

Educational Philosophies Adhered by Filipino Preservice Teachers: Basis for Proposing Initiatives for 21st Century Teacher Education Preparation Program

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Abstract – *The study endeavoured to ascertain the educational philosophies adhered by Filipino preservice teachers. Descriptive survey research method was employed. The participants of the study were the 76 fourth year Bachelor in Elementary Education (BEED) and Bachelor in Secondary Education (BSED) of the College of Teacher Education in one state university in the Philippines. Data were gathered with the use of standardized research tool. Research findings showed that the Filipino preservice teachers espoused a very high adherence to progressivism educational philosophy and high orientation to existentialism and reconstructionism. They also showed a moderate adherence to perennialism and existentialism philosophies. These imply that they espoused a high student-centred teaching belief with partial acceptance to teacher-centred teaching belief. Test of difference and Post hoc analysis revealed that course, residence and scholastic standing in high school spelled differences on the educational philosophies of the Filipino preservice teachers. Findings of the study present initiatives for 21st century teacher education preparation program.*

Keywords – *educational philosophies, Filipino preservice teachers, Teacher Education Preparation*

INTRODUCTION

The increasing demand of best classroom practices, pedagogical approaches, and instructional strategies that define effective teaching in the 21st century challenge teacher education programs in preparing future teachers to equip them with the desired personal and professional teaching attributes and competencies. Teaching excellence in the 21st century classroom belongs to those teachers who have the dispositions of being effective and passionate.

Quality preservice education is considered as a key factor in quality Philippine education. All efforts to improve the quality of education in the Philippines are dependent on the service of teachers who are properly prepared to undertake various important roles and functions of teachers [1]. It has been the role of teacher education institutions (TEIs) in the Philippines to ensure the preparation of quality preservice teachers armed with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to become effective teachers. These teachers in terms of the quality of learning are the ones who possess workable knowledge and excellent teaching practices

accompanied with well developed educational philosophies.

Teaching consists of beliefs, attitude, values and behaviors espoused by teacher to facilitate the students' learning and development. These behaviors follow a pattern or model depending on the teacher's educational philosophy. The educational philosophies are the framework to guide, filter, and consider the effort of teacher towards what she/ he believes as the purpose of education. In relation, educational philosophy is a point of view that provides a logical, rational, and valid basis for educational effort and criteria for the selection of a sound educational practice [2]. The personal beliefs, assumptions, and connections concerning the role of the teachers, the role of the learner, the goal of schooling, the ideal curriculum content, and the best means of including learning atmosphere constitute the educational philosophy of a teacher [3].

Preservice teachers' beliefs on the goal and purpose of education manifest their educational philosophic orientation. Their beliefs and conceptions

about teaching will prepare them with their expertise to teach in the real world which will help them become effective facilitators of learning in the future. Rideout [4] affirmed that the basic determinant of individuals' educational dispositions is their educational philosophies. Such educational dispositions are being formed founded on educational philosophy. Thus, a personal philosophical orientation is an important and active element of the teacher in the classroom.

Developing and owning an educational philosophy is influential in directing and guiding teachers in executing their teaching practices and most importantly on the way how they look at their learners whom they deliver their effort. Bilbao [5] affirmed that as teacher, one should have a philosophy of education because it is a strong belief that is translated into action that will guide them what to teach, how to teach, and why to teach.

In the perspective of this study, the main five (5) educational philosophies were considered specifically essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, existentialism and behaviorism. In brief descriptions, perennialism is an educational philosophy adhering to the concept of conservative point of view mainly focused on the intellectual and moral standards. It emphasizes that schools must teach students with the ideas that are everlasting and the search for enduring truths are constant. Values are constant and unchanging through the literature, arts, philosophies, and religions.

For a classroom teacher adhering this educational philosophy, subject-matter centered approach in teaching that requires mastery of learning content is emphasized. Bago [6] noted that a perennialist educator is an authority figure in the classroom that transmit and interpret knowledge because they believe that education is the process of transmitting changing knowledge from generation to generation.

