



Falling Behind: Relevance of Teachers' Recruitment, Selection, and Placement to Filipino Students' Low Performance in International Learning Metrics

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Abstract: This paper examined the relevance of teachers' recruitment, selection, and placement to Filipino students' low performance in international learning metrics. This paper identified nepotism in recruitment and ranking, too document-based evaluation of qualifications, politics in hiring, and ranking and performance over localization as the main issues of concern in teachers' recruitment, selection, and placement. Furthermore, this paper suggests that the recruitment, selection, and placement (RSP) system of the Department of Education be examined as it should be aimed at ensuring that the organization and its manpower are able to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century with an emphasis on the delivery of quality, accessible, relevant, and liberating basic education.

Index Terms – teacher's recruitment, selection, placement, Filipino students' low performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) 2019 data released on December 2, 2020 indicate that grade five students in the Philippines are falling behind their counterparts in some Southeast Asian countries in reading, writing, and mathematics, with a significant proportion of students still performing at levels expected in early primary education. Department of Education, on the other hand, welcomed the regional report, stating in a press release issued on the same day as SEA-report PLM's that the metrics was developed to help countries across Southeast Asia better measure and understand learning outcomes in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Global Citizenship, and that the department will use the insights from these assessments to evaluate their short-, medium-, and long-term strategies.

While the result appears positive based on how DepEd phrased and interpreted it in the press release, the SEA-PLM 2019 report is not the only one indicating that Filipino students are falling behind their peers in learning. The Philippines scored 353 in mathematics, 357 in science, and 340 in reading, all below the average of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations, according to the most recent Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results released in December 2018. The most recent Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study report, released on December 8, 2020, reveals that in the sixteen years that the Philippines has participated in the aforementioned international metrics, Filipino students' performance has declined precipitously.

DepEd flaunts in its press releases that the results of foreign exams do not convert into tangible and implementable changes, particularly in the classroom where genuine learning occurs. Several legislators, including the Assistant Minority Leader of the House and ACT-Teachers Representative France Castro, respond to these reports. She emphasized that the K-12 crowded curriculum is a colossal failure that contributed to the abysmal performance of Filipino fourth-graders on the most recent international examination of math and science ability. Senator Sherwin Gatchalian has filed Senate Resolution No. 526 requesting a Senate investigation into the quality of teacher education and training in the country, as well as the performance of Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs), stating that the quality of teacher education and training and the performance of TEIs are reflected in the learning outcomes of students, such as the PISA, TIMSS, and SEA-PLM results.

Students' performance is the quantifiable measurement of their organization's performance, so it is essential to examine how the education sector manages its organization before holding the curriculum and teacher education accountable for this gap, given that students' performance is the measurable indicator of their organization's performance.

This article will investigate the relevance of teachers' recruitment, selection, and placement to the low performance of Filipino students on international learning measures.

II. REVIEW

This section examines the recruitment, selection, and placement of teachers by DepEd in light of management theory and practice.

Human Resource Management is primarily concerned with the effective management of an organization's people (Stone, 2002). According to Stone, HRM is crucial to the operation of a corporation. Stone elaborates that the management of an organization's human resources may make or break its aims and objectives. Employee recruitment and selection are integral components of any institutional organization.

One of the primary objectives of Human Resource Management is to guarantee that a business has sufficient individuals with the necessary skills to execute specific roles. Recruitment occurs when an organization has an open position. According to Stone (2002), recruitment is "the process of seeking and attracting qualified individuals for an open position" (p. 187). Stone (2002) also listed three recruitment strategies, including (1) internal recruitment, (2) external recruitment, and (3) electronic recruitment. According to Stone (2002), internal recruitment evaluates first the qualified individuals within the firm who could fill the vacancy. If no one within the organization meets the qualifications for the position, external recruitment may be utilized.

The organization can seek help from a reliable recruitment agency to look for highly qualified applicants to fill in the vacancy. Electronic recruiting is done through the internet. Companies post job vacancies on their website and applicants can apply online. Education plays an indispensable contribution in building a nation (Demitchell, 2010). Teachers are the key players of realizing the goals and objectives of a country for education. Therefore, the process of recruiting and hiring teacher-applicants who will mold the characters and values of young children is very important (Demitchell, 2010).

