

The Teachers' Readiness and Administrators' Support for the Implementation of Performance-Based Assessments in the K to 12

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Originality: 100% • Grammar Check: 98% • Plagiarism: 0%



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ABSTRACT

Performance-based assessments are designed by schools to measure what the learners know and can do in diverse ways. According to the Department of Education, these assessments should enable the students to integrate their 21st-century skills and their knowledge, understanding, values, and attitudes in specific real-life situations. To determine the extent of the teachers' readiness for the implementation and the extent of support provided by the administrators in terms of supervision and assistance and the administrators' coaching and mentoring, expert-validated questionnaire checklists were administered to 65 teachers in the Senior High School. Findings show that the extent of the teachers' readiness to implement performance-based assessment is the extent. In contrast, the extent of the administrators' support in terms of administration and supervision and coaching and mentoring are very great. The teachers' readiness has been attributed to their field studies, professional education subjects, and practice teaching wherein they observed and experienced designing performance assessments. Also, the administrators supervised and assisted the

teachers by allowing them to create their assessments, providing suggestions, and encouraging participation. To further the implementation, enriched training and workshop sessions, maintaining the communication among the teachers and administrators, and giving credit, independence, and commendations to the faculty members are recommended.

Keywords — Institutional Research, classroom assessment reform, authentic tasks, DepEd Order No. 8, and Understanding by Design, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Assessment is the bridge between teaching and learning. It helps teachers determine where each learner needs to be and how he/she gets there; hence, educators engineer effective and challenging tasks serving as learning experiences, eliciting evidence of learning, activating students towards owning their learning, and increasing learners' engagement and achievement "across a range of contexts.

Realizing that classroom assessment is a powerful tool to attain the highest educational purpose, which is "achieving high-level learning" for all students, assessment reform has taken hold worldwide. Teachers and administrators should untangle embedded issues and tensions in the complexity of the assessment process by formulating plans that will make sense to them (Earl, 2014).

Thus, in pursuance of DepEd Order No. 8, s. (2015) in the Philippines, learning is assessed based on what the learners know and can do in diverse ways through the performance task component of summative assessments, which allows students "to demonstrate and integrate their knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, and values about topics or lessons learned in a specific real-life situation by performing and producing evidence of their learning." Otherwise known as the *Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment for the K to 12 Basic Education Program*, the Order states that these performance tasks that give learners "the freedom to express inappropriate learning ways" significantly need to "encourage student inquiry" and integrate 21st-century skills in various meaningful contexts.

Mandated to be the most weighted summative assessment, performance task presently plays an essential role in the students' learning as it becomes 50% of the final grade in all the core subjects and 45% in all other subjects in the curricula of the K to 12 Basic Enhanced Education Program Senior High School levels. Hence, to evaluate students' attainment of the content and performance standards through authentic performance tasks, K to 12 teachers can engineer performance-

based assessments demanding oral, written, and kinesthetic performance tasks that provide learners with experiences in the real world (DepEd, 2015).

More commonly known as the K to 12, a reform in assessment and grading practices in pursuance of DepEd Order 73 mandates that “all students will be assessed based on K-P-U-P (Knowledge, Process, Understanding, and Product/Performance). To recall, this Order also recommends that the student’s level of proficiency must be categorized as “B for beginning, D for developing, AP for approaching proficiency, P for proficient, and A for advanced” (DO 73, 2012, p. 5); however, it was immediately found out that “many schools find systemic reform difficult to implement as there are many factors and stakeholders who may hinder this initiative” in documenting systemic school reform from vision to standards and assessment (Plata, 2013). More so, when the traditional assessments’ appropriateness was reconsidered, Magno and Lizada (2014) had more greatly proven that teachers need to note that only certain domains such as knowledge, process, and understanding can be assessed using traditional forms of assessment. The other facets such as empathy, taking perspective, and self-knowledge are best done on performance-based assessment. To verify, the 2002 Grading for Learning Framework by O’Connor was utilized to analyze K-P-U-P (knowledge, process, understanding, and product/performance) further just to reveal that teachers are not sharing a common understanding of the key concepts that are essential for successful implementation (Plata, 2015). Because of this, Chua (2015) needed to determine the level of preparedness of the teachers who served as the implementers of the new SHS consisting of two additional levels in high school. The study identified that the school’s possible difficulty in the implementation is that teachers are given autonomy over curriculum design and implementation.

