

Literature review of general education instruction in SUC's: Basis for faculty development

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Abstract

This literature review analyzes the quality of General Education (GE) instruction in higher education, with special attention to how it affects faculty development at State, Universities and Colleges. It summarizes academic research on curriculum alignment, active learning, collaborative professional development, teaching efficacy, faculty development, student evaluation, instructional assessment, and educational technology. The review examines how faculty competency, professional development, institutional support, and available resources influence effective GE instruction, with guidance from the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model and Adult Learning Theory. According to the literature, learner-centered strategies, explicit learning objectives, aligned assessment procedures, insightful feedback, and inclusive learning environments are all necessary for effective teaching. Additionally, research demonstrates that well-crafted faculty development initiatives can enhance pedagogical expertise, instructional strategies, self-assurance, teamwork, and technology integration—especially when these initiatives are long-term, reflective, experiential, and institutionally supported. Relying on a single measure is not as comprehensive as using multiple approaches to instructional assessment, such as student feedback, peer evaluation, classroom observation, and self-assessment. However, there is little empirical data about general education instruction in Philippine state colleges and universities, particularly when it comes to the long-term impacts of student learning outcomes, workload, institutional support, faculty development, and instructional demands. As a result, the review finds important research and contextual gaps that support a methodical evaluation of GE instruction. Its conclusions serve as a foundation for creating a context-responsive faculty development program that supports curriculum implementation, strengthens teaching efficacy, addresses instructional needs, encourages professional development, and improves General Education learning experiences.

Keywords: general education instruction, higher education, faculty development, SUC, literature review

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1. Introduction

1.1 General Education Instruction in Higher Education

General Education (GE) instruction remains as an integral part of higher education because it develops learners' critical thinking, communication competence, ethical reasoning, and lifelong learning skills. As higher educational institutions continue to respond to emerging changes in educational, technological, and societal sectors, the role of General Education instructors has become increasingly demanding. Faculty members are not only expected to deliver information and disciplinary knowledge but to implement flexible instructional practices, innovative and inclusive that respond to diverse needs of every learner. Consequently, faculty development and institutional support have become essential components in improving the quality of GE instruction.

Higher education is built on general education (GE), which equips students with fundamental skills, beliefs, and knowledge that cut beyond discipline boundaries. It seeks to develop the critical thinking, communication, ethical reasoning, cultural sensitivity, and lifelong learning abilities required for successful careers and responsible citizenship. The quality of general education instruction has grown in importance among educators and policymakers as universities continue to adapt to shifting societal and global needs. Faculty members must use learner-centered pedagogies, incorporate suitable assessment techniques, make good use of technology, and establish inclusive learning environments in order to deliver effective general education instruction. To achieve meaningful student learning, Biggs and Tang (2011) assert that constructive alignment between learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and assessment procedures is essential. Similarly, increased student involvement and academic success have been linked to active and student-centered teaching methods (Freeman et al., 2014).

Higher education instructional approaches have also changed as a result of the growing emphasis on outcomes-based education. In order to ensure that students acquire the desired information, skills, and values, outcomes-based frameworks require instructors to match their teaching methods with institutional learning outcomes and competency standards (Spady, 1994). Consequently, monitoring the quality of instruction has become a vital tool for maintaining educational excellence and driving continual development. Existing literature on General Education (GE) instruction and faculty development stresses the essentiality of professional learning, curriculum reform, instructional innovation, and institutional leadership in promoting effective teaching and learning. However, many studies focus on isolated instructional practices, discipline-specific reforms, or large universities, giving limited attention to how faculty competence, institutional support, curriculum implementation, and instructional innovation collectively influence GE instruction in regional and state higher education institutions.

In the Philippine context, localized studies on the instructional practices and professional development needs of General Education faculty remain limited, particularly in state colleges and universities. Previous reviews also tend to examine faculty development, curriculum reform, and flexible learning separately rather than within a unified instructional framework, creating gaps in understanding General Education instruction in resource-limited institutions. Anchored on Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model and Adult Learning Theory, this review recognizes that instructional effectiveness is shaped by reflective learning, institutional support, professional demands, collaboration and available resources. This literature review provides a systematic synthesis of literature on General Education instruction and faculty development by: (1) examining research trends; (2) identifying key themes, issues, and challenges; and (3) determining research gaps relevant to ISPSC. Overall, the study serves as a foundation for developing a context-responsive faculty development program for General Education instructors.

especially in SUC.

