

# Permanent Faculty Qualifications and Its Effects to K-12 Program Implementation

**Monetta C. Valencia**

College of Education, Bicol State College of Applied Sciences and Technology, Philippines

monetvalencia@yahoo.com

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**Abstract** - *Child's education has been a focal issue in the trend of global learning and that the K to 12 education system has been applied to most countries worldwide. In Southeast Asia, countries have adjusted to suit the curricular program that entails K to 12. In the Philippine context, the education sector is still on the stage of polishing after its implementation. The full implementation of the K to 12 education system not only applied changes to the pre-school, elementary and high school levels but it also impacts the Higher Education sector as changes in policies, curricular programs, mandates, and other academic concerns take place. This study provided readiness assessment of the College of Arts and Sciences faculty along the implementation of the K to 12 education system. Its purpose is to assess the qualifications of the permanent College of Arts and Sciences faculty members of the Bicol State College of Applied Sciences and Technology (BISCAST) and its effects to the K-12 Program implementation. In addition, it explored the possibilities of helping the college faculty to be fully equipped in handling the new General Education courses in college. Utilizing a descriptive-evaluative methodology, this research included surveys and individual interviews. Results in this study revealed that college teachers should be the most academically prepared by having the appropriate education background and expertise in his/her field. As evidenced in the data gathered, there are only 30% qualified teachers for the core courses and 42% for the elective courses as opposed to 70% and 58%, respectively. The lack of qualified teachers has future implications to the K to 12 process. Accordingly, Human Resource Development intervention and personal development were suggested.*

**Keywords:** *K to 12, General Education courses, Core Courses, Elective Courses, higher education*

## INTRODUCTION

Global education is very much valued today hence teacher proficiency forms part of the importance of global learning engagement. The kindergarten to grade 12 curricula, or K-12 curriculum, is the forefront of global education in which higher education institutions recognize the need for teacher preparation programs for the new General Education courses [1]. In the global context, students are required to be "citizens of the world" thus educators are trained to be equipped with specific skills that would entail globally competent teaching [2]. Although the current worldwide teaching force are provided with mentoring and assessment in their curriculum areas, studies reveal that there is still lack of continuing support and coordination in the course of their work [3]. Researches about the worldwide K-12 policy further emphasized that the teachers' qualifications are measured by their degree of study – undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, to be more competent, they need "ongoing opportunities to engage in professional learning throughout their careers" [4].

One element in the International Education strategic plan is "increasing the global competencies" of students around the world and focusing on the need of the faculty and administrators of higher education institutions to acquire new approaches in the teaching-learning process after senior high school [1].

The Philippines is third to the last country in the world to apply the K-12 system. Djibouti and Angola are yet to follow suit. In the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), where Philippines is a member, the K-12 education is a gateway towards the agreement to integrate economies to provide wider opportunities and to expand perspectives for community formation. The final implication of K-12 education system in the ASEAN countries is collaboration and not competition [5]-[8].

The Philippines has long been in the process of being globally competitive which focuses on creating more employments, raising wages and providing education opportunities. In the current landscape, the country fails to produce citizens of the world [2] that who can respond to the globalized society this is because the higher education teachers' qualifications

are less discussed, or perhaps has taken the last spot in the K-12 preparation priorities. Its need is highlighted in a study that stated,

*“While state departments of education and national teachers’ organizations have begun to adopt global awareness in their teaching standards and evaluation tools, there is a need for educators to understand what globally competent teachers actually do in classrooms across subject areas and grade levels” [2].*

CHED has conducted studies that project the anticipated job losses during the transition period, and so it has partnered with DepEd and DOLE to put programs in place to ensure that personnel in the higher education sector are not only taken care of during the transition, but that this challenge is transformed into an opportunity to upgrade higher education in the country [9]. In the United States, universities addressed the need for more qualified teachers by providing graduate certificates in online teaching and other teacher education programs to help teachers become more efficient in the teaching-learning process [10].

At present, trainings and seminars initiated by the CHED is being offered across the nation because teachers have to be armed with the right perception, skills and knowledge in facing the first senior high school graduates. To this writing, the country is still in need of more qualified teachers. The significance of this study is to have a view of the number of the most academically prepared higher education teachers with the appropriate background and with the right expertise.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main purpose of this study was to get the perception of an assessment of the permanent CAS faculty qualifications and its effects to K-12 program implementation. Specifically, to identify if the permanent CAS teachers are qualified and ready to teach the new General Education core courses and electives as an implication of the K-12 implementation in the country. The researcher worked in (1) to determine the readiness of the CAS faculty to teach the new General Education courses based on their (a) educational qualifications, and (b) willingness to teach the courses; (2) to identify the new General Education courses that the CAS faculty needs training, and (3) to effect possible Human Resource Development intervention as basis for hiring.

