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Research Article

Problems Encountered by Teachers and the Readiness of Students for National Competency Assessment in Food and Beverage Services

Richin M. Benitez*, Elvis P. Patulin, Romel C. Mutya
For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

This study assessed the problems encountered by teachers and the readiness of senior high school students majoring in Food and Beverage Services (FBS) to take the National Competency Assessment (NCA). The study used a descriptive research design with a survey questionnaire as the primary data gathering instrument. Data were gathered from ten (10) teachers and sixty (60) students in FBS. The study revealed that the teachers observed problems in class participation, test performance, project making, and attendance of the students; they also observed problems in the classroom regarding books and references, tools and equipment, space, and lighting and ventilation. The students agree that they are ready to take the NCA in FBS in terms of preparing the dining room/restaurant area for service, welcoming guests, taking food and beverage orders, promoting food and beverage products, providing food and beverage services to guests, providing room service, and receiving and handling guest concerns. A significant difference among the ratings of the respondents in their readiness to take the NCA was found, and there is a significant relationship between problems encountered by teachers and the readiness of the students to take the NCA. It is generally concluded that the more problems the teachers have experienced, the more the students are not ready to take the national competency assessment. It is recommended that the administrators address the general issues and concerns of the teachers in FBS to deliver the necessary knowledge and skills to their students.

Keywords: Food And Beverage Services, National Competency Assessment, Students' Readiness

Introduction

The senior high school serves as the preparatory level for students before entering college, which consists of various subjects according to their chosen strands under different tracks. These programs develop students through a higher level of teaching, broader lessons, and actual application of learning in real life (Kariya, 2011; Parson, 2017). In the Philippines, the Enhanced Basic Education Act formalized the execution of the K–12 program, which aims to produce holistic graduates with 21st-century capabilities (Cabansag, 2014; Sarmiento & Orale, 2016). These graduates are expected to be equipped for higher education, developing middle-level skills, employment, and entrepreneurship. It is mainly accomplished through one prominent element, the senior high school program (Maghuyop, 2019). The primary goal of the senior high school (SHS) is to generate productive and responsible citizens endowed with fundamental competencies, skills, and values that will enable them to be lifelong learners and job ready.

Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) is a bureau that takes charge of Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and provides education and training opportunities to prepare students and other clients for employment. Additionally, it addresses the need for people currently employed to upgrade or acquire new skills to increase employability and boost production (Syjuco, 2013). The SHS Technical-Vocational Livelihood (TVL) track is composed of specializations in the agriculture and fishery sectors, garments, tourism, health, processed food and beverages, social and community development service, automotive and land transport, construction, electronics, furniture and fixture, metal and engineering, utilities, and information and communications technologies sectors (DepEd Order No. 21, series 2019). The SHS TVL program exposes students to acquiring demonstrable skills and values that could be transformed into financial gains (Brillantes et al., 2019). Thus, it provides students with technical vocational training, skills, and academic know-how to prepare them for the community's needs and the global workplace through highly trained competent teachers.

The competency-based curriculum used in the Strengthened Technical Vocational Education Program (STVEP) aims to reduce the high school dropout rate and the gap between graduates' job skills and the demands of the local economy's labor market. While still in high school, it aims to give pupils TESDA-certifiable competence and skills. Students are given more comprehensive options during and after high school (Andrada, 2008). The Department of Education (DepEd) has placed technical-vocational education on top of its agenda because education means learning the

three R's in the classroom and learning the basic skills for employment. Technical and vocational education skills help high school graduates find gainful employment whether they get a college degree (Labrador, 2008; Lucas et al., 2012).

The TVL tracks are distributed according to the resources available in the area, the student's needs and interests, and the opportunities and demands of the community. However, this objective of DepEd has not been realized in some senior high schools. The students have no choice of what specialization they would like to take up as an elective subject except for Food and Beverage Services because this is the only elective course offered in the said school. The students forced to enroll in this elective subject are hesitant to take the national competency assessment (NCA) since FBS is not their interest and inclination.

The scenario cited above becomes the springboard for the researchers to assess the problems encountered by teachers and the readiness of SHS students specializing in FBS to take the NCA. It determined the extent of the problems encountered by teachers in Food and Beverage Services class as to student factors and classroom factors and the extent the students demonstrate readiness in taking the national competency assessment in FBS.

