Outcomes-Based Education Implementation: Knowledge, Skills and Academic Performance

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Abstract

In response to the demands of a rapidly changing global landscape, the Philippines' higher education sector is seeking innovative ways to prepare students to face the challenges of the 21st century. This paper explores the implementation of outcomes-based education (OBE) in higher education institutions in Bohol, Philippines, with a focus on the accessibility, preparedness, and knowledge of academic administrators and faculty members regarding OBE. The study's findings reveal that both administrators and faculty possess extensive understanding of OBE, emphasizing the importance of successful OBE integration in tertiary education, leading to improved learning outcomes and overall educational effectiveness. However, the assessment of their skills in OBE indicates a need for improvement in certain areas. The study underscores the crucial role of knowledge and skills in OBE as strong predictors of students' academic performance, with administrators demonstrating notably higher levels compared to faculty members. These results highlight the need for targeted training programs to enhance faculty skills and understanding of OBE, ultimately fostering improved educational outcomes and enhancing student academic performance. By refining the OBE framework and conducting faculty development seminars, institutions can create a conducive environment for student success and academic excellence. Moreover, further research on OBE's effectiveness in relation to graduates' employability can provide valuable insights for continuous improvement in the educational system.

Keywords: Outcomes-Based Education, Implementation, academic performance

Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving global landscape, the importance of ensuring citizens possess the necessary competencies and attitudes to be globally competitive cannot be overstated, particularly in the context of the Philippines. High-quality education across all levels plays a pivotal role in producing competent professionals and fostering a strong nation capable of standing up to global competition. As the demands and challenges of the international community continue to grow, the higher education sector in the Philippines is seeking innovative ways to revamp its educational system and equip students to face the unique challenges of the 21st century. In response to this, the focus is shifting from an inputs-based approach to an outcomes-based education (OBE) model, which places students at the center of all educational

6244

Eur. Chem. Bull. 2023,12(Special Issue 7), 6244-6250

planning and aligns with institutional vision, mission, and goals. This paper explores the implementation of OBE in higher education institutions in Bohol, Philippines, aiming to meet international standards and adapt to the changing educational landscape. By examining the accessibility, preparedness, and knowledge of school administrators and faculty members regarding OBE, the study seeks to provide valuable guidelines for effective implementation and management of outcomes-based education in the region's higher education institutions, ultimately contributing to the ongoing transformation of OBE and preparing young learners for global living and future success.

Literature Review

Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) is a newly adopted structure in the Philippine education curriculum aimed at creating effective teaching and learning environments to bring about positive changes in learners. Its primary goal is to produce globally competitive graduates who meet international educational and labor market standards. However, there has been a lack of clear understanding of what OBE truly entails and its operational aspects. OBE focuses on defining essential learning outcomes for students, organizing curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure these outcomes are achieved. These outcomes are tangible demonstrations of what students can actually do with their knowledge, helping them reach their full potential in their personal and professional lives. Teachers play a crucial role in fostering meaningful learning experiences through innovative and creative instructional approaches. By prioritizing learning accomplishments and results over time, OBE emphasizes the integration and application of knowledge and skills in real-life settings after formal instruction.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued Memorandum Order No. 46, series of 2012, to enhance the quality assurance of Philippine higher education through an Outcomes-Based and Typology-based approach. This policy aims to ensure that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) provide quality programs meeting world-class standards, producing graduates with lifelong learning competencies to support the country's social and economic development needs. Universities and colleges were tasked to revise and align their curricular programs using an outcomes-based framework, consistent with their institution's vision, mission, and goals.

Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) is guided by four essential principles: clarity of focus, designing backwards, high expectations, and expanded opportunities. These principles strengthen the conditions for student and teacher success, encouraging innovative and creative application of OBE. Clarity of focus helps educators define clear learning outcomes, while designing backwards ensures that curriculum planning aligns with the desired results. Setting high expectations motivates students to learn better, and providing expanded opportunities fosters the development of each student's potential. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) offers a conceptual paradigm to guide higher education institutions in adopting OBE.

6245

Eur. Chem. Bull. 2023,12(Special Issue 7), 6244-6250

Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) emphasizes a shift from teaching to student-centered learning, with teachers acting as facilitators. It incorporates study guides, group work, continuous assessment, and self-assessment to support learners in organizing their activities. The framework focuses on holistic outcomes, linking learning objectives at different levels to build higher-level achievements. For successful OBE implementation in higher education institutions (HEIs), strategic design should come first, defining exit outcomes to drive subsequent implementation planning. Challenging specific goals have shown to enhance motivation and performance, helping individuals and organizations monitor progress and refine strategies for success.

CHED Memorandum Order No. 46 s. 2012 aims to enhance the quality assurance system in Philippine higher education through an outcomes-based approach. The focus shifts from teaching to learning, with educators acting as facilitators and promoting student-centered learning. The policy emphasizes the development of well-rounded graduates with values, analytical skills, ethical awareness, and the ability to learn continuously. To achieve success in OBE implementation, educators must understand the principles and outcomes, aligning teaching and assessment with learning objectives. The ultimate goal is to improve student learning and teaching quality through an aligned teaching-learning process.

