

Assessing Job Performance: Employers' Feedback on Bachelor of Elementary Education Graduates of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology

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ABSTRACT: This study assesses the job performance of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology-College of Education (NEUST-COED) Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) graduates in both public and private schools. Conducted through surveys with 20 school administrators from selected elementary schools in Nueva Ecija, data was collected from July to December 2023 via Google Forms and Facebook Messenger. The study reveals high praise for NEUST-BEEd graduates, particularly in instructional competence and leadership skills. However, it suggests room for improvement in areas like research output and project development, specifically in publishing articles and contributing to journals. Recommendations include ongoing professional development, collaboration among graduates, and a focus on sustainability in research and project work. Overall, the findings affirm NEUST's BEEd program's effectiveness in preparing graduates for successful careers in education, advocating for continuous support and enhancement of their skills to meet the evolving demands of the field.

Keywords: NEUST-COED BEEd graduates, Employers' feedback, Instructional competence, Leadership skills, Research output

ABSTRAK: Penelitian ini menilai kinerja kerja lulusan Sarjana Pendidikan Dasar (BEEd) dari Fakultas Pendidikan Universitas Sains dan Teknologi Nueva Ecija (NEUST-COED) di sekolah negeri dan swasta. Dilaksanakan melalui survei dengan 20 administrator sekolah dari sekolah dasar terpilih di Nueva Ecija, data dikumpulkan dari Juli hingga Desember 2023 melalui Google Forms dan Facebook Messenger. Studi ini mengungkapkan pujian tinggi untuk lulusan NEUST-BEEd, terutama dalam kompetensi instruksional dan keterampilan kepemimpinan. Namun, penelitian ini menunjukkan perlunya peningkatan dalam output penelitian dan pengembangan

proyek, khususnya dalam menerbitkan artikel dan berkontribusi pada jurnal. Rekomendasi mencakup pengembangan profesional yang berkelanjutan, kolaborasi di antara para lulusan, dan fokus pada keberlanjutan dalam penelitian dan pekerjaan proyek. Secara keseluruhan, temuan ini menegaskan efektivitas program BEEd NEUST dalam mempersiapkan lulusan untuk berkarir sukses di bidang pendidikan, mendorong dukungan berkelanjutan dan peningkatan keterampilan mereka untuk memenuhi tuntutan yang terus berkembang di bidang ini.

Kata Kunci: *Lulusan NEUST-COED BEEd, Umpan balik pemberi kerja, Kompetensi instruksional, Keterampilan kepemimpinan, Output penelitian*

INTRODUCTION

The Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology-College of Education (NEUST-COED) is known for producing highly competent graduates who excel both locally and internationally. This study aims to investigate employers' perceptions of the employment performance of NEUST-BEEd graduates working in both public and private educational institutions.

From its humble beginnings as the Wright Institute in 1908 to its current state as NEUST, the institution has steadily extended its services and offerings to better serve its community and stakeholders. Despite changes in names, the institution has remained committed to developing qualified professionals and public servants.

Established as the Nueva Ecija School of Arts and Trade (NESAT) in 1964 and later chartered as the Central Luzon Polytechnic College (CLPC), the institution has regularly produced high-quality graduates, particularly in the field of education. Many alumni from the College of Education (COED) have held notable positions in both basic and higher education, earning both local and international distinction. These accomplishments demonstrate the efficiency of the teaching skills taught by the institution's faculty.

Since COED's first graduating class in 1967, the College has regularly produced distinguished educators, with alumni displaying exceptional employability and leadership skills. To uphold the heritage of quality, it is critical to assess COED-BEEd graduates' employment performance, particularly in their roles inside educational institutions. Thus, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the job performance of COED-BEEd graduates from the viewpoints of their present and previous employers, many of whom hold highly respected positions within their respective schools.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: 1) How may the profile of the respondents be described (in terms of age, sex, academic rank, and number of years in service as a school head); 2) How may the performance of NEUST-BEEd graduates as rated by the employers be described (in terms of Instructional Competence, ResearchOutput/Publications/Project Developments; and Leadership Skills; 3) How may the characteristics of NEUST-BEEd graduates as a teacher in their respective school be described as observed by their employers?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed the descriptive method of research, specifically utilizing a survey questionnaire to assess the perceptions of employers regarding BEEd graduates. The employers were identified and interviewed using Google Forms and Facebook Messenger.

