Awareness on the Advantages and Disadvantages of Outcome Based Education Among Graduating Psychology Students

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Abstract:
The main objective of this study is to identify how aware the sixty-one (61) psychology graduating student-respondents are on the advantages and disadvantages of outcomes-based education. Descriptive method was used since this was suitable and appropriate for the study. Findings showed that respondents are aware of the advantages of the outcomes based education program that it promotes the acquisition of the specific skills and competencies in a country in which there are many skill concept. They are also aware that as a disadvantage, all trainers must be retrained to acquire the knowledge, values and competencies to implement OBE and that whether AB or BS Psychology, male or female, there is no difference as to how aware the respondents are on the advantages and disadvantages of outcomes based education.

Outcomes-based Education (OBE) is known to be a performance-based approach at the cutting edge of curriculum development which offers a powerful and appealing way of reforming and managing education (Harden, 2009). It is an approach to education in which decisions about the curriculum are driven by the exit learning outcomes that the students should display at the end of the course (Caguimbal, et.al, 2013). For the past years, the academic community became more and more concerned in producing graduates who possess the necessary competencies and skills to perform well in their chosen career. In countries like Africa for example, OBE was introduced during the last decade as one of the measures to improve the quality of education and to address the demands for an increasingly skilled working force. It was introduced in South Africa on the assumption that it would lead to an increase in the quality of education that South African learners attain in schools(Botha, 2010). Outcomes-based education has also been one of the most important trends in health-profession education in recent years which provides a framework based on the three-circle model: what the doctor should be able to do ('doing the right thing'), the approaches to doing it ('doing the thing right') and the development of the individual as a professional ('the right person doing it') (Davis, 2016; Harden, Crosby, Davis, &Friedman, 2009). Even vocation education and training system opted to implement outcomes based education (Oates, 2004).

Caguimbal, et al (2013) stresses that the shift towards outcomes-based education is analogous to the total quality movement in business and manufacturing. It reflects a belief that the best way for individuals and organizations to get to where they are going is first to determine where they are and where they want to be, then plan backwards to determine the way to get from here to there. Outcomes-based education is a process that involves the restructuring of curriculum, assessment and reporting practices in education to reflect the achievement of high order learning and mastery rather than the accumulation of "course credits". But this educational framework is far more complicated that what it seems. As some curriculum planner puts it, the approaches involved need to emphasize important adult education themes: student autonomy; learning from experience; collaborative learning; and adult teacher–learner relationships, among others. There is a need for learning environment that values the social nature of learning. This is fostered through the program's design and assessment system, which supports interdisciplinary integration and rewards students who exhibit self-direction. Assessment should incorporate criterion referencing, interdisciplinary examinations, a balance between continuous and barrier assessments, peer feedback and performance assessments of professional competence (McNeil, Hughes, Toohey& Dowton, 2009)

Along with OBE, the concept of learning outcomes and outcome-based education is high on today's education agenda (Harden, 2009). Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate at the end of a period of learning. They are explicit statements about the outcomes of learning – the results of learning. They are usually defined in terms of a mixture of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and understanding that an individual will attain as a result of his or her successful engagement in a particular set of higher education experiences. (Adam, n.d.). As pointed out by Kennedy (2007), when writing learning outcomes it is helpful to make use of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. This classification or categorization of levels of thinking behaviour provides a ready-made structure and list of verbs to assist in writing learning outcomes. Most learning outcomes describe evidence of learning in areas like knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. This

