Preparedness of Teacher Candidates and Problems Faced by Teachers in the Beginning Years of Teaching

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Abstract
This paper reports the preparedness and skills of teacher-candidates as instructors, managers, and supervisors. Framework of twenty-first skills by (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2012) was the founding principle to interpret the respondents' beliefs towards their preparation to teach. All 256 respondents are expected to graduate in 2018 and their courses are coded as teacher candidate or TC1(51), TC2 (13), TC3 (29), TC4 (27), TC5 (26), TC6 (57), and TC7 (24). Categories of their skills and preparedness reported in the teacher-made questionnaire and open-ended questions underscore the "uncertainty" of respondents and "very strong agreement". Answers of respondents towards their reported skills were matched with their knowledge and instructional practice. The paper ends with recommendations to address "uncertain" instructional practice and ultimately improve teacher education curriculum. In addition, the paper includes a report on problems faced by practicing teachers, graduates of Pampanga State Agricultural University- College of Education in the interest to match their problems and current anticipations of teacher candidates.
Keywords: Teacher Education Curriculum, Preparedness, Problems in their First Year of Teaching, 21st Century Skills

1. Introduction
Teacher candidates (TCs) are honed and shaped by theoretical and pedagogical knowledge and expectedly their instructional practice should at least reflect a level of preparedness. The extant literatures underscore the link between preparedness and self-efficacy (Giallo & Little, 2004); success in educational reform (Kagoda & Itaaga, 2013); responsive teaching (Ellerbrock, Cruz, Vasquez, & Howes, 2016). Preparedness of teacher candidates during their training in the education program surely helps in the development and confidence of their abilities. Clearly, colleges catering to teacher education must address this need to prepare teacher candidates.

21st century skills of a teacher
The skills demanded by the Department of Education and Commission on Higher Education are priming on skills of collaboration, flexibility, innovation, and technology-driven. 21st century skills as collectively known and cited by Corpuz & Salandanan (2012) are the following - communication, learning & innovation, information, media & technology, life and career skills. Under each of these four clusters of 21st century skills are specific skills. Effective communication skills include teaming, collaboration, interpersonal skills, local, national and global orientedness, and interactive communication. Next, the learning and innovation skills are the 3Cs namely, creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and risk-taking. The third, life and career skills include flexibility and adaptability, leadership and responsibility, social and cultural skills, initiative and self-direction, productivity and accountability, and ethical, moral, and spiritual values. Finally, information, media and technology skills include visual and information literacies, media literacy, basic scientific and technological literacies and multicultural literacies.

Teaching 21st Century Knowledge and Skills
Skills of teachers demanded of them include creativity and innovation, communication and collaboration, research and information literacy, critical thinking and problem-solving, and digital citizenship, technology literacy and growth and leadership.

The preceding skills are 21st century which require training and administration support. Professional development is crucial to attaining the skills.

The readiness of pre-service teachers towards attaining these skills should be a priority of any administrator. In addition, the "how to teach" of these skills to a pre-service teacher is very important

According to Windshilt, Thompson, & Braten (2009) the following are examples of concrete support for the teaching of 21st century skills : (a) video-enhanced learning progression (b) discourse tools; and (c) rubrics

Moreover, Windshilt (2009) further explains two important things in teaching 21st century skills will require two important things. First, years of coherent teaching, reflection and professional development. Second, it will require reengineering of many interrelated components of the education system.

Preparing Pre-service Teachers
A solid professional development program is needed to create 21st century-ready students and instructors (Mishra & Wolf, 2009). Technological and pedagogical content knowledge should transfer into classroom practice. There are four (4) key phases of training and development program (p. 13): (1) understand training gaps; (2) develop skills; (3) analyze progress; (4) technical training and support.

The skills required for college or university students should be useful to them in their workplace: creativity and innovation; communication and collaboration; research and information literacy; critical thinking and problem-solving; digital citizenship; technology literacy; and growth and leadership. More importantly these skills will spell the economic success in a country (p. 9). According to Autor, Levy & Murnane (2003) the demands for skills have changed, skills are no longer for career success but for personal and civic quality of life. P21 (or Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2010) asserts that the fundamental changes in the economy, jobs, and businesses are driving new different skill demands.