Essentialism refers to the educational philosophy which pertains to the traditional or 'back to basic movement' as approach in teaching. As the name implies, it seeks to instill learners with the "essentials" of academic pursuit and knowledge. Educators espousing this philosophy believe that teaching students with the mastery of 3Rs will make them competent in the world. For these basic skills are essentials for an individual to live well in the modern society. This philosophy encourages academic rivalry where the classroom is stiff and controlled.

Progressivism as educational philosophy captures the belief that students manifest meaningful learning when they are actively involved in learning activities that they have interest with. Actual and experiential learning are important and will develop individual learner's creativity and imagination. This philosophy emphasizes the different learning styles and dispositions of students, their multiple intelligences and individual learning preferences. The curriculum in this philosophy shows dynamism and relevance to the needs of the society.

Existentialism is a philosophy that put much student's freedom to learn. It supports the idea that to exist is to find the essence of life. It requires student-centered teaching approach where students are given the freedom of choice which they know will unleash their potentials and creativity. Educators in this philosophy serve as facilitators who guide students define their own essence by assisting them to various choices they would like to take.

Social Reconstructionism philosophy aims to bring out the consciousness of an individual about the social events, concerns and problems being confronted. This philosophy provides vision of the better world by looking solutions and addressing social concerns and issues. It purports the idea that teachers should be an instrument to encourage and lead students for social reforms. Methods of teaching may include problem oriented type, community-based learning and group discussions.

The different philosophical orientations of preservice teachers help them become better teachers in profession. Their assumptions on the purpose of education ensure their choice of teaching as their future career. Determining their existing philosophical orientations can help them understand and modify their preservice teaching educational practices and align them into the appropriate instructional approaches. This captures what Ryan [7] declares that a clear understanding of philosophy can help a teacher grow professionally and create a purposeful direction for teaching in the classroom.

Pre-service teachers have to be guided with their beliefs, values, and knowledge and the nature and meaning of education which are hinged on certain educational philosophy to define themselves as professional teachers, manifest their role to students, define their responsibility in the school and community, and on how they showcase and exhibit their expertise. A personal educational philosophy is

an essential and active element of a teacher. Acquiring a philosophy is powerful, in that it directs and guides a teacher's teaching practices in the classroom as well as how they perceive teaching and learning and the students around them [8]. Further, Uzunöz [9] stressed that determining educational philosophical dispositions is quite necessary and important for understanding preservice teachers' and teacher educators' behavior to create alignment between their philosophical dispositions for the quality of teaching-learning process. Further being aware of a philosophy of education informs and provides an identity for preservice teachers who are beginning their careers [10].

The different philosophies espoused by preservice teachers will be evidential in their choice of teaching methods, strategies and tactics employed in the classroom including their dispositions and standards in dealing with their students. The study ascertained the educational philosophies being adhered by the preservice teachers of the College of Teacher Education of Cagayan State University at Lasam which will serve as basis for proposing initiative of their preservice training program.

The result of the study will serve a very important input in the training of preservice teachers and at the same time strengthening the quality of the faculty of instruction of the College of teacher Education. As an implication of this study to the preservice teacher education will be a very valuable input to the college in designing curriculum initiatives to better prepare them as effective facilitators of 21st century learning particularly along their personal views and beliefs about education, their classroom management styles, teaching methods, and most especially on deeper and better understanding how they may postulate different ways of teaching and handling students in their future classes.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study generally aimed to determine the educational philosophy espoused by preservice teachers of the College of teacher Education of Cagayan State University at Lasam. Specifically, (1) examine the philosophical orientations of preservice teachers when grouped according to their profile variables; (2) ascertain the implications of the philosophical orientations of pre-service teachers by proposing a plan of action to the college of teacher education.

