



Employers' feedback on workplace performance of teacher education graduates of the NEUST San Isidro Campus

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Abstract

Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) are faced with the constant demand of equipping their graduates with updated higher level of knowledge and skills needed to perform the job. This study aimed to determine the employers' feedback on the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus teacher education graduates' workplace performance in terms of their attributes and skills. Descriptive in nature, it utilized a survey questionnaire to collect feedback on NEUST teacher education graduates' performance from school principals and head teachers of public schools. The findings showed that the employers were very satisfied with both the attributes and skills of the teacher education graduates of the University employed in their respective schools.

Keywords: feedback, workplace performance, attributes, and skills

Introduction

Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) are faced with the constant demand of equipping their graduates with updated higher level of knowledge and skills needed to perform the job. The institutions must constantly update and innovate in order to cater to future professionals who will enter the world of work.

However, developing the skills and knowledge of future teachers should not be the decision of the institution alone. According to Navarro (2020) ^[7], getting the feedback of the employers of its graduates is the real measure of the university's success in its implementation of educational programs. Evaluating how the graduates perform in the workplace as well as the qualities that are deemed important by the employers are vital in the development of the university's curriculum and program offerings.

With the constant change in the demand of the market, it is crucial that the teacher education graduates meet the needs of such change. Thus, the relationship between university graduates' standard of skills and the job market has been the subject of increasing theoretical and empirical studies in educational literature (Herath, 2015; Navarro, 2020) ^[7].

One important stakeholder whose feedback is vital to the success of the teacher education's program implementation is the employer. The employer's feedback on the workplace performance of the graduates must be collected as an indicator of the university's mandate to develop students into productive professionals in the field (Aquino, 2018) ^[4]. The school principals and head teachers, as immediate supervisors of the teacher education graduate, can provide crucial feedback on the workplace performance of the graduates.

In a study conducted by Sannadan, *et al.* (2016) ^[9], it was found that universities need to integrate basic generic teacher

attributes which are required by the employers and incorporate effectively in the course work to produce work-ready graduates. Employers look for graduates who are not only knowledgeable, but also possess both positive professional and personal attributes, and 21st century teaching skills.

Asio and Riego de Dios (2018) ^[5] have identified four (4) 21st century teaching skills as communication, learning and innovation, information, media, and technology, and life and career skills. Communication involves the teacher education graduates' ability to articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral and written communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts.

On the other hand, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education explained learning and innovation skills as a skill that separates teacher graduates who are prepared for a more and more complex life and work environment in the 21st century, from those who are not. It includes critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration, creativity, and innovation. Information, media and technology skills includes information literacy, media literacy, and ICT literacy. Lastly, life and career skills include the graduates' flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility.

The university is entrusted with the responsibility of turning in graduates with employable skills and good attitudes, and so the university must continue to enhance its curricula and improve the quality of instruction (Aquino, *et al.* (2015) ^[3]. Thus, this study, which aims to determine the feedback of the employers on the teacher education graduates of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus, in terms of their performance in the workplace will be conducted. This will serve as a baseline towards developing programs that

would provide development of the skills needed in the workplace.

Objectives of the study

This study aims to determine the feedback of the employers on the teacher education graduates of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus, in terms of their performance in the workplace. This seeks to determine (1) the feedback of the employers in terms of their level of satisfaction on the teacher education graduates' (a) attributes – professional and personal skills; and (b) skills - communication skills, learning and innovation skills, information, media and technology skills, and life and career skills.

Materials and methods

Research design

This research utilized the descriptive design to determine the feedback in terms of the feedback of the employers on the teacher education graduates of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus, in terms of their performance in the workplace.

Respondents of the study

This study involved the fifty-eight (58) school principals and head teachers from thirty-five (35) public schools in the survey area.

Instrumentation

The questionnaires used in this study was developed based on the statement of the problem and drawn after a review of literatures related to the study. The instrument is a two-part questionnaire – feedback on the graduates' attributes and skills. The instrument's face and content validity were evaluated by experts. Changes recommended by the validation panel, when appropriate, were incorporated into the instrument. To evaluate its reliability, the questionnaire was pilot-tested to employers who were not participants of the study.