According to Mason & Schroeder (2010), there are two practices of hiring new teachers. They argued that hiring may be done in district level or centralized or in school level or decentralized process. On the one hand, centralized process of hiring is being done by the administrators of the district office wherein they are responsible for recruiting and hiring activities such as evaluation of applicants' papers and conduct of interview and demonstration teaching (Mason & Schroeder, 2010). Consequently, centralized hiring tends to facilitate and accommodate large number of applicants and utilize common employment descriptions and interviews and use standardized criteria for assessing teacher-applicants (Shivers, 1989; Wise et al, 1987, cited in Mason & Schroeder, 2010). Accordingly, district administrators are the ones in control for giving appointments to newly hired teachers and assigning them in every school within the district without considering the needs of the principals in their respective schools (Mason & Schroeder (2010).

On the other hand, decentralized process of hiring is being done by the school hiring committee spearheaded by the principal and expert teachers and sometimes parents and students are involved (Mason & Schroeder, 2010). Consequently, schools typically set their own criteria for ranking and plan hiring activities such as evaluating applicants' submitted documents, conducting interview, and facilitating demonstration teaching (Wise et al, 1987, cited in Mason & Schroeder, 2010). Mason & Schroeder (2010) further argued that in a decentralized process, schools have the sole responsibility in hiring and appointing teachers.

This practice of hiring was supported by Ubben (1995 cited in Papa & Baxter, 2008) arguing that one of the principals' most important duties and responsibilities is to manage the process of hiring and selecting high caliber teachers. Principals are the ones who know best their needs. Therefore, it is necessary that they should be empowered to choose and appoint teachers who fit to the need of their school while district administrators take on a mere supporting role (Papa & Baxter, 2008).

In the Philippines, School-Based Management (SBM) was introduced in 2003. The main concern of SBM is the decentralization of decision-making authority from the higher offices of the DepEd to the schools for the improvement of teaching and learning in every public institution in the country (Yap & Adario, 2008). Through SBM, principals are empowered to the management of hiring new teachers. However, this provision of SBM is not enforced. As a matter of fact, hiring of new teachers in the Philippines is a combination of centralized and decentralized processes. The conduct of interview and demonstration teaching and evaluation of necessary documents of the teacher-applicants are being done by the school officials who include the principal, head teachers and expert teachers. This employs decentralization. On the other hand, hiring and selection is centralized because all applicants in the different schools within the division are ranked accordingly. In addition to this, criteria and guidelines for recruitment and selection come from the DepEd Central office and they are strictly followed by all public secondary schools in the country. Moreover, selection, giving of appointment and assigning of teachers are the sole responsibility of the Schools Division Superintendent which illustrates centralized process.

DepEd Order, No. 20, series of 2009 stipulates the basic rules on hiring for teacher I positions and recruitment procedures. Announcement of vacancies is done as early as January every year. Applications are received until the end of April. All applicants are given criteria to be used which are as follows: (1) Education, (2) Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) Rating, (3) Experiential Learning Course, (4) Specialized Training and Skills, (5) Interview; (6) Demonstration Teaching, and (7) English Proficiency Test.

All applicants shall file their application to the principal of the school nearest to his/her residence for ranking purposes. Pertinent papers are also submitted such as Civil Service Commission (CSC) form 212 with 2x2 picture, certified photocopy of the teaching license issued by Philippine Regulation Commission (PRC), copy of rating obtained in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), certified copies of transcript of records, copy of a service record when the applicants had a teaching experience to be obtained from the school where they taught and certificates of specialized trainings. Evaluation of these documents and demonstration teaching of the applicants shall be undertaken by the School Selection Committee (SSC) manned by the Principal, and with the help of Department Head concerned and three master teachers from the different learning areas as members. Observing and rating demonstration teaching is also a responsibility of the SSC. Having done all of these, SSC will submit the list of the applicants with their corresponding documents and the marks for demonstration teaching to the Division Selection Sub-Committee (DSSC) which