Hypothesis:

This study tested the lone research hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance if there is no significant difference on the philosophical orientation of preservice teachers when grouped according to their profile variables.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative method using descriptive survey research design in collecting, analyzing and classifying the data along with the different philosophical orientations of preservice teachers of CSU-Lasam. Moreover, Calmorin [11] affirmed that the used of the design is appropriate since word survey was used to gather data regarding the perceptions of the respondents. Survey is useful in producing the value of facts, and the focus of the attention on the most important things to be reported. The findings of the study also will serve as basis of the College of Teacher Education in designing curriculum intervention.

Participants

The respondents of the study were the seventy eight (78) fourth year Bachelor in Elementary Education-Generalist (BEEd- Generalist) and the Bachelor in Secondary Education major in English (BSED- English) of Cagayan State University at Lasam, Lasam, Cagayan Province, Philippines during the second semester of SY 2016-2017. The preservice teachers were taken in complete enumeration because they have already teaching exposure in the different cooperating schools.

The researcher sought permission to conduct the study to the campus authorities. After having sought permission, the researcher administered the questionnaires to the identified respondents. Orientation of the participants as well as obtaining their consent was undertaken prior to the conduct of the study. The respondents were also asked to accomplish the questionnaire honestly to arrive with valid findings of the study.

Instruments and Procedures

This study utilized an adopted and modified questionnaire lifted from the Field Study 6 on becoming a 21st century teacher developed by Sadker and Sadker [12] revised by Bilbao [5]. The questionnaire has two (2) parts, part I drew out the

personal profile of the respondents while the part II elicited the responses along with the educational philosophy orientations consisting of 40-item statements. Each statement was answered with a 5-point likert scale with 5 as the highest and 1 as the lowest. The different educational philosophies measured by the survey were limited into five (5) namely: essentialism, Perennialism, progressivism, existentialism and behaviorism.

Before the distribution of the questionnaire, a letter was forwarded to the dean for approval and notation. Upon the approval scheduling of data gathering was done by the researcher. The distribution of questionnaire was initiated by the faculty researcher being the professional education instructor of the College of Teacher Education. Data were collected from the preservice teachers who were officially enrolled in the subject "Teaching Profession" in the first semester of SY 2016-2017. The researcher informed the respondents about the objectives of the study. After the collection of data, tabulation and coding were performed using statistical software. Analysis and further interpretation were done to arrive at findings and conclusion of the study.

Data Analysis

After the collection and coding of data, the research used appropriate statistical tools. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, rank and percentage were used along with the profile variables. Inferential statistics such as independent sample t-test and one way ANOVA were used to test the hypotheses of the study. All the data gathered were treated using statistical software at 0.05 alpha level. The assessment of the respondents on their educational philosophy orientations used the following arbitrary scale: 4.20-5.00: Very High (VH); 3.40-4.19: High (H); 2.60-3.39 Moderate (M); 1.80-2.59: Low (L); 1.00-1.79: Very Low (VL).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the assessment of the preservice teachers on the educational philosophies they adhered. The data shows that the preservice teachers of the College of Teacher Education of Cagayan State University- Lasam have a very high rating on progressivism (4.28), while positive high assessment ratings along with existentialism (3.99) and essentialism (3.86). Perennialism (3.35) and

essentialism (3.36) were rated with moderate adherence by the preservice teachers.

Table 1. Philosophical Orientations

Philosophies	Mean	Descriptive Value	Std. Dev.
Essentialism	3.36	Moderate	0.43
Perennialism	3.35	Moderate	0.53
Progressivism	4.28	Very High	0.64
Reconstructionism	3.45	High	0.44
Existentialism	3.99	High	0.37

The very high rating of the preservice teachers on *progressivism philosophy* as evidenced with a mean of 4.28) explains that they have high belief that in teaching and learning, students learn well when activities in their lessons have meaning for them. They manifest a very high positive belief to develop their learners as intelligent and enlightened individuals who can play their role in a democratic society because. They also manifest a high belief that education's purpose is to fully develop the potential of the learner for them to have a good and positive life in the future. The preservice teachers can see and recognized that the curriculum is dynamic that should be relevant to the needs of the society. They also adhere to the concept that change is the only permanent thing on earth; hence, their orientation is to teach their learners with the skill to cope with change.

