

**RESEARCH PAPER****Program Theory of Outcomes Based Education: Analyzing Systemic Reform****MA. Gloria E. Liquido.**

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Email: mgli77@yahoo.comReceived: 23rd November 2017, Revised: 13th February 2018, Accepted: 15th February 2018**ABSTRACT**

The objective of this study was to conduct program theory evaluation (PTE) of outcomes-based education-it being an avenue in analyzing education systemic reform. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is pushing for the adoption of outcomes-based education in all curricular programs of CHED-recognized/regulated HEI's in the country. CHED Memorandum Order No.46, series of 2012 was issued to this effect and has given all its subjects at least two years to shift to outcomes-based education (OBE). Given the scenario, the problems posed for this study include (1) what theory informs outcomes-based education (OBE) as strongly advocated by Commission on Higher Education (CHED)? (2) What specific needs do outcomes-based education address? (3) what model is used to explicate the PTE of OBE? and (4) what implications can be drawn for the upcoming OBE implementation? While this OBE thing is seen not just a mere paradigm shift in a long-standing praxis in education, most importantly, it has to be understood that 'OBE is principally a curriculum reform model with definite implications for the assessment of student learning' (Guskey, 1994). And as a systemic, curricular reform, the conduct of PTE is inevitably significant to understand and prefigure 'why this program will work or will not work' in this country. Here, an adapted model is presented to explicate the program theory of outcomes-based education in the country. The study course through the discussions anchoring on sound theoretical frameworks and empirical evidences utilizing the review of research literature on similar programs and document analysis.

Key words: Program Theory Evaluation, Outcomes-Based Education

INTRODUCTION

This paper endeavors to explicate the program theory of outcomes-based education (OBE), hence a program theory evaluation (PTE). This type of evaluation helps 'to specify not only what of program outcomes but also the *how* and the *why*' (Brouselle & Champagne, 2009; Weiss, 2000). The praxis of PTE seeks to examine the *raison d'être* of the program. Primarily, it looks into the interplay of foundational components like the logic and framework of the program articulated in the chain of objectives, processes, activities, resources, outputs and outcomes. Thus, the plausibility of the program to produce the intended outcomes and the likelihood of the program to work successfully is herein predetermined, even so before the program is yet to be implemented.

The conduct PTE of OBE is rather timely and very motivating since OBE is becoming imminent. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) strongly advocated the adoption of OBE in higher education institutions (HEI's) in the country, as stipulated in CHED Memorandum Order No. 46 series of 2012.

This OBE thing is not just a mere paradigm shift in a long-standing practice in education; it has to be understood that 'OBE is principally a curriculum reform model with definite implications for the assessment of student learning' (Guskey, 1994). And as a systemic, curricular reform, the conduct of PTE is inevitably significant to understand and prefigure 'why this program will work or will not work' in this country. A good number of literatures divulged on the acceptability and relevance of OBE in the global arena, but let it be known also that some countries strongly opposed it. For instance, some nation states under Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Western Australia, reported OBE and its implementation to be chaotic. In a study, Outcomes based education? Rethinking the provision of compulsory education in Western Australia by Berlach and McNaught (2007) cited an observation made by Steve Kesell (2007), recently a retired Associate Professor of Science and Mathematics education, saying-

The former minister touted OBE as 'world best practice', claiming it has been implemented across Australia and other OECD countries. The last part is technically correct: OBE was implemented in many of those places, and virtually all are now abandoning it as a failed experiment.

While it is safe to presume that the adoption of outcomes-based education (OBE) in this country will gain acquiescence especially among the teachers who are in the front line of implementation. Given the afforested extant premises, it is with great expectation that this program theory evaluation (PTE) of OBE may serve to shed light to better understand the logic behind OBE as systemic reform and appreciate the importance of the conduct of program theory evaluation.

