

Analysis of the Policies, Trainings and Practices on Student Assessment in Higher Education Institutions in the Philippines

Ester B. Ogena
Marilyn U. Balagtas

*Philippine Normal University,
Manila, Philippines*

This paper aims to analyze the trends in the assessment practices in higher education in the Philippines from 1999 to 2012 based on research studies and capacity building programs conducted in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the country within this period. These practices ranging from traditional to authentic ways of assessing learning are assumed to have been influenced by two memoranda released by the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) in 1999 and in 2004. Such memoranda specify the policies and standards for teacher education, which include the required courses in assessment of students' learning that prospective teachers in basic education as well as those in higher education institutions are expected to learn and apply when they become teachers regardless of the level of students they handle. This paper highlights the direction of HEIs in the Philippines toward policies, trainings and practices that show value to balanced assessment of students' learning where teachers combine the use of the pen-and-paper tests and more authentic assessment through performance tasks and learning portfolios in assessing for, of, and as learning.

Keywords: Assessment, Traditional Assessment, Alternative Assessment, Balanced Assessment

Educational assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. As defined by Chatterji (2003), it deals with the measurement of characteristics integral to the education process. Mc Millan (1997) defines it as a collection, interpretation, and use of information to help teachers make better decisions. It is a process of gathering quantitative and/or qualitative information that could be used in making decisions about students' learning or teachers' instruction. It provides information to students if they have learned in the process of teaching whether done through a teacher-centered or student-centered approach. It also provides information to teachers about their effectiveness in attaining the objectives they have set for students' learning. For its social

purposes, it is the basis for accountability check and policy formulation. As explained by Abulencia (2011), through assessment, the national government could monitor if the educational reforms are being carried out by schools. McDonnell as cited by Abulencia (2011) also explained that assessment has become a form of regulatory policy where rules are promulgated to govern the conditions under which rewards and sanctions will be imposed on individual students or schools.

Teachers including those in the tertiary level assess learning with different purposes. Earl (2005) and Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (2006) as cited by Balagtas, Dacanay, Dizon, and Duque (2010) describe these purposes as *assessment for learning*, *assessment of learning*, and *assessment as learning*. *Assessment for learning* sees assessment as formative or diagnostic. Formative assessment aims to gather information that could give immediate information about the progress of learning or the effectiveness of teaching so that adjustments could easily be made if teaching is not working or needs improvement. Assessment is diagnostic if it aims to examine possible difficulties, errors or misconceptions of students that need corrective feedback or intervention. *Assessment of learning*, on the other hand, is summative, seeing its results as basis for students' grades, for certification and policy making. *Assessment as learning* looks at assessment as the area of learning of the students so that they become knowledgeable as to technical knowhow of assessment and they would know how to assess themselves and others as well. Gonzales (2012) added another purpose of assessment and that is *assessment to inform* all the stakeholders of education.

Whatever is the purpose of classroom assessment, teachers in all levels of education need to be equipped with the competencies that will enable them to perform their role as the key assessor of students' learning. Plake and Impara (1997), call these competencies on assessment as assessment literacy. One of the competencies teachers should be good at is choosing assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions. They should also be good in developing valid grading procedures. These methods and procedures are referred to as assessment practices in this paper.

Generally, assessment procedures are classified into three: traditional; alternative or non-traditional; and balanced (See Figure 1). Chatterji (2003) describes traditional assessment as the multiple-choice or the structured-response type of written test while its alternative refers to the free-response type of tests. In this paper, *traditional assessment* is operationally defined as the pen-and-paper objective test which makes use of selected-response and supply short-answer tests. This kind of assessment usually covers cognitive traits mostly are of low-level thinking. *Alternative assessment* or non-traditional assessment refers to all other ways of assessing learning that measure complex skills or multiple foci like performances, portfolios, exhibitions, demonstrations, and constructed-type of response. A combination of the traditional and alternative is called *balanced assessment* (Burke, 1999).