1.2 General Objective

This literature review aims to assess and synthesize existing literature on General Education instruction in higher education as a basis for developing a context-responsive faculty development program for General Education instructors at SUC's

1.3 Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study aims to:

1. **Examine** the existing literature on General Education instruction, particularly on instructional quality, teaching effectiveness, curriculum alignment, assessment practices, active learning, and educational technology.
2. **Identify** the major themes, trends, issues, and challenges influencing the effectiveness of General Education instruction in higher education.
3. **Analyze** the role of faculty development, professional learning, mentoring, collaboration, institutional support, and available resources in improving General Education teaching effectiveness.
4. **Examine** the different approaches to assessing instructional quality, including student evaluations, peer evaluations, classroom observations, and self-assessment, and determine their relevance to General Education instruction.
5. **Identify** research gaps concerning General Education instruction, faculty development, instructional assessment, workload, institutional support, and technology integration, particularly in Philippine state colleges and universities.
6. **Determine** the implications of the reviewed literature for assessing the instructional needs and professional development requirements of General Education faculty.
7. **Develop** a literature-based foundation for a responsive and sustainable faculty development program that addresses identified instructional needs and promotes continuous improvement in General Education instruction.

2. Findings

2.1 Theme 1: Instructional Quality and Teaching Effectiveness

One of the most important measures of the quality of education is still teaching effectiveness. It includes pedagogical competency, classroom management, communication skills, instructional creativity, and assessment procedures in addition to subject matter expertise. According to Hattie (2009), student accomplishment is significantly impacted by teacher effectiveness, making instructional quality a crucial element of institutional success. According to Marsh and Roche (1997), there are several factors that contribute to instructional success, including organization, zeal, interaction, evaluation techniques, and presenting clarity. Deeper learning and student engagement are facilitated by effective teaching, especially when teachers use evidence-based pedagogical strategies.

In a systematic evaluation of instructional development in higher education, Stes et al. (2010) discovered that

faculty development interventions greatly enhanced teachers' professional development, instructional practices, and knowledge. Their results demonstrated the value of ongoing, well-thought-out professional development initiatives in raising the efficacy of instruction. In a similar vein, Amundsen and Wilson (2012) suggested that educational development in higher education includes scholarly investigation, institutional development, discipline understanding, and reflective practice in addition to the learning of teaching abilities. Their conceptual assessment highlighted that multifaceted approaches, as opposed to discrete training sessions, are necessary for effective instructional enhancement.

2.2 Theme 2: Faculty Development and Professional Growth

Organized activities aimed at enhancing educators' professional capabilities, knowledge, abilities, and attitudes are referred to as faculty development. It includes instructional coaching, technological training, collaborative learning communities, workshops, mentoring programs, and scholarly involvement. The importance of faculty development as a strategic tool for raising institutional efficacy and educational quality is becoming more widely acknowledged. In a comprehensive review of 111 studies, Steinert et al. (2016) found that faculty development programs frequently delivered good effects, such as improved teaching practices, stronger professional identities, increased confidence, and enhanced pedagogical expertise. According to the review, effective faculty development programs must include experiential learning, reflection, feedback mechanisms, longitudinal frameworks, and institutional support.

Likewise, Phuong, Cole, and Zarestky (2018) found that most faculty development programs focused on pedagogical upgrading and technology integration. They did note, however, that many research focused primarily on self-reported metrics and gave little consideration to organizational results and the impact of student learning. This implies that additional context-specific and evidence-based teacher development programs are required. Because higher education systems in Southeast Asia are changing so quickly, teacher development has become more crucial. According to Phuong, Duong, and McLean (2015), self-directed learning and pedagogical competency were the main focus of professional development programs in the area. However, there was still little empirical data on the success of these programs, suggesting that institution-specific evaluations are necessary to inform faculty development strategies.