Twenty respondents occupying high-ranking positions in public and private elementary schools participated in the study. They reside within Nueva Ecija and were contacted through BEEd graduates who currently or previously worked in their schools/stations.

The survey questionnaires were distributed during the first semester of the SY 2023-2024, specifically from July to December 2023. The data gathered were analyzed and treated using frequency, percentage, and mean. To provide qualitative descriptors to the responses of the employers, Likert scales were utilized.

Table 1. Description of Mean ratings

Interval	Performance of BEEd Graduates	BEEd Graduates' Characteristics as Teacher
1.00 - 1.75	Poor	Not Desirable
1.76 - 2.50	Satisfactory	Slightly Desirable
2.51 - 3.25	Very Satisfactory	Moderately Desirable
3.26 - 4.00	Outstanding	Very Desirable

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

To better address the research problems, the results and discussion sections elaborate on the profile of the respondents, the performance of BEEd graduates, and their characteristics as teachers.

Profile of the respondents

The employers were described by their age, sex, academic rank, and number of years in service as school head.

Age

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents According to Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
25 - 30 yrs old	1	5.00
31 - 35 yrs old	1	5.00
36 - 40 yrs old	1	5.00
45 - 50 yrs old	3	15.00
51 - 55 yrs old	7	35.00
56 - 60 yrs old	1	5.00
41 - 45 yrs old	6	30.00
Total	20	100.00

Table 2 presents the age distribution of respondents, revealing interesting trends in the demographics of our sample. The largest cohort falls within the 51 to 55 age range, constituting 35% of the total sample. Following closely behind is the 41 to 45 age group, comprising 30% of participants. Additionally, there is notable representation from the 45 to 50 age bracket at 15%. On the other hand, age groups spanning 25 to 30, 31 to 35, and 56 to 60 each have a solitary participant, making up 5% individually. This distribution indicates an even spread across different age segments, with a notable emphasis on middle-aged and early senior demographics.

Sex

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents According to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	9	45.00
Female	11	55.00
Total	20	100.00

In examining the distribution of sexes within our sample population, it is evident that females slightly outnumbered males, comprising 55% of the total respondents compared to 45% males. This gender distribution provides a balanced representation within our study, facilitating a comprehensive analysis of both male and female perspectives. Such parity is crucial for ensuring the robustness and generalizability of our findings, as it allows us to explore potential gender-based differences in attitudes, behaviors, or responses to the variables under investigation.

Academic Rank

Table 4. Distribution of Respondents According to Academic Rank

Academic Rank	Frequency	Percentage
Head Teacher I	2	10.00
Head Teacher II	0	0.00
Head Teacher III	3	15.00
Head Teacher IV	0	0.00
Head Teacher V	0	0.00
Head Teacher VI	0	0.00
Assistant School Principal I	1	5.00
Assistant School Principal II	0	0.00
School Principal I	8	40.00
School Principal II	3	15.00
School Principal III	1	5.00
School Principal IV	1	5.00
Supervisor	1	5.00
Total	20	100.00

Table 4 displays the distribution of academic ranks among the respondents, encompassing a range from Head Teacher I to Supervisor. Among these ranks, School Principal I emerges with the highest frequency, consisting of eight school administrators, equivalent to 40% of the total respondents. Notable positions include Assistant School Principal I, School Principal I, and School Principal II, with frequencies of 1, 8, and 3 respectively, collectively representing significant proportions of the total sample at 5%, 40%, and 15% respectively. School Principal III, School Principal IV, and Supervisor each account for 5% of the total, with one respondent occupying each position.

Remarkably, certain ranks such as Head Teacher II, Head Teacher IV, Head Teacher V, Head Teacher VI, and Assistant School Principal II are absent from this dataset. This absence underscores a distinct pattern in the distribution of academic ranks within the institution.

