



## Competencies of Teaching-Interns: Basis for a Capacity Building Program for State Colleges and Universities

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### Abstract

This research investigated the competency level of teaching interns and developed a capacity building program for enhancing the competency of the interns. The study was conducted at the Sorsogon State College, Philippines. The critical action research approach was utilized for this study; it also incorporated a descriptive correlation design. Data were gathered through content analysis, observations, and standard validated questionnaires. One hundred and fifty (150) teaching interns were purposively selected from three (3) programs for this study. The overall results revealed that the competency levels of teaching interns before and after the internship were novice and needed further training. The paired samples t-test revealed a significant difference in the competency levels and hence, implies a significant increase in their level of competency after the internship. Overall, a strong positive relationship ( $r = .097$ ) was found to exist between the internship and the competency level of teaching interns; consequently, an internship with a capacity building program for classroom action research is proposed for the state colleges and universities in the Philippines.

### Introduction

Discussions about educational reform and improving the competency of teachers for quality education has been numerous in recent years (Yadav, 2013; Kaur, 2015; Hoesini, 2014; Lugitsch, 2011). National evaluation, program development and training of teachers are known as one of the key elements for educational evolution (Kumar, 2013; Sturmbauer, 2013; Schecker, 2012). This means that teachers need specific content knowledge as well as pedagogical content knowledge for the implementation of school curricula (Kulkarni, 2014; Panda & Tewari, 2009). Both forms of teacher knowledge are crucial for successful learning at

school and thus, a part of professional action competency (Kunter, Baumert, Blum, Klusmann, Krauss, & Neubrand, 2013; Wals, 2012).

O'Neill (2010) reports that an internship program in a Higher Learning Institution (HEI) serves students in a variety of ways. According to the researcher, it benefits students by improving their performance while in college and increases the opportunities for finding a job upon graduation. Mendis & Arachchige (2015) adds that work-based learning experiences are increasingly important for HEIs as students who participate in it tend to increase their employment potential.

Recent research reveal that internship programs

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involve a triangular partnership between students, schools, and industry (Ramakrishnan & Yasin, 2011; Wilton, 2012; Fernald & Goldstein, 2013). Similarly, Parker, Kilgo, Sheets, & Pascarella (2016); Terry & Larry (2007) highlight that an internship can be considered as one of the positive approaches for the HEI to compete for a larger intake of students by promoting a comprehensive curriculum with an attractive Internship Program. A growing body of literature suggests a positive correlation between the internship and the competency of student-teachers (Fernald & Goldstein, 2013; Rothman & Sisman, 2010; Sweitzer & King, 2009; Ehiyazarayan & Barraclough, 2009). It is apparent that HEIs build strong relationships with the industry partners, and this allows students to acquire the latest skills in terms of both hard skills and soft skills in their curriculum. Likewise, industry partners equally benefit from this unique relationship by being a bridge between the HEI and students (Ontiveros, 2010).

In 2017, the Philippines Commission on Higher Education Division (CHED), released the new policies, standards and guidelines for the revised Bachelor of Elementary Education, Bachelor of Secondary Education, and Bachelor of Technical-Vocational Teacher Education curricula Integrated into these teacher education curricula were the revised student teaching program for the experiential learning courses of teaching interns. The Department of Education (DepEd) also responded with the issuance of DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017 which prescribes the national adoption and implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) for the continuing professional development and advancement of teachers (DepEd, 2017). It replaced the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS) issued through DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2009 (TEC & DepEd, 2017).

With the new standards for new teachers as defined in the PPST, it is imperative to determine the performance of the last batch of teaching interns of Sorsogon State College Teacher Education Program enrolled in the teacher education curriculum prescribed through CHED Memorandum Order No. 30, s. 2004 and CHED Memorandum Order No. 52, s. 2007. The initial feedback of the cooperating teachers from the basic education sector on the level of competence of teaching interns vis-à-vis the new descriptors for new teachers in preparation for the full implementation of the new elementary, secondary and technical-vocational teacher education curricula prompted the conduct of this 4 study.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the curricula can be known through the expected performances of the teaching interns as defined in the PPST. It is also important to evaluate the student teaching program of the College of Education to determine opportunities for the continuing professional development of teaching interns, supervising instructors, and cooperating teachers. To this end the hypothesis, "internship program can increase the competency of college teaching interns" was tested.