How will 21st Century Skills be Taught?
Students must master a blend of content, knowledge, specific skills, expertise, and literacies (p.8).

Teachers should infuse the following in most content areas: critical and problem solving, collaboration, multi-media communication (p.9). Furthermore, P21 assert that any teacher-education program should consider the following instructional models in the interest of infusing the said skills: (a) integrate "teach for understanding principles"; (b) create rich clinical experience; (c) create vibrate learning communities and peer mentoring networks; (d) examine the role of content, pedagogy and technologies in developing higher order thinking skills.

Classroom Problems
Classroom behavior problems are a principle source of stress and burnout for both new and experienced teachers (Giallo & Little, 2004). Adapting classroom management strategies and varied instructional practice are both content and pedagogical knowledge a teacher candidate is exposed during the training. However, actual application of this knowledge needs time and experience. TCs who actualize or display their preparedness in terms of instruction, management and supervision will inevitably be susceptible to problems in teaching especially in their first year of teaching. Britman (1986) maintains that teacher candidates face massive challenge of reinterpreting years of experiences in light of the theoretical and pedagogical foundation. As novice teacher, problems in instruction, management and supervision are not concordant with the level of preparedness they bring to the classroom and ultimately in the institution. That is why preservice teachers must at least recognize their vulnerability in the beginning year of their teaching.

Studying the beliefs of TCs' instructional practice is as important in recognizing the problems they might be encountering in their novice years of teaching. Giallo & Little (2003) argue that following an established causal relationship, perceived preparedness is likely linked to the development of self-efficacy. From the perspectives of practicing teachers, the problems can likely be avoided if TCs are told of the probable instructional, management and supervision problems. Bartell (2004) asserts that new teachers bring varying backgrounds, motivation, experiences and preparation levels to their initial teaching experience. It is possible that problems arise from this condition. In the study of Bartell, a comprehensive induction program was developed to address the categorical needs of teachers - procedural, managerial, instructional, psychological, professional, cultural, and political.

This paper raises questions about the (a) preparedness of teacher candidates with the demands of DepEd & CHEd's 21st century skills; (b) preparedness of teacher candidates with pedagogical knowledge in terms of instruction, management, and supervision; and (b) determine the problems faced by practicing teachers in their novice years of teaching. This paper questions teacher candidates' needs and curriculum fulfillment in the teacher education program that can be improved or remedied if detected early on.

This paper is anchored on Bartell's categories of teachers' needs and the 21st century skills of teachers according to Corpuz and Salandanan (2012). In addition, in the study of Bartell (2004), categories of teachers' needs were cited in the current study. Below is a comprehensive needs of teachers with corresponding instances of each category. See Figure 1. *Bartell's Needs of Teachers*

The needs of the teachers according to Bartell include procedural, managerial, psychological, instructional, professional, cultural, and political.

The framework of P21 (or the 21st century skills) is headed by an international group of education officials and has inspired other countries such as the Philippines. Below is a figure representing the four categories of 21st century skills. See Figure 2. *Framework of P21 or 21st Century Skills*

The 21st century skills in the book of Salandanan and Corpuz are in consonance with the framework of P21 which include the 4 C's (creativity or learning innovation, communication, ICT, life and career or citizenship).

2. Methodology
The current study generally used quantitative design with frequency count and mean. Answers from open-ended questions were coded. Problems faced by graduates of PSAU were categorized following Bartell's category of teachers' need.

2.1 Respondents
There were two groups of respondents - teacher candidates or graduating students (256) and practicing teachers or graduates of PSAU-College of Education (72). Graduating students of PSAU from the College of Education

were the respondents and coded as TC or teacher candidates, hence, TC1, TC2, TC3,   TC4, TC5, TC6, and TC7. Graduating students of PSAU. There were 72 graduates of PSAU who answered the survey questionnaire. Graduates (or alumni) were located by the students of the researcher. Some alumni are relatives of the students.