Literature Review

The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 spells out features of the K to 12 programs in terms of the goals, intentions, outcomes, curriculum, and learning areas. These features need to ensure that students improve better time where the necessary 21st-century outcomes are achieved by the students, including college employment readiness. Assessment plays an important role in ensuring that students have developed 21st-century skills. Assessment in K to 12 becomes more functional and is seen as an integral part of student learning where it allows the teachers to track students' progress and informs the learners, their parents, and their guardians of their progress (Magno & Lizada, 2015). Furthermore, assessments are used to monitor student progress toward curriculum learning standards and the development of 21st-century skills, to encourage self-reflection and personal responsibility among students regarding their learning, and to establish a foundation for the profiling of student performance in these areas. Because of the many critical roles played by assessment, it is described as an essential component of curriculum practice (Akker, 2013). The study by Martin (2019) predicted the chance of SHS students to pass the competency assessment by a TESDA competency assessor.

Adding the SHS levels in basic education provides several pathways for making assessment functional. The present report specifies assessment opportunities in the SHS to better realize appropriate instruction for learners and better scaffold students learning at the classroom and national level. The SHS's assessment level is described as an array covering assessment on an individual level, classroom level, and on a larger scale, such as in the national and international arena. These assessment levels range from entry-level assessments to the classroom, national, and international levels. The array also describes another dimension in terms of accountability. The smaller the scope of the assessment within the classroom, the more specific interventions can be provided for learners. The larger the assessment scale covering national and international levels, the more policymakers are informed to make better decisions on educational development and programs across the country. The smaller the scope of the assessment, the more the teachers and curriculum implementers are accountable for students "progress. The larger the assessment scale, the more policymakers are accountable for creating educational support for assessing achieved competencies (Sharma et al., 2019).

The standard competencies students learn can be assessed using national exams or summative assessments at the end of a school cycle. The basis of the national exam is the standard curriculum that is agreed upon and common for all schools. It is necessary to have a set of national standards to have a common direction on what to teach in schools. Assessment of achievement refers to what students have acquired within the school year, administered towards the end of the school year. These exams either come in the form of national assessments or assessments from private institutions. These exams follow the same targets that come from the curriculum. These targets assessed in the curriculum are considered standards. The government of a country usually administers national assessments through its ministry of education.

As emphasized by Kellaghan and Greaney (2013), national assessments measure and monitor the learning outcomes of a whole education system or defined part of an education system. Usually, the national assessment includes measures of competencies in different subject areas such as English, mathematics, science, social studies, and native language. Usually,

the core subjects are covered in the examination if the assessment is a measure of achievement and what students have learned from the instruction of the curriculum. The assessment serves as accountability for students' progress over time. Through its public schools, the government uses the results of the national assessment to determine how effective the curricular program is, the quality of instruction in schools, decisions on school systems improvement, and further training and programs to be implemented in the senior high schools. The national assessment designed for the senior high school will be a good indicator for implementing the curriculum for the first time. The batch that will graduate for grade 12 in 2018 will be the first product of the new curriculum for the senior high school. The results of their end-of-cycle assessment can provide information on the areas of strengths and improvement in the intentions of the curriculum implemented within six years. Lessons learned will be derived from assessing the first batch of graduates. The assessment results will be used to inform policymakers on the improvement that needs to be made to the senior high school curriculum.

The insights of the authors reviewed in this study show semblance of the present study because these all discussed how ready the senior high school students are to pursue college and take the NCA. The former studies differ from the latter in terms of their scope and limitations because the former discussed the readiness of senior high school students regardless of their tracks and strand, while the latter specifies FBS.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design employing a quantitative method. Descriptive research design provides an association between selected variables and accurately and systematically describes a population, situation, and phenomenon (Dulock, 1993; McCombes, 2019). This design is deemed appropriate to determine the problems encountered by teachers and the readiness of the SHS students in taking the NCA in FBS and determine the significant relationship between the problems encountered and the readiness of SHS students in taking the NCA in FBS.