Number of Years in Service as a School Head

Table 5. Distribution of Respondents According to Number of years in service

Number of years in service	Frequency	Percentage
1-3 years	6	30.00
4-6 years	4	20.00
7-9 years	6	30.00
10 - 12 years	0	0.00
13 - 15 years	3	15.00
16 years and above	1	5.00
Total	20	100.00

Table 5 provides valuable insights into the tenure distribution among respondents, categorized by the number of years in service. Notably, the majority of participants, constituting 30% each, reported tenure durations of 1-3 years and 7-9 years, with six individuals in each cohort. Additionally, 20% of respondents, totaling four individuals, indicated a service duration of 4-6 years. Interestingly, there were no respondents reporting a tenure of 10-12 years, contrasting with findings from other studies. However, 15% of participants, equivalent to three individuals, reported serving for 13-15 years, showcasing a presence of experienced individuals. Moreover, a small percentage, 5%, represented by one individual, reported having 16 or more years of service.

Performance of NEUST-BEEd Graduates as Rated by the Employers

The performance of NEUST-BEEd graduates were described into three categories such as Instructional Competence, Research Output/Publications/Project Developments and Leadership Skills.

Instructional Competence

Table 6. NEUST-BEEd graduates' Instructional Competence

Statement	Mean	Verbal Description
1. Formulate/adopt objectives of lesson plan.	3.85	Outstanding
2. Select contents and prepares appropriate instructional material/teaching aids.	3.25	Very Satisfactory
3. Select teaching methods/strategies.	3.20	Very Satisfactory
4. Relate new lesson with previous knowledge/skills.	3.30	Outstanding
5. Provide appropriate motivation.	3.45	Outstanding
6. Present and develop lesson logically.	3.35	Outstanding
7. Convey ideas clearly.	3.20	Very Satisfactory
8. Utilize art of questioning to develop higher level of thinking.	3.15	Very Satisfactory
9. Ensure pupils/students participation.	3.25	Very Satisfactory
10. Address individual differences.	3.40	Outstanding
11. Show mastery of the subject matter.	3.30	Outstanding
12. Diagnose learner's needs.	3.40	Outstanding
13. Assess lesson to determine desired outcome within allotted time.	3.30	Outstanding
14. Maintain clean and orderly classroom.	3.35	Outstanding
15. Maintain classroom conducive to learning.	3.15	Very Satisfactory
Total Mean	3.33	Outstanding

Table 6 presents an evaluation of the instructional competence of NEUST-BEEd graduates as rated by their employers. Each statement within the instructional competence domain is assessed for its mean score, providing insight into the graduates' performance in various aspects of teaching.

Overall, the mean score for instructional competence is 3.33, indicating an outstanding performance level. Looking at individual statements, it is evident that the graduates excel in many areas. For instance, they are exceptional in formulating or adopting objectives of lesson plans, relating new lessons with

previous knowledge/skills, providing appropriate motivation, presenting and developing lessons logically, showing mastery of the subject matter, diagnosing learners' needs, and assessing lessons to determine desired outcomes within allotted time. These high mean scores suggest that NEUST-BEEd graduates demonstrate strong abilities in lesson planning, delivery, and assessment, contributing to effective teaching and learning experiences.

While the graduates perform outstandingly in several aspects, there are areas where improvement could be made. For example, their performance in maintaining a classroom conducive to learning and utilizing the art of questioning to develop higher-level thinking is rated as very satisfactory. This indicates that there may be opportunities for further development in creating and sustaining an optimal learning environment and enhancing questioning techniques to stimulate critical thinking among students.

Moreover, Table 6 reflects a highly positive assessment of NEUST-BEEd graduates' instructional competence by their employers, with notable strengths in various areas contributing to effective teaching practices. However, there are areas identified for potential growth, highlighting opportunities for ongoing professional development to further enhance their teaching skills and abilities.