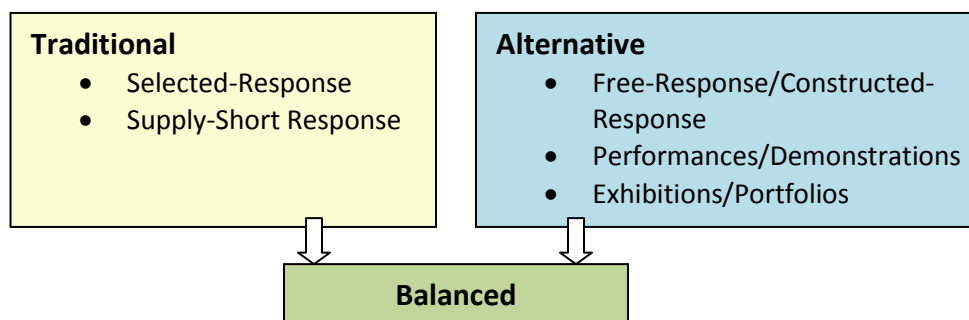


Figure 1: Assessment Procedures

Another way of classifying assessment practices is by looking at the main beneficiary of the process. Assessment practice could be *student-centered* if it is done to enable the students to know how they could actually meet the standards that have been set and see the relevance and application of what they do in real-life situations. In this process, students are also involved in setting the targets and in defining the qualities that could meet them. Most especially, the students are the users of assessment. Stiggins (2001) termed this kind of assessment as student-involved classroom assessment while Goodwin (1997) calls this as “democratic-child centered” practice of assessment. Assessment is *teacher-centered* if it is done most to the advantage of the teacher like responses could be easily scored and the process requires less time in reporting and ranking the students. In this kind of assessment, students perform a task without knowing the standards that are used for grading or they just simply speculate the standard that could enable them to meet the requirements of the highest grade possible.

In trying to make assessment practice useful to improve students’ learning, would-be teachers are trained formally on how to assess learning. Competence in student assessment is emphasized in the national document that defines the professional standards for teachers, that is, the National Competency-based Teacher Standards (NCBTS). Domain 5 of NCBTS focuses on planning, assessing, and reporting, which requires teachers to ensure that the teaching and learning activities are maximally appropriate to the students’ current knowledge and learning levels (TEC, DepED & CHED, 2009). The teacher education curriculum prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) also provides the development of such competence on student assessment. In-service teachers usually keep themselves informed or updated as well on the trends and demands of being an assessor of students’ learning by attending training programs as a form of their professional development. Training programs are provided to enable teachers to meet the demands of the profession as explained in Article II, Section 2 of the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers, which states that “every teacher shall participate in the continuing professional education program...to improve his efficiency, enhance the prestige of the profession, and strengthen his competence...”. Apparently, student assessment is a competence a teacher should be equipped with through formal trainings or professional development programs, which national policies dictate. However, in spite of the trainings given to teachers as required by the law and

policies, the reality in most classrooms is that some students would fail because of teachers' poor understanding of the role of assessment in improving student learning and practice. It is then worth looking into the alignment of the kind of assessment being practiced in the classroom and the emphasis of trainings on student assessment as defined by policies to find out where the gaps are.

In this paper, analysis was made on the assessment practices of teachers in the tertiary level particularly those who handle teacher education programs as they are the ones who prepare the professional teachers in all levels of education and areas of discipline. The analysis is centered on 1) CHED policies on student assessment for teacher education programs; 2) research studies conducted in higher education that deal on student assessment; and 3) capacity buildings conducted in HEIs that deal on student assessment.

Method

In this paper, three main sources of information were carefully examined in describing the policies, trainings, and practices in student assessment in HEIs, namely: CHED policies involving student assessment that can be accessed in their website and publications on teacher education; research studies conducted in relation to student assessment which could explain what teachers in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) explore as a new or improved way of assessing learning; and topics of training or faculty development programs supported by CHED or initiated by HEIs or State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), which could also explain the need of teachers to become better assessors of learning where one of the researchers was a Resource Person or trainer. In identifying the policies on student assessment, the primary source was the ones issued by CHED on the standards, policies and guidelines in the preparation of teachers in performing their function as assessors of learning, which served as a legal document that could also inform training and practice of teachers across levels of education particularly those in Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs). These are known policies that have guided the crafting of the curriculum for the development of teachers being implemented by the TEIs, which can be accessed from the internet. Studies and capacity building programs that have been examined and cited as sources of data in this paper were only those available within the reach of the writers but limited to those conducted from 1999 to 2012. Such criterion has been set for practicality in obtaining information but guided by the assumption that practices of both traditional and non-traditional methods of assessment are stressed in the policies issued by CHED for the preparation of teachers and the initial implementation of these practices are expected to have been reflected in studies conducted on student assessment in higher education within this period covered.