area is known as the cognitive domain. The other two main domains are the affective domain (attitudes, feelings, values) and the psychomotor domain (physical skills).
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Outcome-based education offers many advantages as a way of achieving this. It emphasizes relevance in the curriculum and accountability, and can provide a clear and unambiguous framework for curriculum planning which has an intuitive appeal. It encourages the teacher and the student to share responsibility for learning and it can guide student assessment and course evaluation. What sort of outcomes should be covered in a curriculum, how should they be assessed and how should outcome-based education be implemented are issues that need to be addressed (Harden, 2009). But despite its many rewards, outcomes based education like any other innovation, probably has its downside. There are reports that its implementation is accompanied by a range of political and technical problems, including tensions between the summative and formative purposes of assessment and doubts surrounding the validity and reliability of teacher-constructed assessment tasks (Brindly, 2015). One of the problems involved in this issue is that curriculum designers and teachers control product-orientated curricula, leading to student disempowerment. A research done by Reese in 2004 debated outcomes-based curricula from an ideological perspective and argues that learning outcomes cannot specify exactly what is to be achieved as a result of learning. The study argues that schools should adopt a model for co-operative control of the curriculum, thus empowering learners. It also suggests that educators should determine the value of precise learning outcomes before blindly adopting an outcomes-based model.

The goal of this research is identify how aware are the psychology graduating students on the advantages and disadvantages of outcomes-based education. This is particularly important for the college to assess where they stand in helping the students cultivate their knowledge in passing the psychometrician board exam and the skills in becoming competent and ethical psychometricians.

METHODS
Respondents of the Study
The respondents of the study were 61 presumed graduating AB and BS Psychology students under the College of Arts and Sciences. They are expected to graduate for Academic Year 2016-17.

Instrumentation
The researchers used a questionnaire for the purpose of collecting the needed data. The instrument was a validated instrument used by Caguimbal, et al. (2013) in their paper about the perception of students of Lyceum International Maritime Academy on outcomes based education. It was divided into two (3) parts: Part 1 identified the respondents' gender and academic program, part 2 presented items regarding the advantages of outcomes based education and part 3 presented items on its disadvantages.

Data Collection Procedure
The questionnaire was considered as the most appropriate data-gathering instrument for this descriptive research study. The researcher requested for the cooperation of presumed graduating Psychology students for Academic Year 2016-17. The respondents were oriented about the objectives of the study and clarified to them the instructions on how to

respond to the questionnaire. After distribution, the researcher retrieved the questionnaires.. Data were then tallied, statistically treated, analyzed and interpreted.

Data Analysis
The statistical tools used for the quantitative analysis in this study were the following: weighted mean was used to describe how aware are the respondents on the advantages and disadvantages of outcomes based education and the following measures were used: (4) 3.51- 4.00 for strongly agree orvery much aware, (3) 2.51- 3.50 for agree or aware, (2) 1.51-2.50 for disagree or not so aware and (1) 1.00- 1.50 for strongly disagree or totally not aware. Pearson r was used to determine significant difference on the respondents' awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of outcomes based education when grouped according to gender and academic program.

Ethical Consideration
A letter was given to each of the respondents, requesting them to participate in the said research. They were assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents

Profile		Frequency	Percentage
Degree Program	AB Psychology	14	23.00
	BS Psychology	47	77.00
Gender	Male	9	14.80
	Female	52	85.20
Total Number of Respondents= 61			

Table 1 shows the profile of the graduating Psychology students who were considered as the respondents of the study. It was shown that out of the 61 respondents, 47 or 77% were enrolled in BS Psychology program while 14 of them or 23% were enrolled in AB Psychology program.

Table 2
Description of How Aware the Respondents are on the Advantages of
Outcomes Based Education (OBE)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1.Learners know what is exactly expected of them as unit standards make it very clear what is required of them.	3.08	Aware	8
2.There is greater buy-in and support for OBE from all role-players due to the extensive level of consultation and stakeholder involvement.	3.10	Aware	7
3.Well-defined assessment criteria makes it clear to both assessors and learners how assessment will take place.	3.26	Aware	3

