

Secondary Education in Sorsogon

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive study was conducted using secondary data and through a survey to establish a baseline information on the status of the secondary education in Sorsogon province. This investigated the profile of the schools, the teachers and the school heads. The data were taken from sixteen schools from seven municipalities and Sorsogon City. For big schools, the classroom-student ratio falls below the Department of Education standard of 1:40, but the small schools with below one thousand enrollees are within the standard. Only 10% of the teachers are holders of advance degrees. Majority are with masteral units only. While in terms of length of service, 40% of the teachers are within 11 to 30 years in service. Most teachers are young with ages below 40 years old. Majority of the teachers are females; but, 75% of the school heads are male. Although all school heads are more than thirty years of age, most of them are new in their positions as school head, with less than 10 years of service in their position. With these results the following were recommended by this study; first, address the classroom inadequacy in big schools. Second, in-service trainings and other faculty development programs may be provided to teachers especially those who are young and whose teaching experience is less than ten years. Finally, human resource development programs should also be considered for the secondary school heads.

Keywords

education., secondary schools, profile

Introduction

One ambition embodied in the development strategy called 'Philippines 2000' is to provide quality basic education that is equitably accessible to all by the foundation for lifelong learning and service for the common good [1]. This was the mission statement of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports DECS (now DepEd) two decades ago and now, the educational system is still striving for the same to keep up with the changing times and the challenges that go with it.

Education by simple definition, is a tool which provides people with knowledge, skill, technique, information, enables them to know their rights and duties toward their family, society as well as the nation. It plays a crucial role to eradicate poverty, promote safety and security against crimes, prevent wars and terrorism, regulate commerce and trade, maintain law and order, empower women, uplift economically weaker sections of society, and communicate [2]. Three easily measurable importance of education to an individual are having a good career, good status in the society and self-confidence [3]. Education is so important and the Philippine government believes in what it can do to its people as evidenced by allocating the highest budget for it.

Basic education in the Philippines is handled by DepEd. It is supported by Section 1 of Article XIV of the Constitution which declared that the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps for education to be accessible to all. It is also stipulated in Section 5 that the State shall take into account regional and sectoral needs and conditions and shall encourage local planning in the development of educational policies and programs. [4] For the purpose of

this narrative, secondary education in the province of Sorsogon is focused.

Secondary education is the second stage traditionally found in formal education, beginning about age 13 to 16 [5]. Although secondary education is not compulsory in the Philippines, it is widely attended, particularly in the more urban areas of the country [6]. Researchers related several indicators to secondary education; one of these indicators is the socio-economic status of a place.

Socio-economic status (SES) is not limited to the presence or absence of poverty. SES encompasses not just income but also educational attainment, financial security, and subjective perceptions of social strata and class. Socioeconomic status can encompass quality of life attributes as well as the opportunities and privileges afforded to people within society [7]. The PSA-PSO published an article regarding these indicators.

Sorsogon is a second class province based from one of the studies. In terms of financial security, the food threshold in 2015 was 9.9%, which means 19.3 thousand families did not have income enough to buy their basic food needs. The poverty threshold was 32%, meaning 32 for every 100 families were considered poor based on some definition. This data implied that 61.9 thousand Sorsogon families in 2015 had incomes not enough to buy foods and non-food needs [8]. A number of Sorsogon families had poor socio-economic status based from these findings.

Researches in the US continues to link lower SES to lower academic achievements and slower rates of academic progress as compared with higher SES communities. Performance indicators in government elementary and secondary schools of Sorsogon showed that elementary education was higher in terms of participation rate, retention rate, transition rate, survival rate, repetition rate, graduation rate and completion rate than the secondary education.

Meanwhile, it also showed that there were more dropouts in the secondary education than in elementary education [8]. The secondary level of education is relatively more affected by the environmental SES in contrast to elementary education. This can be explained further by specific factors. Research indicates that school conditions contribute more to SES differences in learning rates than family characteristics do. Researchers have argued that classroom environment plays an important role in outcomes [7]. In Sorsogon province, in terms of literacy, 99% of individuals ten years and older were literate. The literacy of males was 99.0% while females was 99.1%. When it comes to school attendance of individuals five to 24 years old, 72.9 % were attending school, of which 51% were males. In the case of enrollment for school year 2016 - 2017, only 93% were enrolled for high school, in contrast to elementary with 99% [8]. This shows a decrease in the percentage of elementary pupils transitioning to secondary level.