The positive assessment of the preservice teachers towards progressivism philosophy encapsulates their understanding on learning by doing where they see themselves as guide to help their students. This very high belief of preservice teachers of Cagayan State University at Lasam, Cagayan, Philippines can be affirmed in the study of Tupas and Pendon [13] on the prevailing educational philosophies among preservice teachers of West Visayas State University, Janiway Campus, Philippines found out that when taken as a whole, preservice teachers' educational philosophy is progressivism. Similarly, in the study of Ryan [7] on the philosophical orientation of Canadian pre-service teachers, it was revealed that 96% of his respondents had results indicating that they were progressivist.

As to *existentialism philosophy*, it obtained a mean of 3.99 was noted having the second highest mean based on the assessment of the preservice teachers. It can be inferred from the finding of the study that they have a high positive belief that to become a successful facilitator of learning, one must consider the motivation and affect of their learners.

The finding also suggests that the preservice teachers can recognize the uniqueness and individuality of their students. They can see themselves to be a teacher who can provide their learners a variety of options from which they choose where it will bring out the creativity and self-expression of the students. They have high orientation to the teaching principle which is anchored on different learning styles, emotional intelligences and physical characteristics since they believe that every learner is born as potential genius. The positive adherence of the preservice teachers to this philosophy implies that they can allow their students to make meaningful decisions in the classroom where autonomy and self-confidence is being promoted to every learner. Winch & Gingell [14] posit that existentialism is a philosophy of education which is student-centered and it focuses on student choice; teachers provide an environment that is consequential in nature.

Meanwhile, the high assessment of the preservice teachers along with reconstructionism philosophy indicates their high belief on teaching students to carry out change in the society. They can see that nurturing the skills and knowledge of students for change is necessary. As future teachers, they show importance to the idea that social reforms do not necessarily start in the formal classroom but it is through unstructured and informal instruction where students understand themselves and seek the meaning of their existence. Thus, for them it is vital for a teacher to nurture the self-concept, self-confidence and emotional stability of their students; that the role of the teacher is to encourage and lead students to initiate social reforms.

Relative to the moderate assessment of the preservice teachers along *essentialism philosophy* with a mean of 3.36 showed that they fairly believed on the role of the school to determine the information that is important for students to absorb. They are moderately favoring the role of the teacher to transfer the basic skills to their students for them to become successful in the future. They somewhat accept the belief that preparing students academically and cognitively will allow them to acquire higher levels of competences needed to their future lives. As affirmed by Bagley [15] essentialism believes that should equip students with the basic academic skills to survive in society. Teachers are supposed to transmit knowledge to students who usually play a passive role in the process of learning. Standardized testing is seen by

essentialists as an ideal benchmark for assessing students and holding teachers accountable for student achievement.

Along with *perennialism philosophy* obtained the mean of 3.35, the preservice teachers assessed themselves to have moderate acceptance to this philosophy. This suggests that the preservice teachers somewhat agreed to the belief that schools, above all, should develop students' abilities to think deeply, analytically, and creatively; this is more important than developing their social skills or providing them with a useful body of knowledge about our ever-changing world. They manifest a neutral belief that students must be taught to appreciate learning primarily for its own sake rather than because it will help them in their careers. Moreover, they manifest partial acceptance to the belief that depriving students with their ability to use their reasoning power will lose the control of passions.

Witcher and Travers [16] affirmed that perennialism and essentialism are transmissive philosophies. Transmissive teachers are being refereed as traditional or conservative. They believe that the purpose of school is to develop the intellect. Thus, they view their role as knowledge dispenser to the students, such they prefer to employ lecturing, demonstration, and recitation as teaching methods. Teachers who represent this paradigm tend to advocate curricula that are subject centered, organized and sequenced, and focused on mastery of specific skills and content. Consequently, their classrooms tend to have a business-like atmosphere in which students are passive learners who generally work independently [9].