#### **METHODS**

This research utilized a descriptive-evaluative approach to get the perception of the assessment of the College of Arts and Sciences faculty readiness in handling the first batch of K to 12 graduates. A descriptive research is a study on the characteristics of the population or phenomenon hence the use of questionnaires and interviews to gather data (Patton, 2005). The evaluative approach is undertaken to systematically analyze the effectiveness through data gathered using qualitative methods [11].

For the purpose of this study, the 24 permanent faculty members of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) of the Bicol State College of Applied Sciences and Technology (BISCAST) were selected as the subject of interest. The school is located at the heart of Naga City and has four college departments to date – College of Education, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Engineering and Architecture and College of Trade and Technology. The respondents are given a researcher’s made questionnaire that would reflect their qualification and interest in handling the new general education courses. It is the primary instrument used to gather relevant data on teacher’s qualification, readiness and interest in the teaching of the new general education courses. The respondents were given a list of the new General Education courses that is categorized into two, the Core Courses and the Elective Courses. After acquiring a clearance from the Ethics Review Board and getting a consent from all parties, the educational backgrounds of the faculty members were collected from the Human Resource office. Following the collection of data, a matrix was prepared to show the best qualified teachers to handle the new General Education courses. The new courses or subjects with no qualified teachers were identified and shall serve as basis for hiring or retooling of teachers. The statistical tool used is the frequency distribution tool where in the teachers are given variables (General Education subjects) from where they can pick more than one subject appropriate for their qualification. The results are presented in graphs.

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

K to 12 refers to the 13 years of education before entering college. It is the schooling that starts from kindergarten, grades 1-6 for the elementary level, grades 7-10 for the junior high school and grades 11-12 for the senior high school. This 13-year education is used in the public-school system of countries like United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and parts of Europe and Asia [12]. The importance of the K-12 system is more than preparing the students for college, it is honing students to be fit to work.

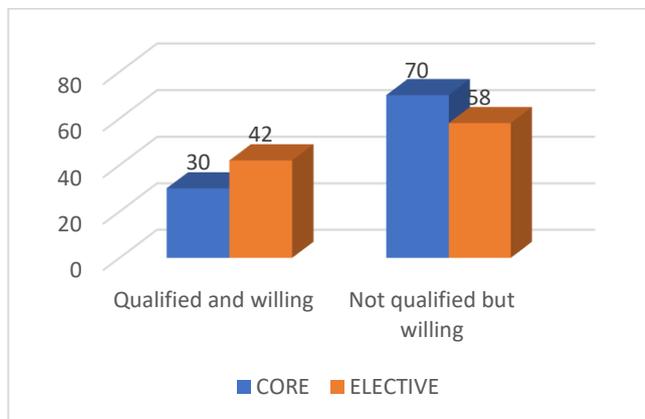
More so, studies have shown that graduates of the said system are more employable than graduates of other system [12]. Owing to this fact, it is vital that higher education teachers are properly equipped with knowledge and skills to handle the new subjects for the incoming batch of freshmen college.

The findings of the study reflect the qualifications of the respondents to teach the new General Education courses. The new GE courses are classified into two, the Core Courses and the Elective Courses. As previously mentioned, the gathered data is interpreted in a qualitative-evaluative form. The focus of the findings is parallel to the objectives of the research. The respondents in this study were the 24 permanent CAS faculty of BISCASST.

**Readiness of the CAS Faculty**

The questionnaire sought to identify the number of teachers who are qualified to teach the new General Education courses based on their educational background and those who are not qualified but willing to teach.

The result revealed that of the 24 teachers, 30% are qualified to teach the core subjects and there are 70% who are not qualified but are willing to handle some of the subjects. For the Elective Courses, 42% are qualified and 58% are not qualified but willing to teach.