It is crucial for the secondary education institutions in the province to grow to keep up with the needs of the youth and the community. There are 107 secondary education institutions in the province, 75% of which are public. The national government supports educational programs to guarantee its quality. However, research shows that socio-economic status directly influences the quality of education among youth either in positive or negative ways. Sorsogon being a second class province, with its significant rates in subsistence and poverty incidences, is likely to be affected in the same manner based from the 2018 statistics. Also, the quality of education is affected by home SES and even further by school SES through the quality of its material and human resources. Thus, it is important that profile of secondary education in the province in terms of facilities and human resource be look into.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

Generally, this study aims to determine the situation of the secondary education in Sorsogon province. It specifically includes the profile of the schools along classroom-student ratio, teacher-student ratio, and profile of teachers along educational attainment, length of service and age.

Materials and Methods

As part of the project Sorsogon Provincial Baseline Data Information System (SPBDIS), this descriptive study aims to establish a baseline information on the secondary education in the province of Sorsogon. Secondary sources were used to collect information on the number of secondary schools and their corresponding enrolment for the last four years. The rest of the data needed in this study were obtained through a survey questionnaire answered by the school heads.

The survey questionnaire used in this paper is crafted by the SPBDIS project team. To validate the instrument, it passed through a series of revisions through critiquing of the research team, project team deliberations, and inputs from Department of Education (DepED) representatives as the study’s stakeholders. The questionnaires were then tried to ten randomly selected school heads. Based on the results of

the dry run, the instrument was revised accordingly.

The final questionnaire was composed of two parts. The first part included the profile of the school heads and the school itself in terms of number of teachers, number of classrooms. The second part of the questionnaire determined the profiles of the teachers.

Questionnaires were distributed to all public secondary schools in the province, except for the schools under the leadership of the school heads who served as respondents in the validation of the instrument. Unfortunately, some school heads failed to return the accomplished instruments. Of the retrieved instruments, some have incomplete answers, hence the discrepancies in number of respondents in the some tables. The data retrieved through the questionnaire came from the schools in Sorsogon City, Bulan, Casiguran, Irosin, Juban, Magallanes, Prieto Diaz and Sta. Magdalena.

Frequency count, percentage and ratio were used to analyze the data.

2.1. Public secondary schools’ profile

This section shows the enrolment data of secondary school in Sorsogon from secondary sources provided by DepEd. It also reveals the number of classrooms and number of teachers based on the retrieved survey questionnaires.

Respondent schools were classified into big and small. Schools with more than a thousand enrollees were identified as big, otherwise it is considered small. As shown in table 1, classroom-student ratio in big schools deviates from the DepEd standard of 1:40. On the other hand, small schools maintain their classroom-students ratio within the standard.

Table 1. Classroom-Student Ratio of the Public Secondary Schools

School Type	No. of Classrooms	Enrolment	Classroom-Student Ratio
Big Schools	264	19 536	1:74
Small Schools	117	3 889	1:33
Total	381	23 425	

This finding connotes that shortage of classrooms is evident to big schools but not with small schools. This result may be an evidence of the continuous population growth in the province of Sorsogon. It brings about an increase in the number of households as well as the number of children in the province. Parents in families belonging to any levels of social and economic echelon believed that education is a guaranteed inheritance children can receive from their parents. It becomes an obligation of parents to send their children to school and take every means just to see their children holding a diploma. Parents would always wished to give the best possible education to their children in order to be successful in life. It is not therefore surprising that parents prefer to enrol their children in schools located in a much urbanized area. They believe that teachers in big schools are more competent than those in the small schools. This thinking may be because of the fact that teachers assigned in highly urbanized area are more exposed to new

trends and advancements in technologies. They have more advanced lifestyles and have dealt with large groups of diverse ideas. They also have bigger opportunity to participate to a variety of trainings especially in technology, teaching strategies and state-of –the-art instructional materials and devices.