### **Objective**

This study aims to determine the competency level of the teaching interns of the Sorsogon State College and develop a capacity-building program to enhance their competency during the internship for student-teachers.

### **Conceptual framework**

The independent variable in this study is the internship program for student-teachers, and the dependent variable is the level of competencies of teaching interns. The expected outcome is that the implementation of the capacity building program shall produce competent graduates who can skillfully share their knowledge and model the teaching and learning process.

The term "internship" denotes any temporary work experience involving students, for-profit or nonprofit, to learn while working. For teaching programs, internships are integrated with the students' regular school schedule or during a semester away from school or during the summer break. (Lai, Nalliah, Jutti, Hla, & Lim, 2009; Simpson & Kehrwald, 2010). They involve academic credit or remuneration. Some internships have an academic section and faculty patron. Internship models may vary from school to school and even among departments on campus. Terminology also may vary: Internship may be used interchangeably with field experience. Internships form a tool in education by which colleges and industry offer meaningful, career-related work experience for students and give employers access to a pool of highly qualified and competent personnel. This mutual partnership makes an internship program highly rewarding for both employers and students (Brennan, Corrigan, Allard, Archer, Barnes, Bleakley, & De Bere, 2010; Weible, 2009).

According to Reece (2010); Parker (2012), a student-teaching program is considered as the capstone of the teacher education program. Early field experiences

are a vital part of preparing teachers as it can improve their level of competence. Most teacher educators hold the view that field experience should be integrated into the preparation of future teachers. O'Donoghue & Harford (2010) posit that this requires key attention to the feelings, attitudes, and beliefs of teachers. Naong (2011) explains that student teaching is the most universal component of the teacher preparation experience.

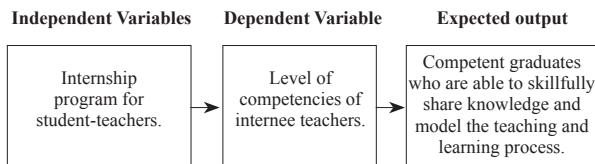


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

## Research methodology

### 1. Population and samples

Sorsogon is a province in the Philippines located in the Bicol Region. It is the southernmost province in Luzon and is subdivided into fourteen municipalities and one city. Its capital is Sorsogon City. The study was conducted at the Sorsogon State College, Philippines. It involved one hundred and fifty (150) participants purposively selected from the following programs: Bachelor in Elementary Education (BEED), Bachelor in Secondary Education (BSED), and Bachelor in Technical and Teacher Education (BTTE).

### 2. Research instruments

Critical action research approach (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010) was utilized in this study. It also employed Descriptive Correlational Research Design. Data were gathered through content literature, survey, and observation. The survey was conducted through a validated questionnaire designed to determine the competency level of the teaching interns along with the 37 descriptors for beginning teachers in the PPST. The questionnaires were rated on a Likert using the following scale: 5 - expert; 4 - advanced, 3 - intermediate, 2 - novice, and 1 - fundamental. It was tested and, then 5 validated by a group of experts from the college of education before administration to the 150 teaching interns of the Sorsogon State College Teacher Education Program in the Province of Sorsogon.

### 3. Data collection

Curricula for different years were analyzed together with educational policies. This was followed by observations of the interns and their supervisors, and a survey of the selected teaching interns. The final stage

was benchmarking with an international seminar-workshop on action research.

### 4. Data analysis

All descriptive data were processed with mean, median, and standard deviation. T-test was used to analyze the significant difference in the means. Pearson r was used to determine the type of correlation that exists between the dependent and independent variables.

## Results

### 1. Content analysis of the existing students' teaching Program

The undergraduate teacher education curricula require teaching interns to undergo internship at DepEd cooperating schools. CMO No. 104 s. 2017 defines an internship as the practical application of classroom learning to the actual regular work environment. An internship is synonymous with practicum, field practice, and on-the-job training but not with an apprenticeship (Licuanan, 2017). The analysis as presented in Table 1 shows the development of the student-teaching program from 1999 to 2017 in terms of the course title, subjects, credit units, prerequisite, teaching strategy, and course requirement (Licuanan, 2017; Neri, 2007). It is imperative to highlight that all of the teacher education curricula from 1999 to 2017 requires the completion of action research during the internship.

