

Proposed Teacher Observation Guide

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Abstract: This study aimed to describe the existing teacher observation tool used by public instructional leaders of DepEd Batangas Province and also determined its effectiveness in evaluating the teaching competence of the elementary teachers. The problems met in the use of the existing observation tool were likewise explored with the end view of developing a teacher observation guide

The study utilized the descriptive research design with researcher-constructed questionnaire as main data gathering instrument complemented by focus group discussion and interviews. Respondents in the study were 236 master teachers, 156 principals, and 44 supervisors from 37 districts, Division of Batangas Province, selected through random sampling. The statistical tools used were frequency, weighted mean, F-test, and Scheffe test.

The findings revealed that the respondents concurred the existing observation tool used to evaluate the teaching performance of elementary teachers which provided the necessary objectives, content, style and organization; reliability and relevance; and rating scale and verbal interpretation. They strongly agreed that the existing observation tool was effective as its capacity to evaluate creative and critical thinking skills, developed higher order or cognitive skills and related competencies of teachers.

Test of hypothesis showed the three groups of respondents did not differ in their assessments as regards to objectives and content of the evaluative tool, while there were significant differences in their assessments on the tool's style and organization, reliability and relevance, and rating scale and verbal interpretation.

On the other hand, problems cited in the use of the observation tool were provision of space for the mean percentage score in the class level for competence; specified academic achievement of the class including subject difficulty/specialization; and no means of verifications (MOVs) for each rating per criterion. On the basis of the findings, a teacher observation guide was proposed to help instructional supervisors to effectively evaluate the teaching competence of elementary grades teachers.

It was recommended that the proposed teacher observation guide to be used in evaluating teaching performance be subjected for further review for enhancement prior to implementation. Proper consultation among instructional supervisors, looking into the individual components of the observation tool may also be conducted to address the problems met. Lastly, similar studies may be conducted on other criteria to determine the effectiveness of the observation guide for teachers.

Keywords: teacher observation guide

1. Introduction

Education serves as the training ground from which each individual is honed to be successful and be developed into

becoming a holistic person and to do what his talents particularly suit, in such a way as to be beneficial for the whole social group. To achieve this, quality education is the road educators take towards improvement of learners' lives. It is directly linked to the quality of instruction in the classroom. Thus, teachers play as major force in the educational system who are in the driver's seat to guide and mold them.

Teachers are considered the most crucial persons in implementing all educational reforms, therefore, their academic qualifications, knowledge of the subject matter, competence and skills and their commitment are recognized to have effective impact on the teaching-learning process. Being the key educational players, they are primarily responsible in solving difficulties the students meet in the learning process. To monitor this, the teachers' performance is evaluated four times per year depending to ensure that the needs of the learners are met. Their performance as to class management, organizational skills, communication abilities, student atmosphere and overall class climate are all taken into account. Performance evaluations are designed to be most significant part of a teacher's professional file. These are expected annual process for all teachers and perceived to enhance their instructional performance as prescribed in DepEd Order 42, series 2017 commonly known as national Adaption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers.

The No Child Left Behind emphasis on teacher quality and its relationship to learners' achievement has made teacher evaluation an area of increased concern for today's 21st century leaders. As teachers are the key players who bring instruction in the classroom alive, they serve as lighted torch toward the journey in long-life learning via instructional supervision (IS). If teachers are the vehicles where the children ride to reach the destination in learning a concept, instructional supervision is the fuel that helps the vehicles in the continuous delivery of the lessons translated into activities for meaningful experiences of the learners. The activity-engagement in the classroom facilitated by the teacher is documented in the instructional supervisory tool for teachers where teaching performance behavior is rendered through the employed techniques and methodologies suited for the concepts taught and is measured by the principals and supervisors including the master teachers who are called instructional leaders.

The bottom line of all these then, are the steps which bring together the three groups of workforce towards the common goal of providing a laboratory-life in the classroom for learners'

wide-long experience. The acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude (KSA) development among learners is the overall target of providing quality instruction supported by classroom observation.