They are the first ones to adopt new things because of accessibility and availability in terms of transportation and internet connections. Thus, parents prefer to enrol their children in big schools than in small schools. Moreover, having an exposure to a bigger crowd, which means wider groups of acquaintances and friends from other places is a good learning environment to their children. It gives their children high level of self-confidence and self-esteem necessary for improving networks within and outside the society they live. Improving the social linkages and partnership with other people needs skills in human relations that could be the link to a successful future.

Table 2 reflects the teacher-student ratio of the big and small schools. They are both within the standard ratio of 1: 40. This means that the number of teachers is adequate due to the continuous hiring in the DepEd. However, because of the shortage of classrooms in the big schools, more than 40 students were lumped to one classroom with one teacher. This resulted to an excessnumber of teachers and hence they were given clerical assignments other than teaching. It is therefore suggested that big schools need to address the classroom inadequacy by providing the students with a classroom necessary to the teaching- learning process. It is further suggested that the localization policy be strictly implemented to limit the enrollees in the big schools

Table 2. Teacher-Student Ratio of the Public Secondary Schools

School Type	No. of Teachers	Enrolment	Teacher-Student Ratio
Big Schools	624	19 536	1:31
Small Schools	223	3 889	1:17
Total	847	23 425	

2.2. Profile of Secondary School Teachers

The profile of the public school teachers in terms of educational attainment, length of service and age is presented in this section.

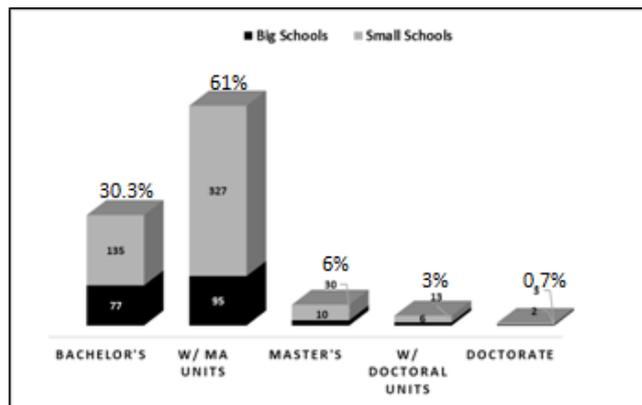


Figure 1. Educational Attainment of the Public Secondary School Teachers

Figure 1 shows that from the 16 respondent schools in the province of Sorsogon, there are 698 Public Secondary school teachers. 190 or 27% of which are from big schools and 508 or 73% are from small schools. 5 or 2% are holders of a doctorate degree, 19 or 3% have doctoral units, 40 or 6% are masteral degree holders, 422 or 60% are with masteral units and the rest are bachelor’s degree holders. Results show that a 9.7% are holders of advance degrees. This implies that 90% of the teachers did not pursue advance studies. It can be construed that most of these teachers maybe contented with their baccalaureate degrees or maybe constrained to pursue further degree due to bulk of work, responsibility and financial insufficiency. Teachers with family are torn between the money and time spent for work, children and schooling. Those who tried to enter graduate school but were eventually faced with difficult circumstances tend to drop schooling. Time and financial management skills are imperative in getting advance degrees hence only a small percentage of teachers who aim for a higher position in their careers and are goal oriented can make schooling possible. Moreover, the opportunities for in-service trainings and other faculty development activities from the DepEd are considered sufficient in upgrading and updating the knowledge and learning experiences of the teachers so as not to compromise the quality of services they can provide to their students. The implementation of the CPE requirement in the renewal of PRC license is an initiative that encourages teachers to improve their professional expertise.