However, on rethinking about assessments, Arar (2012) argued that the advances in psychometrics and technology could offer the possibility of new assessment methods that would tap a broader range of skills and knowledge than multiple-choice tests and would do so more efficiently and at a reasonable cost. The development of high-quality assessments requires students to apply complex problem-solving and reasoning skills that are relatively immune to test-focused instruction that could go a long way toward improving outcomes associated with Standards-Based Grading (SBG) or Standards-Based Reform (SBR) through increasing variety in the content and format of tests, resulting to lack of predictability as key to reducing overly narrow test preparation and the resulting score inflation. This was why Lunenburg (2010) pointed out that changes in

the curriculum, instruction, and assessment are crucial. The role of instructional leaders is critical for the success of all implemented school initiatives. In this sense, it was revealed that principals and administrators could accomplish the goal to enhance learning by the encouragement of collaboration, use of data, provision of support, and alignment of the curriculum, assessment, and instruction. More so, through commendations and merit rewards from the principal and schools' organized in-house seminars, teachers become more interested and effective in fulfilling assigned roles and tasks.

As integrated in the Singapore American School (2017), the focus in assessments shifts to communicating students' progress. The goal is to communicate students' progress towards mastery of learning targets and against rigorous, high-level standards - not against each other.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Therefore, this study aimed to determine (1) the extent of readiness of the teachers and the (2) support by the administrators in terms of supervision and assistance, and (3) the support of the administrators in terms of coaching and mentoring provided to the teachers for the success of the implementation.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive method was used to evaluate the extent of readiness of the teachers and the extent of administrative support in terms of supervision and assistance and coaching and mentoring through the responses of the participating teachers and selected students to the questionnaire checklists.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were 4,420 students and 65 teachers from the University of Perpetual Help System-Dalta, Molino III, Bacoor, Cavite. Total enumeration was used for the teachers' population, while Slovin's formula was used to derive the sample size of the students. With a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, 367 students were selected.

Instrumentation

The research instrument used in this study was a self-developed questionnaire checklist for the teachers and a separate self-developed questionnaire checklist for the students.

The questionnaire-checklist for the teachers had three (3) parts: the first part inquired about the teachers' received/attended seminars, training, workshops, meetings, and modules on performance tasks, which were used to support or validate the second part that was for the extent to which the teachers are ready for the implementation. The third part was for the extent of support received by the teachers from the administrators.

The self-developed questionnaire checklist was tested, validated, and approved by experts from Philippine Normal University, Department of Education, and De La Salle University-Dasmariñas.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data from the respondents were gathered through a questionnaire checklist for teacher-respondents and the performance-based assessments for all the student-respondents. In view thereof, the following steps were done to gather data from the teachers and students who were the respondents of the study: (1) the approval of the Principal was obtained through a letter of request signed by the researcher and the adviser, (2) the first set of questionnaire-checklist was distributed to the teachers, while the second set was administered to the students for them to accomplish accordingly, and (3) the accomplished questionnaire-checklists were collected, organized, and tallied for the subsequent statistical treatment and analysis.

Statistical Treatment and Analysis of Data

To analyze the results obtained from the questionnaire checklist for the teachers and the performance-based assessments for the students and to answer the problems, the following statistical tools were used.

Frequency count. Frequency statistics are done by simply counting the number of times a specific response occurs (Korb, 2013). This tool was useful in tallying the data obtained in all parts of the questionnaire checklist, specifically determining the number of respondents experiencing each of the given problems before they were subjected to the other applicable statistical tools.

