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ADDRESSING GAPS IN QUALITY TEACHING: ASSESSING TEACHERS' NEEDS AS BASIS FOR A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXTENSION PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT
This study aimed to assess the training needs of High School Teachers in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur. The result of this study lays the foundation for the development of the Professional Development Extension Program. This study employed a descriptive research approach, a survey questionnaire adhering to ISO: 2015 standards was utilized to draw responses from 18 high school teachers selected through purposive sampling. Data analysis incorporated descriptive statistics. The majority of teachers in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur are under 21-30 years old, female, with a master's degree, serving 7-9 years, and holding Teacher I rank. Most individuals have specializations, with Science Teachers being the largest group, with West Bunawan National High School having the most of these individuals. Furthermore, the Training preference of the teachers is the Preparation of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIM) to enhance students' performance. The least learned competencies in mathematics include operations on integers, basic and fundamentals while reading comprehension in English and projectile motion, impulse and momentum, and conservation of linear momentum in Science. For the parents and stakeholders to support quality education, it was revealed that they mostly need training related to financial management and literacy as well as in empowering basic literacy to aid learners in the take-home activities. Lastly, the Training needs of the school leaders, most of the participants wanted training in Instructional supervision strengthening mentoring skills and management of colleague.
KEYWORDS: *Training Need Assessment, Professional Development Extension Program, Strategic Intervention Material*

INTRODUCTION

Enhancing the caliber of education is said to be the most effective way to combat poverty and achieve economic growth. However, teachers lack access to quality professional development opportunities, limited time for learning due to administrative tasks, and inadequate training can hinder their teaching practice (Abay, Jemil & Morallo,2019). Extension programs can help bridge this gap and foster meaningful relationships. With that, Republic Act 7722 mandates the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to answer the urge for social needs to implement extension service programs (Bidad & Campiseño, 2010). In addition, Llenares et,al. (2018) elucidate that extension programs' ultimate aim is to disseminate information, support rural adult learning, and enhance technical and managerial skills (Danso et.al,2018). The demand for these services has surged significantly not just within Philippines HEIs but also on a global scale, as community extension embodies outreach, transformative impact, community empowerment, and collaborative endeavor. Furthermore, it fosters their engagement with partners spanning research, education, and pertinent institutions.

Colleges and Universities (SUCs) are required by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to address the demand for societal change. To achieve this, educational institutions have created and put into place a range of extension services and initiatives that aim to enhance and improve community life. The Agusan del Sur State College of Agriculture and Technology (ASSCAT) is committed to providing quality instruction, research, and extension services. This extension program and services demonstrate ASSCAT's goal to become a change agent and leader in the creation and dissemination of knowledge through this pillar. Extension plays a significant role in the knowledge creation process, as it helps to disseminate research findings and other relevant information in the community. It also helps to build capacity and empower people to take action and make positive changes in their lives. The extension aims to educate people in ways that improve their quality of life. Teaching them about new methods, tools, and techniques that enhance their well-being, health, and productivity is one way to do this.

To meticulously craft and establish pertinent extension initiatives that maintain significance, conducting an exhaustive evaluation of community needs in conjunction with an assessment of training requirements is crucial. This procedure involves active involvement

