

Philosophical Orientation and Performance in Instruction among Directors and Faculty Members of Palawan State University

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Abstract - This is a descriptive-correlation study on the philosophical orientation of the campus directors and faculty members of the College of Community Resources Development south campuses and their respective demographic profiles and performance in instruction. The study involved 7 directors and 57 faculty members. Their respective students assessed their philosophical orientation as well as performance in instruction. The directors and faculty members likewise made a self-assessment of their philosophical orientation. Faculty members assessed themselves to be having eclectic, realistic, and existentialist philosophies. The students found that most of their faculty members are holding an existentialist philosophy. Using the paired-difference test, the study further revealed that there is no significant difference in the personal assessment of the faculty members of their philosophical orientation and that of students' assessment. The students' assessment of the faculty members' philosophical orientation significantly relates to their performance in the areas of commitment and teaching for independent learning. Finally, the

study revealed that the philosophical orientation of the faculty members is significantly related to the philosophical orientation of their director.

Keywords - philisophical orientation, independent learning, existentialist philosophy

INTRODUCTION

The teacher occupies a strategic and unique place in the society in general and in educational system in particular for they are the molders of the youth of the next generation since the very essence of teaching is to shape the minds, the hearts and the future of the learners. They also exert every effort in strengthening the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for the learners to become productive, useful, and law-abiding citizens of our country. In a nutshell, teachers are duty bound for the total development of the learners in all aspects of learning.

In view of the above, teachers must possess necessary knowledge and skills, and should be able to transmit that knowledge and skills to the students. They need to have a “world-view” that will give them a basis for making decisions in the execution of their profession as a teacher. Their “world-view” enables them to give students a unified view of the universe in which they live and to make them more critical, thus sharpen their ability to think clearly and precisely. It is, therefore, but fitting for teachers to have a world-view or a philosophy that will make them become extensively aware of their own life and work, and makes them more dynamic, discriminating, critical and mentally alert in fighting against the challenges posted by the future. Education alone does not make a teacher, a teacher.

To enhance such role of effectiveness and efficiency in the classroom, mentors and school administrators must be properly guided with a system of philosophy of teaching in the course of their service.

To do these, the teachers need to be guided by the philosophy of education, which will direct them in the realization of such principles. As cited by Tulio (1999) a philosophy of education is extremely important to all those who intend to enter the teaching profession. In fact, she also states in her book that a philosophy of education could offer insight that clearly demonstrates the very essence of the

art of teaching to further strengthen the skills of the learners who are entrusted to their care and safe keeping. Bilbao et al., (2006) when they revealed that teachers could influence a lot the people whom they work with especially their learners, supported her concept. They further stress that their philosophy in life and their philosophy in education will serve as their “window” to the world and “compass” in the sea of life.

The main point in this study is to determine what philosophies directors and faculty members of PSU CCRD South campuses embrace. The researcher believes that teachers and administrators should be equipped with a background on educational philosophies especially those who are in the field of teaching. One can not be an effective teacher in this fast changing world if he/she does not have a meaningful philosophy that attempts to determine what kind of teaching practice one should lead. It is in this light that the researcher was motivated to conduct this study.

Specifically, the researcher sought to determine the philosophical orientations of the Palawan State University-College of Community Resources Development South directors and faculty members. Since Extramural Studies Centers in Southern Palawan are geographically near each other and to the main campus, they may be practicing a common philosophy. Based on the result of the 2006 Licensure Examination for Teachers, Extramural Studies Centers in Southern Palawan have a higher percentage of passing compared to that of the Extramural Studies Center in Northern Palawan. The researcher assumes that the philosophical orientations of the directors and faculty members have something to do with this performance. CCRD South will serve as a pilot study on the relationship of philosophical orientation of directors and faculty members to their performance in instruction so that further study will be done all over Palawan State University. The researcher further believes that as an educator, philosophical orientation of education has something to do with his/her performance in instruction in the four areas: commitment, knowledge of the subject matter, teaching for independent learning, and management of learning.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to determine the philosophical orientation of the directors and faculty members of the PSU-CCRD South and how this orientation has some relationship on performance in Instruction. Specifically, the following objectives are pursued:

1. To determine the demographic profile of the directors and faculty members in terms of personal characteristics, educational background, and length of teaching experience;
2. To describe the philosophical orientation of the directors and faculty members;
3. To determine the relationship between philosophical orientations of faculty members and directors with their demographic profile.
4. To describe how students assess the philosophical orientation of the faculty;
5. To compare the assessments made on the philosophical orientation of the students with that of faculty;
6. To assess the performance of the faculty in instruction in the four areas: a. Commitment; b. Knowledge of the Subject Matter; c. Teaching for Independent Learning; and d. Management of Learning;
7. To determine the relationship between the philosophical orientation as assessed by the faculty and students and performance in instruction; and,
8. To determine the relationship between the philosophical orientations of the directors with their respective faculty.

FRAMEWORK

Teachers are considered important elements in the teaching-learning process. It is beyond argument that the teacher and the learner are the critical “thread and ties” to the lifelong search for knowledge. They are responsible in translating and implementing the educational objectives into functional and valuable learning experiences for the students. Their most important responsibilities are to plan and direct the activities of the students, which will result in learning. Success of the learners depends largely on the quality of teachers who are the key

factors in the teaching learning process. It has always been believed that a good and effective teacher is one who knows his craft - one who has a vast knowledge of the subject he handles, coupled with various methodologies and guided with his philosophies that ensure learning is taking place (Forbes, 2002).

Philosophy is applicable to all people whatever their professions are, but most of all educators need this much. The personal philosophy of teachers serves as their “road map” to become an effective teacher because it reflects their own values and philosophy about teaching. It is through philosophy where teachers show their reasons why they teach, what they teach and how one should teach (Bilbao et al, 2006).

The concept of philosophy denotes a cluster of meanings, which naturally differs among different individuals. Splitter, et al., (1995) defined philosophy as a search for a general and comprehensive view of nature or doctrine of values that justifies one’s beliefs. It is likewise an attempt to give a universal explanation of the nature of things, and a critical explanation of human life experience to discover meaning and possibilities in order to be in the service of the total human growth. For Calderon (1999), philosophy of education is a point of view that provides a logical, rational, and valid basis for education effort and criteria for the selection of a sound educational practice. This likewise serves as a guide in the performance of duties as teacher. Thus, it can be said that a philosophy of education provides guidelines in the formulation of educational policies and programs and in the construction of curricula. It also provides direction toward education where all efforts should be exerted, theories in education which may be tested for their effectiveness and efficiency, and norms are established for setting standards and for evaluation purposes.

In this study, philosophy dealt with what a teacher believes in as he or she carries out the teaching tasks. Such beliefs are manifested in his/her practices in dealing with the student and facilitating learning.

Developing a personal philosophy is important for an educator and administrator because one’s philosophy in life and way of thinking about education account for their unique teaching style, educational decision making, and interaction with learners. As teachers and administrators, the decisions made in the classrooms have an impact on the students’ lives and contribute to reshaping schools, families,

universities, and learners. This is supported by Meyers and Meyers (1995) who viewed that a personal philosophy of education involves clarifying educational issues, justifying educational decisions, interpreting educational data, and integrating this understanding into the educational process. They further clarified that a philosophy of education is a foundation of teaching.

Philosophy in education contributes a lot in the effectivity and efficiency of teaching for it serves as their guide in their course of teaching. Effective and efficient teachers help improve the performance of instruction in an institution. According to Ganapin (1996), instruction undertakes the institution's formal education. Since at the very heart of effective instruction is an effective teacher, therefore, he/she should exert every effort in helping her/his pupils acquire knowledge and skills, and attitudes necessary for them to become productive, useful, and law-abiding citizens of our country. He/she is also responsible in the character-building, valuing, mental development, social and cultural values, emotional and psychological stability and spirituality of his/her learners.