4.Assessment is more objective and fair as a result of pre-determined assessment criteria.	3.23	Aware	4
5.OBE promotes the acquisition of the specific skills and competencies in a country in which there are many skill concept.	3.38	Aware	1
6.OBE fosters a better integration between education at school, workplace, and higher education level.	3.20	Aware	6
7.OBE helps learners to accept responsibility for learning, as they are now at the center of the learning process.	3.34	Aware	2
8.OBE recognizes prior learning which prevents the duplication and repetition of previous learning situations.	3.21	Aware	5
Average	3.23	Aware	

Table 2 describes how aware are the respondents on the advantages of outcomes-based education (OBE). Respondents reported that they are aware on all the indicators presented wherein item number 5 or "OBE promotes the acquisition of the specific skills and competencies in a country in which there are many skill concept." was the first in rank with a weighted mean of 3.38. Second in ranking is the item "OBE helps learners to accept responsibility for learning, as they are now at the center of the learning process." with a weighted mean of 3.34. Ranked last is the item "Learners know what is exactly expected of them as unit standards make it very clear what is required of them.", obtaining a weighted mean of 3.08.

The average weighted mean of 3.23 indicates that the respondents are aware of the advantages of the outcomes based education program which means that the graduating psychology students are convinced that the outcomes based education program promotes the acquisition of the specific skills and competencies in a country in which there are many skill concept. As Crespo (2010) puts it, in outcome based learning, learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) to be achieved by learners are in the focal point of the learning process. All educational activities and resources need to be related to the intended learning outcomes of a learning module or course, in order to assist the learners in successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes at the end of the learning experience.

Table 3
Description of How Aware the Respondents are on the Disadvantages of
Outcomes Based Education (OBE)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1.Most learners are not ready to adopt the OBE because the gap between a trainer-led system and a learner-centered approach does not happen overnight.	2.95	Aware	6
2.OBE requires that all learning materials be rewritten which requires a major investment in time and resources.	3.36	Aware	2

3.The process of generating and registering of unit standards is very slow.	2.92	Aware	7
4.People with vested interests and strong personalities in standard-generating bodies may manipulate the standard setting process to achieve their own objectives.	3.07	Aware	5
5.OBE requires quality assurance systems which were not part of the previous educational dispensation.	3.21	Aware	3
6.The scope in greater variety and application of OBE assessment methods are extremely time-consuming to implement.	3.10	Aware	4
7.All trainers must be retrained to acquire the knowledge, values and competencies to implement OBE.	3.44	Aware	1
Average	3.15	Aware	

Table 3 describes how aware the respondents are on the disadvantages of outcomes based education (OBE). Indicator which states that "All trainers must be retrained to acquire the knowledge, values and competencies to implement OBE." got the highest mean of 3.44 interpreted as aware. Second in ranking is indicator which states that "OBE requires that all learning materials be rewritten which requires a major investment in time and resources." with a weighted mean of 3.36 also interpreted as aware. Ranked last is the indicator which states that "The process of generating and registering of unit standards is very slow." having obtained a weighted mean of 2.92 still interpreted as aware.

Generally, the graduating Psychology students are aware of the disadvantages of outcomes based education (OBE) as revealed in the average weighted mean of 3.15. This means that the respondents are aware that all trainers must be retrained to acquire the knowledge, values and competencies to implement OBE. Nusche (2008) stressed the challenge for higher educational institutions to equip teachers in implementing outcomes based education. Accordingly, HEI's focus on inputs, activities and research outputs, such as resources used, classes taught, and articles published. Kilen (2000) argues that in outcomes based education, teachers need to understand how they can translate the theory and philosophy of OBE into practical action in their instructional planning, teaching and assessment of student learning. In his study, teachers were challenged to question their current teaching practices and to find ways in which some of the philosophies of outcomes-based education can be incorporated into their teaching.