encompasses the Principal of the school needing the services. He shall then serve as chairman of the selecting committee and four other principals from other schools who will then serve as members. The DSSC will receive and review the documents submitted by the SSC. DSSC is also responsible in conducting and rating interviews for the applicants aside from administering of English Proficiency Tests of which a passing grade in the said examination is also one of the requirements. DSSC consolidates individual ratings and submits the initial list of applicants to the Division Selection Committee (DSC) which comprises Assistant Division Schools Superintendent as Chairman, two Education Program Specialists (EPS), Division President of Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), and Division President of Teachers as members. Upon completion of the ranking list, the DSC shall prepare the Registry of Qualified Applicants (RQA). RQA is a list of qualified applicants which shall be used as reference in proposing and appointing permanent and substitute teachers as well as Provincial School Board (PSB) teachers financed by the Provincial Governments (PG), Local School Board (LSB) teachers financed by the Local Government Unit (LGU), and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)-funded teachers for natural vacancies, new and casual appointments. The complete results of the evaluation including records of deliberation and other pertinent documents shall be submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) for approval.

The SDS shall post the results of the ranking in at least three noticeable places as identified by the Division Office. The Regional Director and each school shall also be provided a copy of the ranking. Applicants on the other hand shall be informed through a copy that they could obtain from the school where they applied for. LGUs and PGs are also given a copy of the RQA as reference for locally funded items.

After having done with the ranking procedures, the process of selecting the best teacher applicant for possible permanent appointment is undertaken. Selection is the process of choosing from a group of applicants those individuals best suited for a particular position (Stone, 2002). In case of natural vacancy or new teacher I item, the SDS can appoint from among the qualified applicants whose name appears on the RQA in compliance with Division Memorandum No. 34, s. 2012, stipulating that the applicant has officially applied and has joined the ranking procedures set by the selection committee. RA No. 8190, otherwise known as Localization Law should strictly be implemented in hiring permanent teachers, substitute, casual and locally-funded teachers (DepEd Order No. 12, s 2012). Said Republic Act highlights that an applicant, who resides in the municipality where the vacancy exists, shall be the priority for the appointment, regardless of his rank as stipulated in the RQA. The preparation of documents for appointment of the newly hired teacher I is the responsibility of the Division HRM Officer. On the other hand, LGUs and PGs have also the power to hire teachers with a temporary status under their local school board and provincial school board, respectively; to provide augmentation to the needs of schools for teacher manpower. The LGUs and PGs have their own process of selecting teachers that may be assigned to schools who then ask for augmentation from the Municipal and Provincial Executive Officers, but LGUs and PGs still need to adhere with the provision of the Republic Act No. 7836 (Teacher Professionalization Act) in the hiring of permanent, substitute, casual, PSB, LSB, and PTA teachers which states of the strengthening the regulation and supervision of the practice of teaching in the Philippines and prescribing a licensure examination for teachers and for other purposes. More so, LGUs and PGs shall also make use of the RQA as their reference. Additional requirements may be their prerogative.

III. ISSUES AND PROPOSALS

This section provides the four main issues arising from the discussion above: (1) nepotism in recruitment and ranking, (2) to document-based evaluation of qualifications, (3) politics in hiring, and (4) ranking and performance over localization. These all will be discussed in length below likewise incorporating proposals to tend these issues.

First, involvement of principal and expert teachers from different disciplines in the ranking and hiring of teacher applicants is important (Peterson, 2002). They are the school personnel who directly know the needs of their own schools and have the expertise of knowing who among the applicants have the potentials and inherent abilities to be a part in the academe. Thus, is it the responsibility of those in the selection committee to fairly exercise their authority especially of giving marks to the applicants' performance in the demonstration teaching and interview. Principals and Master Teachers and the rest of the members of the ranking committee should avoid biases and it should be closely monitored that any regular member of the selection committee who is affiliated with the teacher-applicant, either by consanguinity or affinity may abstain in the selection process. Also, Nepotism and receiving of gifts from the applicants may be circumvented and set aside for the purpose of clean and honest results of ranking. Hiring committee should observe ethical responsibilities in selecting and appointing new teachers.