Generally, when taken as a whole, both the BEED and BSED preservice teachers espoused themselves to have a very high progressivism philosophy and high positive existentialism and reconstructionism educational philosophies while they assessed themselves to have moderate adherence to perennialism and essentialism beliefs.

Table 2 presents the test of difference on the creativity styles of the student teachers when grouped according to their profile variables. Result of the test of difference showed that there is a significant difference on philosophical orientation of the preservice teacher when grouped according to their profile variables. Thus, the null hypothesis of the study was rejected at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 2. Test of Difference on the Educational philosophies of Preservice teachers when grouped to their profile variables

Profile Variables	Essentialism	Perennialism	Progressivism	Reconstructionism	Existentialism
Gender	0.0857	0.0921	0.8389	0.0839	0.2022
Birth Order	0.5629	0.492	0.7252	0.4280	0.6192
Course	0.0340 *	0.001 *	0.7400	0.599	0.9050
Residence	0.1451	0.0286*	0.4646	0.053	0.065
Type of HS Graduated	0.4347	0.6905	0.0904	0.429	0.913
Scholastic Standing in HS	0.2080	0.0350 *	0.9539	0.110	0.5043
Father's Occupation	0.7471	0.7289	0.9020	0.1608	0.7093
Mother's Occupation	0.978	0.9096	0.8438	0.5056	0.3962
Father's Education	0.6552	0.6461	0.8913	0.5801	0.8388
Mother's Education	0.675	0.2322	0.8446	0.437	0.1761
Family Income	0.1869	0.1638	0.8915	0.5343	0.3436

*= significant at 0.05 level

The variables that spelled differences on the philosophical orientation of the preservice teachers were seen along course, residence and scholastic standing in high school.

The BEED preservice teachers rated themselves moderately higher along essentialism philosophy compared to the BSED preservice teachers showed significant difference. It can be inferred that BEED preservice teachers have higher adherence of essentialism philosophy. The difference can be explained that BEED is a degree program which aims to develop elementary school teachers who are generalist who can teach across the different learning areas in grade school. Thus requiring them to have the basic level of literacy will allow them to become essentialists in the field. Allowing them to become experts to teach the subject in the elementary grades indicates that they focus more on teacher-centered approach. Meanwhile, BSED preservice teachers also significantly rated themselves moderately higher along perennialism educational philosophy compared to the BEED preservice teachers. The finding is reasonable since being a BSED with specialization in English Language requires them the meaningful and comprehensive knowledge in the integration of language and literature so that they can teach their subject effectively. They can recognize that teaching their students to communicate effectively is engaging them to have exposure to language teaching. They have an orientation that language teaching is hooked not only to the development of cognitive and academic competencies but also with the development and promotion of cultural enrichment and aesthetic

appreciation for English. The rationale behind this is that language and literature are considered perennial subjects. It appears that BSED preservice teachers have higher leaning along perennialism philosophy.

Result of the test of difference also showed that residence spelled significant difference on the educational philosophy of preservice teachers. It was revealed that preservice teachers who are residing in non-centro tend to have moderately higher adherence to perennialism educational philosophy compared to those residing in centro. The result is logical since most of the respondents graduated from barrio high schools and perhaps their exposure to subject matter-centered approach have influenced their educational belief to adhere perennialism approach since conservative point of view is focused on the intellectual and moral standards is much emphasized in perennialism philosophy.

Relative to scholastic standing in High School, it was also found out that preservice teachers who are with honors tend to have moderately higher orientation with perennialism philosophy compared to those without honors. This indicates that BEED and BSED preservice teachers having high academic standing accepted perennialism as educational philosophy. It can also further be inferred that students with higher academic standing tend to espoused perennialism educational philosophy since it allows them to think deeply, analytically and critically which might have influenced their academic standing.

Generally, when the preservice teachers were taken as whole, no significant differences found along gender, birth order, type of high school graduated

from, parents' occupation and education, and family income.