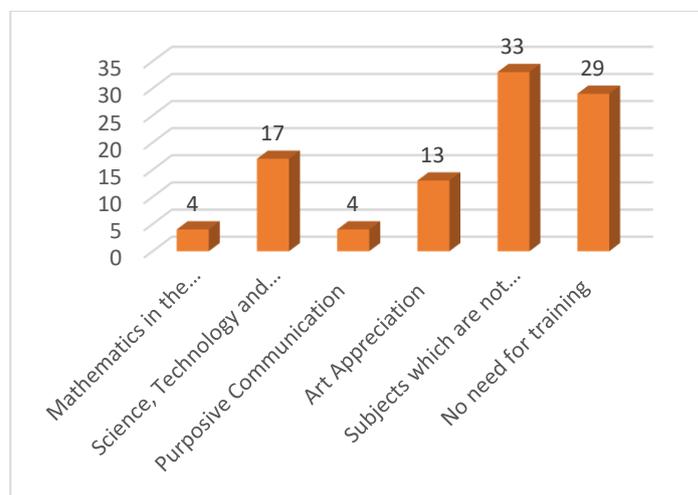
**Figure 1.** Readiness of the CAS faculty to handle the new General Education courses.

The rest of the faculty whose expertise are not qualified for any of the general education courses show willingness to teach and be trained. They can be considered for possible Human Resource Development intervention, so they can be more equipped to handle such courses. HRD intervention or personal development is an effective method for the teachers to have the necessary skills, attitude and knowledge in handling the new General Education courses. K-12 aims for a stronger foundation of

learning and it is vital for the college teachers to have a follow through especially during the freshman college year.

**CAS Faculty Need for Training**

The educational background of the teachers is an essential factor in considering them to be qualified to teach the new courses or not. However, there are teachers who are willing to teach any other subjects from the new courses provided they are given proper trainings. A study posits that “societies worldwide allocate substantial investment in resources to prepare and deliver a formal system of education that will help support social and economic development” [14]. Trainings and seminars are forms of learning grounds for teachers to further equip themselves with necessary knowledge in the teaching of the new courses. In the next figure, the core courses where teachers need training are shown.

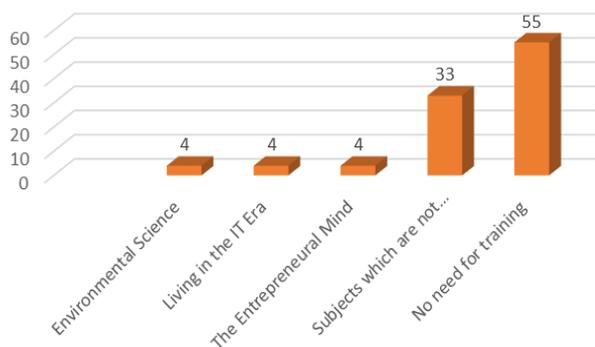


**Figure 2.1** The General Education Courses that the CAS faculty need for training.

From Figure 2.1, it can be inferred that five subjects were chosen for training. Among the 24 respondents, 4% specified their need for training in the subject Mathematics in the Modern World and another 4% for Purposive Communication. 13% are willing to be trained in Art Appreciation, and; 17% for Science, Technology and Society. There are 33% of the teachers who signified their need for training, however they did not mention in which subjects and also a high 29% of the teachers claimed they do not need training.

The above result shows that a total of 78% teachers would allow themselves to be trained in order to be competent in the subjects under the core courses. Although this would entail time and resources, they are for the notion of being better prepared to impart knowledge to the students.

Elective Courses are also important. If the Core Courses are mandatory, the electives are chosen by the students. These subjects are beneficial to the individuality of each [15] and provide a positive climate to the competency acquisition process [16]. The next figure (Figure 2.2) shows the willingness of the teachers to teach the Elective Courses.



**Figure 2.2** The Elective Courses that the CAS faculty need for training (in Percentage).

Of the twelve elective courses, 4% or only three subjects were identified that would need training for the respondents. The low rate is a direct opposite of the 55% who expressed that they no longer need training and 33% who answered they need training but did not mention in which subjects.

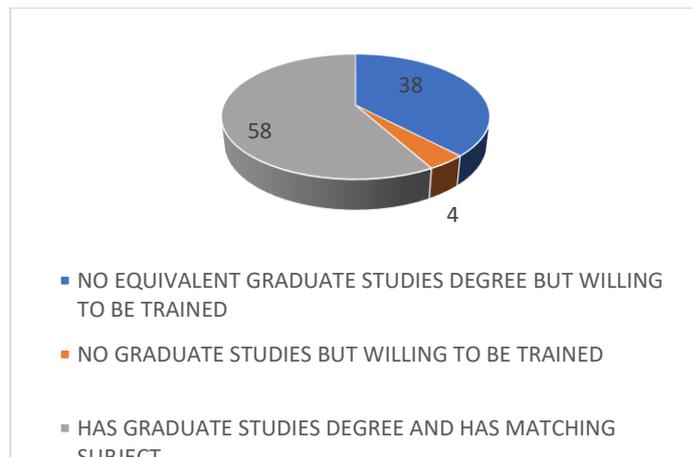
The outcome of the need for training for the Core Courses and Elective Courses is a reflection of the eagerness of the teachers to be qualified for the new education system. Those who have acquired a higher degree of learning are often the ones who feel the less need for such personal development activity.