DESCRIPTION AND BRIEF HISTORY PROGRAM THEORY EVALUATION (PTE)

In the study, Program Theory Evaluation: Practice, Promise and Problems by Rogers, Petrosino, Huebner & Hasci (2000) cited that for three decades since, many different terms used for Program Theory Evaluation (PTE), including *outcome hierarchies* (Benette, 1975) and *theory-of-action* (Schön, 1997). More commonly, the terms *program theory* (Bickman, 1987 & 1990), *theory-based evaluation* (Weiss, 1995 & 1997), and *program logic* (Lenne & Cleland, 1987; Funnell, 1997) have been used. Further, they posited that 'although there are clear variations in types of PTE, these different labels have not been used consistently to refer to different types and have instead tended to reflect the preferred label in particular organizations or source references.'

In parallel vein, Brouselle & Champagne (2009) in their study, Program theory evaluation: Logic analysis, stated that the interest in PTE increased with the recognition that black-box evaluations were insufficient and that better knowledge of the theory underlying the program was necessary to produce generalizable findings (Bickman, 1987a). Further, the foundational work of Suchman (1967) and Weiss (1972) clearly influenced the field with the observation that failure to find program effects could, when not attributable to faulty evaluation design, be due either to wrong theory or to inadequate implementation (Bickman, 1987b; Birckmayer & Weiss, 2000; Chen, 2004; Weiss, 2007). Implementation analysis addresses questions related to the implementation, and *program theory evaluation addresses questions related to the adequacy of the program theory.*

BACKGROUND OF OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION (OBE)

OBE had a longstanding and various historical roots. First, OBE 'can be traced to the earliest efforts to rationalize curriculum building. Guskey observes, 'All the basic tenets of what we now call 'outcomes-based education' were elegantly set forth by Ralph W. Tyler over 40 years ago' (Schwarz & Cavener, 1994). Ralph W. Tyler is sometimes referred to as the father of the curriculum movement (Print, 1996).

Then came OBE that trace its roots with Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Objectives and Mastery of Learning; and some other behavioral psychology associated with B.F. Skinner.

Another major influence on OBE is traditional American business, which has a long history of shaping education. Spady and Marshall declare that OBE begins with strategic planning, 'fully developed descriptions of future conditions' from which outcomes are derived. These outcomes are largely tied to the economy. Concerns about efficiency and predictable, measurable productivity remain paramount in what William Spady, the leading proponent of OBE, calls the transformational OBE paradigm (Schwarz & Cavener, 1994).

DEFINITION AND BASIC CONCEPTS OF OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION (OBE)

William Spady, the leading proponent of OBE called the transformational OBE paradigm (2002) defined OBE as 'focusing and organizing all of the school's programs and instructional efforts around the clearly defined outcomes we want all students to demonstrate when they leave school'.

Dr. Randall Raburn, Superintendent of Schools in Edmond, Oklahoma, offers the following definition of OBE as cited in the study of Schwarz & Cavener (1994), Outcome-Based Education and Curriculum Change: Advocacy, Practice and Critique:

OBE is an education philosophy organized around several basic beliefs and principles. It starts with the belief that all students can learn and succeed. Schools control the conditions of success, and the student's success is the responsibility of the teacher. Organized from a focus on student exit

outcomes and designed downward to the subject and unit level, it focuses instructional strategies on clearly defined learner outcomes getting high standards with high expectations for all students and includes expanded opportunities for enrichment and remediation.

In the same study of Schwarz & Cavener (1994) mentioned the following definitions-

