Teachers as Producers and Consumers of Educational Materials: An Analysis

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Abstract: One of the necessities of a 21st century educator is the ability to develop learner's materials to address the needs of individual students. Primarily, the objective of this study is to identify the perspective of Filipino teachers on how they produce and consume educational materials such as visual aids, hand-outs, presentations, lesson plans, work sheets, video tutorials and more. Another point that this study aims to identify is if the teacher-respondents have shared their work whether in tangible form or through online platforms. To meet these objectives, a qualitative research method was used to provide a complex textual description of how the teacher-respondents experience the given research issue. Moreover, this method provides flexibility for it allows greater spontaneity and adaptation. To gather responses, Google Forms was used to reach more number of teachers. There were eight research questions that helped the researcher to conclude that the teacher-respondents perceived themselves as producers than consumers of educational materials.

Key Words: educational materials, 21st century teacher

1. INTRODUCTION

It is important that teachers are knowledgeable and skilled in order to improve their participation in changing the school environment (Maeroff, 1993) which makes professional development programs essential for them (Borko, 2004) in order to suffice lacking skills of being a teacher in a 21st century classroom because according to Williams and Williams (n.d.) learners are more motivated when teachers have greater expertise and experience. One 21st century skill that our students possess today is the ability to create and innovate (Trilling and Fadel, 2009) therefore, teachers must be able to have that skill as well in order to promote students' interactive learning (Viswanathan, 2013)

The ability to develop learner materials is as as important as the learner materials itself because it greatly links to the objectives of any education program (Ranjit, n.d.) When teachers use a uniform learner's material, they assume that all students have the same learning styles and learning outcomes which must not be the case because they should account for inclusion and diversity in the classroom. (Voltz, Sims, & Nelson, 2010) To embrace diversity, a 21st century classroom necessitates and encourages the development and use of diverse teaching strategies (Saravia-Shore, 2008) which involves developing learner's materials to address students' individual needs.

This paper aims to identify the perspective of Filipino teachers on how they produce and consume educational materials. The motivation is to provide an overview on the ability of teachers in developing and sharing content in order to make their students' learning more relevant and applicable. The results of this paper may help form guidelines on how teachers could be able to make their created materials searchable and usable from the public. From the education point of view, this is yet another effort to recognize the role of development informatics in the practice of teaching for socio-economic development and because teachers are one of the catalyst of change in any community, it is considerably imperative to focus on the capabilities of teachers to contribute to sustainable growth and development which includes the capacity to make learning materials available to be used by the students and by their fellow teachers as well.

2. METHODOLOGY

The current study uses a qualitative research method to provide a complex textual description of how the respondents experience a given research issue. Qualitative method is preferred than quantitative method because it is much more flexible for it allows greater spontaneity and adaptation. (NEU, n.d.)

The questionnaire includes six items about demographics and eight research questions. The questionnaire was developed using Google Forms that will give the researcher the flexibility to reach intended respondents. In a two-weeks run of the response gathering, there were thirty (30) responses that have been collected.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following are the results of the current study with a questionnaire containing six items about demographics and eight research questions.

3.1 Demographics

3.1.1 Gender
Among the 30 respondents, there are 10 Male or 33.3% and 20 Female or 66.7%

3.1.2 Age
Among the 30 respondents, there are 8 (26.7%) who comes from the 20-29 age group, 10 (33.3%) from the 30-39 age group, 8 (26.7%) from 40-49 age group and 4 (13.3%) from the above 50 years old age group.

3.1.3 Teaching Experience
Among the 30 respondents, 10 (33.3%) teachers have been teaching for 1 to 5 years, 3 (10%) for 6 to 10 years, 8 (26.7%) for 11 to 15 years, 4 (13.3%) for 16 to 20 years and 5 (16.7 %) for more than 20 years.

3.1.4 Level of Assignment
Among the 30 respondents, 23 (76.7%) are teaching in the secondary level, 6 (20%) are teaching in the primary level and only 1 (3.3) in the tertiary level.

3.1.5 Location of School
Among the 30 respondents, 20 (66.7%) are teaching in an urban area, 10 (33.3%) are teaching in a rural area and no one is teaching in a remote area.

3.1.6 Computer Experience
Among the 30 respondents, 16 (53.3%) have more than 10 years of experience in using computer, 9 (30%) have 7 to 10 years, 4 (13.3%) have 4 to 6 years, 1 (3.3%) have 1 to 3 years, no one have less than one year or none at all experience in using a computer.

3.2 Research Questions
3.2.1 Have you developed your own educational materials (e.g. activity sheets, modules, visual aids, hand-outs)

Among the 30 respondents, 96.7% or 29 teachers answered that they developed their own educational materials but only 19 of the 29 teachers (65.5%) listed the materials they have developed. The only teacher who answered NO did not provide any reason for not developing own educational materials. Below is a list of materials that the 29 teachers have been able to develop according to their responses:

Visual Aids – 16	Seatwork – 1
Activities – 10	Assessment Quiz – 1
Hand Outs – 8	Video Tutorial – 1
Modules – 4	E-Book – 1
Lesson Plans – 3	Grading Sheet – 1
Audio Materials – 2	Rubrics – 1
Worksheets – 2	Blogs – 1
Online Quiz – 2	Learning Packages – 1

3.2.2 If your answer in Question 1 is YES, were you able to share this content with other teachers? Was it online or in tangible form? What do you feel in sharing your creations?