Implications of Filipino Preservice Teachers' Educational Philosophies to 21st Century Teacher Education Program

Results yielded in the study may provide several implications to the teacher education preparation program. This study generated the finding that the preservice teachers of Cagayan State University at Lasam when taken as a whole group, both BEED and BSED students espoused themselves as progressivist, existentialist and reconstructionist. It can be explained that they have clear belief that schools are existing for societal change and development. They can see themselves as future teachers who can teach the diverse learners in the 21st century learning environment with the promotion of student-centered approach through the use of problem-based, experiential, interactive, integrated, multidisciplinary, contextualized, experiential and collaborative principles of teaching. In teaching their learners, they can consider the learning styles, multiple intelligences, emotional intelligence and creativity of their students. They can also consider employing different instructional materials with the integration of ICT, games, manipulative and other instructional support to teach their students. It is very evidential that the preservice teachers generally perceived themselves as facilitator of learning in the 21st century classroom.

Meanwhile, the preservice teachers' assessment on essentialism and perennialism described as moderate, suggests that they have fair adherence to these educational philosophies is indicative that they did not totally discard the concept of teacher-centered approach but they can still manifest the importance of employing these educational philosophy in the 21st century classroom. The partial but not the total adherence to these beliefs is indicative that the teacher in the classroom has the formal and expert authority teaching styles to project expertise in the field and knowledgeable on what to expect from their students.

The construction of a teaching philosophy within a teacher training program does affect the teaching-learning process [17]. Because it is generally believed that understanding one's philosophical approach would foster evaluation of teaching decisions [18].

Making the preservice teachers eclectic in their educational philosophies may help them shift from

being the *guide on the side* to *sage on stage* or vice versa as the situation requires them to subscribe. Allowing the preservice teachers to showcase different philosophies of education can make them deal practically to the latest development of their field. Finally, the significant differences on the educational philosophies of the preservice teachers when grouped to their personal profile variables yielded important implications concerning their individuality and exposure of preservice teachers on how the College of teacher Education may provide necessary initiatives to enhance their different educational philosophies.

CONCLUSION

The preservice teachers of Cagayan State University at Lasam espoused a very high adherence to progressivism educational philosophy and high orientation to existentialism and reconstructionism. They also showed a moderate acceptance to perennialism and existentialism philosophies. Course, residence and scholastic standing in high school spelled differences on the essentialism and perennialism educational philosophies of the preservice teachers. The high assessment on the progressivism, existentialism and reconstructionism philosophies showed that as future teachers they can see themselves as the one who can teach the diverse learners having a belief which is student-centered teaching approach while the partial but not the total adherence to perennialism and existentialism philosophies indicative that as future teacher, they can consider formal and expert authority teaching styles to project their expertise in the field.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Basing from the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are offered: first, preservice teachers must be informed as to what educational philosophies they are adhered. Implications of their teaching philosophies to teaching-learning process should be discussed before their off-campus training/ practice teaching for them to have clear grasp and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the educational philosophies they personally adhered; second, the following activities are proposed to be initiated by the College of Teacher Education considering the dominant educational philosophies adhered by the preservice teachers:

a) conduct of seminars and trainings aligning to the progressivist, existentialist and reconstructionist philosophical orientations of the preservice teachers to hone their 21st century teaching skills. Among which are the following: the use of learning style and classroom motivation, authentic and performance-based assessment, innovative teaching strategies through of games and manipulative, experiential learning, simulation, community-based learning, and other strategies with appeal to the interest and feelings of the students.

b) The moderate adherence of the preservice teachers to the essentialism and perennialism philosophical orientations may be clarified with a seminar workshop along: classroom management and discipline, integration of values to lessons, strategies to develop mastery of students, time-tested teaching methods, and workshop to develop learners' critical thinking skill.

Thirdly, a continuous update of the knowledge of preservice teachers to their field of specialization is necessary for them to become expert of their field. Fourth, more technology integration in teacher education courses to allow modeling by university professors and instructors and more opportunities for preservice teachers, and finally, a similar study may be conducted with wider samples of Preservice teaches in the Philippines using quantitative and qualitative methods.

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