- a. ...*'a general term applied to instructional and assessment efforts aimed at defining and evaluating student performance'*.
- b. ... *'all the basic tenets of what we now call 'outcome-based education' were elegantly set forth by Ralph Tyler over 40 years ago. 'King and Evans state that 'Tyler notes the importance of the objective for systematically planning educational experiences, stating that a well-written objective should identify both the behavior to be developed in the students and the 'area of content or of life in which the behavior is to be applied''*.
- c. ...*Spady and Marshall declare that OBE begins with strategic planning, 'fully developed descriptions of future conditions' from which outcomes are derived. These outcomes are largely tied to the economy.*
- d. ... *three aspects of OBE stand out in this set of assertions: the focus on outcomes, the curriculum design process, and the responsibility of the school and teacher for the success of all students.*
- e. ... *outcomes include tests and more; ultimate results must be observable in significant 'culminating demonstrations' by students that may include 'real life' undertakings.*
- f. ... *OBE model alleges that student success is solely the teacher's responsibility because 'all students can learn'.*
- g. ... *The technocratic power that drives OBE is closely aligned to an industrial business mentality.*

Towers cautions as follows:

Outcome-based education assumes that all academic success is observable and can be measured...Similarly, the business world believes that the only success is observable.. OBE and business seem to share the same rigidity, objectivity, and results-orientation. Students, like automobiles on conveyor belt, are run through a series of quality control checks...then thrust into the market place...

OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION (OBE) THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the study of Guskey (1994) on Outcome-Based Education and Mastery of Learning: Clarifying the Difference clearly stated that, 'outcome-based education is principally a curriculum model with definite implications for the assessment of student learning'. Here, he cited the guiding principles elegantly set forth in the 1940's by Ralph W. Tyler in his classic book, Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction. Tyler emphasized that four fundamental questions must be answered in developing any curriculum and plan of instruction. They are (1) What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? (2) What educational experiences can be effectively organized? (4) How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (Guskey, 1994; Tyler, 1949). In his writings, Tyler considered the specification of educational purposes to be synonymous with the process of defining educational objectives. To Tyler, objectives were broadly defined as conceptions of what we want students to learn and what they should be able to do as a result of learning. Tyler recognized, however, that 'in the final analysis, objectives are matters of choice and they must, therefore, be considered value judgments of those responsible for the school (Guskey, 1994; Tyler, 19549).

In parallel vein, Spady posited five overarching principles through which OBE operates. First, learning starts with *outputs* and *not inputs*, or outcome not process. Once the end result is established, only then can curriculum design be considered. Second, individual authorities (normally schools) accept responsibility for determining how the big picture outcomes are to be achieved. In this, Spady sees teachers as moving from primary responsibility as expositors of a syllabus to one of becoming curriculum designers. Third, facilitate what Spady terms 'high expectations', students ought to be given as many opportunities as required to demonstrate criterion-based success. Fourth, in the task of learning, importance of understanding ought to have precedence over time constraints. In other words, students should be allowed for 'delayed success' for as long as they exhibit mastery over a particular concept. Fifth, the process of learning is more

important than the content to be learned. Learning should be enjoyable rather than be, as is often the case, the agent for disenfranchising the learner (Berlach & Naught, 2007).

Similarly, Burns & Squires (1987) cited the curriculum organization in OBE that starts with defining useable learning outcomes which is a critical first activity. Once learning outcomes are outlined and organized, the next activity is to *adopt* or *develop* appropriate curriculum materials for those outcomes. The third activity is to align the curriculum in two ways: (1) the existing curriculum documents, from exit outcomes to lesson objectives, need to be consistent; (2) the curriculum should be aligned with the assessment instruments that the school uses to evaluate the effectiveness of its educational programs. A final activity is to *devise* a means of managing the curriculum.

The above cited OBE frameworks do not include all the steps that the university or college might follow to organize their curriculum given their respective contexts.

OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION (OBE) AS MANDATED BY CHED

In the guidelines for the implementation of CMO 46 series of 2012 on the policy-standard to enhance quality assurance (QA) in Philippines Higher Education through outcomes-based and typology-based QA, under (3) learning competency-based/outcomes-based standards in higher education states that,

3.1. CHED strongly advocates a shift from a teaching-or-instruction-centered paradigm in higher education to one that is learner-or-student, within a lifelong learning framework.