On the other hand, Forbes (2002) cited the EDCOM findings that raising the quality of instruction is constrained by the incompetence of many public schools teachers. Deficiencies exist at the pre-service and in-service training stages of teacher education. This is supported by Gunzenhauser (2006), in his research studies that high-stake testing may lead to a default philosophy of education that holds in high regard a narrow bundle of knowledge and skills. He further explained that a default philosophy is defined as the vision of education that results from a lack of reflective, engaged dialogue among educators and school communities about their goals and practices which resulted to philosophies of education which are becoming harder to articulate and implement. When the default philosophy of education dominates in school, possibilities for improving educational reforms and innovations are limited.

Traquena (2002), as cited by former DECS Secretary Isidro Cariño emphasized that on the basis of the constitutional mandate, "We should formulate a philosophy of education that would reflect the kind of society we want to build. Our philosophy must be rooted in our culture and anchored on our values and beliefs as a people."

Therefore, in order to enhance the role of effectiveness and efficiency, the classroom mentors and school administrators must be properly guided with the system of philosophy of teaching in the course of their teaching service. Traquena (2002), found out that the performance of teachers in the elementary grade level of the Division of Lucena City is affected by their philosophical orientation, particularly in the areas of classroom management, teaching methods, knowledge of the subject, leadership and relationships with students and fellow teachers. He also concluded that because of the background on the philosophy of education, there is teamwork among school administrators and teachers, especially in their level of performance which is consistent with the school principles. Teachers and administrators also work together for a common cause or purpose in order to obtain a high standard of education that has improved further their teaching effectiveness and efficiency.

In general, performance in Instruction can be influenced by administrators too. According to Mendoza (1997), the school head or school administrator is the key person in affecting the school performance. As a leader, he/she sets the tone of the school atmosphere to ensure quality outputs.

METHODOLOGY

This study made use of the descriptive-correlational design that looked into relationships between and among variables. This method was used because it systematized the presentation, description, and interpretation of the data gathered. It further described the philosophical orientation of the faculty and correlated with the demographic profile and performance of the faculty members in the four areas of instruction: commitment, knowledge of the subject matter, teaching for independent learning, and management of learning.

The population comprised of seven directors, 57 fulltime faculty members, and a total sample of 1,131 students coming from Balabac Extramural Studies Center, Bataraza Extramural Studies Center, Brooke's Point Extramural Studies Center, Española Extramural Studies Center, Narra Extramural Studies Center, Quezon Extramural Studies Center, and Rizal Extramural Studies Center who evaluated

their respective faculty on their performance in the area of Instruction. The students also made an assessment on their faculty members' philosophical orientation.

Stratified sampling was used to determine the number of students who rated the faculty members.

A researcher-made instrument on philosophical orientation of the directors and faculty members was used for this study. This was responded by the faculty to describe their own philosophical orientation. The same instrument was likewise responded to by the students to describe the philosophical orientation of their faculty. The University's faculty evaluation instrument was used to determine the performance of the faculty in Instruction. The students were the ones who evaluated their faculty's performance in instruction. The evaluation instrument is made up of four components: commitment, knowledge of the subject matter, teaching for independent learning and management of learning.

The questionnaires were the main tools in gathering the data needed to answer the questions in this study. These were given to the seven directors, 57 faculty members. A total of 1,131 students were asked to rate their respective faculty for their philosophical orientation and performance in instruction.

A Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to treat the data gathered for the study. Because of the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), the categorical data were coded as follows: Gender: 1 - Male, 2 - Female; Field of Specialization: 1 - Education, 2 - Arts and Humanities, 3 - Sciences, 4 - Engineering, 5 - Business; Philosophical Orientation: 1 - Idealism, 2 - Realism, 3 - Pragmatism, 4 - Existentialism, 5 - Progressivism, and 6 - Eclectic.