Weighted mean. The Weighted mean is a kind of average wherein some data points contribute more weight than others. It was used to determine the extent of teachers' readiness and the extent of support coming from the administrators, as shown in relative values and verbal description below:

Relative Value	Verbal Interpretation	Statistical Limit
5	Very Great Extent (VGE)	4.20 - 5.00
4	Great Extent (GE)	3.40 - 4.19
3	Average Extent (AE)	2.60 - 3.39
2	Less Extent (LE)	1.80 - 2.59
1	Least Extent (LstE)	1.00 - 1.79

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. The Extent of Readiness of the Teachers in the Implementation of the Performance-Based Assessments

Items	Meam	VI
1. I studied authentic performance tasks.	4.14	GE
2. I designed authentic performance tasks.	4.03	GE
3. I saw how authentic performance tasks were being administered by my co-teachers.	4.02	GE
4. I took professional education courses/subjects that discuss authentic performance tasks.	4.15	GE
5. I designed authentic performance tasks during my college days.	3.98	GE
6. I observed authentic performance tasks during my field study courses.	4.22	VGE
7. I used authentic performance tasks during my practice teaching.	4.18	GE
8. I have attended workshops, training, or orientations on the use of authentic performance tasks.	3.8	GE
9. I have read handouts, modules, guidelines, and other related materials on authentic performance tasks.	4.03	GE
10. I have been given examples of authentic tasks that I can use in my lessons.	4.06	GE
General Weighted Mean	4.06	GE

Table 1 shows that the teachers' extent of readiness in implementing of performance-based assessments is Great Extent with a general weighted mean of 4.06. It confirms the assumption that the teachers are ready to implement the performance-based assessments. As soon as the Guidelines on the Assessment and Rating of Learning Outcomes, more commonly known as the Knowledge,

Process, Understanding, and Product/Performance (KPUP) Grading, was issued in DepEd Order No. 73, s. 2012, schools, administrators, and school organizations, both in public and private institutions, immediately geared towards the changes through offering, welcoming, and involving seminars and training being held in and out of their respective campuses and even in and out of their respective cities/municipalities and province to be updated.

Furthermore, as evident in the highest-ranked items in the table, the readiness of the teachers is greatly attributed to their practice teaching experiences and Professional Education courses and lessons taught in Higher Education Institutions that are taking the initiative to expose education students and student teachers into authentic education during their years in tertiary education. Colleges, universities, and cooperating basic education institutions, usually public schools, where practice teaching and field studies are being held, train and prepare future teachers for authentic performance assessments mandated by the Department of Education Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment, so they will be ready to apply them when they enter the real world and profession of teaching.

As proven by Davis et al. (2016), pre-service teachers' success on performance-based assessments is impacted by three factors, namely: personal preparation, mentor's knowledge/expertise, and candidate support. With the emergence of the Outcome-based Education (OBE) in colleges and universities and in anticipation of the K to 12 reforms on classroom assessment and grading that require performance tasks to be integral bases of achievement, education students are trained to gear towards authentic performance-based assessments early on.

Still, it is shown that more training and workshops wherein teachers will be asked to utilize performance-based assessments can enhance teachers' readiness and further equip them with more beneficial knowledge and competencies in designing performance tasks. Teachers should continuously be trained and ready for any challenges in the design and implementation of performance tasks. Numerous activities and required teaching documents focusing on standardized and periodical tests and teaching loads of teachers, including leadership and participation in academic, co-curriculum, and extra-curricular clubs and activities, are the factors that limit seminars and workshops that can be provided within a year.