2.2 Instruments

There were two sets of questionnaires- one for TC and another for practicing teachers. The first questionnaire contains a 3-likert scale about the skills of the TC. It also contains another 4-likert scale about their agreement towards their IMS or Instruction, Management, and Supervision. The last part of the questionnaire contains open-ended questions about the kind of problems they think are common in the profession. Next, the questionnaire intended for the practicing teachers contain a number of open-ended questions. For example, which problems have they met in their beginning year of teaching and another question about the teacher-education curriculum of PSAU. The following sets of scale were used to analyze the data:

For Part 2 Questionnaire

4.00-3.50   Very Prepared (VP)

3.49-3.00   Prepared (P)

2.99-2.00   Quite Prepared (QP)

1.99-below Not Prepared (NP)

For Part 3 Questionnaire

3.00 - 2.50   (Strongly Agree)

2.49 -1.50   (Neutral)

1.49 - 1.00   (Strongly Disagree)

   In order to determine **Teacher Candidates or** TC's preparedness of skills and their views about their teaching profession, the researcher developed and floated the survey questionnaire.

   Next, in order to determine the problems met by the graduates during their novice year of teaching, a survey questionnaire containing open-ended questions was floated. The researchers' students in Educ 11 (The Teaching Profession) were given each to float.

2.3 Analysis & Interpretation

a. Preparedness Level. Data collected from the survey questionnaires about the teacher candidates' level of preparedness (21st century skills and IMS or instruction, management and supervision) was tabulated using a frequency table with frequency, mean, percentage. Below are the instructions provided to the respondents:

Describe your level of agreement (or disagreement) by placing a check mark.

How prepared are you in the teaching profession in terms of the 21st century skills (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2012)?

How prepared are you in the teaching profession in terms of : instruction, classroom management, administration? Rate your agreement (or disagreement) in the kind of preparedness towards instruction, management and administration. (SA- Strongly Agree, N-Neutral, SD- Strongly Disagree)

b. Interview. Questions for the interview were formulated in order to supplement self-reports of the teacher candidates. Reports of the teacher candidates regarding their preparedness were cross-sectionally analyzed with their answers from the interview. Same questions were also asked to practicing teachers (alumni) of CoEd. Below is a list of interview guide questions:

How do COEd students view themselves in the teaching profession?

1.   Do you see yourself in this profession few years from now?

2.   If your answer in number 1 is yes, what makes you think that this is your profession?

3.   If not, what profession do you think will you likely be in? Why?

4.   Are there problems or concerns in "teaching profession" that you think should be prioritized by the teacher?by the administration? Why?

5.   What will your advice be to someone who would like to start a career in this profession?

6.   Has the curriculum provided you enough confidence to teach?Why?

7.   What are your expectations after finishing this pre-service education program?

3. Result and Discussion

	TC1 BEEd (N=51)	TC2 PSED (N= 13)	TC3 PHYSCI (N=29)	TC4 ENGLISH (N=27)	TC5 MATH (N=26)	TC6 TLE (N=97)	TC7 PEHM (N=24)
C	3.04 (P)	3.00 (P)	3.03 (P)	2.89 (QP)	3.19 (P)	3.14 (P)	3.29 (P)
LI	2.98 (QP)	2.92 (QP)	3.03 (P)	2.96 (QP)	3.23 (P)	3.10 (P)	3.08 (P)
IMT	3.02 (P)	3.25 (P)	3.31 (P)	3.15 (P)	3.23 (P)	3.08 (P)	3.17 (P)
LC	3.20 (P)	2.67 (QP)	3.21 (P)	3.07 (P)	3.46 (P)	3.12 (P)	3.17 (P)

Table 1. Preparedness of Teacher Candidates towards 21st Century Skills

Table 1 shows preparedness level of the teacher-candidates (TCs) in terms of the 21st century skills. The results show that TC1, TC2, TC4 are "quite prepared" in terms of communication (C), learning and innovation (LI) and life and career (LC). This result is quite surprising because this skill is (supposedly)very important to English majors (or TC4). The level of preparedness in terms of communication could be understood following a reconciliation of respondents' answers to interview questions about problems and concerns they wanted to prioritize in the teaching profession. Some of the respondents from TC4 report problems such as facilities and learning environment (R14) (R24), students and resources (R7), facilities, equipment, and materials (R6, R1) individual differences (R25, R21, R18).

