 5.50), benchmarking from other institutions (weighted mean of 5.41), community support (weighted mean of 5.32),and CHED constant regulation, assistance and evaluation (weighted mean of 5.41). None of the factors were rated strongly agree.

Table 11. Factors to Positive Implementation of OBE-CHED Curriculum

Factors that affect the positive implementation of OBE in your institution	**Weighted Mean**	**Description**
Committed and skilled key players in the implementation	5.50	Slightly Agree
Strong Faculty Development Program	5.78	Moderately Agree
Sufficiency of resources and financial support	5.52	Moderately Agree
Support and pressure from the administration	5.04	Slightly Agree
CHED constant regulation, assistance and evaluation	5.31	Slightly Agree
Benchmarking from other higher institutions	5.41	Slightly Agree
Effective workshops and trainings on OBE	5.73	Moderately Agree
Community Support	5.32	Slightly Agree
Good consultants on OBE	5.51	Moderately Agree
A healthy school climate that supports experimentation	5.69	Moderately

and innovation in implementing OBE	Agree

Legend:

Range		Description
6.51 – 7.00	-	Strongly Agree
5.51 – 6.50	-	Moderately Agree
4.51 – 5.50	-	Slightly Agree
3.51 – 4.50	-	Neither
2.51 – 3.50	-	Slightly Disagree
1.51 – 2.50	-	Moderately Disagree
1.00 – 1.50	-	Strongly Disagree

Analysis of the results would suggest that despite the agreement of the HEIs that the factors discussed above were significantly impacting on the positive implementation of OBE in their institutions, the HEI's ratings were conservatively low –along the moderately agree with none rating the factors agreeing strongly on their positive effect to the OBE implementation. The result of the FGD with the selected deans and faculty members of the HEIs reveal that these factors are already observable and in placed in the system but their strong implementation and support to enhance these factors needs to be focused.

Principal Component Analysis of the best success-determining Factors to Positive Implementation of OB-CHED Curriculum in HEIs in Aklan

The data on table 3 shows the result of the PCA analysis. It can be gleaned that the highest index in the table , component 1, strong faculty program of the institution with the eigenvalue of .332 yield the highest value, therefore it implies that it is the principal component among the variables identified, followed by component 7, in-house seminar-workshops and training of teachers on OBE pedagogies with the value of.329, therefore, the second principal component to positive implementation of OBE curriculum.

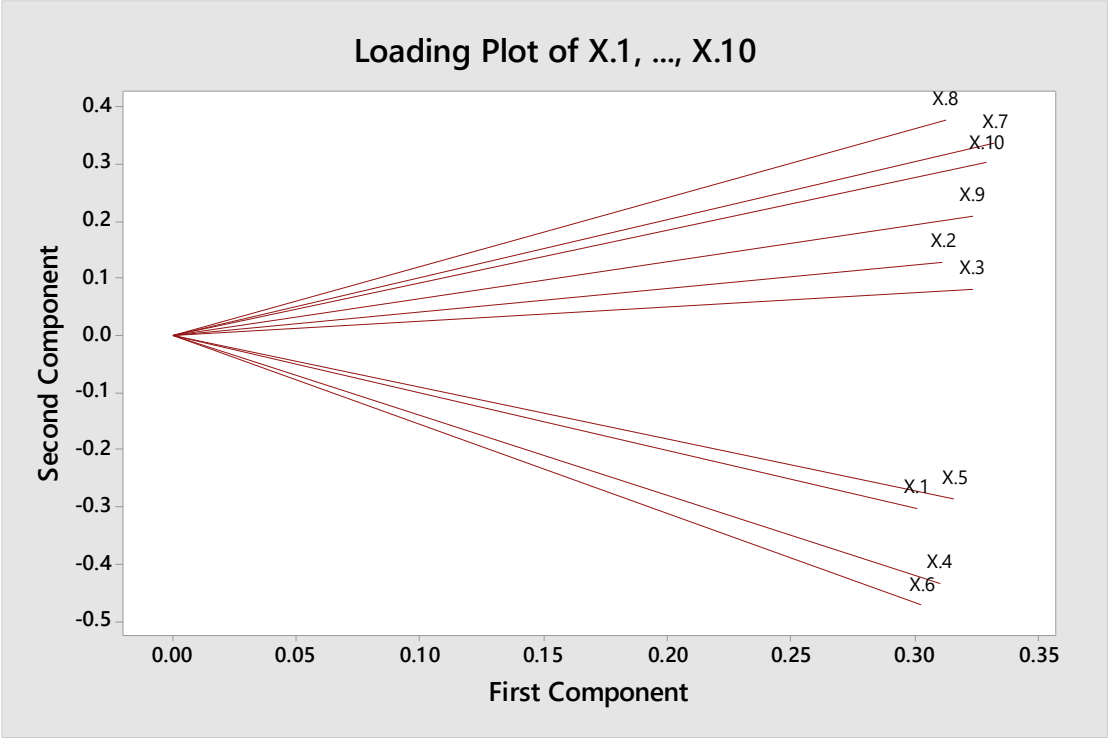
The results from the analysis suggest that no major overall difference exist between the different factors to positive implementation of OBE as evident by the very near scores or eigenvalues, which implies that all factors are indeed positive factors to successful implementation of OBE, however, in analysing the PCA results, the higher the weight of the scores, the higher the impact of the factors to variable measured. Therefore, though all items were identified as positive factors to OBE implementation, these two primary components are the highest significant to successful implementation.