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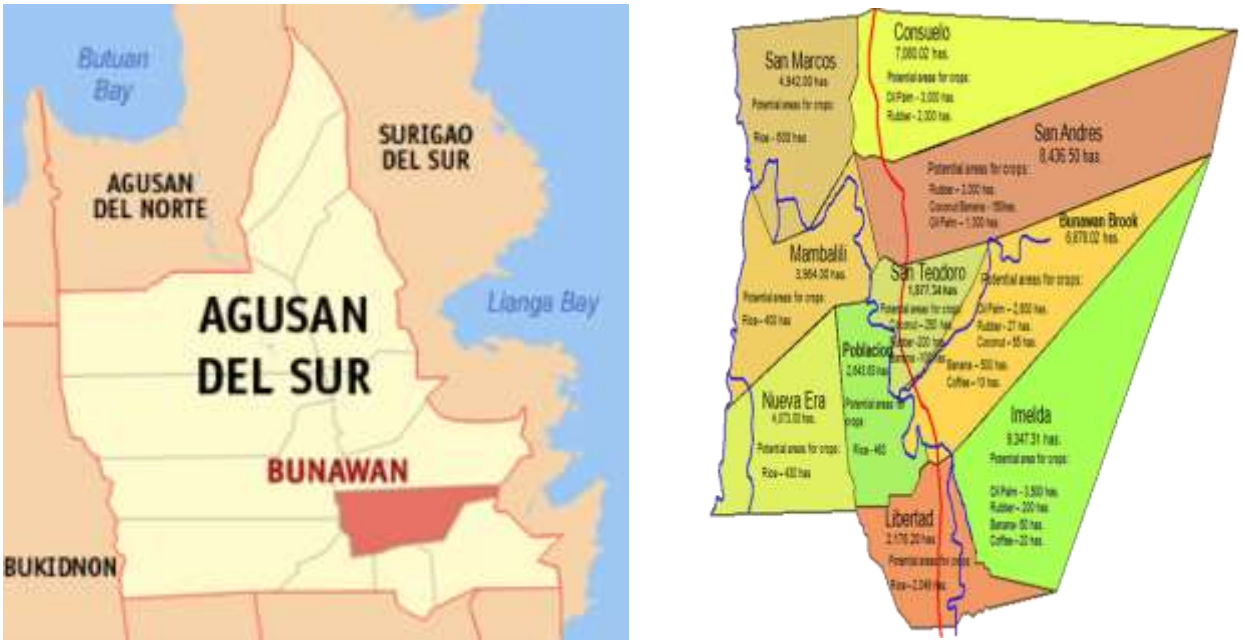
with local stakeholders and the execution of focus groups, observations, surveys, and interviews aimed at pinpointing educational obstacles and priorities. By evaluating the current educational framework, resources, and methodologies, it becomes feasible to devise precise solutions that tackle the community's distinct needs, such as improving educational access and knowledge dissemination through technological means (Thomas, 2020). Furthermore, the training needs assessment process involves a methodical strategy to determine the presence of deficiencies in training. If such deficiencies are identified, it also involves defining the precise training measures necessary to address and overcome these deficiencies (Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2023). The procedures were carried out to develop an extension initiative that effectively caters to the requirements of the focal community.

This manuscript delineates the outcomes obtained from the interviews, focus group discussion, and survey carried out among principals and educators of secondary educational institutions in the Bunawan, Agusan del Sur locality. These findings will establish the foundation for the university's outreach initiative.

METHODS

This paper employed a descriptive research design. It aimed to describe the current community and training needs of High School teachers in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur. A face to face-to-face survey was conducted using a survey questionnaire developed by the extension service unit of ASSCAT and prescribed by ISO 9001:2015. A total of 18 high school teachers were selected as respondents through purposive sampling, as they are the target beneficiaries of the professional development extension program to be initiated. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the gathered data.



Geographical Map

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Profile of High School Teachers in Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur.

Table 1 illustrates the demographic characteristics of the participants hailing from various secondary educational institutions within the Municipality of Bunawan, Agusan del Sur. In terms of their age distribution, 8 out of 18 respondents, constituting 44.44%, fall within the age range of 21-30 years, while 4 out of 18 respondents, accounting for 22.22%, belong to the 31-40 years age bracket, and 6 out of 18 respondents, totaling 33.34%, are aged between 41-50 years. This data suggests that the majority of the participants are in the 21-30 years age group.

When it comes to the sex of the respondents, 3 of 18 or 16.67% are male, and 15 of 18 or 83.33% are female. From the data gathered most of the teacher respondents are female.

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The educational attainment of the participants indicates that 6 out of 18, equivalent to 33.33%, are considering furthering their studies, given that they have already completed their undergraduate degree. An encouraging observation is that the majority of the respondents hold a master's degree, with 9 out of 18, representing 50%, reporting that they have graduated with this qualification. Moreover, 3 out of 18 participants, accounting for 16.67%, have attained a doctoral degree.

In terms of the duration of their service, 4 out of 18 individuals, equivalent to 22.22%, were engaged for a period ranging between 1 to 3 years. Similarly, another 4 out of 18, also 22.22%, had a service tenure of 4 to 6 years. Additionally, 5 out of 18 respondents, accounting for 27.78%, reported being in service for 7 to 9 years. Lastly, an equal proportion of 5 out of 18 participants, or 27.78%, indicated having a service length of 9 years or more.