Some of the respondents from TC2 report managerial problems such as facilities and learning environment (R14) (R24), students and resources (R7), facilities, equipment, and materials (R6, R1) individual differences (R25, R21, R18). According to Bartell et al. (2001), managerial problems include classroom management strategies, getting materials and supplies, time management, setting up the classroom, scheduling, taking attendance, grading practices, and keeping records. In the current study, it particularly refers to classroom management strategies, resources of the teacher candidates which appear to affect TC2's preparedness level in terms of communication.

Moreover, another interview question that TCs reveal was their view about their curriculum being able to provide them confidence to teach. Their answers to this interview question can also be reconciled with their level of preparedness. For instance, TC2 appears to be affected by their views about their curriculum. Some TC2 respondents report, "The curriculum has not provided me enough confidence. My future experience will fill what is lacking (R18)." Another report, " Not really because (some times) there were times wasted due to many holidays and no classes (R22)."

The reports of TC2 respondents reveal that they feel less about their curriculum and consequently feel less prepared to teach. In sum, preparedness of teacher candidates is generally prepared. Self-reports of preparedness could have been under rated or overestimated by the TCs but the reported problems and their doubts towards the teacher education curriculum could be plausible reasons for rating themselves lower or higher in their preparedness to teach.

Table 2. Teacher Candidates' Preparedness (Instruction, Management, and Supervision)

	TC1 BEEd (N=51)	TC2 PSED (N= 13)	TC3 PHYSCI (N=29)	TC4 ENGLISH (N=27)	TC5 MATH (N=26)	TC6 TLE (N=97)	TC7 PEHM (N=24)
Instruction (I)	2.68 (SA)	2.55 (SA)	2.74 (SA)	2.65 (SA)	2.74 (SA)	2.67 (SA)	2.80 (SA)
Management (M)	2.61 (SA)	2.48 (N)	2.54 (SA)	2.41 (N)	2.56 (SA)	2.48 (N)	2.67 (SA)
Supervision (S)	2.63 (SA)	2.47 (N)	2.66 (SA)	2.56 (SA)	2.66 (SA)	2.52 (SA)	2.64 (SA)

Table 2 shows the teacher candidates' (TCs) level of preparedness in terms of instruction, management, and supervision (IMS). In terms of Instruction, all groups "strongly agree" that they are prepared. However, TC2, TC4 and TC6 report "neutral" in terms of Management. In terms of managing a class, TC2, TC4 and TC6 report Neutral to statements which are pertaining to dealing with students' behavior; planning activities in a calm or orderly fashion; strategies to discipline and; finishing a lesson with no worries of class participation and attention.

Some of the answers of TC4 and TC6 to questions about the teaching profession in the part three of the questionnaire seem in consonance with their uncertainty or unpreparedness to manage a class. Respondents 2, 3 and 8 report, "My skills will improve and will learn more strategies to apply in teaching." " I think I should

prioritize the discipline of the pupils in order for them to acquire more knowledge." " Yes, disciplinary (discipline) problem." The reports of some teacher candidates reflect uncertainty of abilities particularly problems in managing a class. It is noteworthy that reports of problems about classroom management strategies in the interview match their level of preparedness in terms of IMS. Some TC's level of preparedness of 21st century skills can be compromised by the problems they foresee once they have their own classroom to manage. Excerpts from the interview are as follows:

"Students are are not interested in studying (R25)." I think the classroom management should be prioritized ((R5, R20). "Behavior of students (R3, R5, R4, R6)." Teacher candidates from TC4 group also report some problems in the teaching profession. Respondents 21, 25 and 18 report, "I think teachers *should address the individual differences of learners."* R21 also reports about confidence to teach, *"I think not enough confidence has been provided to me because I think I am yet to gain this because I still lack experience."*

In terms of supervision, teacher candidates appear to **Strongly Agree** that they can handle supervisory functions. However, only TC2 reports **Neutral** to statements about supervision with a mean score of 2.47.