Table 3. Principal Component Analysis of the Best Success-determining Factors to Positive Implementation of OB-CHED Curriculum in HEIs in Aklan

Factors that affect the positive implementation of OBE in your institution	**Principal Component**									
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
Committed and skilled key players in the implementation	0.301	-0.304	0.263	-0.695	-0.238	-0.297	-0.059	-0.295	0.016	-0.169
Strong Faculty Development Program	0.332	0.127	0.546	0.035	-0.437	0.410	0.131	0.448	0.020	0.103
Sufficiency of resources and financial support	0.323	0.080	0.424	0.301	0.326	-0.141	-0.075	-0.439	0.278	0.466
Support and pressure from the administration	0.310	-0.435	0.066	0.416	0.128	-0.431	0.382	0.280	-0.066	-0.066
CHED constant regulation, assistance and	0.316	-0.287	-0.227	0.360	-0.338	0.116	-0.695	-0.102	-0.097	

evaluation										-0.073
Benchmarking from other higher institutions	0.303	-0.474	-0.327	-0.192	0.281	0.556	0.275	-0.042	-0.005	0.273
Effective workshops and trainings on OBE	0.329	0.336	-0.094	-0.032	0.241	0.250	-0.041	-0.065	0.487	-0.635
Community Support	0.312	0.377	-0.335	0.138	-0.426	-0.063	0.455	-0.416	-0.249	0.043
Good consultants on OBE	0.323	0.207	-0.400	-0.210	-0.025	-0.385	-0.124	0.483	0.316	0.388
A healthy school climate that support experimentation and innovation in implementing OBE	0.311	0.301	0.089	-0.147	0.443	-0.008	-0.211	0.136	-0.713	-0.058

Graph 1. Plotted Principal Component Analysis of the Best Success-determining Factors to Positive Implementation of OB-CHED Curriculum in HEIs in Aklan



Challenges and Opportunities in CHED-OBE Implementation as Perceived by the HEIs in Aklan

Table 3 outlines the thematic results of the qualitative inquiry using interviews and focus group discussion with selected school heads and faculty of HEIs in Aklan.

Table 3. Challenges and Opportunities on the OBE Implementation

Challenges and Opportunities on the OBE Implementation
• Articulation of the institutional and program outcomes to the industry partners and other stakeholders.
• Constructive alignment of the curriculum maps
• Alignment of the syllabus to the PEO's and VMG's
• Jargon impregnated curriculum that alienates the teachers.
• Increased workloads of teachers because of individual-based diagnostic assessment.
• Overloading of subject assignments that prohibits authentic and more meaningful achievement of learning outcomes.
• Big class size that prohibits a meaningful remedial interventions for students who have difficulty catching up with the learning outcomes.
• Limited learning resources and materials to support learning outcomes
• Establishment of a sound system of effective database and organization of the results of OBE curriculum implementation.
• Placement of a separate quality assurance office
• Incorporation of the OBE Curriculum standards with the accreditation regulation standards and positive innovations of teachers in the conduct of classes.
• Positive turn outs of professional licensure examinations taken by graduates and a positive healthy school climate.

DISCUSSION

Overall, the extent of implementation of the HEIs in Aklan of the CHED- OBE curriculum practices following the standards of CHED was found Very Good. However, the highest extent of curriculum implementation among the standards identified is their clearly defined mission statements and publicly derived exit outcomes which is Outstanding thus the strength of their implementation, while the standard on a system of continuous quality improvement of curriculum has the least implementation.

The strong faculty development program of the institution was rated the highest factor that affect the positive implementation in the HEIs. When asked what particular programs contributes to the successful implementation of OBE, the deans cited scholarships for continuing education that builds on the competence of the faculty members to implement the standards of OBE, sending teachers to short courses on OBE seminar, training and conferences, incentives to teachers who were involved in the curriculum planning and innovations in OBE. All these according to them contributes greatly to the successful implementation of OBE in the schools. While some teachers admit during the interview that though they believe that these programs are instrumental to the positive implementation, their schools have very limited provisions to support continuing education and professional growth of the teachers.

Second highest rated factor is effective in-house workshops and trainings on OBE. Studies would show that the resistance of academic staff could be an impediment to successful OBE implementation, (Harden,1999). However, this resistance can be addressed by increasing the sense of belongingness of teachers to OBE and this would require adequate resources and appropriate forms of professional development are provided to teachers (Brindley,2001).