Observations then, play a major role in any comprehensive teacher evaluation system. It is critical that the system help paint a fair and accurate picture of teachers' strengths and development areas in the classroom. Although the implementation of observation criteria and tools ultimately matters more than their design, a better design makes it more likely that they will achieve the desired results. Teacher performance evaluation plays a key role in educational personnel reform, so it has been an important yet difficult issue in educational reform. Previous evaluations on teachers failed to make strict distinction among the three dominant types of evaluation, namely, capability, achievement, and effectiveness. Moreover, teacher performance evaluation is usually restricted to task performance, neglecting contextual performance. Numerous problems associated with the evaluation of teachers have been cited, including lack of agreement on what constitutes good teaching, an emphasis on accountability rather than improved performance, limited feedback, and low benefit to teachers as a means for improving instruction.

With this matter on hand, efforts to improve the technical quality of evaluation systems over the past have not produced evidence of improved teaching and increased student achievement. Thus, newer thinking treats teacher evaluation as an organizational problem that includes improving school climate, having the administrator become an instructional leader, and building links between school improvement, professional development, teacher evaluation and student learning.

On this regard, the government provides reforms to support the Department of Education's (DepEd) target of improving learning outcomes in the different disciplines and level of achievements of the school children. This is to help address the besetting condition in the organization as a whole. The three sub-offices, namely, the Schools Division Office (SDO), Schools Governance and Office Division (SGOD) and the Curriculum Implementation Division (CID), work for the welfare of the learners in the school. Its bottom line is for improved performance of both the teachers and pupils in the classroom by targeting in the Office Performance Commitment Result-Based, the most important Key Result Area (KRA) which reinforces workforce delivery of services most particularly on instruction.

This reform in the organization intends to meet the expected outcome of attaining quality basic education. This is done through the institutionalization of standard-based reform in the offices and individual personnel in learning organizations as per DepEd Order 2, s. 2015 which covers the guidelines in the Establishment of Result-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) in the Department of Education.

In this view, the authorities have aligned the office plans and

commitment to help increase overall performance of the organization. The new performance-based system as per position competency profile has given well-defined duties and responsibilities, specifically to the instruction curriculum. These authorities whom the office put in-charge for enhanced instructional activity engagements, safeguard the learning opportunity in public schools toward the workplace' directed objectives for instructional reforms.

Conversely, the alarming results of the NAT and the number of poor readers in 607 public elementary schools have provided the researcher the initiative to seek the root cause of below performance level of learners. As an instructional supervisor whose main function is to provide technical assistance on the said task, she has noted the relevance of instruction and the tool that the system has utilized in measuring the teacher competence. Currently, part of the educational reform in advancement on instruction is the utilization of instructional supervisory tool incorporated in DepEd Memorandum 196, s. 2012, otherwise known as Monitoring of Grades 1 and 7 Classes of the K to 12 Program. The form is called Instructional Supervision Form 3A/CB-PAST Form 3A. It is used as a tool for evaluating the behavioral performance of the teacher in the different learning areas and grade levels, Grade I to Grade 12.

Considering the series of innovations in the basic education curriculum, methods, strategies and the like which comprise instructional development, the indicators formulated in the teacher observation tool for instructional competence have lagged-behind in the needed factors which contribute to the meaningful classroom assessment on teaching-learning. The type of learners in the 21st century is called the millennials whose behavior is different from the young learners of past decades. The assessment tool for instruction which has been formulated six years ago and which has been actively utilized by the instructional leaders in the field has an important message relayed to the authorities in the educational system. It necessitates revisiting for alignment to the present call for reform toward instructional advancement to new directions in learning the 21st century skills.

Experts in the Curriculum Implementation Division (CID) group who are called the instructional supervisors specifically, the education program supervisors (EPSs), public schools district supervisors (PSDSs) and the master teachers (MTs) conduct classroom observation based on the needs gathered from the class data standing on the different learning areas including the NAT results and reading ability of the class members which the instructional supervisors analyze. The rating of 0 to 4 where 0 is the lowest and 4 is the highest is rated by the latter to describe the teaching-learning engagement between the teacher and the pupils. Its utilization has opened an opportunity for the researcher to analyze the bearing it provides to the different types of learners engaged in the learning areas/subjects per grade level.