3.1.1 A learner-or-student-centered paradigm in higher education entails a shift from a more input-oriented curricular design based on the description of course content, to outcomes-based education in which the course content is developed in terms of learning outcomes. In this paradigm, students are made aware of what they ought to know, understand and be able to do after completing a unit of study. Teaching and assessment are subsequently geared towards the acquisition of appropriate knowledge and skills and the building of student competencies;

3.1.2 Teachers remain crucial to the learning process as catalysts and facilitators of learning. Laboratories and other inputs for specific disciplines are likewise important as they create the environment and shape the learning experience of students. However, the focus of attention shifts to students and the process that will enable the development and assessment of their learning competencies as defined by disciplinary and multi-disciplinary communities of scholars and professional practitioners. In a student-centered, outcomes-based approach to education, the development of these learning competencies is the expected outcome of higher education programs.

3.1.3 The term 'competencies' has been increasingly used to identify and operationalize outcomes that bridge the gap between education and job requirements. However, beyond the work setting, higher education is also mandated to produce graduates with the requisite competencies to cope with a changing world and participate in crafting their individual and collective future. The development of such competencies- thinking, attitudinal and behavioral competencies as well as ethical orientations- are achieved through their integration into disciplinary/program-based learning competencies and through the revised General Education curriculum.

3.1.4 The outcomes-based education has various interpretations. There are, for instance, at least two different curriculum frameworks associated with the term- 'strong' or 'upper case' OBE and the 'weak' or lower case 'obe'.

3.1.4.3 The 'obe' approach in Philippine higher education at this juncture mixes outcomes-based education with other curriculum approaches and is open to incorporating discipline-based learning areas that currently structure HEI curriculums.

Further stated in the CMO that the Technical Committees and Panels who are tasked to make the Revised Program Standards and Guidelines (PSG's) shall reflect the shift to learning competency based standards/outcomes-based education; ...the the PSG's shall provide ample space for HEI's to innovate on the curriculum in line with their assessment of how best to achieve learning outcomes in their particular contexts and their respective missions; andCHED is NOT subscribing to a one-size-fits-all model of outcomes-based education.

METHODOLOGY

The Program Theory Evaluation: Analyzing Systemic Reform is a qualitative research mainly engaged and utilized program theory evaluation. In this study, a model was adapted from the work of Huey-Tsyh Chen, Stewart Donaldson and others, the Theory-Based Evaluation Paradigm, that emerged during the mid -1970s and 1980s, and as cited in the study of Faizal Haji, Marie-Paule Morin and Kathryn Parker (2013), Rethinking programmed evaluation in health profession education: beyond 'did it work?'. The paradigm had been tweak and modified to fit for the purpose of the study and is limited to the problems herein set forth, utilizing mainly on a review of research literature on similar programs and document analysis of CHED Memorandum Order No. 46, series of 2012, i.e. Policy-Standard to Enhance Quality Assurance (QA) in Philippine Higher Education through an Outcomes-Based and Typology- Based QA.

At one hand, constraints in human and non-human resources had prompted the researcher to defer (in depth) discussions with key informants particularly from CHED and curriculum designers/ coordinators in public and private higher education institutions, especially those that with OBE already in place, such in the case of maritime and engineering education.

Further, since OBE had just been implemented effective June 2015, this program theory evaluation sought to find out the logic and theory behind the program. In the future, the researcher hopes to do an in-depth, qualitative research i.e. review of program documentations (OBE Curriculum), observe the program itself, and venture on extensive triangulation of data and theory sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section of the paper presents the discussion of the results viz the questions set forth in this study.

1. What theory informs outcomes-based education (OBE) as mandated by Commission on Higher Education (CHED)?

The following citations are all derived from CHED Memorandum Order No 46, series of 2012 which posited to be the bases for a theoretically-informed OBE mandated by CHED itself.

It says, CHED strongly advocates a shift from a teaching-or-instruction-centered paradigm in higher education to one that is learner-or-student, within a lifelong learning framework... learning throughout life is the key in the globalized world of 21st century to help individuals 'adapt the evolving requirements of the labor market' and better master 'the changing time-frames and rhythms of individual existence' (UNESCO 1996 Delors Report) (CMO No.46 series of 2012 Article III Section 11 & 12).

