



## ATTRIBUTES OF THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY TEACHERS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNERS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN PHILIPPINES

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*Abstract*—The study tried to evaluate the attributes of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers assigned in the Senior High School of the University of Eastern Philippines and the characteristics of the Senior High School students enrolled during the school year 2018-2019. It included not only the main campus but also the external campuses in Lao-ang and Catubig.

The profile of the respondents were described and the strategies of teaching that best fit the characteristics of the learners were highly suggested.

The study is a descriptive survey research which included 34 teachers and 136 students in the Humanities Strand of the Senior High School in the University of Eastern Philippines.

Findings revealed that the teachers assigned in the Humanities Strand of the University of Eastern Philippines were mostly instructors, aged 20 to 24 and 35 to 39, females, and a teaching experience of less than a year to five years. On the other hand, the learners enrolled in the University's Senior High School were mostly 18 years old, females, and majority came from public schools of the province.

As to the attributes of the 21st Century Teachers, findings revealed that they were advocates for their students and their profession, adaptive to the teaching tools and changes implemented in their school, and life-long learners. This further means that they were very dedicated and committed to their profession and to the learners. Their focus is on honing and developing the skills and knowledge of the learners. They had standards set believing that they can nurture each learner to their fullest potential. They have the competence and skill in technology that can be used in the classroom. Most of all, they portray as an ideal substitute parents of the students, they being understanding, concerned, and persistent in helping them.

As to the characteristics of the 21st Century Learners, it was revealed that the student-respondents were technology literate, collaborative and communicative. This implies that they can be competitive in the future. They can be prepared of the challenges of the days ahead for basically they will be dealing with new technology, meeting new people, and entirely new settings. The standards set by their mentors will be achieved based on their performance.

Finally, as to the strategies that best fit the characteristics of the student-respondents, presentations using power point, audiovisual materials, and handouts, individual, pair, and group tasks, projects, and activities, peer teaching and reviewing, and mentoring of other learners are suggested based on their characteristics.

***Keywords-*** 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers, learners, attributes, characteristics, strategies of teaching

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The university has accepted the challenge of opening Senior High School classes in the Humanities Strand. With the change to OBE curriculum, the student-respondents of this

study served as the first beneficiaries. This study is an initial step of the university to focus on the 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers as well as the 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. Determining the characteristics and attributes of the two principal movers in the

teaching-learning process is very essential. The teachers and learners of the 21<sup>st</sup> century need to be highlighted to facilitate learning especially that they will experience the OBE curriculum. The students, faculty, and administrators in the college as well as in the university can benchmark the result and findings of the study to careful planning and preparing OBE course syllabi and improve activities in the classroom and some innovative policy devices.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study primarily determined the attributes of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers in the Senior High School Humanities Strand and the characteristics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learners enrolled during the school year 2018-2019 in the University of Eastern Philippines Main Campus and in its extension campuses in Catubig and Lao-ang.

Specifically, it sought to:

1. describe the profile of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers and learners in the Senior High School Humanities Strand in the University of Eastern Philippines;
2. ascertain the attributes of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers in the Senior High School Humanities Strand in the University of Eastern Philippines;
3. determine the characteristics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learners enrolled in the Senior High School Humanities Strand in the University of Eastern Philippines; and
4. ascertain the strategies of teaching that best fit the characteristics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learners in the University of Eastern Philippines.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at the University of Eastern Philippines (UEP), the former Catarman National Agricultural School which was converted to a state college, the Samar Institute of Technology, then a university.

The study is a descriptive survey research. There were 34 senior high school teachers and 136 Senior High school students included in the study. Using Sarah Eaton's (2016) 21 Characteristics of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners and Attributes of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching

Professionals by the National Institute of Education (Singapore) which were the main instruments of the study and was personally administered by the researcher to the respondents. The attributes and characteristics were discussed to the student-respondents for their easy grasp and clear understanding. Both instruments in determining the attributes of the teachers and the characteristics of learners were rated by the respondents which include the teachers and learners. They were made to check the characteristics and attributes they perceived and observed mostly from their teachers and their classmates using a five-point Likert scale. Frequency counts, ranking, and percentage were used as statistical tools to determine the attributes and characteristics of the respondents in the study.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Profile of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teachers and Learners

The profile of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teachers ascertained in the study were academic rank, age, sex, and number of years of teaching experience.

There were 15 instructors or 44%, 13 special lecturers or 38%, 4 Assistant Professors or 12%, and 2 Associate Professors or 6%. Data showed that majority of the teachers teaching in the Senior High School were Instructors and Special Lecturers. Only few were Associate and Assistant Professors. This means that mostly those assigned in the Senior High School of the university were the young and newly hired faculty members.