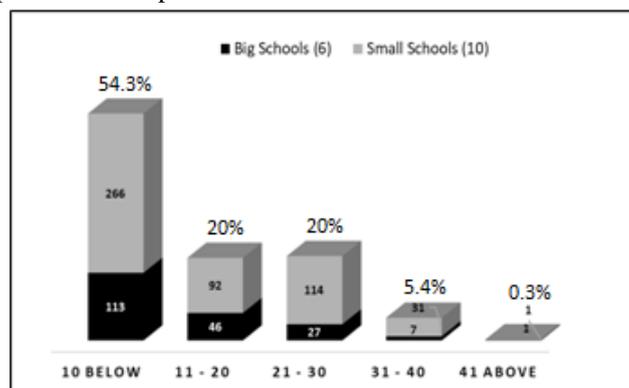


Figure 2. Length of Service of the Public Secondary School Teachers

Figure 2 shows that more than half of the teacher respondents have length of service less than ten years, while there are 279 or 40% of the teachers are within 11 to 30 years in service. These teachers are assumed to have mastered their teaching skills and are considered as experts in their respective schools. On the other hand only 40 or 6% of the teachers have served more than 30 years. They are the most senior and are about to retire from service.

These data imply that it is still practical to invest on teachers' training. Moreover it also indicates there are enough expert teachers that may serve as models to teachers with less than 10 years in service along areas on human relations, professionalism, professional ethics and growth.

It is suggested that more in-service trainings and faculty development programs be provided to teachers with less than 10 years in field service. Those senior and more experienced teachers may be tapped as resource persons and as mentors of the new teachers during the in-service trainings. They may still be sent to trainer's training to improve their skills and self-confidence especially in dealing with different groups of trainees and participants. On the other hand, scholarships may be widely disseminated to encourage teachers willing to pursue their advance degrees inline with their specialization.

Figure 3 reflects that 332 or 48% of the teachers are young with ages less than 40 years old. 366 or 52% are more than 39 years of age. 19 teachers are within the optional retirement age.

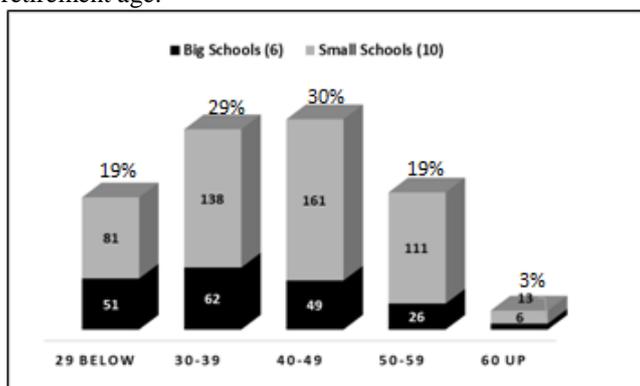


Figure 3. Age Profile of the Public Secondary School Teachers

These data imply that there is a need to anticipate for the possible replacement of the retireable teachers. These teachers may retire anytime within the next 4 years. It is suggested that seminars on retirement may be conducted to assist them upon retirement and orient them with the life after retirement. Moreover, 94% percent of the teachers in the province are below 60 years old and are still far from retiring. They are actively teaching their respective classes and are continuously waiting for opportunities for self and professional growth and improvements. Investing on teachers' training geared towards teacher and student development may be considered. Professional growth of teachers may have a positive effect to students learning.

Table 3 reflects that 479 or 69% of the teachers are female. Only 219 or 31% of the teachers are male. This result connotes that the teaching career is still dominated by female. This maybe attributed to the past Filipino belief that

teaching is a profession for female. Women worked as teachers of their children in the family. This task is being carried to schools where children in the classrooms are taught by female teachers. Teachers are considered the second parents of the pupils the reason behind why the role of the mother is more evident in the teaching career.

Table 3. Sex Profile of the Public Secondary School Teachers

School Type	No. of School	Sex		Total No. of Teachers	%
		M	F		
Big Schools	6	59	135	194	28
Small Schools	10	160	344	504	72
Total	16	219	479	698	100

2.3. Profile of Public Secondary School Heads

This section discusses the profile of the secondary school heads who took part in the survey conducted.

Table 4 shows that 14 or 88% of the respondents are below 10 years in service as school head. One or 6% served within 11 to 20 years and another 1 or 6% has served within 20 to 30 years.