Frequency count and percentage were used to describe data on demographics and philosophical orientation. The mean was used to describe the age, length of teaching experience, and performance of faculty members in instruction

The paired-difference test was used to determine the difference between the personal assessments of students' assessment of the faculty member's philosophical orientation.

Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between demographics and philosophical orientation as well as philosophical

orientation and performance in instruction.

The chi-square test of independence was used to determine the association between categorical variables, such as gender, field of specialization and the philosophical orientation of the faculty and that of directors. The Fisher's Exact Test was used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile. There is more or less the same number of male and female directors. This indicates that the gender of the director is not really a consideration in designating their position.

There are, however, more female faculty members than male. This shows that more females are engaged in the teaching profession than males.

All of the directors are married while there is almost an even number of single and married faculty members in the Extramural Studies Center of the University.

Having a Master's Degree is one of the basic qualifications of any applicant to a tertiary institution, particularly in a State University. In screening the nominees for directorship, one of the considerations is that the candidate must have a Master's Degree, or at the least, has earned units towards it. This is the reason why all directors have gone beyond their baccalaureate degrees. However, only a very small part had earned a Master's Degree.

Though there is a great part of the faculty members who had earned units towards Master's Degree, there is still a sizable number who had not gone beyond their baccalaureate degrees. These faculty members who have not earned even units towards a Master's Degree are newly-hired faculty who had just graduated from their baccalaureate courses. A very insignificant number has earned a Master's Degree.

A considerable number of directors have specialization in arts and humanities and sciences and the rest are distributed along the fields of education, engineering, and business. This indicates that the field of specialization of the Campus Directors is not a consideration in designating them to the position.

For the faculty members though, half of their population is in the field of Education. This is because the population of the Teacher

Education Programs (BEEd and BSEd) is the largest in all the Extramural Studies Centers in the South. This is followed by faculty members whose field of specialization is in Business. There are few faculty members who are in the fields of sciences and engineering.

The directors and faculty members at the Extramural Studies Centers are young.

Likewise the faculty members are younger in terms of the years of service they have rendered in the University compared to the directors.

Philosophical orientation. The directors, though head of the campus, also takes on teaching loads, thus, their philosophy for teaching is likewise being considered. There are two directors who take on a realist philosophy and the other two, an existentialist philosophy. A director who holds a realist philosophy is one who believes that a teacher must be a subject matter specialist, thus having the content areas in the subject being taught highly structured. A director who holds this kind of philosophy likewise believes that the major purpose of education is to promote thinking and understanding of the subject.

An existentialist director, on the other hand, relates with the students openly and helps the students in responsible decision making in order for the student to develop their inner-selves. In the process, an existentialist director would be one to encourage students to develop their own views and accept responsibility for their own actions and decisions.

Directors having these kinds of philosophies would likewise mean that this would be their beliefs even in dealing with the faculty members under their supervision. It is more likely that a realist director would be highly structured in dealing with his/her faculty members and an existentialist director would be one who will allow faculty members to express their thoughts freely.

The two most dominant philosophies of faculty members are eclectic and realism. A faculty member who has an eclectic philosophy is one who has more than one dominant philosophy as assessed by the instrument. It is a combination of two or more philosophies. In this case, it could not be theoretically identified to only one philosophy.

The next dominant philosophy among the faculty members is realism. A realist faculty member is one who believes that as a teacher his/her responsibility is to help students understand the subject matter.

In order to help students understand concepts, a realist teacher would keep his/her lessons structured. For this reason, the teacher would tend to rely mostly on textbooks.

Relationship between philosophical orientation and demographic profile. There is no significant relationship between the demographic profiles of faculty members. It further shows that there is neither relationship between the philosophical orientation and the position.

There is also no significant relationship between the gender of the faculty member and their philosophical orientation. There is no significant association between the faculty members' civil status and philosophical orientation. Thus, it implies that the philosophical orientation of the faculty is not dependent on his/her civil status. It likewise indicates that there is no association between the field of specialization of the faculty member and their philosophical orientation.