Seven (7) or 20% were 35 to 39 years old and another same number which is 7 or 20% for respondents aged 20 to 24. There were 5 or 15% for 30 to 34 years old and another same number and percentage to aged 25 to 29. There were 4 or 12% who were 45 to 49 years old and 3 or 9% for respondents aged 40 to 44 and 60 and above. Majority of teachers handling Senior High School students in the university were young and middle-aged. As mostly described in the academe, these ages from 20 to 24 were the youngest and most active in teaching especially

in dealing with senior high students. Those aged 40 and above were only few. Suffice it to say that, those assigned in the Senior High were the young ones.

Out of 34 teacher-respondents assigned in the Humanities Strand of the university's senior high school, there were 20 or 59% females and 14 or 41% were males. Majority were females. This means that the teaching force assigned in the Senior High School of the university was dominated by female teaching professionals.

There were 21 or 61% of the respondents who had been teaching from less than 1 year to 5 years, 5 or 15% had been teaching for 21 to 25 years, 4 or 12% worked for 6 to 10 years, 3 or 9% worked for 11 to 15 years, and 1 or 3% had 31 to 35 years of teaching experience. Remarkably, looking at the data, majority of the respondents had experienced teaching for a period of less than a year to 5 years. This shows that the teachers handling senior high students in the university were just starting in the field of teaching. Suffice it to say that they were neophytes in teaching senior high students.

The profile of the 21st Century Learners of the university includes age, sex, and type of secondary school they last attended.

Out of 136 students, there were 78 or 57.35% aged 18, 41 or 30.15% aged 17, 8 or 5.88% aged 16, 6 or 4.41% aged 19, only 2 or 1.47% aged 20 and 1 or 0.74% aged 22. Majority were 18 years old. This means that the 21<sup>st</sup> century learners of the university enrolled in the Humanities Strand of the Senior High School were just right of age or as expected being 7 years old when they entered grade one in elementary.

There were 94 or 69% females and 42 or 31% males. The majority belonged to the female students. As mostly observed, students are usually dominated by females just like the respondents of this study.

There were 118 or 87% of students who came from public high schools and 18 or 13% from private schools. This only shows that the majority really came from public schools. As mostly known, agricultural, industrial and technical schools in the province were

prominent and accessible in every municipality. The students availed of the free education in high school.

### Attributes of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teachers

Results showed that the attributes of the teachers are the following: they are believers that all children can learn, they show empathy to the learners, they value diversity, they have the commitment to nurturing the potential in each child, they applied multiple intelligence-based activities to their students, and they aimed for high standards. They helped the students develop to the fullest. The teachers are skilled in technology like using power points and mass media related materials in the classroom. They are professional in ways and deeds and very objective in dealing with his/her students. The teachers strive to improve their performance. They listened to the suggestions of peers and supervisors. They also have quest or drive for learning. He/She presents varied tasks for the students to learn. They have social and emotional intelligence. He/She being professionally mature in dealing with parents, students, and other stakeholders of the institution.

Using Cox's characteristics of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teacher, the teacher-respondents of this study are advocates for their students and their profession. They being competent in giving varied tasks in honing their students' skills and in developing their capabilities and at the same time understanding their feelings and experiences. Today's teachers as mostly expected by the students of having the ability to guide their students and prepare them for the future.

Another attribute is being adaptive to the changing tools in teaching like the use of power point presentations and other mass media related materials which students can really relate to. The teachers are also adaptive to the changes that are being implemented in the schools.

It can be gleaned from the results that the teacher-respondents can be classified also as lifelong learners. As mentioned by Cox, educators do not just expect their students to be a lifelong learner, but they are as well. They stay

up to date with current educational trends and technology and know how to tweak their old lesson plans from years before to make them more current.

### **Characteristics of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners**

The students want to connect with others in real time on their own terms. They want their social media, their phones and their mobile technology. They have a say in their education. They also collaborate well with their peers. They love teamwork and they demand the freedom to show their wild creativity. They learn by doing. They know where to go to find information. They always resort to Google in everything they do. They also know that they are the future. They look at their parents and their peers and understand that the world's future rests in their hands. They have a "can do" attitude. They have higher levels of digital literacy than their parents or teachers. They do not know a word without computers. They have the ability to multi-task.

Majority of the respondents perceived the 21<sup>st</sup> century learners as very independent of their own time but dependent on their phones and mobile technology. They move their own lives. They want to be available always on social media. They decide for their own, and express their views and creativity. For them, they can do what is right, and they love collaborating with friends and peers. They know that they are the future of this world. But they rely on Google for almost everything they wanted to know. They make use of technology as their partner towards success in life. These characteristics were mostly observed by teachers and parents and as popularly described by authors nowadays.

Using the wordpress.com characteristics of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner, technology literacy is the most prevalent characteristic of the student-respondents. Technology has completely revolutionized almost everyone's way of living. Advanced technology and all forms of digital media are completely integrated into modern society and are an integral aspect of a 21<sup>st</sup> century learner's life. With instant access to a vast array of information through the internet, smart phones, and other devices, today's

students are digital learners and will adapt to technological change far easier than any generation beforehand and that do not exempt the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners of the university being the subjects of this study.