Respondents

The study respondents were SHS students and teachers in three public schools in Surigao del Norte, Philippines. The schools were selected because they offered preparatory subjects for NCA in FBS, whose strands are HUMSS, GAS, and TVL. The students in HUMSS and GAS are included in the study because they are required to take an elective where FBS is the only available strand in the school and are obliged to take the NCA. A conventional sampling technique was used to recruit sixty students and ten teachers.

Data Gathering Procedures and Ethical Consideration

A certificate from the office of the dean of the graduate studies, superintendents, and school principals was secured before the conduct of the study. Upon approval, researchers sent an invitation, an informed consent form that indicates voluntary participation and roles of the respondents, and a provision to withdraw from the study at any time. A research outline with a copy of the participant's rights and confidentiality protection was also attached to that form. All these were personally given to the respondents. Strict confidentiality was assured to the participants, specified in the informed consent form.

Research Instrument

A survey instrument was used to gather the needed data in the study, consisting of two parts. Part I determined the problems encountered by teachers in teaching FBS as to student and classroom factors. Part I determined the readiness of the SHS students specializing in FBS. For each question, the two groups of respondents expressed their agreement on a four-point Likert-type scale by marking the corresponding number on the scale that best represents their agreement with the question. High scores indicated high agreement (4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree). The survey instrument was reviewed and validated by a panel of experts. Expert's comments and suggestions were considered in the final draft. Pilot testing of the tool was conducted on non-participating students. The test-retest reliability was used, and a 0.83 coefficient was obtained, showing that the instrument is reliable.

Results and Discussion

Problems Encountered by Teachers in Food and Beverage Service Class

Student Factors

The problems encountered by teachers in FBS classes regarding student factors classified into class

participation, test performance, project making, and attendance, are presented in Table 1. Extracted from the survey of teachers, it was revealed that problems encountered by teachers under student factors were dominantly rated as "Observed," with a composite mean of 3.21. Certainly, it can be concluded that teachers agreed that they encountered these problems in FBS class. Test performance got the highest mean of 3.21 which means that teachers have encountered students who do not get better scores and good grades in the formative and summative tests. Teachers also observed that students do not study their lessons regularly in FBS class. On the other hand, class participation and attendance got the lowest mean of 3.21. Although these factors were rated lowest among all the student factors, it is important also to focus on these factors to improve the performance and skills of the students. There should be a space where students share their ideas in the class, volunteer to performtask-related activities and ask questions if there are points that need to be clarified. It is also a must that students attend classes regularly and come to class on time.

These findings are parallel to the study of Estecomen et al. (2019), which profoundly determined the level of national competency performance of the students. The national competencies taken were all on the NC II level of qualifications. The national competency assessment (NCA) is a strategy to create a competent, motivated, adaptable, and innovative workforce (Kassa & Bogale, 2020). In addition, Retnawati et al. (2016) noted difficulties experienced by vocational high school teachers in implementing the assessments.

Table 1. *Problems Encountered in terms of Student Factors*

Student Factor	*Average Mean*	*Verbal Interpretation*	*Descriptive Value*	*Rank*
Class Participation	3.21	Agree	Observed	3.5
Test Performance	3.23	Agree	Observed	1
Project Making	3.22	Agree	Observed	2
Attendance	3.21	Agree	Observed	3.5
Composite Mean	3.21	Agree	Observed	

Classroom Factors

Teachers agreed that they encountered problems teaching FBS in the classroom, as signified by the composite mean of 3.22 with a descriptive value of "Observed" (Table 2). The teacher observed problems in the classroom with the books and references (3.20), tools and equipment (3.26), space (3.18), and lighting and ventilation (3.23). It can be gleaned that tools and equipment have topped the indicated problems, while space ranked the lowest. This means that tools and equipment in FBS class were lacking while teaching the necessary skills and techniques to pass the NCA.

The findings were consistent with the study of Rusiana and Flores (2019), which claimed that several tools and equipment needed to teach TVL were unavailable. The study revealed that the lack of teaching tools and equipment could negatively affect students' learning and performance (Ugbo, 2014). In addition, Akhihiero (2011) concluded that students who are made to learn under poor provisions of infrastructural facilities become half-baked. In addition, Dahlan and Eissa (2015) emphasized the importance of having good lighting because it can improve students' vision and perception and contributes to students' health, comfort, and productivity. Thus, the learning environment has a significant role in determining students' academic achievement and learning (Allen et al., 2015; Berkowitz et al., 2017; Ibem et al., 2017; Wang & Degol, 2016).