Results and Discussion

CHED Policies on Student Assessment

Policies on student assessment issued by CHED particularly those that concern the teacher education programs, which are believed to have influenced the

assessment practices in higher education, have been explored. There were no policies set by CHED that explicitly focus on student assessment the way the Department of Education issues policies on student assessment for the guidance of teachers (e. g. DepEd no.70, s. 2003 on the Revised Grading System for Elementary and Secondary Schools; DepEd No. 4 s. 2004 on the Additional Guidelines on the New Performance-based Grading System; DepEd No. 33, s. 2004 on the Implementing Guidelines on the Performance-based Grading System for SY 2004-2005; DepEd No. 5 , s. 2005 on Student Assessments at the National and Division Levels of Basic Education; DepEd Order No. 71 s. 2010, which sets the National Assessment and Grading System Frameworks effective May 26, 2010; and DepEd Order No. 74, s. 2012, which sets the guidelines on the selection of honor pupils and students of grades 1 to 10 of the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum).

However, the policies set by CHED that could serve as the legal foundation of assessment practices in HEIs in the Philippines are more on curricular programs which embed policies on student assessment. These policies approved and released for implementation of HEIs from 1999 to 2012 describe how student assessment in HEIs is practiced in the Philippines.

CHED Memo No. 11 series of 1999. This memo that provides the **revised policies and standards for teacher education**, indicates how assessment of students learning should be done. In Article V, Section 1, the memo explains that the teacher education curriculum for elementary and secondary education programs should “include a body of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values and experiences that will provide prospective teachers with necessary competencies essential for effective teaching in either two levels”. Although this policy describes the curriculum for would-be teachers in the basic education level, it was the same policy which teacher educators refer to in offering courses for non-education degree holders earning units in education to gain the professional skills (including student assessment) in teaching their discipline in the tertiary level.

It can be implied in this CHED’s policy that assessment should reflect proficiency in the subject in all domains; therefore, its methodologies should combine the traditional and non-traditional ways of assessing students’ learning. Furthermore, Article VI, Section 4, describes some guiding principles in assessing students in teacher education programs, to quote:

The institution shall provide for a systematic and continuing plan of evaluation of student progress through a marking system that is consistent and consonant to the objectives set by the institution. Institutional policies shall be made known to the teacher education students to serve as their guide in preparing for their courses. The grade and rating for each course shall be fair and just and shall reflect proficiency in the subject based on reasonable rules and standards of the school.

Assessment *for* learning, which is a systematic and continuous assessment, is emphasized by CHED. Fair and just assessment is likewise practiced. Such practice is supported by Cohen & Swerdlik (2007) who said that assessment should be conducted in a fair and unbiased manner. Apparently, there is no mention on how the assessment should be done because such process is left to the discretion of the

institution. It is then expected for Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) to have varied ways of assessing learning as long as they are consistent to the objectives of the course which translate the objectives of the institution. Moreover, the memo identified one professional education course required of teacher education programs, where would-be teachers are expected to learn the art in assessing learning. This 3-unit course with the nomenclature of “Measurement and Evaluation” emphasizes assessment procedures where data are quantified for easy evaluation of students’ learning. This course has been part of the teacher education curriculum for several decades already and it has not improved its focus for a long time. Such course which is also offered to non-education degree holders who intend to teach in college courses under their degree program explains the necessary rigor in testing, which measures mostly what the students know and understand. Such emphasis led then to teachers across levels using mostly tests in assessing learning. Some would also require projects and other performances that could gauge students’ learned skills, attitudes and values but rated using instruments like rating scales, checklists, score cards, and the like. The criteria for evaluation in these instruments are usually just known by the teachers or vaguely described or revealed to the students only after they have been graded. Such practice of teachers concealing information like how teachers have actually assigned grades or points to students’ outputs negates the principle of “just and fair assessment”. This course on “Measurement and Evaluation” usually does not expose would-be teachers to non-traditional and more student-centered ways of assessing learning. Teachers usually see testing as the best way to assess learning. As described by Ferido and Balagtas (2007), many teacher educators have not been exposed to current trends in student assessment, such as performance, portfolio, and other types of alternative assessment. Students have not been given the opportunity to improve their learning through assessment. To sum it up, assessment of students’ learning before the turn of the 21st century has not been truly fair and just to students because they are teacher-centered. Assessment practices are mostly summative in nature or are viewed as “assessment of learning”.