Challenges to Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) principles and premises arise from different interpretations of responsibility for student learning. While OBE emphasizes shared responsibility between schools, teachers, students, and parents, some argue that students should also take significant ownership of their learning. The proof of learning in OBE lies in the difference in a learner's performance before and after learning, emphasizing the importance of achieving intended outcomes through learning activities. However, concerns have been raised about the use of standardized tests, workload increases for teachers, and mixed success in implementing OBE in various education systems. Despite challenges, OBE has shown success in certain fields, such as medical education in the US. The quality of an educational system can be assessed from multiple perspectives, with outcomes-based evaluation focusing on the results and products of education.

Source: Penaso A.M. (2014). Outcomes-Based Education Seminar
Figure 1.
OBE Process Flow

6246

Eur. Chem. Bull. 2023,12(Special Issue 7), 6244-6250

Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) focuses on what students should achieve and prepares them for their career and professional accomplishments, stated in the institutional mission, vision, and goals. Intended learning outcomes (ILOs) are written at both intended program and course learning outcomes levels, where program outcomes (PO's) represent students' expected knowledge and abilities by graduation, and course learning outcomes (CLO's) are the expected outcomes for specific course, assessed through various assessment tools. Outcomes-based course syllabi clarify learning goals, activities, and assessment tasks to help students master identified knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The Outcomes-Based Teaching Learning Process (OBTL) aligns ILOs, teaching, and assessment to enhance student learning and teaching quality, while Outcomes-Based Assessment (OBA) emphasizes assessing student outputs to reflect real-life, authentic learning experiences.
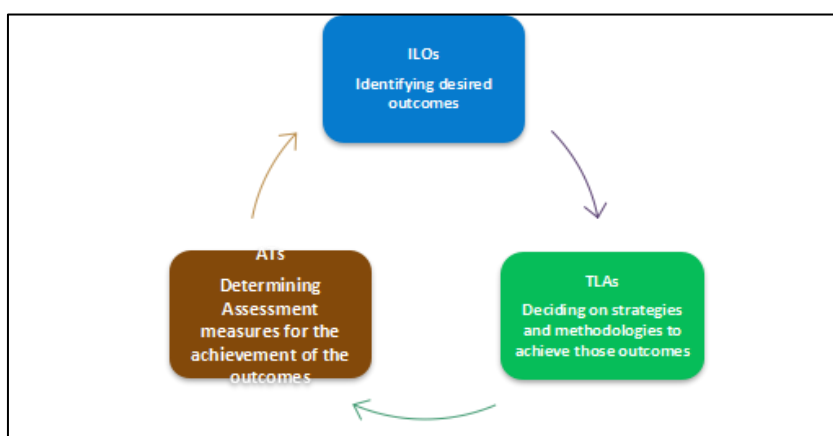

Figure 2.
Transformative Alignment of OBTL
Source: Uy F.A. (2015) Outcomes-Based Education: Critical Issues and Answer.

Methodology

The research design employed in this study is descriptive, and it utilizes quantitative data gathered through a survey questionnaire. The study is centered on selected private and state universities in the progressive Province of Bohol, Philippines. The participants in the study include academic administrators, regular faculty members and randomly selected students from different tertiary education institutions in Bohol. To assess their knowledge and skills in the implementation of Outcomes-Based Education, the researcher utilized a self-made questionnaire based on Spady's book, covering various aspects such as learning outcomes, teaching-learning processes, curriculum content and structure, and assessment.

6247

Eur. Chem. Bull. 2023,12(Special Issue 7), 6244-6250

Results and Discussion

The study's significant findings reveal that both academic administrators and faculty possess extensive understanding of various aspects of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), including formulating learning outcomes, curriculum content, teaching-learning processes, and assessment. This understanding emphasizes the importance of successful OBE integration in tertiary education, leading to improved learning outcomes and overall educational effectiveness for both teachers and students. However, the assessment of academic administrators and faculty's skills in OBE implementation indicates a need for improvement in certain areas, such as showcasing the relationship between course syllabi and learning levels, facilitating learning activities for diverse learners, and creating rubrics for assessing institutional and program outcomes.

The study further emphasizes the crucial role of knowledge and skills in OBE as strong predictors of students' academic performance, with administrators demonstrating notably higher levels compared to faculty members. These results have significant implications for educational institutions, highlighting the need for targeted training and development programs to enhance faculty skills and understanding of OBE, ultimately fostering improved educational outcomes and enhancing student academic performance. The study suggests the importance of ongoing conversations and collaboration among stakeholders to refine the OBE framework, align course, program, and institutional outcomes, and conduct faculty development seminars to equip educators with necessary skills. Additionally, further research on the effectiveness of OBE implementation in relation to graduates' employability can provide valuable insights for continuous improvement in the educational system, ultimately fostering an environment for student success and academic excellence.

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6249

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6250

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