Research Output/Publications/Project Developments

Table 7. NEUST-BEEd graduates' Research Output/Publications/Project Developments

Statement	Mean	Verbal Description
1. Conduct research in the school level.	2.65	Very Satisfactory
2. Conduct research in the district level.	2.40	Satisfactory
3. Conduct research in the division level.	2.50	Satisfactory
4. Share research results to peers on problems related to learning environment: home, school and community.	2.70	Very Satisfactory
5. Conduct research in the school level.	2.80	Very Satisfactory
6. Publish article/s in a journal/newspaper/magazine of wide circulation.	2.95	Very Satisfactory
7. Act as co-author of a book	1.90	Satisfactory
8. Act as sole author of a book.	1.45	Poor
9. Conceptualize project/s.	3.10	Very Satisfactory
10. Start the implementation of project/s.	3.10	Very Satisfactory
11. Fully implement project/s.	3.10	Very Satisfactory

12. Organize and implement home-school community projects.	3.10	Very Satisfactory
13. Establish a model that exemplifies a learning environment conducive to teaching and learning.	3.40	Outstanding
14. Involve majority of the parents in the education of children.	3.75	Outstanding
15. Conduct at least two (2) home visitations.	3.50	Outstanding
Total Mean	2.83	Very Satisfactory

Table 7 presents an evaluation of the performance of NEUST-BEEd (Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology - Bachelor of Elementary Education) graduates in terms of their research output, publications, and project developments as rated by their employers. The mean score for each statement ranges from 1.45 to 3.75, with a total mean of 2.83, indicating a "Very Satisfactory" performance overall. Notably, the highest mean scores are achieved in statements related to project conceptualization, implementation, and community engagement, with means ranging from 3.10 to 3.40, indicating a "Very Satisfactory" to "Outstanding" level of performance.

Particularly impressive are the ratings for statements 13, 14, and 15, where employers rated the graduates' ability to establish a conducive learning environment, involve parents in education, and conduct home visitations very highly, with mean scores of 3.40, 3.75, and 3.50, respectively, indicating an "Outstanding" level of performance. On the other hand, statements 7 and 8 received lower mean scores, indicating a comparatively lower level of satisfaction regarding the graduates' involvement in book authorship. Statement 8, where graduates act as sole authors of a book, received the lowest mean score of 1.45, indicating a "Poor" level of performance.

Overall, the table suggests that NEUST-BEEd graduates excel in various aspects related to research, project development, and community engagement, demonstrating their competence and effectiveness in contributing to educational initiatives and fostering positive learning environments.

The findings suggest that NEUST-BEEd graduates excel in various aspects of research, project development, and community engagement, showcasing their competence and effectiveness in contributing to educational initiatives and nurturing positive learning environments.

Leadership Skills

Table 8. NEUST-BEEd graduates' Leadership Skills

Statement	Mean	Verbal Description
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1. Act as mentor/coach in professional development of pupils.	3.90	Outstanding
2. Lead to serve as a demonstration teacher.	3.85	Outstanding
3. Innovate teaching strategies, classroom management an assessment to enhance learning.	3.70	Outstanding
4. Increase the difference the achievement rate by 2.5% or higher on all classes taught.	3.65	Outstanding
5. Inspire others to become a recipient of award(s).	3.55	Outstanding
6. Stimulate peers to acts as coach or trainer.	3.65	Outstanding
7. Encourage others to earn relevant professional trainings.	3.65	Outstanding
8. Extend help for others to receive scholarship awards.	3.35	Outstanding
9. Lead others to be punctual in attendance and report submission.	3.70	Outstanding
10. Act as mentor/coach in professional development of pupils.	3.90	Outstanding
Total Mean	3.69	Outstanding

The table presents the assessment of NEUST-BEEd graduates' leadership skills as rated by employers, and the computed mean score for the overall leadership skills of NEUST-BEEd graduates is 3.69, which falls within the "Outstanding" verbal description category.