CHED Memo No. 30 Series of 2004. This memo which provides the revised policies and standards for undergraduate teacher education programs for implementation in school year 2005-2006, explains that assessment of students learning in all courses in the teacher education program should make use of various approaches. As cited in Article 5, Section 10, to quote:

All the courses should be taught using a wide range of learning-teaching approaches and student assessment procedures, including whenever possible the use of some educational technology. Finally, all courses should have a research requirement, which may take the form of term paper, case study, action research, or other forms of research/scholarships as may be appropriate.

Obviously, the policy is more defined in setting what is truly important for students to learn and how they should be assessed. Apparently, the use of technology is given emphasis. Evidence-based or outcomes-based learning like the outputs in the conduct

of research is encouraged. An exploration of this policy shows two professional education courses, which have corresponding field study components that require field observation and then gradually intensifying until students undertake practice teaching. The two assessment courses emphasize balanced assessment. One course has contents that focus on traditional or pen-paper assessment while the other focuses more on its alternative to include affective, performance, and portfolio assessment as a content of the teacher education course. Through these courses, basic education teachers were expected to learn the art of assessing all domains of learning through the combination of traditional and alternative assessments. The corresponding field study of the assessment courses aims to *“provide students with practical learning experiences in which they can observe, verify, reflect on, and actually experience different components of the teaching-learning processes in actual school setting”*. These courses indicate that assessment should not just be through the use of pen-and-paper but with the inclusion of more authentic ways of assessing learning like the use of reflective journals, term paper, case studies, action research, and many more.

CHED Memo No.8 series of 2009. This memo explains the **Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program (ETEEAP)** program, which CHED sees as an integral part of the educational system. The ETEEAP is a comprehensive educational assessment program at the tertiary level that recognizes, accredits, and gives equivalencies to knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values gained by individuals from relevant work. It is implemented through deputized HEIs that shall award the appropriate college degree. Beneficiaries must be Filipinos who are at least high school graduates. They must have worked for at least five years in the field or industry related to the academic program they are obtaining an equivalency. They must also be able to show proof of proficiency, capability and thorough knowledge in the field applied for equivalency. In article 5, Section 4 of the memo, the procedure in the assessment of students includes both the use of their portfolios and examinations. To quote:

The deputized HEI requires the applicant (candidate) to prepare and submit his/her portfolio with the assistance of the institution’s career counsellor/adviser within an agreed period of time. This portfolio should include descriptions of prior experiences in the context of learning outcomes. The employer concerned should certify all experiences cited by the candidate as having been completed while in employment. Upon receipt of the portfolio, the HEI convenes a panel of assessors to conduct the evaluation. Tests or other forms and instruments of assessment, e.g. interviews, actual demonstrations of claimed knowledge and skills, written examination, and others that are appropriate to the candidate’s needs maybe used as needed.

Apparently, the assessment of students is balanced as it makes use of both the traditional and alternative modes of assessment. Portfolio assessment is given emphasis due to its ability to capture accomplishments of students across time and

space that could attest claims that one has gained through work or experience the equivalent competency expected of him/her in a formal school.

CMO No. 23, series of 2009. This policy, which sets the **guidelines for student internship program in the Philippines for all programs in higher education with practicum subject**, indicates the importance of practicum in acquiring practical knowledge and skills and desirable values and attitudes through actual exposure to professionals and other people in the workplace. The said policy underscores practical knowledge, which when assessed could not be captured traditionally. Hence, this demands for a more authentic way of assessment through actual performance in one's work. To have basis in assessing students' learning, Article IV, section 6, indicates that practicum students need to submit a monthly journal of practicum experiences describing his/her training activities, problems/encountered, and reflections on the training experiences to their training coordinator, who is expected to contribute to the computation of one's practicum grade. Section 7 of this article describes grading that is done through the partnership of the faculty of HEI and the trainer of the Host Training Establishment (HTE). The highlight of this policy is the recognition given on the use of students' reflections like journals to capture insights gained from or feelings towards their learning experiences. This kind of assessment reflects the direction of the system towards assessment *as learning* where students are recognized as assessors themselves.