Another characteristic which the student-respondents fall is collaboration and communication. By collaboration, it simply means learning to respect each other's differences and using their different personalities to collectively solve problems as a team, and in creating and innovating ideas. Communication means an essential ingredient in any successful collaboration between and among students. Students need to express their ideas articulately and creatively through a range of oral, written, and non-verbal platforms.

### **Strategies of Teaching**

As to the strategies of teaching that best fit the characteristics of the student-respondents, presentations using power points, audio visual materials, and handouts are effective. Being technology literates, they can best express their learnings through presentations. Studies showed that reading, writing, and listening skills are involved through these presentations. Life skills are also ingrained as learners get insights on how to use ICT for presentations as Shaikh Naghma mentioned in her paper.

Individual, pair and group tasks, projects and activities can also be effective to the student-respondents. Since they are good at collaborating and communicating with their classmates and peers, they can learn best using these strategies.

Peer teaching and reviewing their works are also advisable. Looking at the characteristics of the student-respondents, this may work well since they are open to the suggestions or corrections of others.

Another strategy can be mentoring of other learners. As suggested by Naghma in her paper, this can be done through a student-led learning circle which can be a healthy mix of different levels of students and those who are the best in different subjects. The teacher will serve as a facilitator who will be there to guide and encourage the learners.

Self-assessment of learning can also be had in the kind of learners described in the study. In this strategy, Students make their own question papers as a class assignment. This will not just train them to frame questions but develop their higher order thinking skills.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. As to the profile of the respondents, the 21st Century Teachers assigned in the Humanities Strand of the University of Eastern Philippines were mostly instructors, aged 20 to 24 and 35 to 39, females, and a teaching experience of less than a year to five years. They were the young female teachers and just starting in the world of teaching. On the other hand, the 21st Century Learners enrolled in the University's Senior High School were mostly 18 years old, females, and majority came from public schools of the province. They complied the required age of the DepEd when they enrolled in the first grade of elementary. The respondents were also dominated by female students who mostly studied in public schools during their junior high school.
2. The teacher-respondents of this study are advocates for their students and their profession. They being competent in giving varied tasks in honing their students' skills and in developing their capabilities and at the same time understanding their feelings and experiences. They are adaptive to the changing tools in teaching like the use of power point presentations and other mass media related materials which students can really relate to. The teachers are also adaptive to the changes that are being implemented in the schools. They can be classified also as lifelong learners. As mentioned by Cox, educators do not just expect their students to be a life-long learner, but they are as well.

3. As to the characteristics of the 21st Century Learners, majority of the respondents perceived the 21st century learners as very independent of their own time but dependent on their phones and mobile technology. They move their own lives. They want to be available always on social media. They decide for their own, and express their views and creativity freely. For them, they can do what is right, and they love collaborating with friends and peers. They know that they are the future of this world. But they rely on Google for almost everything they wanted to know. They make use of technology as their partner towards success in life. These characteristics were mostly observed by teachers and parents and as popularly described by authors nowadays.
4. As to the strategies that best fit their characteristics, lectures using power point presentation, audiovisual materials, and handouts, individual, pair, and group tasks, projects, and activities, peer teaching and reviewing, and mentoring other learners are suggested based on their characteristics. These strategies hone their varied skills and eventually developed their capabilities. These are very helpful to them not only in their performance today but in their preparation to be equipped with the needed qualifications of professionals in the future.
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are proposed:

1. While it is good to have young and new instructors assigned to teach senior high students because they can really relate and understand the ways and deeds of today's generation, it is good also to have seasoned faculty in the teaching force. Faculty members who are Assistant or Associate Professors may be added to the teaching force assigned

in the Senior High School of the university. They can at least contribute their experiences and expertise being more exposed to the actual field of teaching. Students also can really feel other generations that are too distant from theirs.

2. The special lecturers handling senior high students may be prioritized in giving permanent positions because of having good feedback as to their attributes in teaching. The university needs competent teachers and professionals in ways and deeds. Teachers who are knowledgeable in technology used in the classroom to facilitate the conduct of teaching.
3. It is recommended that the current procedure or policy of admitting senior high students in the university be pushed through because of the good profile of the student-respondents involved in the study.
4. The teachers and administrators of the different colleges can make use of the data as to the characteristics of the student-respondents in the study in the preparation of their course syllabi and specific activities in the courses they are handling. Knowing the characteristics of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners in the university will facilitate them in their planning and preparation of almost all activities in the university.
5. Future researchers may conduct another study related to the present study. Other variables may be included to evaluate the attributes of the teachers and the characteristics of the students. Other

personal factors may be looked into to strengthen its claim.

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