By following the directions provided in the observation tool and looking closely at indicators and final rating at the end of

the observation, the tool is to be left to the teacher after both parties affix each of the signatures. It signals agreement on the observed performance of the teacher where the only description by the observer is the equivalent verbal interpretation of highly proficient for 4, proficient verbal rating for 3, basic is equivalent to numerical rating of 2, and for below basic while for not observed is 0 as the prescribed rating.

An instructional supervisory tool serves as guide to both parties involved in instruction. The bearing it gives to the teacher upon receiving the rating in a subject observed, provides a blurred picture on the level of competence as written in the tool because the rating scale per se lacks specific aspect to exhibit per indicator under a certain domain. The teacher is left alone having with her the signed supervisory tool with the numerical and descriptive rating but no significance because its meaning is implied or not clearly described as to the interface documents or key performance evidences. There are no means of verification which give reasons for the teacher receiving a grade of 3 or proficient as the adjective that describes the rating.

On the other hand, the supervisor who observes the teacher could not as well give justification to the average rating given to the latter because the tool lacks documented information based on the observed performance as to the standard for quality, efficiency and timeliness over the demonstrated behavior of the classroom players for instructional development.

The gaps on the existing tool noted by the researcher as an instructional supervisor in the Division of Batangas for almost 12 years gave her the utmost desire to study the existing instructional supervisory tool for public elementary teachers with the end view of developing an innovative instrument to evaluate teachers' capability as educators. From this concern came the rationale of framing and enhanced teacher observation guide for better evaluative purpose of teachers' competencies.

2. Objectives

This study aimed to evaluate the existing teacher observation tool used by public instructional leaders of DepEd Batangas Province with the end view of developing an enhanced observation guide for public elementary grades teachers. The study evaluated the existing observation tool in terms of objectives, content, style and organization, reliability and relevance, rating scale and verbal interpretation. Moreover, the study assessed the effectiveness of the observation tool in evaluating the teaching competence of the instructional leaders specifically, the supervisors, school heads and the master teachers. It likewise considered the problems met in the utilization of the existing observation tool.

The significant differences in the responses of the three-groups of respondents in the description of the existing observation tool were also noted and analyzed in the study. A teacher-observation guide was proposed as an output of the study.

3. Methodology

The study employed the descriptive method of research. with a set of questionnaires as the main data gathering instrument administered to a sample of 236 master teachers, 156 principals and 44 supervisors from 37 districts in the Division of Batangas, selected through random sampling and served as research respondents. Interview and focus group discussion were used to substantiate the responses to the questions and validate the findings. The instrument was validated by the experts in the field of education and reliability process was also undertaken prior data gathering which used percentage, weighted mean, F-Test and Scheffe-Test for analysis and interpretation.

4. Results and discussion

A. Description of the existing observation tool

1) Objectives

Results showed respondents strongly agreed on its presence and function as shown by the composite means of 3.57, for the principals 3.54 and 3.48 for the supervisors. These were substantiated with the assessments of teachers on the provision of set of objectives in the conduct of classroom observation that were specific, measurable, attainable, result-oriented and time-bounded (SMART) with highest weighted mean of 3.82; while the principals and supervisors, strongly agreed that the evaluation tool provided holistic development of the learners reflected in weighted means of 3.81 and 3.84, respectively.

On the other hand, the objective on inclusion of a set of target learning area as the basis for the conduct of observation was disagreed on by the three groups of respondents citing it to be least provided in the existing tool which obtained weighted means of 2.38, 2.46 and 1.89, respectively.

2) Content

The three-respondent groups as respondents expressed their agreements on the content of the existing observation tool for teachers as noted in the composite means of 3.04, 3.09 and 3.11, respectively. However, disagreements between the master teachers and the principals were evident reflected in weighted means of 1.45 and 1.43, respectively on that the content had preliminary procedure for the involved workforce in the observation assessed the lowest in rank by the respondents. The same item was rated lowest by the group of supervisors evidently show in weighted mean of 1.50 indicating disagreement.

3) Style and organization

The respondents agreed on the style and organization of the observation tool as shown in the highest means of 3.53, 3.60 and 3.57, respectively. On the other hand, the three-respondent groups disagreed that the tool's procedure was comprehensively enumerated which garnered the lowest rank expressed in weighted means of 1.66 for teachers, 1.49 for principals and 1.45 for supervisors.