**Possible Human Resources Development Intervention as Basis for Hiring**

Self-efficacy is a vital factor to improve the effectiveness of the teachers [17] if the school lacks proficient or qualified teachers, then it is important to consider the review of policies and apply it in the recruitment, selection, preparation and certification of new teachers [18].

Figure 3 shows possible HRD intervention as basis for hiring new teachers to handle the new General Education courses.

Looking at Figure 3, it is evident that 58% of the CAS faculty has equivalent graduate degree studies and so very much qualified to teach the corresponding new General Education course/s. Of the 24 teachers, 4% have no graduate studies and 38% has no equivalent graduate studies degree of which both groups (totaling to 42%) are willing to be trained.



**Figure 3.** Summary of CAS faculty qualification for possible HRD intervention (In percentage)

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is greatly affected by the K-12 implementation. In the current context, the first batch of graduates of Grade 12 is already enrolled as first year college. In the above result, it is evident that there is a great need for HRD intervention. The rate of 42% as a lack of qualified teacher is already significant in the delivery of quality education to the senior high school graduates. The HRD has options to train, retool or hire new teachers based on this evidence.

Retooling of teachers is a method used to address the shortage of teachers on some fields and the excess of teachers on other fields. According to Cooper [13], retooling method is direct and “it also overcomes the high cost of initiating new teachers into a system that they might soon leave.” Still, this will depend on the number of enrollees which will determine the actual demand for more teachers. This will also depend on the hiring of qualified teachers. In case the school was not able to hire educationally equipped teachers, then the existing faculty may be reconsidered for retooling interventions.

Further, the Higher Education Reform Agenda (HERA) emphasized faculty development in upgrading faculty qualifications. Consequentially, the CHED has continually maintained similar programs geared towards this end, including the CHED Faculty Development Program Phase 1 and other scholarships and grants. Its implementing guidelines shall define the procedures, priorities, and regulation of scholarships to faculty and staff nominated by their respective HEIs beginning in the K to 12 Transition Period [19].

Should there be a need to hire, hiring of effective teachers is reasonable at this stage as it will affect the performance of the students as well as the school

[20]. In a recent study, if the HRD opts to hire on the late stage it would result to disrupted student learning and having less time for them to prepare for the lessons [21].

#### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Philippines lags behind its neighboring countries when it comes to education. At present, it is very evident how a blue-collar job still requires employees to have at least reached college level. The goal of K-12 is to increase the employability of the high school graduates. If the higher education sector supports this goal, then it is also important to increase the need for qualified teachers.

It would be very helpful for the college teachers to grab the opportunities for growth given to them. CHED has prepared series of seminars and trainings to support the aim of K-12, the only thing that the college teachers have to do is to find time to enrich themselves with new knowledge and equip themselves with skills that they can use in adapting to the new education system that the Philippines is having.

This study gleaned towards the assessment of the readiness of the College of Arts and Sciences permanent faculty in teaching the new General Education courses. It revealed that even though CHED offered ways on how to bridge the gap of the K to 12 implementations in the university faculty sector, there is still a loophole in which readiness is a contributing factor – readiness when it comes to the qualification, competency and teaching strategies.

Teachers are the central factor in the full implementation of the K to 12 education system in the Philippines. However, the qualification of the current university teachers is not as often discussed. It is true that CHED prepared a series of trainings and seminars to further equip the university teachers but there is obviously a lack of motivation as most of the respondents have not taken any step (or perhaps the college department itself) to acquire the necessary teaching skills and methods required for the new General Education courses.

Drawing on this framework, the following recommendations may be considered by BISCAS in preparing the CAS faculty to the effect of K-12 program. First, there is a need to hire faculty members for the new General Education courses as there is a lack of qualified existing faculty. Second, the administrators must urge faculty members to take graduate studies in their respective fields of expertise. Lastly, it is recommended that the HRD Office takes this into consideration as basis for planning future HRD interventions. This would help the faculty harness their teaching capabilities and upgrade their

knowledge in their respective fields of specialization. In turn, the students and the main stakeholders would most benefit from the competent faculty manpower.

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