Professionalization of ACE Teachers and Trainers in the Philippines: The TM+ (Trainer's and Assessor's Methodology Course) Module

Leonardo Rey "Bing" S. Cariño
Coordinator of Community Extension Program
Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges
General Santos City, Philippines

Asia-Europe Meeting
ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning

Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung Leibniz-Zentrum für Lebenslanges Lernen

Romanian Institute for Adult Education

RAMON MAGSAYSAY MEMORIAL COLLEGES RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Introduction

When the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) was created, it devolved into an Authority by replacing and absorbing functions of the National Manpower and Youth Council (NMYC), the Bureau of Technical and Vocational Education (BTVE). The personnel and function of the technical-vocational education in the regional offices of the Department of Education Culture and Sports (DECS) was also incorporated into this merger. As a consequence, the enactment of Republic Act 7796 or the TESDA Act of 1994, a new niche in the teaching profession was created: Teachers/trainers for lifelong learning.

TESDA Trainers are expected to impart attitudes, knowledge, skills and behavior patterns required for specific jobs, tasks, occupations or group of related occupations. These trainers shall deliver skills development and technical education process to post-secondary and lower tertiary level learners. Opportunities to acquire and upgrade, or both, the ability, knowledge and behavior pattern required as qualifications for a job or range of jobs in a given occupation area and the delivery of education process recognized as non-degree programs aimed at preparing technicians, paraprofessionals and other categories of middle level workers by providing them with a broad range of general education, theoretical, scientific, and technological studies and related job skills training," are the agenda of Lifelong Learning education in the Philippines in the formal education front.

Training the Trainer: The Delivery of the TM+ Module

The TVET Trainers and teachers

TESDA education is delivered in a "Dual System Training" which refers to a delivery system of quality technical and vocational education which requires training to be carried out alternately in two venues: In-school and in the production plant. It is in these provisions of the RA 7796 that a new kind of teacher is in demand: a person who excels in both the trade and in the methods of teaching.

Training the Trainer: Elements TM+ Module

Teachers and trainers in Technical/Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system need to standardize the teaching methodology vis-à-vis the standards expected in the workplace. Guided by training regulations developed by the leaders in the identified priority sectors and pass the required TM+ course, the TVET trainers are sure to deliver the TVET quality assurance mechanisms.

The TM+ contains two course- TM 1 (Trainer's training Methodology Course) and AM 1 (Assessor's Methodology Course). Until this year, the two courses are taken separately with the accomplishment of the National Competency (NC) 1 of the chosen trade area they are teaching in between. Note that to also qualify as trainer one has to earn competency in a sector/occupation or trade area. The two basic methodology courses are now collapsed into TM+ taken before or after the NC.

TM 1 has four units of competencies, each having several Learning Objectives (LO). The first Unit of competency, "Plan Training Sessions" orients the learners with the methods of identifying the learner's training requirements, Training session planning techniques and contents building of a training session, as well as the preparation of instructional materials and organizing the learning and teaching resources.

The second Unit of Competency (UC), "Deliver CBT Session" is the meat of the delivery of TVET. In this Training session the principles of Competency-Based Training are discussed. This UC aims to accomplish five LOs- from the preparation to the facilities to conducting pre- assessment, followed by the actual facilitation of the transfer of skills to the conduct of the institutional assessment. This UC also instills the discipline of double checking by including the review of the Plan at the end of this module.

The Third UC prepares the LLL teacher in another task which is the understanding of the skills of assessing the acquired skills of the learners, by planning and conducting Institutional assessment.

The fourth and crucial element of technical/vocational education is the learner's behavior inside the workplace- "Maintaining facilities and equipment". Here, the learners learn two LOs – Implement Housekeeping activities, and maintain facilities and tools. International Standards of Operation (ISO) like the 5S approach in organizing and maintaining the shop, waste management and segregation, etc. are given attention.

AM 1 contains two units of competencies: Plan Competency Assessment and Conduct Competency Assessment. Here the teacher-trainees learn the TVET competency assessment/measurement methodology.

Like all the Training Sessions in TVET, topics in TM+ are delivered in several training methods: oral presentation, simulation, group work, demonstration, laboratory work, assignments, group discussion, computer based learning, on-the-job learning, lecture discussion, illustrated discussion and role playing.

Use of the Training Regulations

Very often in the conduct of the training, the Trainees for TM+ consult Training Regulations (TR) of their corresponding NCs. These Training Regulations (TRs) are developed in consultation with industry leaders and promulgated by the TESDA Board. The training regulations consist of the competency standards, training standards and assessment and certification arrangements. These spell out the parameters of ensuring quality in the delivery of a TVET program. The training regulations also serve as the basis for the development of curriculum and instructional materials and competency assessment packages for competency based technical and skills development.

Assessment of the TM+ Competency

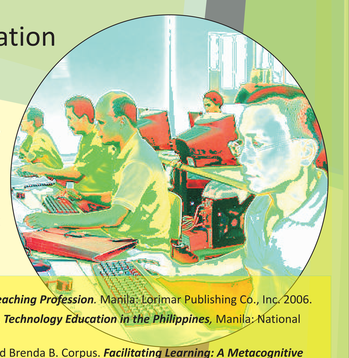
NC style assessment is given after the delivery of these two methodology courses for teachers and assessors are given to determine if certification I due and deserved by the Teacher-trainee. Indeed the learning styles and behavior of adult learners are matched with the role and responsibility of a trainer. The Conduct of TM+ is a simulation of the whole TVET skills development and technical education delivery.

Beyond TM+

Poverty continues to plague a large segment of Philippine society. Poverty incidence in the country or the proportion of families with per capita income below poverty threshold increased from 28.1% in 1997 to 28.4 in 2004-an increase of 0.3 percentage points This means that a growing number of people do not have capacity to provide for their basic needs more so to acquire education that will empower them to get a decent job and lead a better quality of life. The issue on access to education and training opportunities comes to fore. (Philippine TVET Outlook 2005-2010 p. 17).

Starting 2006, the national TVET Trainers-Assessors Development Program have been implementing the PTTQF with the delivery of trainings and awarding of qualifications in Training Methodology from the TESDA Technology Institutes in eight priority sectors. This initiative resulted with the recognition/ accreditation of lead trainers to conduct training in the regions until the backbone for the implementation of training, assessment and certification programs nationwide is established.

The establishment of lead trainers in the regions allowed a wider/decentralized mode of delivery. Training the trainer in TM1 and TM2 in the regions are conducted by the regional offices only TM 3 and TM 4 are conducted at the National Institute of Technical/Vocational Education and Training (NITVET) in Manila. This early only 2 sectors have the technology level of NC IV; hence the need for a wider distribution of TM III and IV is not yet immediate. But as some sectors begin to upgrade their technological competencies the NITVET should anticipate the development of Lead Trainers in higher TMs in the Regional Offices to maintain the quality of Tech/Voc Education in the Philippines.



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