4) Reliability and relevance

The respondents agreed on the reliability and relevance of the

existing observation tool for teachers' evaluation was relevant and reliable. as revealed in the means of 3.66 for teachers, 3.79 for principals and 3.89 for supervisors. However, the master teacher-respondents disagreed that there was an application of formula in the attainment of the outcome of observation as whole, with lowest weighted mean of 3.73; similarly, principal-respondents showed disagreement that there was a provision of data on the level of performance behavior of teachers as revealed on the lowest weighted mean of 2.17 while for the supervisors strong disagreement was cited on that to be least provided was to the identification of relevant elements in the exhibition of performance behavior, lowest weighted mean of 1.09.

5) Rating scale and verbal interpretation

The highest mean of 3.69 for the master teachers divulged their strong agreement on the rating scale and verbal interpretation of the existing observation tool for teacher's evaluation while 3.79 for the principals and 3.73 for supervisors.

Lowest rated feature of the tool was that it has means of verification for each rating scale agreed upon by the teacher-respondents expressed in weighted mean of 2.30. However, this was disagreed on by the principals and supervisors as manifested in weighted means of 2.31 and 2.07, respectively.

B. Effectiveness of the existing observation tool

The teachers, principals and supervisors concurred strongly that the existing tool was effective as it facilitated creative and critical thinking skills that develop higher order or cognitive learning as exhibited in the given lowest weighted means of 2.32, 2.29 and 1.91, respectively.

The teachers strongly agreed on the effectiveness of the existing observation tool while the principals and supervisors both agreed on it as evidently shown on the composite means of 3.33 and 3.20, respectively.

C. Differences in the assessments by the respondents

No significant differences were noted in the assessments among the three-respondents on the existing observation tool as to its objectives and content which registered F-values of 1.220 and 1.090 with p-values of 0.296 and 0.337 which were higher than the set .05 level of significance leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

On the other hand, significant differences were affirmed in the assessments on the style and organization, reliability and relevance, rating scale and verbal interpretation of the observation tool exhibited in f-Values ranging from 4.406-13.834 with corresponding p-values ranging from 0.000-0.13, thus, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

D. Problems met in the use of the existing observation tool

Results showed that foremost problems met in the use of the existing observation tool was on provision of space for the mean percentage score in the class level for competence; academic achievement of the class including subject

difficulty/specialization was not specified; and means of verifications (MOVs) for each rating per criterion were not evident, justified in weighted means of 3.68, 3.65, and 3.62, respectively.

E. Proposed teacher observation guide

The proposed teacher observation guide was conceptualized based on the identified weak components of the existing observation tool. Named as observation guide for elementary grades teachers, the enhanced version of the existing tool included sets of specific rubrics to help establish an empirical evidence of association between scores on the tool and outcomes of interest for teachers' improved performance and students' increased achievement.

5. Conclusions

The existing observation tool used to evaluate the teaching performance and behaviors of teachers has the necessary objectives, content, style and organization; reliability and relevance; and rating scale and verbal interpretation. The three-respondent groups strongly agree that the existing observation tool an effectively facilitate creative and critical thinking skills that develop higher order or cognitive learning. The respondents commonly agree on objectives and content of the observation tool, but differ in their assessment on the tool's style and organization, reliability and relevance, and rating scale and verbal interpretation. The most common problems on the use of the tool are on provision of space for the mean percentage score and absence of means of verification for each academic achievement per subject/specialization.

The developed observation guide with sets of rubrics on its observation tool enhanced with appropriate means of verifications with suited means of verifications provides teachers and instructional leaders empirical evidence to objectively evaluate the elementary grade teachers' performance and its impact on student learning.

6. Recommendations

The proposed Teacher Observation Guide for evaluating teachers' teaching performance and behavior may be subjected for further review for enhancement. After which, it may be presented for proper consultation among instructional supervisors looking into the individual components of the observation tool. Consultations with other internal stakeholders may be done to address problems on utilization of the considered tool for enhancement with interests and needs of students as priorities. Similar studies may be conducted working on other criteria to determine the effectiveness of the teacher observation guide.

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