Moreover, CHED is committed to developing competency-based learning standards that comply with existing international standards when applicable (e.g. outcomes-based education for fields like engineering and maritime education) to achieve quality and enable effective integration of the intellectual discipline, ethos and values associated with liberal education

Also, CHED is committed to developing and implementing an outcomes-based approach to quality assurance (QA) monitoring and evaluation because it has the potential to greatly increase both the effectiveness of the QA system, and the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of higher education. Mature evaluation systems are based upon outcomes, looking particularly into the intended, implemented, and achieved learning outcomes. Further, in its rationale for enhancing quality assurance,

Section 1. Philippine higher education is mandated to contribute to building a quality nation capable of transcending the social, political, economic, cultural and ethical issues that constrain the country's human development, productivity and global competitiveness.

Section 2. This mandate translates to multiple missions for the Philippine higher education system:

- To produce thoughtful graduates imbued with (1) values reflective of humanist orientation (e.g. fundamental respect for others as human beings with intrinsic rights, cultural rootedness, an avocation to serve); (2) analytical and problem solving skills; (3) the ability to think through the ethical and social implications of a given course of action; and (4) the competency to learn continuously throughout life – that will enable them to live meaningfully in a complex rapidly

changing and globalized world while engaging their community and the nation's development issues and concerns.

- To produce graduates with high levels of academic, thinking, behavioral, and technical skills/competencies that are aligned with national academic and industry standards and needs and international standards, when applicable;
- To provide focused support to the research required for technological innovation, economic growth and global competitiveness, on the one hand, and for crafting the country's strategic directions and policies, on the other;
- To help improve the quality of human life of Filipinos, respond effectively to changing societal needs and conditions; and provide solutions to problems at the local community, regional and national levels.

Lastly, CHED subscribes to a more eclectic approach that resonates with a 'weak' or 'lower case' 'obe'. In either way, CHED is NOT subscribing to a one-size-fits all model of outcomes based education.

2. What specific needs do outcomes-based education address to?

The Table below on Sources of Curriculum Change was adopted from the works of Malcolm Skilbeck (1984) as cited in the book of Murray Print (1993), Curriculum Development and Design. It posited that curriculum of a school is subjected to considerable pressures to change from its current situation. Pressures emerge from what Skilbeck considers to be four principal sources. The changes to the school curriculum reflect four major inputs: changes in society (indirect and direct) and changes in education (direct and indirect). That curriculum change in schools reflects changes in society at large. Skilbeck suggests that the school curriculum responds to '... changes in society which explicitly and deliberately enlists curriculum policy and practice as a means of achieving stated goals and ends.

<p>1 Changes in society (indirect effects)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Globalization ➤ ASEAN integration 	<p>3 Changes in education (indirect effects)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The clarion call for 'lifelong learning' ➤ Forces forging for 'high-levels of accountability' and 'effectiveness' in HEI's ➤ Pressing need for development of human capital
<p>2 Changes in society (direct effects)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mandate from the national government, i.e. as stipulated in CHED Memorandum Order N. 46 Series of 2012, specifically in Art. I Sec. 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5. 	<p>4 Changes in education (direct effects)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The mandate for outcomes-based quality assurance ➤ The alignment of core and other competencies/standards with international frameworks and mechanisms as specified by CHED-PSGs, for adoption of HEIs for their respective proffered programs ➤ Shift from teaching-centered paradigm to student-centered within the lifelong learning framework. ➤ Generally, CHED Memorandum Order N. 46 Series of 2012, specifically in Art. III Sec. 11, 12, 13, & 14, cited the rationale for the adoption of competency-based learning standards and outcomes-based quality assurance monitoring and evaluation.

