

Prospective Teachers' Inclinations for Technology and Livelihood Education Degree Program

Maricris M. Loso

ABSTRACT

The present study investigates prospective teachers' inclinations for technology and livelihood education as a college degree program. Utilizing the descriptive survey research design, 25 prospective technological and vocational teachers were purposively chosen as respondents. Data were gathered through interviews and thematically analyzed in the lens of Wa-Mbaleka's 10-steps Model of Data Analysis. Results of the findings revealed that these pre-service teachers consider the program the most ideal to take up as a degree because of its potential to give them employment and expose them to business ventures in the future, and, in turn, have better lives. Given this, it is thus imperative for the faculty members in the department handling the program to ensure that they are able to meet the desired learning competencies to help the program takers realize their professional goals of enrolling the program.

Keywords: Degree Program, Livelihood Education, Prospective Teachers, Technology Education.

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M. M. Loso*

Technology and Livelihood Education
Department, College of Education, Leyte
Normal University, the Philippines.
(e-mail: maricris.losolnu.edu.ph)

**Corresponding Author*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines joins the international academic community in adopting various educational frameworks to make its educational system comparable with the international standards and still relevant and responsive to the call of the present society. Specifically, for primary education, it enacted Republic Act No. 10533 or Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013. Among others, the law mandates the offering of an additional two years of Senior High School (SHS) to the usual 10-year educational cycle. The SHS program aims to prepare Filipino learners both for tertiary education and employment. It has five tracks offerings: Academic, Arts and Design, Sports, Technical, and Vocational. Each track is composed of different strands. For example, the academic track includes Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), Accounting Business and Management (ABM), and General Academic Strand (GAS) (Department of Education, 2017).

The institutionalization of the K-12 Curriculum has paved the way toward a major re-engineering of the country's higher education curricular landscape. Specifically, for teacher education, the New Teacher Education Curriculum (NTEC) was institutionalized as the foundational framework for upscaling the standards of pre-service Filipino teachers (Commission on Higher Education (CHED), 2017). One of the new program offerings under the NTEC is Bachelor of Technology and Livelihood Education (BTLEd). It is for prospective teachers of the technical-vocational livelihood (TVL) track, technical-vocational education and training

(TVET), and technology and livelihood education (TLE). Program graduates are expected to become efficient and effective promoters and facilitators of learning to enable the learners to develop to the fullest their potential to continue lifelong learning and effective synthesizers of organized knowledge to allow analytical and critical thinking (CMO 79 s. 2017).

The Leyte Normal University (LNU), a teacher training institution for higher learning, is one of the universities that offer BTLEd. The program is under the watch of its College of Education and is supervised by a department head. Every academic year, about a hundred students are admitted to the program due to its stringent admission requirements. One of which is being a graduate of TVL track in SHS. Ideally, TVL graduates are expected to take technological-vocational programs should they opt to pursue a college degree. Given this contestation, this study then explores the meaning of pursuing this program through the lens of TVL graduates enrolled in BTLEd in the college of education of LNU.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Education plays a significant role in nation-building. Curriculum innovation is undertaken to ensure that young learners would be equipped with important work skills, knowledge and information, and work ethics so necessary for an intelligent career choice such as specialized training in a specific field. Ultimately, this innovation would provide students with basic skills and principles coupled with pertinent values at home at the workplace, and, in turn, make them social assets (Ozturk, 2013). It cannot be denied that the

teaching-learning must be responsive to the call of time and situation. Thus, concerns related to these become inevitable. As such, teachers must be ready, alert, and tactful to be able to respond to the needs and demands called by the situation (Del Rosario, 2015). BTLEd teachers are not exempt from these dilemmas. Considerably, in the NTEC, prospective technological and vocational teachers are prepared to be able to respond to the pedagogic challenges in the classroom and beyond. As discussed in CMO 79 s. 2017, the Bachelor of Technology and Livelihood Education (BTLEd) is a teacher education program designed to equip program takers with knowledge and skills to be able to teach technical-vocational courses like Food and Service Management, Automotive, Electrical, Civil, and Drafting Technology across grade levels. Upon program completion, graduates enjoy a number of career opportunities including being technology and livelihood teacher, assistant teachers, livelihood program facilitators, community project organizers, researchers, and a tutor.