Procedure

After a series of evaluation, and validation of the instrument, the researchers prepared the list of public schools where their graduates are work as classroom teachers. They then secured the approval from the DepEd Division Office to distribute questionnaires to school principal and head teacher of the identified public schools. The questionnaire was then distributed by sending the link to the google form via the FB messenger application. This was to gather data faster, observing the health and safety protocols.

Statistical treatment

Weighted mean was used to determine the feedback of the employers in terms of their level of satisfaction on the teacher education graduates' attributes and skills.

Results and discussion

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the participants of the study.

1. Employer's feedback on teacher education graduates' performance

1.1 Attributes

Table 1: Employer's feedback on teacher education graduates' performance in terms of attributes

Attribute	WM	Verbal interpretation
Professional attribute	3.78	Very satisfied
Personal attribute	3.82	Very satisfied
Composite mean	3.8	Very satisfied

Table 1 reflects the employers' feedback on the workplace performance of teacher education graduates of NEUST employed in public schools in terms of their professional and personal attributes. The data show that the employers were very satisfied with the attributes of the NEUST teacher education graduates with the overall mean of 3.8. This indicates that the teacher education graduates of NEUST, particularly that of San Isidro Campus, possessed very satisfactory professional and personal attributes that employers appreciate.

1.2 Skills

Table 2: Employer's feedback on teacher education graduates' performance in terms of skills

Skill	WM	Verbal interpretation
Communication	3.65	Very satisfied
Learning and innovation	3.6	Very satisfied
Information, media and technology	3.58	Very satisfied
Life and career	3.6	Very satisfied
Composite mean	3.61	Very satisfied

Table 2 presents an employer's feedback on performance of teacher education graduates of NEUST employed in public schools in terms of their skills. Overall rating of 3.61 was interpreted very satisfied as to the workplace performance skills of teacher education graduates in their respective workplaces.

Among the teachers' workplace performance skills, it was revealed that the employers were highly satisfied with the communication skills displayed by the NEUST teacher education graduates in the workplace with the weighted mean of 3.65. This suggests that the NEUST graduates have the capability to effectively and accurately communicate in both spoken and written formats, as well as to perform their tasks proficiently, which is ideal as effective communication, as emphasized by several studies is significant for employees to achieve success in their roles and contribute to the success of the organizations they are associated with (Sannadan, *et al.*, 2016; Ahmed & Redha, 2014; Sarudin & Noor, 2013) ^[9, 2, 10]. The teacher education graduates of NEUST also displayed life and career skills and learning and innovation skills that were highly satisfying to their employers, each with a weighted mean of 3.6. This indicates that teacher graduates were flexible and adaptable, demonstrate leadership skills with integrity and ethical behavior, take initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level, and complete tasks without direct

oversight.

On the other hand, information, media, and technology skills obtained the least weighted mean of 3.58, verbally interpreted as very satisfied. Although information, media, and technology skills obtained the least weighted mean, employers' feedback still indicate that the teacher education graduates that they can incorporate technology to complete tasks related to their work. However, this may also indicate that they still need to improve their information technology and media literacy.

Conclusions

The findings of the study show that the employers were very satisfied with the workplace performance of the NEUST teacher education graduates that they have employed. The graduates demonstrated exceptional performance in the professional environment, likely attributed to the training they underwent during their tertiary education. They possess attributes that are important to the employers today. The extensive personal and professional growth the graduates displayed highly satisfied their employers mirrors feedback indicating their adaptability, versatility, integrity, and strong commitment. This further indicates that they have evolved into individuals and professionals with a broad range of skills and are socially well-adjusted (Palma, 2022) ^[8].

In terms of their skills, while the employers were very satisfied, there is still a need to improve their information, media and technology skills. This is important as to be successful in the 21st century, individuals and workers need to demonstrate various functional and critical thinking skills associated with information, media, and technology. Based on this, the NEUST need to incorporate information, media and technology literacy directly into teacher preparation programs. This ensures that future teachers not only encounter the concept but also acquire the knowledge of how to incorporate it effectively in their prospective classrooms (Gretter and Yadav, 2018) ^[6].

Moreover, the NEUST administrators and faculty members of the College of Education need to carefully consider this study's findings and incorporate them into their efforts to enhance the development of future educators. Teacher education student should also use the study as a foundation for effective learning to prepare them for the professional field. This can further enhance the employability of the teacher education graduates.

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