Table 2. *Problems Encountered by Teachers in FBS Class as Classroom Factors*

Classroom Factors	*Average Mean*	*Verbal Interpretation*	*Descriptive Value*	*Rank*
Books and References	3.20	Agree	Observed	3
Tools and Equipment	3.26	Agree	Observed	1
Space	3.18	Agree	Observed	4
Lighting and Ventilation	3.23	Agree	Observed	2
Composite Mean	3.22	Agree	Observed	

Readiness of Students in Taking the National Competency Assessment in Food and Beverage Services

The readiness of students to take the NCA in FBS is presented in Table 3 to prepare the dining room/restaurant area for service, welcome guests and take food and beverage orders, promote food and beverage products, provide food and beverage services to guests, provide room service, and receive and handle guests concerns. It can be gleaned that the readiness of students to take the NCA in FBS was dominantly rated as "Prepared," with a composite mean of 3.19. However, the students still need the basic knowledge and competencies in FBS since they agree upon all the indicators as essential skills to learn before taking the NCA. It can be noted further that indicators such as providing room service (3.29), receiving and handling guests' concerns (3.24), and welcoming guests and taking food and beverage orders (3.18) are among the top skills that they must absorb

since these are the things that necessitate them to learn more.

Although the teachers encountered problems in teaching FBS, based on the survey, the students were prepared to take the NCA as indicated in the table. This is supported by the study of Tungol et al. (2018) that teachers and school administrators had prepared the school and students for the TESDA accreditation since the school has prepared its teachers, students, and the school itself through different relevant programs and activities conducted. In addition, this poses a serious question if the K to 12 programs is serious enough in preparing them academically and technically to improve their employability concerning their specialization as one of the promised curricula exit expectations of the K to 12 programs (Galias, 2021).

Table 3. *Readiness of Students in Taking the National Competency Assessment in FBS*

Indicators	*Mean*	*Verbal Interpretation*	*Descriptive Value*	*Rank*
Prepare the dining room/restaurant area for service	3.13	Agree	Prepared	6
Welcome guests and take food and beverage orders	3.18	Agree	Prepared	3
Promote food and beverage products	3.14	Agree	Prepared	4
provide food and beverage services to guests	3.13	Agree	Prepared	5
Provide room service	3.29	Agree	Prepared	2
Receive and handle guests concerns	3.24	Agree	Prepared	1
Composite Mean	3.19	Agree	Prepared	

Table 4 illustrates the difference in respondents' ratings in their readiness to take the national competency assessment. The table shows the significant difference among the respondents' ratings in the readiness of the senior high school students to take the national competency assessment. Revealing the f-critical is less than the f-computed; this establishes a significant difference.

Table 4. *Difference on the ratings of respondents in their readiness in taking the national competency assessment*

Variable	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*	*Decision on Ho*
Readiness of the senior high school students	3.833	0.002	2.2358	Rejected

A post-hoc test using the Scheffe test was conducted to find out more about which of these variables supports the claim of rejecting the null hypothesis (Table 5). The scheffe table reveals that between prepare the dining room/restaurant area and providing room service obtained an f-computed value of 16.21314, and between preparing the dining room/restaurant and receiving and handling guests' concerns obtained an f-computed value of 15.47267. This means that the students commonly perceive that these variables must have been given attention to enhance their readiness before taking the national competency assessment. In addition, it also shows that welcoming guests, taking food and beverage, and providing room service, receiving and handling guests' concerns obtained an f-computed value of 14.44488 and 13.74644, respectively, greater than the f-critical. This shows that the students have difficulties and concerns much-needed training in preparation for their national competency assessment. Thus, it concerns a lot of variables shown in the table that the students still need additional training and enhancement.