Almost all participants in the interview and FGD would agree that the support of the institution to ease the process of transition and for curriculum planners, academic heads and teachers must be collaborative providing ample opportunities for them to learn and grow though trainings, mentoring and other interventions to successfully achieve a well-articulated curriculum map effectively translated to the syllabuses and learning plans for teaching and learning. Needless to say, to wrap up the discussions above, the efficiency of OBE can be enhanced through teaching development and increasing the support services through provisions of ample material resources to supplement the learning outcomes targeted. '', while a support group on OBE could alleviate the burden of implementing the standards of OBE. There were sufficient was research evidence to demonstrate that good teaching has positive effects

on student outcomes. A The closing premise of Ortega et al (2016) research would support these specific findings that ' the major role of the teachers should be backed up by substantial actions and concrete support from those who are in authority to better implement the desired curriculum and its approaches."

Factors to positive implementations that are considered by HEIs pivotal to the change and best practices attributed to enhanced implementation of OBE were strong faculty development program, in-house seminar-workshop and training on OBE, healthy school climate that support the experimentation and innovation in implementing OBE, sufficiency of resources and financial support and other servicing support of the institution. Finally, the results of the principal component analysis on the best success determining factor to the positive implementation of OBE in selected HEIs in Aklan was the school's strong faculty program . The result further confirmed the need to launch relevant activities for transformational teacher education in the HEIs through academic staff training and development to achieve the magnitude of change in the implementation.

However, there were some glaring gaps on practices under specific standards and criterion. The qualitative inquiry through interviews and focus group discussion with HEIs identified that despite the very good rating of HEIs , problems related to the limited participation of the stakeholders in the development of institution's PEOs and VMGs, systems of teaching and learning activities , outcomes-driven assessments and overloads, lack of training /skill of teachers, support of admin, resources gap evaluation and continuous quality improvement of OBE implementation. Positive results determined in the OBE implementation were good licensure result turnouts, wholistic school improvement and a changed academic and institutional climate for OBE implementation.

CONCLUSION

The study would support the idea that there is an extensive if not outstanding practices of implementation of the CHED-OBE curriculum standards in the HEIs in Aklan and that certain specific outcomes have created good impacts to the educational outcomes of the schools. Despite these, more authentic identifications of the glaring gaps on the more successful implementation can be traced down to the bottom sector of the whole OBE picture, limited participation of the stakeholders in the development of institution's PEOs and VMGs, systems of teaching and learning activities, outcomes-driven assessments and overloading of teachers vis a vis bigger class sizes, lack of training /skill of teachers, support of admin, resources gap evaluation and continuous quality improvement of OBE implementation.

Supported by literatures, this study also confirms that faculty members with higher understanding attributed to in-depth training and exposure to OBE practices, access to resources that would support the instructional assessment, and a healthy climate that allows them to experiment and innovate on teaching approaches can execute better the OBE curriculum.

RECCOMENDATION

A careful identification of the basic premises on the current practices of selected HEIs in Aklan was conducted in this research which led the researcher to systematic approach of inquiry and presentation of the real-scenarios, experiences and practices of teachers and academic heads that occurs in the schools, classrooms, work environment and relationships to better address the possible gaps identified in the study. The strengths and weaknesses, gaps in OBE implementation practices were identified in this study; the heightened awareness could provide tangible solutions and allow relevant and useful constructive insights. Thus, this program development for OBE implementation was prepared.

Congruent to the belief that there is a need for transformational teacher education in HEIs in Akan if they wish to truly achieve meaningful reforms in the adoption of the new curriculum, educators have very high hopes that with the sufficient support and collaboration within the institutional system, partner academe in the province and the region, and the stakeholders , OBE can be a very promising game changer in the achievement of good educational outcomes of the schools in the province of Aklan. Their general perceptions on OBE implementation expresses the need for schools to restructure the entire educational set up and it would take time to develop and evolve into a better effective and functioning OBE system. Further, it would have been implemented better if the schools provision of data base technology to record and manage assessments and student outcomes.

This study is limited on identifying significant level of practices in the OBE implementation as well as identifying the possible factors that could have contributed to the enhanced or positive results of implementation. However, there was no clear data proved on the connections of the learning outcomes if they were actually linked to the OBE implementation, like student's feedbacks, parents and other stakeholders to validate the claims. Also, this study is limited to understanding the academic practices and challenges in implementing OBE while the administrative and other school's support unit's role was not explored. Such could have provided a more wholistic and validated findings on the amount and quality of implementation with more clearer pathways for interventions. An in-depth and wholistic understanding of the premises of OBE model that could result to meaningful outcome-driven planning, instruction, and evaluation of teaching-learning activities. Thus, a further study is recommended.

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