Table 4
Difference on How Aware the Respondents Are in the Advantages of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) when grouped according to Profile

	Profile	Mean	Test Statistics	Interpretation
Degree Program	AB Psychology	3.32	U=260.00 z=1.203 p=0.229	Not Significant
	BS Psychology	3.20		
			U=205	

Gender	Male	3.26	z=0.599	Not Significant
	Female	3.22	p=0.549	
Significance level @ 0.05				

Table 4 shows the significant difference on how aware the respondents are in the advantages of outcomes based education (OBE) when grouped according to profile variables. As to the degree program, the computed p-value of 0.229 is higher than .05 level of significance, thus no significant difference was noted on how aware the respondents are in the advantages of outcomes based education when grouped according to degree program. As to gender, the computed p-value of 0.549 is higher than .05 level of significance, thus no significant difference was noted on how aware the respondents are in the advantages of outcomes based education when grouped according to gender. This means that the respondents whether AB or BS Psychology, male or female, there is no difference as to how aware they are on the advantages of outcomes based education.

Table 5
Difference on How Aware the Respondents Are in the Disadvantages of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) when grouped according to Profile

Profile		Mean	Test Statistics	Interpretation
Degree Program	AB Psychology	3.19	U=294 z=0.620 p=0.535	Not Significant
	BS Psychology	3.14		
Gender	Male	3.26	U=146 z=1.849 p=0.64	Not Significant
	Female	3.22		
Significance level @ 0.05				

Table 5 shows the significant difference on how aware the respondents are in the disadvantages of outcomes based education (OBE) when grouped according to profile variables. As to the degree program, the computed p-value of 0.535 is higher than .05 level of significance, thus no significant difference was noted on how aware the respondents are in the disadvantages of outcomes based education when grouped according to degree program. As to gender, the computed p-value of 0.064 is higher than .05 level of significance, thus no significant difference was noted on how aware the respondents are in the disadvantages of outcomes based education when grouped according to gender. This means that the respondents whether AB or BS Psychology, male or female, there is no difference as to how aware they are on the disadvantages of outcomes based education.

Caguimbal, et al (2013) emphasized that educational institutions need to continuously provide quality education enhance students' knowledge and skills and implementing outcomes based education is essential in doing so. In implementing outcomes based education, as McNeila, McNeila, Hughesa, Tooheya & Dowtona (2009) put it, an innovative approach needs to be in place. It involves student autonomy, learning from experience, collaborative learning, and adult teacher–learner relationships, among others.. There is also a need for a learning environment that values the social nature of learning is fostered through the program's design and assessment system, which supports

interdisciplinary integration and rewards students who exhibit self-direction. Assessment techniques need to incorporate criterion referencing, interdisciplinary examinations, a balance between continuous and barrier assessments, peer feedback and performance assessments of clinical competence. A portfolio examination in each phase is also encouraged, in which students submit evidence of reflection and achievement for each capability, ensures overall alignment.

Conclusion

After analyzing the significant findings, the following conclusions were drawn: out of the 61 respondents, 47 or 77% were enrolled in BS Psychology program while 14 of them or 23% were enrolled in AB Psychology program. The average weighted mean of 3.23 indicates that the respondents are aware of the advantages of the outcomes based education program which means that the graduating psychology students are convinced that the outcomes based education program promotes the acquisition of the specific skills and competencies in a country in which there are many skill concept. The graduating Psychology students are also aware of the disadvantages of outcomes based education (OBE) as revealed in the average weighted mean of 3.15 which means that the respondents are aware that all trainers must be retrained to acquire the knowledge, values and competencies to implement OBE. And lastly, whether AB or BS Psychology, male or female, there is no difference as to how aware the respondents are on the advantages and disadvantages of outcomes based education.

Direction for future use

It is important that the instructors continuously remind the students what is exactly expected of them for each enrolled course. Such standards are clarified in the assessment requirements and rubrics provided to them. It is also important for the school administrators to enhance the skills and competencies of instructors so that they will be able to implement suitable teaching strategies for students to be acquire the professional competencies needed in the world of work. This could be done through sustainable training and continuous educational program.

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