Furthermore, the content analysis on the course syllabus and the student-teaching handbook revealed that teaching interns are rated in terms of the completion of the required number of demonstration teaching and submission of a narrative report or student-teachers' portfolio (Digo, 2008).

### 2. Level of competencies of the BEED teaching Interns

The teaching interns' competency levels along with the seven (7) domains and 37 descriptors for new teachers in the PPST were analyzed. Table 2 shows the BEED teaching of interns' competency levels. The average mean ratings of 1.90 and 2.07 for before and after internship respectively reflect that their competency level was a novice. The paired samples t-test revealed a significant difference in the competency level of BEED teaching interns. The pre-internship median was Mean = 1.9, with a standard deviation of S.D. = 0.1, whereas the post-internship median was M = 2.07, with a standard deviation of S.D. = 0.05),  $t = -2.88053$ ,  $p = 0.13817$  at  $p < .05$ .

**Table 1** Content analysis of the existing students' teaching program

Year	Course title	Subjects	Credit units	Prerequisite	Teaching strategy	Requirement
MO No. 11,	Student Teaching	Student teaching	12	All general education, Professional education and majors or specialization courses	Observation and laboratory or clinical experiences	Action research paper
CMO No. 30, 2004	Field study Courses	FS 1		Taken concurrent with the professional education course	Experiential learning	Term paper, Case study, Action research or other forms of research
		FS 2				
		FS 3				
		FS 4				
		FS 5				
		FS 6				
CMO No. 52, 2007	Experiential learning courses	Practice teaching		Professional education courses	Experiential learning	Term Paper, Case study, Action research or other forms of research
		FS 1				
		FS 2				
		FS 3				
		FS 4				
		FS 5				
CMO No. 74, 75, & 78 s. 2017	Experiential learning	FS 1		All professional and major/specialization subjects	Direct observation	Teaching portfolio
		FS 2		All professional and major/specialization subjects	Participation; teaching assistantship	Teaching portfolio; Action research proposal
		Teaching internship		FS 1 & 2	Clinical approach; Mentorship	Teaching portfolio; Completed action research

Note: FS – Field Study

**Table 2** Level of competencies of the BEED teaching interns

No	Domains	Competencies	Mean	S.D.	n	df	t (Comp)	t (Tab)-2T	Decision
1	Content, Knowledge and Pedagogy	Before Practice Teaching	1.90	0.07	7	6	1.69	±2.45	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.98	0.02	7				
2	Learning Environment	Before Practice Teaching	1.73	0.02	6	5	6.64	±2.57	Reject Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.05	0.01	6				
3	Diversity of Learners	Before Practice Teaching	2.12	0.02	5	4	5.72	±2.78	Reject Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.26	0.02	5				
4	Curriculum and Planning	Before Practice Teaching	1.96	0.28	5	4	0	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.06	0.28	5				
5	Assessment and Reporting	Before Practice Teaching	1.96	0.01	5	4	2.74	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.10	0.01	5				
6	Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	Before Practice Teaching	1.83	0.04	4	3	2.05	±3.18	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.00	0.01	4				
7	Personal and Professional Development	Before Practice Teaching	1.82	0.062	5	4	1.73	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.06	0.003	5				

### 3. Level of competencies of the BSED teaching Interns

Table 3 portrays the BSED teaching interns' competency level according to the seven domains of the PPST. The analysis highlighted mean ratings of 2.05 and 2.02 which did not differ significantly for the pre- and post-internship exercises. The paired-samples t-test showed a significant difference in the competency levels before (mean = 2.05, S.D. = 0.08) and after (mean = 2.02, S.D. = 0.02); the internship. The detail results are provided in Table 3 below.