Nevertheless, compared to the findings of Plata (2013) that many schools find systemic reform difficult to implement as there are many factors, including stakeholders, that hinder the initiative, the present study reveals a

huge improvement. In the implementation of the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum, specifically authentic performance-based assessments, different stakeholders, most importantly teachers, begin to embrace and reinforce the implementation of performance assessments with the support of Higher Education Institutions, partner schools, and training-workshop providing bodies, such as professional organizations and associations where private schools are encouraged to register.

Most significantly, the data appear to be far different from the findings of Rosaroso and Nelson (2015) that teachers are reluctant to change because they have not fully internalized, prepared for, and accepted the philosophy of authentic assessments because of the challenges and difficulties in implementing them. Through the efforts of education colleges, school administrators, and teacher-trainers, teachers become more ready to plan, design, and administer authentic performance tasks to their 21st-century students.

Table 2. The Extent of Administrative Support to the Implementation of the performance-based assessments in terms of Supervision and Assistance

Items	Mean	VI
1. Comment on performance tasks.	4.27	VGE
2. Give suggestions for performance tasks.	4.38	VGE
3. Allow teachers to design performance tasks	4.31	VGE
4. Allow teachers to plan performance tasks.	4.45	VGE
5. Support the design of performance tasks.	4.32	VGE
6. Monitor the administration of performance tasks.	4.26	VGE
7. Help teachers come up and improve the design of performance tasks	4.25	VGE
8. Improve the plan of performance tasks.	4.65	VGE
9. Build a good relationship and communication with me for the administration of my performance tasks.	4.22	VGE
10. Maintain a good relationship and communication with me for the administration of my performance tasks.	4.18	VGE
General Weighted Mean	4.33	VGE

Table 2 shows that the extent of administrative support in terms of supervision and assistance in implementing the performance-based assessments is Very Great Extent with a general weighted mean of 4.33. This means that the administrators, including the Principal and coordinators, greatly supervise and assist the teachers in implementing performance-based assessments, confirming the assumption of the study.

School administrators allow teachers to plan their performance tasks and

improve their performance-based assessment plans and designs by providing helpful suggestions and recommendations. Through these efforts, the administrators ensure that the implementation of the recommended model is effectively developing the students' higher-order thinking skills and the competencies of the 21st century and, most especially, to prepare them for the Outcome-based Education in college that yields knowledge, skills, values, and attitude necessary for the workforce, especially to their chosen profession.

This supports the findings of Choi (2017) that teachers' implementation of these assessment reforms should be supervised and focused on since they were noted to be struggling in adapting to changes and the implementing aspects herewith. Thus, instead of merely mandating the use of the model, increasing teachers' determination and willingness will lead to a deeper level of implementation. School administrators use their own experiences and observations to assist teachers by sharing their ideas and suggestions to the teachers' tasks and supported to plan on their own.

Furthermore, the data are in line with the findings in the study of Potter et al. (2017) that the implementation and the strategies of the teachers in scaffolding and supporting the students in their needs in the entire duration of the task completion must be thoroughly monitored and supervised by instructional leaders, including but not limited to the School Principal, to explain variations in students' achievement of the objectives and higher-order thinking skills.

However, the finding is somewhat contradictory to what Arar (2014) revealed that the perceptions and expectations of the teachers and staff for a school leader, especially for a deputy-principal are to communicate well with staff; be able to listen, contain and absorb; have a strong and charismatic personality, and be modest and accepted by all. This is the case because administrators greatly focus on reinforcing that building and maintaining a good and constant interpersonal relationship and communication can sometimes be overlooked. Notwithstanding, even though interpersonal relationships and communication are the least-ranked items, these aspects still garner a Very Great Extent evaluation, which implies that it is only a minor opportunity that all administrators can considerably look into during their supervision and assistance to the said implementation.