CMO No. 17 s. 2012. This memo which sets the **policies and guidelines of educational tours and field trips of college and graduate students** gives values on the need to provide the students an opportunity to learn from exposure to various situations outside the classroom to improve the quality of their learning. As explained by CHED in Article III, Section 5, to quote:

The set of policies and guidelines aims to rationalize the conduct of Educational Tours/Field Trips among Higher Education Institutions in order to: 1) provide access to efficient and interactive training of students through meaningful educational tours and/or field trips as required in their program requirement embodied in the approved curriculum; and 2) ensure that all Higher Education Institutions provide quality educational tours and/or field trips relevant to the acquisition of the necessary knowledge, skills, and values for student welfare and development.

This memo further explains the need to tie up academe and industry to ensure link between what is learned in the classroom with what the industry actually requires. As cited in Article IV, Section 5, to quote:

Educational tours and field trips in general are part of the curriculum enhancement; hence, they broaden the students' learning opportunities and feel of the real world, and therefore serve as a powerful motivator to strengthen the academe-industry linkage. HEIs should come up with their

creative academe-industry linkage plans appropriate to degree program requirement.

In assessing students' learning from these activities, CHED emphasized that students should be assessed appropriately and not to see these activities as a replacement to written examinations as cited in Article V, Section 9, to quote:

For students undergoing internship, practicum or on-the-job training program, the same shall be governed by CHED Memorandum Order No. 23 s. 2009 "Guidelines for Student Internship Program in the Philippines (SIPP) for all Programs with Practicum Subject". Educational tours and field trips shall not be made as substitute of a major examination for the purpose of compelling students to participate in educational activities not otherwise compulsory.

This only shows that assessment in HEIs includes both the traditional assessment through written examinations and alternative assessment using performance tasks similar to the requirements of the intended workplace. Furthermore, the memo also anticipates difficulties of students in meeting the requirements of assessment including those with special needs and disabilities; thus, the HEIs are required to offer them parallel school activity that could enable them to attain the same learning activity, as cited in Article V, section 8, to quote:

For students who cannot join the educational tours and/or field trips, they shall be given parallel school activity which provides similar acquisition of knowledge of the required practical competencies and achieves other learning objectives. Learners with special needs such as Persons with Disabilities shall be given due consideration.

CHED further emphasizes the importance of formative and affective assessment of students learning through reflective journals, which should be done by the students after their educational tours and field trips. As cited in Article VII , Section 14, to quote "Debriefing program should include among others, reflection of the learning experiences documented in their learning journals". Again, this CHED Memo reiterates the value of students' reflection as a form of assessment *for* and *as* learning.

While CHED sets how assessment of learning should be done in relation to tours and trips, it also acknowledges that there are institutional policies on grading students that should be observed, to quote " An assessment of learning must be accomplished following institutional policy on grading system". (Article VII, Section 15). This only shows that CHED is consistent in all policies it has created that institutions of higher learning are given autonomy to assess students' learning but would expect that their assessments are sound, fair, and just.

CMO.46 s. 2012. This memo explains the policy-standard to enhance quality assurance (QA) in Philippine HEI through an outcomes-based and typology-based QA. The said memo emphasizes the need for competency-based learning standards to define quality. Article II, Section 6 of this memo defines quality as the alignment and

consistency of the learning environment with the institution's vision, mission, and goals demonstrated by exceptional learning and service outcomes and the development of a culture of quality. If translated into student assessment, outcomes-based requires teachers to recognize students' goals for themselves and help them identify the possible learning outcomes as a manifestation or concretization of the attainment of these goals. For assessment to facilitate the success of the attainment of these goals, the desired learning outcomes should be designed clearly at the beginning of instruction. Then appropriate assessment approaches should be used to validly capture the requirements of the defined learning outcomes.

Research Studies on Student Assessment in Higher Education Institutions

Several studies on student assessment in HEIs conducted in the Philippines have been explored to have basis in describing the assessment practices of teachers in HEIs.