To apply this particular approach to the present undertaking, the changes in society i.e. globalization, ASEAN integration has indirect effects in both the policy and practices in education. It is a fact that these globalization and ASEAN integration forces bring immense changes in almost every aspect and status of one's country and Philippines is no exception to that. Philippines as a member state of ASEAN is obliged to conform to what have been internationally agreed policies and standards, most especially in the field of education. In a wider scale and in great extent, this

ASEAN integration is also a means to conform, if not, to compete or to be at par with other world economic organizations, i.e. UN (United Nations) for developing countries and OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) for developed countries.

The indirect effects of the changes in society (direct effects) pushed the national government of the Philippines thru CHED to come up with a mandate and articulate conformity to what have been internationally agreed/recognized policies and standards, those that have practical effects and implications towards education.

At one hand, the changes in education (indirect effects) include, the clarion call for 'lifelong learning', forces forging for 'high-levels of accountability' and 'effectiveness' in HEI's and pressing need for development of human capital- these concepts are generally coined within the context of globalization/ internalization and were brought to awareness, and even more emphasized as the 'needs of the time'. It can be recalled that with the advent of globalization/internalization, the education was 'in' for lifelong learning, for effectiveness thus demanded 'high-levels of accountability' among implementers and the pressing need for development of human capital which in turn have direct implications/effects in the economy. And these indirect effects in realm of changes in education likely caused the direct effects, i.e. the mandate for outcomes-based quality assurance, the alignment of core and other competencies/standards with international frameworks and mechanisms as specified by CHED-PSGs, for adoption of HEIs for their respective proffered programs, shift from teaching-centered paradigm to student-centered within the lifelong learning framework., generally, CHED Memorandum Order N. 46 Series of 2012, specifically in Art. III Sec. 11, 12, 13, & 14, cited the rationale for the adoption of competency-based learning standards and outcomes-based quality assurance monitoring and evaluation.

And as mentioned earlier on, that changes in education reflect changes in society at large. In this case, CHED affirmed that indeed their move to shift to outcomes-based education was driven by globalization and among other concomitants of the same. These changes both in society and education are inevitable and is becoming imminent, yet it will be advantageous especially on the part of the implementers to see and understand where these changes coming from, and why they are happening, so that they will be in the better position how (and what) to go about with this changes. With it to inevitably happen and would likely influence education, the implementers (teachers themselves) might as well be prepared and equipped in terms of capability and working knowledge to ensure, more or less, the success of the implementation of the program.

3. What model is used to explicate the PTE of OBE?

Below is the model used to explicate the program theory evaluation (PTE) of outcomes-based education (obe).The model is adapted from the work of Huey-Tsyh Chen, Stewart Donaldson and others, the Theory-Based Evaluation Paradigm, that emerged during the mid-1970s and 1980s, and as cited in the study of Faizal Haji, Marie-Paule Morin and Kathryn Parker (2013), Rethinking programmed evaluation in health profession education: beyond 'did it work?'. The paradigm had been modified to fit for the purpose of the study.

The model prefigures the essentials of program theory evaluation as applied in this study. Outside the big circle, is the box as the *planned theory* that represents CHED's ruling on 'obe' for higher education institutions (HEI's) and its respective programs. It presupposes that 'obe' will likely to work given the following provisions stipulated in CMO No. 46 series of 2012, i.e. (1) *CHED subscribes to a more eclectic approach that resonates with a 'weak' or 'lower case' 'obe'* (3.1.4.2); that (2) *'obe' approach in Philippine higher education at this juncture mixes outcomes-based education with other curriculum approaches and is open to incorporating discipline-based learning areas that currently structures HEI curriculums* (3.1.4.3); that (3) *the Revised Program Standards and Guideline (PSG's) that Technical Committees and Panels are tasked to produce shall reflect the shift to learning competency based standards/outcomes-based education* (3.2); ...(4) *shall specify the core competencies expected of graduates of particular programs regardless of the type of the HEI they graduate from, ...the PSG's shall provide ample space for HEI's to innovate on the curriculum in line with their assessment of how best to achieve learning outcomes in their particular contexts and their respective missions* (3.3.1); (5) *...While disciplines like engineering and maritime education that have developed their outcomes-based PSG's ahead of the others may provide useful inputs or guides,*

other programs are expected to develop PSG's based on learning competency standards that are appropriate to their respective disciplinal or multidisciplinary programs (3.2.2.), and among other provisions. These provisions as cited, have had set some sort of pre-conditioned circumstances, that 'obe' will work.