Analyzing individual statements, it's evident that NEUST-BEEd graduates excel across various aspects of leadership. For instance, they are highly regarded for their ability to act as mentors or coaches in the professional development of pupils, as evidenced by the exceptionally high mean score of 3.90 for statement 1 and 10. Additionally, they demonstrate strong leadership in leading to serve as demonstration teachers (3.85), innovating teaching strategies, classroom management, and assessment techniques to enhance learning (3.70), and encouraging others to earn relevant professional training (3.65). Furthermore, NEUST-BEEd graduates exhibit commendable leadership qualities in stimulating peers to act as coaches or trainers (3.65), leading others to be punctual in attendance and report submission (3.70), and inspiring others to become recipients of awards (3.55). However, in extending help for others to receive

scholarship awards while still rated as "Outstanding," the mean score is slightly lower at 3.35 compared to other statements.

Feedback of Employers to NEUST-BEEd Graduates in Terms of their Characteristics as a Teacher

Table 9. NEUST-BEEd graduates' Characteristics as a Teacher

Statement	Mean	Verbal Description
1. Prepare effective planning skills.	3.60	Very Desirable
2. Implements the lesson plan effectively.	3.95	Very Desirable
3. Prepare appropriate evaluation activities.	3.95	Very Desirable
4. Display a thorough knowledge of curriculum and subject matter.	3.95	Very Desirable
5. Select learning content congruent with prescribed curriculum.	3.85	Very Desirable
6. Communicate effectively with pupils/students.	3.95	Very Desirable
7. Provide pupils/students with appropriate evaluative feedback.	3.95	Very Desirable
8. Provide opportunities for individual differences.	3.75	Very Desirable
9. Ensure pupil/student time on task.	3.65	Very Desirable
10. Set high expectations for pupil/student achievement.	3.60	Very Desirable
11. Demonstrate evidence of pupil/student's academic growth.	3.95	Very Desirable
12. Demonstrate evidence of personal organization.	3.85	Very Desirable
13. Establish and maintain discipline.	3.85	Very Desirable
14. Organize pupils/students for effective instruction.	3.85	Very Desirable
15. Demonstrate effective interpersonal relationships.	3.85	Very Desirable
16. Demonstrate employee responsibilities.	3.85	Very Desirable
17. Support school regulations, programs and policies.	3.85	Very Desirable
18. Assume responsibilities outside the classrooms as they relate to school.	3.85	Very Desirable

Total Mean	3.84	Very Desirable
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Table 9 presents the characteristics of NEUST-BEEd graduates as rated by employers in their performance as teachers. The computed means reveal that NEUST-BEEd graduates exhibit highly desirable traits across various aspects of teaching. Particularly noteworthy is the consistently high mean score, with a total mean of 3.84, indicating that employers perceive NEUST-BEEd graduates as possessing very desirable qualities as teachers.

Examining individual characteristics, it is evident that NEUST-BEEd graduates excel in essential areas such as effective lesson planning (3.60), implementation of lesson plans (3.95), and demonstrating a thorough understanding of curriculum and subject matter (3.95). Furthermore, NEUST-BEEd graduates are adept at communication (3.95), providing constructive feedback (3.95), accommodating individual differences (3.75), and maintaining discipline (3.85). These attributes are crucial for fostering a conducive learning environment and facilitating student growth. Additionally, NEUST-BEEd graduates demonstrate strong interpersonal skills (3.85) and a commitment to their professional responsibilities both inside and outside the classroom (3.85).

Overall, the computed means suggest that NEUST-BEEd graduates possess a well-rounded skill set that enables them to effectively meet the demands of the teaching profession, as evidenced by their high ratings in various performance areas. This bodes well for their success in the field and reflects positively on the quality of education provided by NEUST's BEEd program.

Discussion

In this study, the researchers explore the characteristics and performance of NEUST-BEEd graduates as rated by their employers across three dimensions: instructional competence, research output/publications/project developments, leadership skills, and feedback on their characteristics as teachers. The examination of the distribution of respondents by sex, academic rank, and years in service provides valuable contextual information for understanding the sample population. The balanced representation of both sexes within the study facilitates a comprehensive analysis of perspectives, minimizing gender bias. Similarly, the distribution of academic ranks and years in service highlights the diversity within the surveyed population, reflecting a mix of experience levels and leadership roles. These findings align with previous studies, reinforcing the varied distribution of leadership roles and tenure lengths within the educational context.