**Table 3** Level of competencies of the BSED teaching interns

No	Domains	Competencies	Mean	S.D.	n	df	t (Comp)	t (Tab)-2T	Decision
1	Content, Knowledge and Pedagogy	Before Practice Teaching	2.01	0.04	7	6	-0.44	±2.45	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.98	0.03	7				
2	Learning Environment	Before Practice Teaching	1.88	0.01	6	5	1.93	±2.57	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.93	0.01	6				
3	Diversity of Learners	Before Practice Teaching	2.26	0.02	5	4	-1.91	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.06	0.02	5				
4	Curriculum and Planning	Before Practice Teaching	2.10	0.05	5	4	-2.23	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.00	0.03	5				
5	Assessment and Reporting	Before Practice Teaching	2.08	0.05	5	4	0.23	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.10	0.01	5				
6	Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	Before Practice Teaching	2.00	0.05	4	3	-1	±3.18	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.98	0.03	4				
7	Personal and Professional Development	Before Practice Teaching	2.00	0.05	5	4	1.09	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.08	0.01	5				

### 4. Level of competencies of the BTTE teaching Interns

Table 4 illustrates the BTTE teaching interns' competency level based on the seven domains of the PPST. The mean ratings before and after the internship were 1.08 and 1.92, respectively. Both means reveal a competency level of a novice. Though both means connote novice competence, the paired-samples t-test however indicated a significant difference in the competency levels before (mean = 1.08, S.D. = 0.06) and after (mean = 1.92, S.D. = 0.06);  $t = -2.21505$ ,  $p = 0.046854$  at  $p < .05$  the student-internship.

**Table 4** Level of competencies of the BTTE teaching interns

No	Domains	Competencies	Mean	S.D.	n	df	t (Comp)	t (Tab)-2T	Decision
1	Content, Knowledge and Pedagogy	Before Practice Teaching	1.80	0.050	7	6	1.72	±2.45	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.93	0.030	7				
2	Learning Environment	Before Practice Teaching	1.67	0.030	6	5	8.00	±2.57	Reject Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.93	0.030	6				
3	Diversity of Learners	Before Practice Teaching	1.98	0.030	5	4	2.06	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	2.12	0.030	5				
4	Curriculum and Planning	Before Practice Teaching	1.72	0.047	5	4	1.12	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.82	0.002	5				
5	Assessment and Reporting	Before Practice Teaching	1.84	0.008	5	4	3.16	±2.78	Reject Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.94	0.003	5				
6	Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	Before PT	1.88	0.009	4	3	0	±3.18	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.88	0.009	4				
7	Personal and Professional Development	Before Practice Teaching	1.7	0.035	5	4	1.73	±2.78	Accept Ho
		After Practice Teaching	1.84	0.003	5				

### 5. Relationship between internship program and teaching interns' competencies

Table 5 below presents the type of relationship between the internship program and the competencies of the teaching interns based on the 7 domains in the PPST. Overall a strong positive relationship was found between internship program and teaching interns' competencies. Nonetheless, the individual programs showed a unique type of relationship. For the BEED, the following types of relationships were observed: Strong positive correlation for Content, Knowledge, and Pedagogy, Diversity of Learners. This implies that the internship program can boost the competencies of teaching interns for Domains 1 and 4. On the other hand, a negative correlation was recorded for Learning Environment, Curriculum and Planning, and Assessment and Reporting.

### 6. The Proposed Innovation Program

Classroom action research is one of the minimum requirements prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education for internship has the potential to help the mentors and the teaching interns reflect on and assess their practices as they aspire for their professional growth and development. The findings on the competency level of teaching interns, minimum requirement for internship, and lack of training program for mentors require a capacity building program to improve the outcome of the internship program. This can be accomplished thru a training program for supervising instructors and cooperating teachers on classroom action

**Table 5** The Relation between Internship and Competency of Interns

No	Domains	BEED Pearson r	Strength of Association	BSED Pearson r	Strength of Association	BTTE Pears on r	Strength of Association
1	Content, Knowledge and Pedagogy	0.79	Strong positive correlation	0.64	Strong positive correlation	0.53	Strong positive correlation
2	Learning Environment	-0.15	Small negative correlation	0.24	Small positive correlation	0.45	Moderate positive correlation
3	Diversity of Learners	0.93	Strong positive correlation	0.15	Small positive correlation	0.19	Small positive correlation
4	Curriculum and Planning	-0.66	Strong negative correlation	2 x 10 <sup>-16</sup>	Small positive correlation	0.02	Small positive correlation
5	Assessment and Reporting	-0.18	Small negative correlation	-0.42	Moderate negative correlation	-0.10	Small negative correlation
6	Community Linkages and Professional Engagement	0.24	Small positive correlation	0.96	Strong positive correlation	-0.59	Small negative correlation
7	Personal and Professional Development	0.00	No correlation	0.42	Moderate positive correlation	0.67	Strong positive correlation

research. The summary of the proposal is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6** The proposed innovation program