We have additionally considered the ranking of the participants in terms of their service. Out of the total of 18 respondents, 14, equivalent to 77.78%, were educators who could have held roles such as Teacher I, Teacher II, or Teacher III. Furthermore, 2 out of the 18 respondents, accounting for 11.11%, were identified as master teachers. Likewise, the same percentage of respondents, which is 2 out of 18 or 11.11%, were serving as School Heads.

In terms of the field of specialization of the respondents, 5 out of 18, equivalent to 27.78%, have a background in Mathematics, 3 out of 18, which is 16.67%, have majored in English, 7 out of 18, amounting to 38.89%, have specialized in Science, 2 out of 18, or 11.11%, have pursued BTLEd, and 1 respondent did not specify their major.

Of the three secondary schools surveyed, 5 out of 18 or 27.78% are from Libertad National High School, 8 of 18 or 44.44% are from West Bunawan National High School, and 5 out of 18 or 27.78% are from Bunawan National High School.

Table 1: Profile of High School Teachers in Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur.

Profile		Frequency	Percentage
AGE	21-30	8	44.44%
	31-40	4	22.22%
	41-50	6	33.34%
SEX	MALE	3	16.67%
	FEMALE	15	83.33%
Highest Educational Attainment	Undergraduate	6	33.33%
	Master's degree	9	50%
	Doctor's degree	3	16.67%
Length of service	1-3 years in service	4	22.22%
	4-6 years in service	4	22.22%
	7-9 years in service	5	27.78%
	9 years and above in service	5	27.78%
Rank	Teacher	14	77.78%
	Master teacher	2	11.11%
	School Head	2	11.11%
Field of Specialization	Math	5	27.78%
	English	3	16.67%
	Science	7	38.89%
	BTLEd	2	11.11%
	Others	1	5.56%
School	Libertad National High School	5	27.78%
	West Bunawan National High School	8	44.44%
	Bunawan National High School	5	27.78%

Ranking of the Training Needs of the Respondents

Table 2 presents the diverse training requirements identified by the participants. The table shows that the Preparation of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIM) to enhance students' performance ranks 1 in the training need. This indicated that the Training demand among High School Teachers was the Preparation of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIM). Preparing Strategic Intervention Materials

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(SIM) poses challenges like time and budget constraints, teacher competence, and material durability, as highlighted in the study on teachers' experiences(Cherry et.al.,2022). In addition, Cagape, Lloveras and . Bangoy (2023) support that preparing Strategic Intervention Materials (SIM) can be challenging due to the need for innovative approaches.

Table 2: Ranking of the Training Needs of the Respondents (Based on Survey Checklist)

Training Needs	Rank
Preparation of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIM) to enhance pupils' performance	1
Action Research Writing	2
Teaching strategies for teaching children with special needs	3
Capacitate teachers on teaching methods, approaches, strategies and techniques	4
Training on Statistical Tool for Research	5
Multimedia Development (Photo Editing , Video Editing)	6
Capacitate faculty on Performance-based Assessment Tasks	7
Preparation of Traditional and (ICT) Digitized Instructional Materials	8
Review, Enhance and Prepare an OBE lesson plan with PPST competencies	9
Computer Operations (Software , Hardware , Internet Technology)	10
Intellectual Property Protection	11
Community and school support strategies	12
Sample Lesson Plan Preparation	13
School leadership and management training	14
Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines	15

Least Learned Competencies in Mathematics, English, and Science

Table 3 presents the least learned competencies in Mathematics, English, and Science. The table shows that in Mathematics, four (4) out of Nine (9) Mathematics teachers attest those operations on integers, basic, and fundamentals on integers are the least learned competencies in Mathematics. Competency in operations on integers, including basic operations and fundamental concepts, is crucial in mathematics education but often poses challenges for students at various educational levels. In addition, Function, Laws of exponent, Adding and subtracting polynomials, and Unit conversion in the metric system were found to be the other behind competencies. Study indicates that errors in solving integer operation problems stem from reading, comprehension, transformation, process skill, and conclusion-drawing errors, highlighting students' difficulties in mastering these concepts (Moh et.al.,2022).