Table 5. *Post-Hoc Test using Scheffe Table*

Group 1	*Group 2*	*F-Computed*	*Significance*
prepare the dining room/restaurant area	welcome guests and take food and beverage	0.05	Not Significant
prepare the dining room/restaurant area	promote food and beverage products	0.00	Not Significant
prepare the dining room/restaurant area	provide food and beverage services to guests	0.05	Not Significant
prepare the dining room/restaurant area	provide room service	16.21	Significant
prepare the dining room/restaurant area	receive and handle guests concerns	15.47	Significant
welcome guests and take food and beverage	promote food and beverage products	0.03	Not Significant
welcome guests and take food and beverage	provide food and beverage services to guests	0.00	Not Significant
welcome guests and take food and beverage	provide room service	14.44	Significant
welcome guests and take food and beverage	receive and handle guests concerns	13.75	Significant
promote food and beverage products	provide food and beverage services to guests	0.03	Not Significant
promote food and beverage products	provide room service	15.79	Significant
promote food and beverage products	receive and handle guests concerns	15.06	Significant
provide food and beverage services to guests	provide room service	14.44	Significant
provide food and beverage services to guests	receive and handle guests concerns	13.75	Significant
provide room service	receive and handle guests concerns	0.01	Not Significant

Significant Relationship between the Problems Encountered by Teachers and the Readiness of Respondents in taking the NCA

Table 6 reveals the significant relationship between the problems encountered by teachers and the readiness of senior high school students to take the national competency assessment is presented in Table 6. The table shows the significant relationship between the problems encountered by teachers and the readiness of senior high school students to take the national competency assessment. It shows that the student factor is significantly associated with promoting food and beverage products, providing food and beverage services to guests, providing room service, and receiving and handling guests' concerns, having a p-

value of less than 0.05, thus support on the hypothesis rejection. Moreover, the classroom factor was significantly associated with the same variables as the student factor except for the dining room/restaurant area preparation. This means that not only the student factor needs concern but also the school facilities. It alarms the administrators on how to make students improve their skills with less spacious and not conducive facilities.

Table 6. *Significant Relationship between the Problems Encountered by Teachers and the Readiness of Students in taking the NCA*

Problems encountered	*Readiness*	*r-computed*	*P-value*	*Decision on Ho*
Student Factors	prepare the dining room/restaurant area for	0.20	0.54	fail to reject
	welcome guests and take food and beverage	-0.10	0.40	fail to reject
	promote food and beverage products	0.70	0.00	rejected
	provide food and beverage services to guests	0.31	0.01	rejected
	provide room service	0.47	0.00	rejected
	receive and handle guests concerns	0.51	0.00	rejected
Classroom Factors	prepare the dining room/restaurant area	0.73	0.00	rejected
	welcome guests and take food and beverage	0.04	0.78	fail to reject
	promote food and beverage products	0.20	0.10	fail to reject
	provide food and beverage services to guests	0.29	0.02	rejected
	provide room service	0.50	0.00	rejected
	receive and handle guests concerns	0.39	0.00	rejected

Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, it is concluded that the more problems the teachers have encountered, the more the students are not ready to take the national competency assessment. Some students are tardy, passive in the classroom, and perform poorly during the assessment. Lack of necessary teaching materials and an unfavorable classroom environment are encountered. The students are more ready to take the NCA in terms of providing room service and receiving and handling guests' concerns than others in preparing the dining room/restaurant area, welcoming guests, and taking food and beverage orders, promoting food and beverage products, and providing food and beverage services to guests. The more teachers observed problems among their students, the less ready the students were to take the NCA in terms of promoting food and beverage products, providing food and beverage services to guests, providing room service, and receiving and having guest concerns. The more teachers observe problems in the classroom; the more students were less ready to take the NCA in preparing the dining room/restaurant area.

It is recommended that the administrators address the general issues and concerns of the teachers in FBS to deliver the necessary knowledge and skills to their students. Specifically, it is suggested that the administrators consider in the Project Procurement Management Plan (PPMP) the materials, tools, and equipment in FBS and other strands offered in the school to maximize the teaching-learning among students. The teachers are encouraged to use contextualized learning materials without materials to make the learning of the students more meaningful. The students are encouraged to be more resourceful and conscientious in their studies to become skillful and ready to take the national competency assessment.

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Richin Benitez
Alegria Stand Alone Senior High School
DepEd –Surigao Del Norte, Philippines

Elvis Patulin
Surigao Del Norte State University
Surigao CityCampus, Philippines

Romel Mutya
Mambaling National High School
DepEd – CebuCity, Philippines