The evaluation of NEUST-BEEd graduates' instructional competence reveals an outstanding overall performance, with high mean scores across various aspects of teaching. While graduates excel in many areas, there are opportunities for improvement in maintaining a conducive learning environment and enhancing questioning techniques. Nonetheless, the positive assessment of instructional competence aligns with previous research, indicating the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs in equipping educators with necessary skills. For instance, Lucero's (2018) study evaluating the instructional competence of elementary

school teachers in Digos City Central Elementary School revealed extensive competence levels across various domains, echoing the findings of the present study.

NEUST-BEEd graduates demonstrate very satisfactory performance in research output, publications, and project developments, particularly excelling in project conceptualization, implementation, and community engagement. However, there are areas such as book authorship where improvement could be made. These findings echo previous studies, suggesting ongoing needs to address deficiencies in research skills among teacher education graduates. Gonzales et al. (2017) indicated that teachers were only "moderately competent" in research output, possibly due to historical lack of priority and incentives in this area, reflecting similar trends observed in this study.

The assessment of NEUST-BEEd graduates' leadership skills reflects outstanding performance across various domains, highlighting their potential contributions to the teaching profession. Notably, graduates excel in mentoring, innovation, and inspiring others, demonstrating their capacity to lead effectively. These findings are consistent with previous research, affirming the high leadership aptitude of teacher education graduates. PSU's tracer study (2017) underscores the satisfactory leadership performance of teacher education graduates, suggesting that their employers recognize their leadership skills as exceeding minimum job requirements.

Employers perceive NEUST-BEEd graduates as possessing highly desirable characteristics as teachers, including effective planning, implementation, communication, and commitment to professional responsibilities. These findings align with previous studies, indicating positive personal and professional attributes among teacher education graduates. For instance, Espuerta et al. (2023) found that Communication and Relational Skills were ranked first in terms of attributes learned during undergraduate studies, similar to the findings of this study.

The findings of this study have several implications for teacher education programs and educational institutions. Firstly, they underscore the importance of comprehensive preparation programs in equipping educators with the necessary skills and competencies for effective teaching and leadership roles. Secondly, they highlight the need for ongoing professional development to address areas of improvement and ensure continuous growth and excellence among graduates. Additionally, the study suggests avenues for future research, such as investigating the effectiveness of specific interventions or training programs in enhancing teacher performance and exploring the impact of teacher characteristics on student outcomes.

In conclusion, the findings of this study contribute to our understanding of the characteristics and performance of NEUST-BEEd graduates, providing insights into their instructional competence, research output, leadership skills, and overall suitability for the teaching profession. By addressing areas of strength and areas for improvement, this research informs strategies for enhancing the quality of teacher education and promoting excellence in the field of education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results gathered, the following conclusions were formulated: 1) Seventy percent of respondents aged between 45 and 55 years old, and a slight majority of females comprising 55% of the total sample. Notably, a substantial proportion of respondents hold influential roles within schools, with School Principals representing 40% of the respondents. Moreover, 60% of participants have served as school heads for 7 years or longer, indicating a considerable depth of experience in leadership positions; 2) NEUST-BEEd graduates are distinguished by their exceptional instructional competence, notably in objective formulation, motivation provision, and addressing individual variances. Their research output, publications, and project developments are highly satisfactory, with a particular strength in project organization, implementation, and fostering conducive learning atmospheres. Moreover, these graduates showcase outstanding leadership abilities, particularly in mentoring, innovating teaching approaches, and motivating others towards excellence; 3) NEUST-BEEd graduates are consistently sought after by employers due to their exemplary teaching qualities, scoring impressively in all assessed aspects. They demonstrate proficiency in various areas, including adept lesson planning, successful execution of lesson plans, and a comprehensive grasp of both curriculum and subject matter. Furthermore, their strong communication skills, ability to offer constructive feedback, and adeptness in maintaining discipline underscore their effectiveness as educators, making them highly valued members of the teaching community.

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