Inside the circle, are the boxes for *planned process* and *outcome of a program* groomed to adapt and implement an outcomes-based education of a certain HEI. The process component is articulated with an evaluation question-*how will it work?* or in other words, are the preparations and mechanism laid down for /by the program in terms of curriculum and instruction appropriately will lead to operate what is intended to be? Whereas, the outcome component is articulated in an evaluation question-*Does it work?* Here, given the process component assumed to be in place, this component predetermined that the process subsequently will lead to achieve the intended outcomes.

On the other side of the circle are the boxes of process and outcome, under what is considered *emergent*. Some unforeseen change and unprecedented circumstance accounted to have direct or indirect effect towards the planned process and planned outcome which is beyond control by the HEI may occur inevitably-these possibilities are considered emergent. *How else is it happening? How else is the program operating? What else are happening? What are other effects of the program?* -Apparently conclude for the *actual operation and effects* of the program from that of what have been planned and intended. And having such to include will come to interplay with what have been planned and intended, thus towards the implementation of the program, two things will emerge, the planned/ intended process and outcome, and the actual/observed process and outcome. The broken lines in between the boxes denotes that the relationship are not linear; either way, planned process can lead to planned outcome, or planned/targeted outcome will direct for the planned process; also, both planned and emergent processes can lead to planned or emergent outcomes. The whole shaded circle represents the larger context in which the program operates; it will include the unique nature and characteristics of the whole package of the program and the institution itself, its respective vision and mission and among other features of the context identified or known. Thus the question on *what context is the program operating in*, considers the *raison d'être* of the program and in a way, *how is the program doing with the context*. I contend that *context* is important to consider as it may mean the life in itself; it is a 'catch-all term' encompassing every inherent, extant and unique nature of the populace of the students/learners, socio-cultural factors and educational factors- all these characteristically defines a particular context of certain program or curriculum. In essence, the merit and worth of an evaluation will predict/tell as to whether the program is working well, thereby strengthens the context, or is it working against the context, thereby weakens the context. Weakening the context does not necessarily imply that the program is not good, rather, it could be viewed that the program, along with the emergent process and outcome, calls to modify and influence, or to the great extent change the context for its betterment and further development, which is the basic notion of education.

The evaluation model culminates with a careful search for additional explanations (emergent theory) for why emergent processes and outcomes came to be, and to articulate alternative mechanisms (beyond planned theory) behind planned processes and outcomes (Haji, *et al.*, 2013)

4. What implications can be drawn from the upcoming implementation of OBE?

The following implications are drawn:

Outcomes-based education is somewhat synonymous with competency-based education which actually at present mixes with the long standing praxis of education in the country and had been in placed in the curriculum of engineering and maritime education. According to CMO No. 46 series of 2012, the term '*competencies*' has been increasingly used to identify and operationalize outcomes that bridge the gap between education and job requirements. However, beyond the work setting, higher education is also mandated to produce graduates with the requisite competencies to cope with a changing world and participate in crafting their individual and collective future. The development of such competencies- thinking, attitudinal and behavioral competencies as well as ethical orientations -are achieved through their integration into disciplinal/program-based learning competencies and through the revised General Education curriculum. Moreover, the issuance of