In terms of English subjects, Six(6) out of eleven (11) english teachers connote that Reading Comprehension is the least learned competency in English. Reading comprehension is a crucial aspect of English language learning, with various factors influencing its development. Additionally, Mother tongue, Skills in constructing sentences, Literatures, Tenses of Verbs ,and Judging the validity of the text/stories listened to were found to be the other behind competencies. English language learners face challenges such as using the first language, culturally disparate schemata, and vocabulary knowledge deficits when improving their reading comprehension skills, highlighting the need for targeted training and support for teachers (Juan.et.al.,2023).

Lastly, in terms of Science subjects, Two (2) out of eight (8) science teachers stated that Projectile motion, impulse and momentum, and conservation of linear momentum are the least learned competencies in Science. The findings is accordance to the study of Dimaiwat (2022) show that projectile motion, impulse and momentum, and conservation of linear momentum are among the least learned competencies in Science. Studies have shown that students often struggle with understanding these concepts, leading to misconceptions and low mastery levels. In addition, differentiates heat and temperature at the molecular level, differentiates the Epicenter of an earthquake from its focus, explains how earthquake waves provide information about the interior of the earth, Types of bonds that carbon forms that result in the diversity of carbon compounds, How atoms combine with other atoms by transferring or by sharing electrons, and Motions, Speed, Distance, wavelength, Intensity were found to be the other behind competencies in Science. The need for intervention materials and appropriate teaching strategies to improve students' comprehension and scientific literacy in these areas is highlighted, emphasizing the importance of enhancing conceptual understanding and applying these fundamental principles in Science.

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Table 3: Least Learned Competencies

	Frequency
A. What specific competencies do your learners perform in very low	
1. Mathematics	
a. Operations on integer, basic and fundamentals on integers	4
b. Functions	1
c. Laws of exponent	1
d. Calculates the measure of the central tendency of ungrouped and grouped data	1
e. Adding and subtracting polynomials	1
f. Unit conversion in metric system	1
2**. English**	
a. Reading Comprehension	6
b. Mother tongue	1
c. Skills in constructing sentences	1
d. Literatures	1
e. Tenses of Verbs	1
f. Judging the validity of the text/stories listened to	1
3. **Science**	
a. Differentiate Heat and temperature at the molecular level	1
b. Differentiate the Epicenter of an earthquake from its focus	1
c. Explain how earthquake waves provide information about the interior of the earth.	1
d. Types of bonds that carbon forms that result in the diversity of carbon compounds	1
e. How atoms combine with other atoms by transferring or by sharing electrons	1
f. Projectile motion, impulse and momentum, and conservation of linear momentum	2
g. Motions, Speed, Distance, wavelength, Intensity	1

Support need from parents and stakeholders

Table 4 displays the different training needs of parents and stakeholders as identified by the participants. For the parents and stakeholders to support quality education, it was revealed that they mostly need training related to financial management and literacy as well as in empowering basic literacy to aid learners in the take-home activities. According to Sabirin et.al., (2023), financial literacy and management training for school parents is crucial for instilling money management skills in students. In addition, empowering parents with basic literacy skills can significantly aid learners in take-home activities, fostering a conducive learning environment. Research emphasizes the importance of parental involvement in enhancing children's education], especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when home learning became prevalent (Papathanasiou, 2022, Wiyoko et.al., 2022)

Moreover, a noteworthy portion of the participants suggests that parents and stakeholders also need to have trainings in areas related to proper discipline practices to their children, practical and relevant livelihood skills and techniques, and empowerment of parents and responsible parenthood. Conversely, a minor proportion suggests trainings and orientation on active participation during school conferences and activities, parental support/guidance specifically on the issue of early pregnancy, awareness on the parent's responsibilities towards the behavior of their own children as learners, and even orientation on educational system. The participants believe that empowering the parents and stakeholders and strengthening their support plays a crucial role in minimizing challenges faced by students and schools. This supports the study of Petzold (2018) which claimed that parental involvement is key to student success, with studies highlighting the positive impact of meaningful parent participation on academic and social-emotional growth. By recognizing the essence of parental involvement and advocating for meaningful partnerships, stakeholders can work together to address issues like dishonesty, truancy, and disobedience among learners, ultimately creating a more efficient and just society (Xaba, 2015).