On the question if they were able to share their developed materials with other teachers, 24 or 80% were affirmative while 6 or 20% said that they chose not to share their work. From the 24 teachers who chose to share their work, 10 or 41.7% shared it both in tangible form and soft copy/online form, 9 or 37.5% shared it in tangible form while 1 or 4.1% shared it in a soft copy/online form. The remaining 4 or 16.7% did not indicate whether they shared it in tangible or in softcopy/online form.

Below are some of the unedited teachers' testimonials when they shared their own developed educational materials:

- "It is good to share your knowledge to others"
- "Sharing make education more affordable"
- "It's great to share to lighten the burden of teachers in the teaching process"
- "to improve my creations based on the feedbacks of my colleagues after using my materials"

On the other hand, here some of the testimonials from teachers who answered that they did not share their developed materials to their fellow teachers

- "for my personal use"
- "because I'm the only one teaching that subject in our school"
- "because we teach different subject"
- "I feel co-teachers have their own way of crafting their own IM's"

3.2.3 What are the challenges that you encountered in developing your own educational materials?

Topping the list of the challenges encountered by teachers is the unavailability of time in developing their own educational materials with 11 responses. Both cost and unavailability of resources have been mentioned by 5 teachers, respectively. Three said that internet is a challenge. While too much effort needed, difficulty in thinking how to produce, lack of references, newly developed materials are new to students, too technical to develop have been mentioned by at least two teachers. School policies, accuracy and acceptance were only mentioned once. From the 30 teachers, only 2 said that they did not face any challenges in developing their own educational materials.

3.2.4 Do you feel that it is important to develop your own educational materials for your students? Why or why not?

All teachers believed that it is important to develop their own educational materials especially the 17 (56.7%) teachers who mentioned that they know their students' capability therefore they should adjust the materials that these students must use. Four (13.3%) teachers said that they develop based on the reliability of learning materials. Ten percent or 3 teachers believe that developing their own learning materials can provide enhancement on the performance of their students. Respectively, two (6.7%) teachers develop their own because they are the only one who knows classroom issues and because they believe in localization. Only one (3.3%) said that schools' resources are scarce. One (3.3%) teacher answered that it is important but did not provide any reason.

3.2.5 In your perspective, in which side do you see yourself? More of a producer or more of a consumer?

More of a producer	17	56.7%
More of a consumer	13	43.3%

3.2.6 Based on your answer on #5, please explain briefly why you chose that side of yourself?

From the 17 teachers who said they perceive themselves as more of a producer, 6 or 35% said that they chose that because they want to personalize their teaching, 5 or 29% wants to share to their colleagues, 4 or 24% feels that it a must for teachers, 1 or 6% thinks that it fosters creativity and also, 1 or 6% mentioned that it is enjoyable to create learning resources.

On the other hand, from the 13 teachers who said they perceive themselves as more of a consumer, 6 or 46% said that there a lot of available resources so they do not need to create their own, 4 or 31% said that they have lack of time, 2 or 15% mentioned that they are afraid of structured processes and only 1 or 8% feels that having basic computer knowledge is a hindrance in developing their own learning materials.

3.2.7 In the Philippines or in your community, what are the implications of producing your own educational materials:

Teachers mostly believed that there are good implications of developing their own educational materials. Eight (28%) said that it is good but did not provide further details. Twenty per cent or 6 teachers believed that it disregards prescriptive materials because teachers know the pace of their students' learning. Five (17%) teachers also learn when they create. Innovation and for better teaching got 3 (10%) responses each. One teacher answered that it is good because you can get paid by developing your own. There are few who feels that producing brings negative implications such as other teachers may grab their work (2, 7%), structured processes (1, 3%) and cost (1, 3%)

3.2.8 In the Philippines or in your community, what are implications of consuming others' work?

In general, consuming other's work bring good implications with 6 (20%) teachers believed that it improves their performance but also six (20%) said that copyright is an issue that needs to be addressed, 4 (13%) teachers believed that it was helpful to them, two (7%) said that it opens up collaboration with others, two (7%) was afraid it limits their creativity, two (7%) are concerned with its accuracy, 1 (3%) mentioned that some others' work is not relevant. Seven (23%) respondents said it was good to consume other's developed educational materials but did not provide any explanation.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the current study is to determine the perspective of teachers on producing and consuming their own educational materials. Based from the responses from 30 teachers, being producers and consumers of educational materials bring more positive than negative implications in their classroom pedagogy as well as their performance towards other educators. It greatly helps them to personalize their teaching strategies because they know the various learning speed and capacity of their students despite the challenges in developing their own or looking for relevant materials that suit the needs of their learners.

In the future, this study may be improved by reaching more educators from more demographics. The current study was not able to reach more primary and tertiary teachers, as well as teachers from rural and remote areas. These kinds of respondents will be able to provide a better picture of the perspective of teachers on how they develop their own educational materials to ensure that they respond to the needs of today's learners in a 21st century classroom.

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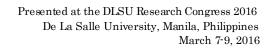
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