CHED Memorandum Order No. 46 series of 2012 is pushing for the adoption of outcomes-based education (OBE), but a caution is noted here, notice that the title of the CMO, i.e. Policy-Standard to Enhance Quality Assurance in Philippine Higher Education through an Outcomes-Based and Typology-Based Quality Assurance. In essence, it was not primarily for outcomes-based education (obe) in itself but for an outcomes-based quality assurance. Technically, why not OBE first or OBE alone? Why *education* should fit with the kind of evaluation or quality assurance mechanism? Or why *'let the tail wag the dog'* as supposed the quality assurance mechanism is in the service of the kind of education, and not the vice versa. I have no strong feeling of opposition to 'obe' nor in outcomes-based quality assurance, but seemingly this notion holds true about OBE- 'the technocratic power that drives OBE is closely aligned to an industrial business mentality. Towers cautions as follows:

Outcome-based education assumes that all academic success is observable and can be measured...Similarly, the business world believes that the only success is observable... OBE and business seem to share the same rigidity, objectivity, and results-orientation. Students, like automobiles on conveyor belt, are run through a series of quality control checks...then thrust into the market place...

Further, the review of literature says that OBE logically demands accountability among the implementers. It cited that, *an emphasis on outcomes defines long term, broadly defined goals and objectives and holds participants accountable for achieving those. The choice of policies, processes and procedures is made by participants on the basis of their professional judgment – which should or could be informed by relevant research, practice wisdom and the needs of all those involved* (Alderson & Martin, 2007). The question now- to what extent our implementers are well-informed, capacitated, and ready for this 'obe'? Although, 'OBE advocates claim that OBE liberates teachers, but the emphasis on standardization and accountability on a paradigm not necessarily selected by them, keeps teachers voiceless, yet responsible for the results-such top-down reform movements have contributed significantly to educator stress and burnout (Schwarz & Cavener, 1994). In this case, will our 'obe' implementers be spared from this kind of scenario?

The crafting of 'obe' curriculum or program is left in the hands of higher education institutions (HEI's) as CHed provides the framework and program theory and/or the *planned theory* to guide and direct HEI's, and the core competencies that will serve as the minimum standards to follow for a particular program. The emergence of unplanned/unintended process and outcome during the course of implementation of a particular program could be beyond expectation/intention of CHed and HEI's- hence considered the *emergent theory*. In one way or the other may include (1)the feedback on OBE curriculum and its actual implementation, (2) the impact of hidden curriculum, and(3) the effects of OBE among teachers, which in turn may affect their acceptability and willingness to implement 'obe'. While it can be gleaned that 'obe' from the standpoint of CHed will likely to be effectively implemented (as it is a policy-making body), but as to the HEI's - it remains to be a remainder issue.

Certainly, OBE works with maritime and engineering education-but will it work with teacher education and other programs? What could be the basis of the appropriateness of the OBE approach for certain programs? Will it not consider the nature of the programs offered? Is 'obe' really a one-size fits all approach for all programs?

Come now the implementation, what could be the nexus and/or effects of OBE with Revised Program Standards and Guidelines (PSG's) of core competencies of programs NOT YET DONE? How about the nexus of 'obe' implementation with enhanced K to 12 basic education? with CHed General Education curriculum? and with Licensure/ Board Examinations of Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)?

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the rationale behind enhancing quality assurance, an outcomes-based quality assurance, impelled CHed to advocate and mandate OBE. Though, technically, outcomes based education is synonymous with competency-based education which in theory and practice has been extant in almost all of the programs recognized by CHed itself. The only difference maybe between

competency-based education and outcomes-based education, is that, 'outcomes-based education is principally curriculum reform model with definite implications for the assessment of student learning' (Guskey, 1994), and still based on core competencies (exit outcomes) as competency-based education. Be that as it may, either competency-based education or outcomes-based education is deemed necessary to be explored in further study especially on the respective contexts of HEI's (i.e. State Universities & Colleges, private sectarian and non-sectarian schools and universities) and very nature of the programs they offered. In essence, curriculum reform is supported with cogent evidences and theoretically informed choices, hence, a research-based curriculum.

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