The quality of student engagement remains the top priority for educators. Researchers have long been interested in exploring variables contributing effectively to engaging the learners (Crosnoe, 2004). Time and again, one of the main concerns confronted by TVL is its low regard for learners and mismatch of its academic preparations to that of the degree program they take in college. This gap is addressed with the current institutionalization of the K to 12 curricula (Morgan, 2017). Aside from addressing the mismatch, the curriculum intends as well to intensify labor expertise by keeping the learners skilled and competitive as they join the global market. Additionally, the students who are choosing this track may not be aware of the future courses and opportunities therein. According to Wainwright (2017), technology is not a want but a need that forms part of our daily lives. It provides the comfort of use and makes work lighter and easier as livelihood is a way of earning subsistence. Rudio (2017), emphasized that BTLEd courses could equip its program takers with a source of living, in support of its existence, invention, work, facilitate work and livelihood to sustain life and health. Given these, it is thus imperative that BTLEd program offered by LNU be attuned to the standards set by DepEd and TESDA. In this way, the university, being a training ground for future educators, could be categorical to claim that its learners are equipped with skills and knowledge as specialists of this discipline.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on consistency theory of Fritz Hiedler. The main tenet of the theory is that people possess a willingness to maintain consistency in their lives. The theory argues that a comfortable state of affairs is achieved when a person's inner system such as beliefs, attitudes, and values all support one another especially when external evidence supports this system as well. On the contrary, the discomfort of cognitive dissonance occurs when things fall out of alignment, which leads us to try to achieve a maximum practical level of consistency in our world.

Similarly, there is a strong need to believe that we are being consistent with social norms. When there is conflict between behaviors that are consistent with inner systems and

behaviors that are consistent with social norms, the potential threat of social exclusion often sways us towards the latter, even though it may cause significant inner dissonance (http://changingminds.org/explanations/theories/consistency_theory.htm). The researcher believes that this theory is very much related to their study which emphasizes the dissonance between what we were told and what is seen with the researchers' naked eyes upon determining the alignment between the BTLEd program competencies.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized the descriptive survey-case study design. Creswell (2014) said that case studies are a design of inquiry found in many fields, especially evaluation, in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. There were 25 freshmen BTLEd students from LNU who were purposively chosen as respondents. Data were gathered using an interview guide. Subsequently, these were analyzed through Wa-Mbaleka's 10-steps Model of Data Analysis (2018) which includes data preparations and organizations, transcripts reading, development of a coding manual, data coding, looking for recurring data, ideas abstracting, data interpretation, writing of reports, writing for findings and conclusions, and final revisions of the interpreted results.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The thematic analyses of the data gathered generated a single theme as regards prospective BTLEd teachers' inclinations for the program. It is being THE MOST IDEAL PROGRAM. Based on the narratives provided by the respondents, they categorically claimed that BTLEd, is the most ideal program for them because they believe that the program could offer them a lot of opportunities as contained in this narrative:

It is connected to my dream future career because it offers a range of exciting career options related to foods, nutrition, housing, and clothing (Respondent 1).

It will give me a lot of opportunities and experience in different fields of education (Respondent 12).

I know that my chosen course would help me in my future career and goals (Respondent 10).

This is the course that captures my interest and I think this is the course that I can afford financially and besides, the subjects are all connected to my past experiences and hobbies (Respondent 14).

It will help me and my future students in achieving healthy and wholesome family and community relations and develop my awareness on self-help habits and active participation in decision-making at home, in school, and in the community (Respondent 9).

It would also help me to develop critical thinking, self-reliance, independence, culture sensitivity and business. Also, it would greatly help me in enhancing my skills on the different uses of technology and application of life

skills. (Respondent 6).

The vignettes above proved that prospective technical and vocational teachers consider the curricular program ideal that would open doors and opportunities for a brighter career path and goals. This notion implies that career choice plays a vital role in one's choice for a college degree. According to Faro (2022), having a correct college degree before entering the workforce because of a mismatch could lead to a miserable career and years of wasted time. This is because a college degree is supposed to be a solid foundation on which to build your future career and life. Accordingly, the reason so many people struggle in their careers is that their interests and skill set don't match what they chose to study in college or university. As such, a career choice must complement one's interest to ensure that are able to find employment after program completion.

Houghton (2021) averred that our core values spell out what is desirable and essential to us. Career satisfaction is directly correlated to our personal values. To ensure that career choice and workplace honor your life goals, it is necessary to determine what your core values truly are both inner and extrinsic values. Among these values include autonomy, teamwork, creativity, job security, performance income, power, and leadership, among others. Once you have determined what you believe in and what spurs you on, it is easier also to know what does not. Likewise, you can rule out certain careers.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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