Table 3. The Extent of Administrative Support to the Implementation of the Performance-based Assessments in terms of Coaching and Mentoring

Items	Mean	VI
1. Inspire me to design performance tasks.	4.29	VGE
2. Believe in me that I can design performance tasks.	4.42	VGE
3. Encourage me to pursue my preferred performance task ideas.	4.2	VGE
4. Contribute to the development of performance tasks.	4.23	VGE
5. Integrate programs and activities that will benefit performance tasks.	4.31	VGE
6. Encourage the students to participate in performance tasks.	4.38	VGE
7. Support me when I design performance tasks.	4.28	VGE
8. Value my efforts and time in administering performance tasks.	4.35	VGE
9. Give credit to my efforts in designing performance tasks.	4.15	VGE
10. Commend and give recommendations about the design of my performance tasks.	4.22	VGE
General Weighted Mean	4.28	VGE

Table 3 shows that the extent of support to the implementation of the Performance-based Assessments provided by the administrators in terms of coaching and mentoring, as perceived by the teachers, is Very Great Extent with a general weighted mean of 4.28. It reveals that school administrators coach and mentor their faculty members thoroughly to reinforce and strengthen performance-based assessments.

Based on the findings, subject coordinators, instructional leaders, and supervisors help improve student learning and the strength of the instruction by effectively believing in the teachers' capability to design sound performance assessments, encouraging students' activity, and valuing their efforts. Administrators see to it that the plans for performance tasks are being communicated to them by the teachers regularly, so feedback and recommendations can be provided and adjusted based on different contexts, possible strengths and limitations, school policies and initiatives, and a certain complexity that is supposed to challenge students and trigger critical thinking, collaboration, and higher-order thinking skills from applying and analyzing to creating a product, output or performance that will be highlighted and emphasized as accomplishments and efforts of each department and subject area.

According to Lunenburg (2010), Principals improve school initiatives by providing support to teachers; encouraging collaboration with students (and stakeholders); and aligning the curriculum, assessment, and instruction. Giving credit and commendations to teachers' efforts is also another area that supervisors improve. Principals allot time to coach and mentor all the teachers to implement

the performance-based assessments successfully and for the teachers to come up with satisfactory performance assessments for their students.

Notwithstanding, the result opposes the findings of Ayeni (2012), revealing that the least performed supervisory roles by Principals and Vice-principals for quality assurance are providing regular and constructive feedback to teachers after the monitoring and evaluation of lessons, providing feedback on students' academic achievement, and reviewing students' works with teachers and stakeholders. Most of the Principals' and Vice-principals' accorded attention is spent on monitoring teachers' and students' attendance, teachers' preparation of lesson notes, and adequacy of the scheme of work. The time that should be allotted for coaching and mentoring teachers in designing tasks can be used for other basic duties, such as attendance, lesson, and work scheme checks.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were drawn from the study, (1) the extent to which the teachers are ready to implement performance-based assessments is great. They observe administered authentic tasks in their field study courses, use authentic performance tasks during practice teaching, and take professional education courses/subjects in college that prepares them for its implementation.

The school administrators provide a great extent of support to implementation in terms of supervision and assistance, especially in allowing teachers to design their performance tasks and improve them by giving suggestions to formulated plans.

The extent of support provided by the administrators in terms of coaching and mentoring is also very great. The administrators believe in the teachers' capability, encourage activity and participation, and value their efforts to implement performance-based assessments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anchored on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were derived, (1) enriched trainings, seminars, and workshops may continually be conducted for the teachers based on the noticeable challenges to ease and strengthen the implementation. Practices on authentic assessments that the teachers acquired from their college and pre-service teacher training can be contextualized and adapted to improve the implementation in Basic Education.

The school administrators and instructional leaders may continue providing a very great extent of supervision and assistance to the teachers in implementing the performance-based assessments. In the process, maintaining good communication and relationship with all the academic community members is an integral factor towards the success of school initiatives.

The school administrators and leaders may still further improve the coaching and mentoring practices by giving more credit, independence, and commendations to the teachers' performance task designs. Nevertheless, the very great extent to which supervisors give suggestions and encourage participation shall be sustained and adopted by administrators in different institutions.

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