Second, the criteria for ranking are focused more on the documents or papers submitted by the applicants. "Interview is one of the most interactive parts of the hiring process and a potentially rich source of information for the selection committees" (Liu and Johnson, 2006). It is suggested therefore that Oral Interview may be given more preference and higher points. Interviews shall be concentrated on the following domains: "prerequisites of effective teachers, the teacher as a person, classroom management and organization, organizing for instruction, implementing instruction, and monitoring student progress and potentials" (Stronge and Hindman, 2003). The members of selection committee may sit and deliberate as to what questions are to be asked in the interview portion which may be drawn from the abovementioned domains that can bring out the best in the teacher-applicants (Stronge and Hindman, 2003). Stronge and Hindman (2003) further argued that interviewers may fix on what they need to look for before the interview starts, "how they will know it when they see and hear it, and the bases they will make a decision." (p. 50). Third, fluency, articulation and proficiency in English should be observed in the interview process, thus English Proficiency Tests shall not only be in the form of written examinations but in oral examinations as well.

Third, schools are getting financial support from the LGUs and PGs. Teachers hired and funded by them are known as local school board teachers. They shall be of great assistance in solving one of the most common problems in the Philippine Educational System - the teacher shortage issue of which, teacher- student ratio is 1:50 or even more than that (BEIS, 2011), while the suggested ratio in the Philippine setting is 1:35. However, it is in this situation that politicians and other influential people are taking advantage of their political powers. As observed, because of the need for job, unemployed teachers usually go to politicians and ask for possible placements in exchange of their support during elections. Politicians will then make all the possibilities to hire whoever they want, disregarding some of the procedures as well as the necessary and important measures in hiring the best teachers in town. They

sometimes cling to alter the results of ranking just to show that they are in the position to give jobs, thereby applicants who are in the higher ranks are neglected. It is therefore recommended that a close monitoring on the hiring procedures of the LGUs and PGs may hold fast in the laws as mandated by the Department of Education and further may be implemented in the most admirable form and without stain or preconceived notion.

Fourth, the Localization Law may include the following provisions: Firstly, the distance of the residence of the qualified applicant. The nearer, the better. This will entail a better service to the workplace. For example, two applicants in the same municipality of whom both are of good standing (educationally, mentally, and physically qualified) but the other one is a resident of a village which is already far from the workplace and would take more efforts in going to the workplace. Secondly, ranking of applicants in the RQA may also be given weight even on the issues regarding localization, so as not to totally disregard the ranks of the applicants. This is to avoid the instances where in the applicant in the bottom rank gets the appointment although there are applicants who is on top as per RQA is concern and who are also the interested in the positions but the only hindrance of getting the position is that he or she is residing from the nearby towns. Lastly, politicians may not stick their nose in the selection of appointees. They should avoid the negative notion: It is not what you know, but it is whom you know. And this may be true not only for LSB and PSB teachers but also to the appointees of permanent positions.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics 2019 report reveals that the lack of qualified teachers was a significant issue impeding school capacity to instruct children, as a result of various hiring and selection process inconsistencies. In almost all countries, for instance, a non-negligible proportion of children were taught by teachers who had not received any training in reading (in the language of instruction used for the SEA-PLM assessment) prior to or during their service. If the hiring and selection process is structured in such a way that qualified teachers are selected, it is unlikely that poor performance will occur.

The recruitment, selection, and placement (RSP) system is the core component of the Department of Education's overall strategic Human Resource Management system to ensure that the organization and its manpower are able to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century with an emphasis on the delivery of quality, accessible, relevant, and liberating basic education. This system consists of policies and procedures governing the application, evaluation, selection, and appointment of Teaching Positions in accordance with the Constitution of 1987, the Administrative Code of 1987, and Civil Service regulations. Therefore, it is necessary to uphold the integrity and sanctity of this system, as the ultimate losers will be our students, who are also the future of our country.

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