In the study of Ricalde (2010), a significant number of faculty in a private computer college makes use of assessment not just to measure student progress but also to scaffold learning through constant feedback to students' works. Formative assessment is done more frequently by more faculty than summative assessment. Although teachers use various ways of assessing learning from pen-and-paper to portfolio assessment, most of them still prefer assessing learning using the traditional pen-and-paper tests particularly the monthly tests and quarterly examinations using the objective test formats. Among the top five (5) frequently practiced assessment procedures, majority of the college faculty do the following: 1) setting clear learning targets for the students; 2) having a comprehensive plan for assessing the targets; 3) providing the students opportunity to be actively involved in decision making when it comes to assessment; 4) returning evaluation and graded assessments in a timely manner; and 5) providing meaningful/and/or specific feedback and/or recommendations for improvement.

Ricalde further explained that among those that faculty are getting used to when assessing learning are as follows: 1) using performance-based assessment to evaluate students' learning; 2) requiring students to work as a group to complete formal and informal assessments; 3) using authentic assessment to make students more involved in the learning process; 4) making sure that criteria and performance standards are clear to the students by providing rubrics and checklists.

On the contrary, the assessment procedures that are least practiced by less than 50% of the faculty are as follows; 1) use of portfolio to show the student's progress; 2) constructing a table of specifications for tests to cover all lessons taught; 3) writing assessment questions for all types; 4) practicing peer assessment where students are given opportunities to assess their classmates' works; and 5) using strategies to involve students for self-assessment. As a result of this study, the researcher recommended the need for faculty development programs where the teachers are trained on assessment practices they least practiced.

Another study comes from Gonzales (2012), a faculty from a private higher education institution who developed an instrument to measure the assessment practices of Filipino teachers across levels and as a result of a survey conducted to 364 Filipino teachers including those teaching in college. Gonzales arrived at four

assessment purposes, namely: 1) assessment as learning; 2) assessment for learning; 3) assessment to inform; 4) assessment of learning. He concluded that professional development enhances teachers' classroom assessment practices and that teaching level and class size moderate the impact of professional development on classroom assessment practices.

Other studies explored how teachers could best assess their students' learning both in traditional and non-traditional modes. Suatengco (2012), for example, investigated the assessment practices of emergent literacy mentors to determine how judicious and fair the mentors are in their judgement based on the evidences that were drawn from their assessment practices. The results show that the mentors use more the objective type of assessment formats with limited understanding on other assessment formats.

Furthermore, Gabinete (2012) conducted a study contrasting the practice of language and non-language teachers when assessing college students using essay. She concluded that language teachers focus on local issues when giving corrective feedback to essay responses while non-language teachers do not make clear feedback at all. Non-language teachers find it time consuming to correct errors in grammar as they are more concerned with the subject matter at hand, leaving the task of correcting the writing skills of their students to language teachers.

Likewise, Crisostomo (2012) encourages use of good assessment practice as discussed in the two assessment courses covered by the pre-service teachers' curriculum, that is use of traditional and non-traditional methods, in order to give the future teachers being trained an experience of the kind of assessment that promotes learning.

More research studies underscore the shift from the traditional teacher-reliant assessment into a more student-centered like the use of journals, rubrics, and portfolio assessment. Balagtas (1999), for example, investigated the pre-service teachers' knowledge and attitude toward portfolio assessment after assessing her students gained knowledge, skills, and disposition in their pedagogy course. The study recommended the use of portfolio assessment in all other strategy courses in teacher education. Likewise, Belecina (2008) discovered the positive effects of portfolio assessment on the problem solving skills, critical thinking, and attitude in mathematics of second year college students. He recommended the use of portfolios in assessing learning in content and methods courses in mathematics. Use of rubrics was also investigated in HEIs. Lim (2012) explored HEIs' students perceived uses of rubrics in their oral production assessment. Results revealed that students recognized the ability of rubrics to make them understand teachers' expectations, reflect on their oral production performances, and justify the grades being given to them by their teacher. Magno (2012) also developed a valid and reliable rubric to assess HEI teachers through peer assistance and review. Galangco (2012) investigated on the affective assessment in molding pre-service teachers in a private HEI. It was concluded that the use of journal writing, reflection papers, and position papers were found out highly instrumental in changing the perspective of students about life, while intercultural activities broadened their understanding of individual difference. Proper and skilful processing of the activities and requirements led to visible refinement in the students' character.