Students' assessments of faculty members' philosophical orientation. Most of the faculty members are holding an existentialist philosophy. An existentialist faculty is one who allows students to develop their own views and respects their ideas. Furthermore, as existentialists, the students observe that the faculty members are professionals who help them in responsible decision making in order to develop their inner selves. The students likewise say that the faculty members offer individual contact with them and relate with them openly and honestly. This finding somehow reflects the kind of relationship faculty members has with the students at the Extramural Studies Centers. This further shows that the faculty members are indeed helping students outside of the main campus to develop themselves as a total person.

Difference between the faculty members own assessment of their philosophical orientation and that of students. The philosophical orientations assessed by the faculty members and the students do not show any significant difference, neither do they show any significant relationship. This implies that what the faculty members think about how they behave or act towards their students in terms of how they carry out their teaching task is congruent with how the students perceive their behaviors and actions towards them. Somehow, this can

be a way for the faculty members to validate their own behaviors and actions towards their students.

Performance of faculty in instruction. The area of instruction is made up of four components: commitments, knowledge of subject matter, teaching for independent learning, and management of learning. Except for commitment, the evaluation given by the students to the performance of the faculty members in the evaluation areas is very satisfactory. It is to be noted that the first two evaluation areas pertain to the faculty characteristics and the other two areas pertain to student learning. Commitment involves the effort of faculty members in recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of the students and helping them cope with whatever difficulties the students may be encountering. Commitment is the passion the faculty member gives in acquiring and giving knowledge and skills. It is necessary in reaching the minds and hearts of the learners since they are responsible in developing the minds and souls of their learners by guiding and directing them to reach their goals.

Relationship between philosophical orientation and performance in instruction. The relationship between the performance of the faculty members in instruction and the personal and student assessment of the faculty members' philosophical orientation were determined using the Pearson Correlation. Results show that there is a significant relationship between the performance of the faculty members in the commitment area as well as in teaching for independent learning and the philosophical orientation as assumed by students. Since the relationship is positive, it signifies that faculty members' performance in the areas of commitment and teaching for independent learning is most likely influenced by the existentialist philosophical orientation. In this study, since the relationship is positive, it signifies that a faculty member who has an existentialist philosophy would most likely have a high performance in the areas of commitment and teaching for independent learning. The faculty members' personal assessment of their philosophy, on the other hand, has no significant relationship with the performance rating given by the students in any of the areas in instruction.

Relationship between philosophical orientation of directors and faculty. The significant association between the philosophical

orientation of the director and that of their respective faculty indicates that the director, as the head of the Extramural Studies Center, has an influence over what the faculty put into practice as they carry out their teachings tasks. A director who allows students to develop themselves by respecting their ideas will likewise have faculty members who believe the same way.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are advanced: the demographic profile of both directors and faculty members do not influence their philosophical orientation on teaching and learning. Most of the faculty members, as existentialist, allow students to develop their own views and respects their ideas. The faculty members' performance in the areas of commitment and teaching for independent learning is most likely influenced by the existentialist philosophical orientation. It can also be concluded that the director's philosophical orientation has a bearing on the faculty members' philosophical orientation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions made regarding the study, the following recommendations are therefore offered:

1. To the administration, it is recommended that in the recruitment or selection of directors and faculty, a criteria to be considered should be their philosophical orientation.
2. To future researchers, further study on the philosophical orientation of faculty should be made so that there is a baseline data in developing a schools' philosophy that would serve as our guide to meet our goals.
3. It is suggested that faculty members should improve their manifestation of commitment which is characterized by going out of their way in order to help students attain the objectives that have been set in class.
4. A study be undertaken to cover all faculty members in the main campus as well as in the CCRD North.

5. Seminars on philosophical orientation be conducted by the University to make the faculty members as well as administrators aware of their own philosophical orientation and draw on this in order to improve or enhance their teaching.

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