Supervision in this current study refers to the confidence of TC before a committee of teachers which might be an extra challenging or over demanding statement) to TC2 but across all groups, this could send a signal that TCs need to prepare, plan, and more importantly, needs concrete instructional support to build courage and confidence while in the teacher-education program.

Next, with the question raised about problems experienced by practicing teachers (CoEd *graduates),* results show that they have encountered managerial, procedural, psychological, and professional problems. Below is a summary of their report:

Managerial
Respondents report lack of instructional materials, student behaviors, number of students, rooms (R5, R10, R7, R1, R6, R13, R14, R22, R25, R28, R32 R56, R57, R62, R28) and books aligned with K-12 (R27), availability of materials (R34) or materials needed in teaching (R34). Moreover, they also report lack of activities (R17, R23); outdoor lessons (R70), different methods (R31).

Procedural
Respondents report reconsideration of child-protection policy (R54), teacher-welfare policy (R55); salary (R61); system (R49, R53), paperwork (R4, 11, R12, R13, R21, R27, R58, R72).

Professional
One of the descriptors in the problems faced by beginning teachers is an "opportunity of professional development." Respondents report their needs of seminars and trainings to address teachers' computer illiteracy (R42, R52, R38, R37, R64, R19).

Psychological
Respondents report their needs - to relax (R72, R20); concentration (R71) when it comes to classroom management; flexibility (R26) when it comes to communicating with students.

In a nutshell, these problems reported by the respondents are relevant to any institution offering education programs because they could reveal the strength and lapses of a cooperating school and the mother institution; limitations and best practices of novice teachers and more importantly, recommend possible programs or activities.

5. Conclusion

Teacher candidates reported prepared in all the 21st century skills but it was noteworthy that a group specializing in English (as a major program) report a need to have more confidence. Perhaps, teacher candidates of this group felt less confident or feared over qualifying, hence under rated themselves. Also, the report might have been different if the researcher was not their teacher. In terms of learning and innovation skills, some groups also have doubts about their preparedness in the 21st century skills. In terms of information, media and technology, all teacher candidates report prepared but in terms of life and career skills, only one group doubted their preparedness which is not clear where the doubt was coming from because there were no problems raised in the open-ended questions. As a consequence of this result, the skills found to be strengthened by the teacher education are communication skills; learning and innovation; and life and career skills. Purposeful learning activities should be in placed for each skill. In addition, training teachers as to infusing 21st century skills in their lessons is an utmost concern. Support from the administrators is highly imperative.

Next, all teacher candidates report strong agreement in terms of handling Instruction but in terms of management, some groups report otherwise. The result suggests that they are not prepared to handle problem behaviors in the classroom. Plausible reasons for their doubts and uncertainty to manage a class points to the problems they have reported such as the lack of technology, instructional materials, teaching strategies of teachers, etc. In terms of supervision, only one group reports uncertain of their abilities to deal with supervisory functions and unfortunately, there are no reports of problems encountered by this group to explain their level of uncertainty to supervise. With the surprising result, a plan of action to intensify apparent needs of all teacher

candidates should be in placed. More importantly, assessing gaps in terms of understanding the 21st century skills, monitoring the progress, and continuing training are necessary in order to ascertain teachers' timely response to the demands of this century.