The studies reviewed confirm that teachers in HEIs are exploring the advantages of both the traditional and non-traditional assessment in their respective classroom. This could explain that teachers in the tertiary level are also exploring on better ways to assess learning other than the use of traditional assessment.

Capacity Building Programs on Student Assessment in Higher Education

Training programs or faculty development programs come in different levels and forms. There are those that were endorsed by CHED especially those that are in national level. Others are faculty training programs held in the respective institutions of the faculty.

National Capacity Building Program for the Implementation of the New Teacher Education Curriculum. This program was organized by CHED in partnership with Queensland University of Technology under a grant from the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). Atweh, Balagtas, Bernardo, Ferido, and Macpherson (2007), explained that this program originally dubbed as Training of Trainers for the Implementation of the New Pre-service Teacher Education Curriculum of the Philippines, was later on changed to IMPACT 21C. Such program was conducted from September 2005 to March 2006 to enable the 46 teacher educators from 15 regions of the country to build their capacity in implementing the new courses in the revised curriculum for teacher education programs as stipulated in CMO 30 s. 2004, which includes the two professional education courses called Assessment of Learning 1 (focused on traditional assessment) and 2 (focused on non-traditional assessment). A product of this training is the book titled *Ripples of Change: a Journey of Teacher Education Reform in the Philippines*, with the national facilitators as the editors. Such book compiled the action research done by the participants of the training. This includes the paper of Parcon and Avanzanso (2007) on performance-based assessment.

Capacity Building Program on Performance-based Assessment for Teacher Educators in NCR. This program held in the National Capital Region in 2006 organized and facilitated by two officials in teacher education programs of two private HEIs as an offshoot of the national capacity building program for the implementation of NTEC. It emphasized the need for performance-based assessment to measure complex tasks in the teacher education programs. Parcon and Aranzanso (2007), reported that they organized this capacity building program on performance-based assessment to 24 teacher educators from nine (9) teacher education institutions after finding out the participants' clamor that they do not have yet the adequate capacity to develop such assessment. This is understandable since the teacher educators were products of old teacher education curriculum, which emphasizes traditional assessments using multiple choice, alternative response, matching type, simple recall, and essay tests. The capacity building program enabled the participants to apply the steps in preparing performance-based assessments after they have gone through inputs from the facilitators and resource persons on assessment.

Other Institutional Faculty Development Programs Involving Student Assessment. The following faculty development programs have been conducted in HEIs in the past 12 years where one of the writers has been invited as a resource person. There were 61 HEIs identified from more than 200 invitations the writer had been invited as a resource person on student assessment. Those institutions from public and private basic education schools were excluded in the analysis. The capacity building programs describes in this paper are classified according to their focus as traditional, non-traditional, and balanced assessment and the sector the institution represents, whether government or private HEI.

Traditional Assessment. This cluster of capacity building programs focus on the traditional or pen-and-paper objective tests like the use of multiple choice, binary test, matching type, and supply tests. Figure 2 reveals that the thirteen (13) sampled institutions that have conducted capacity building program on traditional assessment particularly test construction and interpretation, which are mostly private HEIs. This only shows that more private HEIs need to get oriented on traditional assessment than government or state colleges or institutions. This result may be due to the fact that most of those with requests for such training are not “normal schools” or recognized Centers of Excellence (COE) in Teacher Education where teachers are assumed to be more exposed to the trends in education. These institutions are either comprehensive universities where teacher education program is just one of their offerings or small colleges that are just starting in their offering of teacher education programs. Figure 2 further shows that among the foci for training, it is the traditional assessment that is least needed. This concurs with the trend in the research studies reviewed where a limited study was found exploring the use of test in assessing learning. As reported by Suatengco (2012), mentors use more the objective type of assessment formats with limited understanding on other assessment formats. It can, therefore, be inferred that testing is still a predominant way of assessing learning as this seemed to be not much highlighted in training programs or explored in research studies.