Key Findings	Action	Specific Tasks	Responsible Persons	Participants	When and Where	Expected Output
Competency level of teaching interns is intermediate.	Develop an extended Capacity Building Program	Implement training programs to capacitate at least 100 mentors	Resource Persons, Extension Workers, Dean	Supervising Instructors	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter, Sorsogon State College	Classroom Action Research Proposal
Action research is a minimum requirement for internship but was not required for the completion of the course.	for Internship	annually on classroom action research.	Resource Persons, Extension Workers, School Heads	Cooperating Teachers	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter, DepEd Div. of Sorsogon	Classroom Action Research Proposal
No implemented training program for the mentors of teaching interns.						

### Discussion

The content analysis of the existing students' teaching program unmasked gaps on the CHED prescribed minimum standards against the actual and delivered student-teaching curriculum. It was noticed that the completion of action research was not required for the completion of the course. Invariably, the novice competency level of teaching interns could have been improved if the student-teaching program required the completion of action research as a minimum requirement for the completion of the internship. Also, colleges have



no training programs for the mentors of the teaching interns. Hence, the need to develop a capacity-building program for supervising instructors and cooperating teachers on action research was validated by these findings.

On the level of competencies of the BEED teaching interns, the finding depicts a significant increase in the level of competency of the teaching interns. However, the improvement in their level of competency did not shift interns from one level of competency to the other. Implying that a better internship program or training might have the capacity to help the interns become more competent. Spradlin (2009) affirms that the internship has become a progressive treasure for students. The researcher emphasizes that an internship program strengthens the students' technical proficiencies and improves their analytical skills. It offers students an independent, wider context of learning which provides a more effective learning environment than traditional classrooms. Contrarily, the hypothesis was rejected for domain two (2) and three (3); implying that there was no significant improvement in the means of the two (2) domains. Along this line, it could be deduced that internship is not suitable for competency enhancement.

With the level of competencies of the BSED teaching interns, the result implies that the internship program could play a role in improving their competence level in all the seven domains. This finding is consistent with the studies of Haugan, Moen, & Karisdottir (2012) noting that internship program is very essential in teacher education, therefore it should be given considerable attention. The researcher adds that it should not just be a requirement for completion of the teacher education program but it should be a tool ensuring the effectiveness of education programs.

In relation to the level of competencies of the BTTE teaching interns, the finding means that the internship was able to enhance the competency level of the teaching interns, and therefore the hypothesis accepted. This agrees with Hine (2013) who emphasized that action research bridges the gap between research and practice. The researcher asserts that the theoretical components behind action research practice help practitioners appreciate and observe the real classroom setting. Nonetheless, for domains two (2) and five (5), the hypothesis was rejected. It could be inferred that the internship program was not ideal for enhancing Learning Environment and Assessment and Reporting.

The relationship between the internship program and teaching interns' competencies suggests that the use of internship programs might not guarantee an increase in competence of teaching interns for Domain 2, 4, and 5. It is imperative to also mention that there could be other factors associated with these domains that generated the negative correlation. Otara (2014) posits that what marks teachers out as good, is not only their content knowledge and pedagogical skills. It is their commitment to their teaching, their students, and their learning and achievement. According to Otara (2014); Fletcher, Mountjoy, & Bailey (2011), an internship program is an effective way to give training to the student-teachers about the real world of work as it provides an occasion for integrating theory and practice in teaching. The researchers suggest that internship integrated with action research provides internee teachers the chance to critically reflect and improve on their practice. Finally, no correlation was found for Personal and Professional Development. This indicates that intern programs are not good tools for the personal and professional development of teaching interns.

It could be concluded that the competency level of teaching interns before and after the internship was a novice and therefore needed further training. From the analysis of the policies, standards, and guidelines of the student-teaching program, it was discovered that action research was prescribed by CHED as a minimum requirement for the internship, but this was not required in the institutionally approved student-teaching program. Likewise, there were no implemented training programs for the mentors of the teaching interns. Hence, a capacity building program for classroom action research is proposed for integration in the internship program.

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