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Table 4. Support Need from Parents and Stakeholder

B. What support do you need from parents and stakeholders?	Frequency
a) Proper discipline practices for their children	5
b) Empowering basic literacy to aid their learners in the take-home activities	6
c) Awareness on the parent's responsibilities towards the behavior of their own children as learners	1
d) Active participation during school conferences and activities	3
e) Physical facilities such as instructional materials and books	1
f) Parental guidance and awareness specifically on the issue of early pregnancy	1
g) Financial Management/literacy	7
h) Practical and relevant livelihood skills and techniques	4
i) Orientation on educational system	1
j) Empowerment of parents and responsible parenthood	5
k) Training about parental support/guidance	2

Training Needs of the School Heads

Table 5 presents the various training needs of the school leaders among the secondary schools in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur. Base on the result, most of the participants wanted trainings in Instructional supervision and strengthening mentoring skills and management of colleague. It is also revealed that trainings on new trends on classroom observation and in education, teaching strategies, MATATAG Curriculum, proper distribution of work assignments, and professional and fair leadership are suggested by the participants. These findings correlate with the study of Mampane (2017) which emphasizes the importance of equipping school heads with updated abilities and knowledge for effective teacher leadership, as well as the significance of mentoring support in implementing innovative projects and overcoming obstacles in education management (Koverova, 2022). Additionally, research underscores the significance of fair task distribution by leaders in reducing follower emotional exhaustion, with transformational leadership positively influencing positive school environment (Scheel et.al., 2019). Furthermore, high school leaders engaging in training programs focused on curriculum improvement, such as the MATATAG Curriculum, can benefit from targeted professional development to enhance their knowledge and skills in leading whole school changes

Table 5: Training Needs of the School Heads

C. As leader/ manager of the school, what training do you need?	
a. Instructional supervision	4
b. Strengthening Mentoring skills and management of colleague	4
c. General Professional Growth and Development	1
d. New trends on classroom observations and in education as a whole	3
e. Teaching Strategies	2
f. GAD related training	1
g. Child Protection Policies	1
h. Rights and privileges of the teachers	1
i. Training on New Normal Teaching Strategies	1
j. Enhancement on their intrapersonal skills	1
k. Training and orientation on MATATAG Curriculum	2
l. Content and Pedagogy	1
m. Integration of the 21st Century learner	1
n. Proper distribution of Work assignments	2
o. Professional and fair leadership	2
p. Conflict resolution and time management	1

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, some key conclusions were drawn. The majority of respondents were female, aged 21-30, with 7-9 years of service. Teachers of Mathematics, English, and Science requested capacity building in development of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIM) to improve student academic performance in the Least Learned Competencies (LLC). Specifically, operations on integers in Mathematics, reading comprehension in English, and concepts such as projectile motion, impulse and momentum, and conservation of linear momentum in Science were identified as areas needing improvement. Additionally, parents and stakeholders articulated a need for training in financial management and literacy, and basic literacy to better support take-home activities. Finally,

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school leaders emphasized the need for training in instructional supervision, and mentoring skills, leadership and management skills. Addressing these needs is essential for improving educational outcomes and fostering a supportive and effective learning environment.

Recommendation

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. Initiate partnership with the secondary schools located in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur to provide an extension program for sustainable quality education.
2. Provide training on preparing Strategic Intervention Materials (SIM) for Math, English, and Science teachers that may focus on operations on integers, reading comprehension, projectile motion, impulse and momentum, and conservation of linear momentum for Science teachers
3. Offer training programs on financial management and literacy to empower parents and stakeholders in supporting students' learning.
4. Organize workshops on basic literacy skills to equip parents and stakeholders in assisting with take-home activities.
5. Provide training on instructional supervision techniques to enhance school leaders' ability to guide and support teachers.
6. Conduct workshops on strengthening mentoring skills to improve school leaders' capacity to develop and coach teachers.
7. Organize training sessions on managing colleagues to equip school leaders with effective strategies for fostering a collaborative and productive school environment.

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