Non-Traditional Assessment. This cluster focuses on the use of any assessment method other than the traditional assessment. Non-traditional or alternative assessment includes performance-based assessment and portfolio assessment, which according to Kubiszyn and Borich (2000), gained popularity in the 1990s. Such assessment offers general and special education teachers alternative means by which to annually evaluate the progress of learners and on day-to-day basis in the classroom. This assessment requires rubrics, which serve as scoring guides for students’ demonstrations or creations. As shown in Figure 2, this cluster has the most number of capacity building programs on student assessment conducted by at least 25 institutions. This trend on the need for more non-traditional assessment could be due to the newness of such mode of assessment. It should be recalled that in 2004, CHED has issued a revised policy in teacher education, which offered a new course on assessment (Assessment of Learning 2) that highlights the importance and use of non-traditional assessment. A closer look at the data behind this figure reveals that ten of these sessions included in the sample were led by the Philippine Normal University

(PNU), which is expected as it is the National Center for Teacher Education where innovations in education are expected to emanate. The rest were conducted in both government and private HEIs. It can also be gleaned in the figure that more private HEIs needed such training on non-traditional assessment than those from the government or State Colleges and Universities (SUCs). It becomes more evident that the demand for training programs particularly on the non-traditional assessment is greater in the private sector.

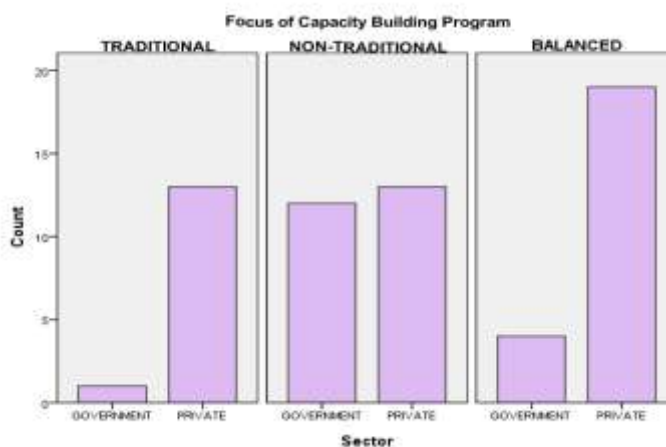


Figure 2: Focus of Capacity Building Program on Student Assessment

Balanced Assessment. This cluster refers to the faculty development programs that emphasize the use of both traditional and alternative assessment. As shown in Figure 2, the training on balanced assessment is next most in demand topic for capacity building on student assessment with 23 institutions in the sample. Most of them are dominated by private HEIs. PNU being the National Center for Teacher Education has also initiated training programs in this area. Topics requested for training classified to focus on balanced assessment include “Development of Tests and Rubrics”, “Assessment *for, of, and as* Learning”, “Assessment Approaches in Today’s Classroom”, “Test Development and Performance-based Assessment”, “Test Development and Portfolio Assessment,” and similar topics.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The review of the policies set by CHED, research studies conducted, and capacity building programs held on student assessment in HEIs led to several insights. One is that CHED allows exercise of academic freedom and autonomy of HEIs in assessing particularly in grading the students as long as the institution’s policy for assessment is known to the students and the practice is appropriate to the objectives of the course. Another is that traditional assessment is commonly used, which could be traced back to the influence of the old teacher education curriculum that emphasizes pen-and-paper test and that has been there in the system for a long time. However, teachers in HEIs are also towards the direction of exploring the use and merits of non-traditional or more authentic ways of assessing learning to balance their practice by using both the traditional and non-traditional assessments in evaluating

the achievements of the students, and this could be attributed to the influence of the more recent teacher education program. Efforts are also directed on making assessment more useful not only in capturing students' achievement, which is viewed as summative or assessment *of* learning but also using it in helping the students see its merits *for* learning or called as formative assessment. Assessment *as* learning is getting its way to popularity, too, now that rubrics are being used in the classroom. It is believed that the change in the 1999 curriculum to 2004 curriculum is not constant; therefore, it is expected that more reforms will come in the advent of a K to 12 curriculum. Since the K to 12 aims to produce holistically developed and functionally literate citizens with the 21st century skills, teachers in HEIs should be more mindful of authentic ways of assessing learning or outcomes-based assessment, which is the direction of CHED in the years ahead, to be more responsive to the demands of the society.

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