Table 4. Length of Service of the Public Secondary School Heads

City/Municipality	Length of Service of Public Secondary School Heads in years			Total
	≤ 10	11-20	21-30	
Bulan	6	0	1	7
Casiguran	2	0	0	2
Irosin	1	0	0	1
Magallanes	1	1	0	2
Prieto Diaz	1	0	0	1
Sorsogon	1	0	0	1
Sta. Magdalena	2	0	0	2
Total	14	1	1	16

Majority of the school heads are still new in their administrative position. This implies that they are on the beginning stage of learning their functions as administrators and as instructional leaders. To be an administrator is not as easy as preparing documents for promotion. The position requires a qualification standard necessary for leading and deciding issues for the betterment of a school community. Their being new to administrative service connotes that they have first served longer in school as teachers before being promoted as school head. The experience of being a teacher in an ordinary classroom counts a lot. The experience of dealing with the parents, students, community, co-teachers and school workers is very significant. These experiences took sufficient length of time and are very important in understanding the school, its environment and the people inside it. No one can make an administrator overnight.

However, the experiences in the field of teaching are still inadequate for the making of an effective administrator. It is only considered as a pre-service training for any head of school and still needs to be supplemented with more training on academic excellence, fiscal management and administrative leadership.

Table 5. Age of the Public Secondary School Heads

City/ Municipality	Age of Public Secondary School Heads					Total
	< 30	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	> 59	
Bulan	0	2	1	2	1	6
Casiguran	0	0	1	1	0	2
Irosin	0	0	0	1	0	1
Magallanes	0	0		0	2	2
Prieto Diaz	0	0	0	1	0	1
Sorsogon	0	0	0	1	0	1
Sta. Magdalena	0	0	1	1	0	2
Total	0	2	5	8	3	15

It can be gleaned from table 5 that all of the school heads are more than 30 years old. The department may have considered potential teachers who have served as teachers for more than 10 years before promoting them to school head position. Moreover, findings on the length of service of these school heads suggest that they are holding their position for less than 10 years. Older persons are better accepted as leader than the younger ones because the followers often consider the age of the leader. The wisdom of the old is more powerful and persuading than that of the young ones because it is anchored on the belief of maturity and emotional stability.

Older people were believed to have more life experiences that made them well equipped with skills, knowledge and self-confidence. It made them stronger to overcome challenges and become more advanced in profession that turned them into an expert. These characteristics draw or attract followers and supporters hence turning them into leaders. In similar note, schools also has the same idea with regards to administrators, hence older teacher has a better

edge of being promoted as school head than younger ones.

Table 6. Sex Profile of the Public Secondary School Heads

City/ Municipality	Sex		Total
	M	F	
Bulan	5	2	7
Casiguran	2	0	2
Irosin	1	0	1
Magallanes	2	0	2
Prieto Diaz	0	1	1
Sorsogon	0	1	1
Sta. Magdalena	0	2	2
Total	12	8	16

In table 6, figures show that 12 or 75% of the school heads are male while 8 or 25% are female. The result implies that more males become administrators than females. Administrative function includes leading the operations of the school, managing its fiscal and human resources, addressing problems and decision-making. The school head's responsibilities and accountabilities to the school and its stakeholders are critical and sensitive and may require more time and attention from them. The role of most males in their family as a father may be comparable to the role and function of the school head in the academic environment. Although females equally fit in to the same role, they prioritize their roles as a mother to their children who needs more of their time over any other non-familial concerns. Hence, the position is more attractive to males rather than to females.

Conclusion

It was revealed by the study that classroom-student ratio among big secondary schools in the province falls below the standard set by DepEd. Although the teacher-student ratio is within acceptable values the class size can still be affected by the lack of classrooms. Teachers profile on the other hand showed that only 9.7% of the public secondary school teachers are holders of advanced degrees. Forty eight percent of the teachers are less than forty years old and majority are female. But for the school heads 75% are male. All school heads are more than thirty years old and majority are within the range of 50 to 59 years of age. Of the school head included in the study eighty eight percent are below ten years of service in their position.

From these results it is important for school to address the inadequacy of classrooms for class sizes to be within the standards. Scholarships and other faculty development programs can also be considered to help the teachers acquire advance degrees. Since most teachers are still young it is still practical to invest on human resource development. With young school heads at the helm of the secondary schools it is empirical that leadership and management training programs be in place.

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