Finally, problems faced by respondents (graduates of COEd) in the beginning of their first year of teaching include managerial, instructional, procedural, psychological, and professional. Problems reported by CoEd graduates can be a point of concern for CoEd officials. Managerial problems include classroom strategies. This problem seemed to be commonly reported by teacher candidates and immediate review on reported problems of graduates should be done.
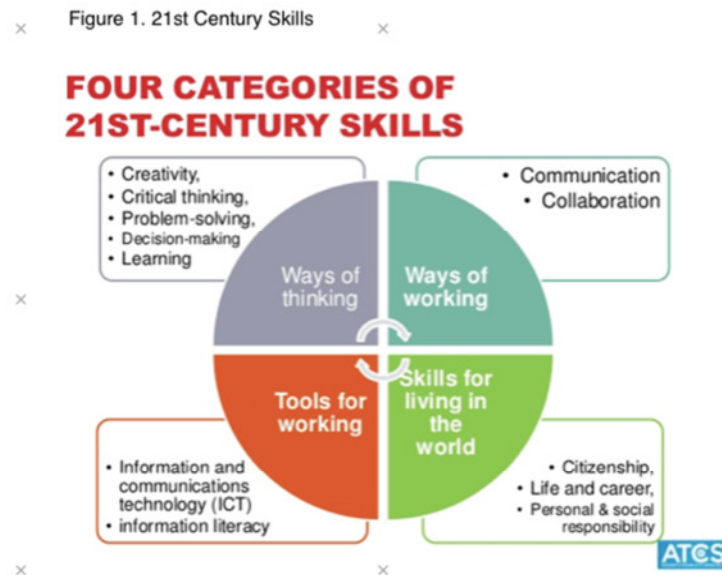
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Category	Examples
Procedural	Familiarity with school and district procedures and expectations for
Managerial	Classroom management strategies; time management; setting up the classroom; getting materials and supplies; scheduling; taking attendance; grading practices; keeping records
Psychological	Managing stress, gaining self-confidence; handling challenges and disappointments; transitioning from student to teacher role; attending to physical and emotional well-being
Instructional	Grade-level curriculum standards and expectations; lesson planning; instructional resources; assessing student progress and using results to shape instruction; using a variety of instructional practices; adapting instruction to meet individual student needs
Professional	Teaching norms and practices; appropriate boundaries and relationships between faculty and students; legal issues; the role of professional organizations; professional development opportunities
Cultural	Developing rapport with students and parents; understanding and appreciating environment; using community resources; valuing diversity; developing cultural proficiency
Political	Getting to know colleagues; contributing to extracurricular program; building relationships with colleagues, staff, and administrators; understanding the broader context of teaching and reform efforts

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 1. 21st Century Skills

	4	3	2	1
	Very Prepared	**Prepared**	**Quite Prepared**	**Not Prepared**
Communication (learning, collaboration, interpersonal, local, national and global orientedness, interactive communication)				
Learning and Innovation (creativity, curiosity, critical thinking problem solving skills, risk taking)				
Information, Media and Technology (visual and information literacies, media literacy, basic scientific and technological literacies, multicultural literacy)				
Life and Career (flexibility and adaptability, leadership and responsibility, social and cross-cultural skills, initiative and self-direction, productivity and accountability, ethical, moral and spiritual values)				

	3 SA	2 N	1 SD
1. I am prepared to teach a lesson with ardent desire to develop my students' skills and potentials.			
2. I am prepared to write my lesson plan with ease and confidence.			
3. I am prepared to present my lesson with confidence.			
4. I can intelligently select (supplementary) materials and other resources needed for my lesson.			
5. I can apply appropriate strategies and assessments after each lesson.			
6. I can deal with my students' misbehavior.			
7. I can handle my students' varying degrees of attitudes.			
8. I can organize a plan of activities in a calm and orderly fashion.			
9. I know some strategies to deal with class discipline.			
10. I can finish a lesson without worrying about class participation and attention.			
11. I can deliver a lesson before a committee of teachers.			
12. I can manage a conversation with my co-teachers.			
13. I can raise my points of view about my class with courtesy intact.			
14. I can talk to parents with a commanding voice and with a sense of intelligence.			
15. I can professionally present myself to school officials.			