2.3 Theme 3: Student Evaluation and Instructional Assessment

Evaluation of instructional quality yields important data for professional growth and institutional enhancement. Teaching efficacy is frequently assessed using student feedback, peer evaluations, classroom observations, and self-assessment. According to Marsh (2007), when utilized properly, student evaluations are genuine and trustworthy measures of the efficacy of instruction. These assessments provide valuable information on teachers' communication abilities, classroom management, and capacity to support learning. However, depending only on student impressions might not give a clear picture of the quality of education; for this reason, it is advised to include many sources of data. Additionally, quality assurance procedures in higher education are compatible with continuous instructional assessment. UNESCO (2015) states that teacher proficiency and the efficiency of teaching-learning procedures determine the quality of education. Institutions must therefore set up methodical processes to assess teaching methods and pinpoint areas in need of professional growth.

2.4 Theme 4: Professional Development Models in Higher Education

The emphasis of modern teacher development programs is on reflective and collaborative learning strategies. Hervas (2021) showed that faculty members in higher education benefit from lesson study in terms of pedagogical expertise, instructional design, and teaching strategies. The study emphasized the importance of peer learning and group reflection in fostering professional development. Professional development in educational technology has also become a crucial field in higher education. Three facets of faculty professional development were highlighted by Lidolf and Pasco (2020): faculty as researchers, faculty as instructional designers, and faculty as learners. The

significance of enabling faculty members to incorporate technology pedagogically rather than just learning technical skills was highlighted by their systematic review. These results imply that comprehensive, evidence-based, context-sensitive, and adaptable faculty development programs are necessary to meet the changing needs of higher education.

3. Literature Matrix

The author/year, country, research design, participants, key variables, major findings, limitations, and relevance to the assessment of General Education instruction and faculty development were summarized in a literature matrix. The matrix provides a systematic overview of existing studies on instructional quality, teaching effectiveness, faculty development, student evaluation, instructional assessment, outcomes-based education, active learning, collaborative professional development, and educational technology. It also highlights the contributions and limitations of previous studies and identifies research gaps relevant to developing a context-responsive faculty development program for General Education Instructors

Author/Year	Country	Design	Participants	Key Variables	Major Findings	Limitations
Spady (1994)	United States	Conceptual/Theoretical	N/A	Outcomes-Based Education (OBE); learning outcomes; curriculum alignment; competency standards	OBE emphasizes clearly defined learning outcomes and alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. It provides a framework for ensuring that students acquire intended knowledge, skills, and values.	Conceptual in nature and does not provide empirical evidence regarding GE instruction or faculty development in Philippine HEIs.
Hattie (2009)	International	Synthesis of 800+ meta-analyses	Students represented in numerous studies	Teacher effectiveness; instructional strategies; feedback; student achievement; learning outcomes	Teacher effectiveness has a substantial influence on student achievement. Effective teaching practices, feedback, classroom interaction, and appropriate learning strategies contribute to improved student learning.	Much of the evidence is from basic education rather than higher education; direct application to GE instruction requires contextualization.
Biggs & Tang (2011)	United Kingdom/International	Conceptual/Theoretical	N/A	Constructive alignment; learning outcomes; teaching-learning activities; assessment; student-centered learning	Effective university teaching requires alignment among intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning activities, and assessment.	Primarily conceptual and does not empirically evaluate a specific faculty development program or Philippine HEI.
Marsh & Roche (1997)	International	Research Review	University students and instructors represented in previous studies	Student evaluation of teaching; teaching effectiveness; reliability; validity; instructional quality; potential bias	Student evaluations can provide reliable and useful information about teaching effectiveness when properly designed and interpreted. Evaluation should consider several dimensions of teaching quality.	Student evaluations may be influenced by contextual factors and biases; they should not be the sole measure of teaching effectiveness.
Stes, Min-Leliveld, Gijbels, & Van Petegem (2010)	Belgium/Netherlands; International	Systematic Review	Studies on instructional development in higher education	Instructional development; faculty learning; teaching behavior;	Instructional development generally improves teachers' professional learning and	Reviewed studies differed considerably in research design, measures, and

Author/Year	Country	Design	Participants	Key Variables	Major Findings	Limitations
				institutional outcomes; student outcomes	instructional practices.	quality, making direct comparisons and causal conclusions difficult.
Amundsen & Wilson (2012)	Canada/International	Conceptual Review	Educational development literature in higher education	Faculty development; teaching skills; reflection; disciplinary knowledge; institutional development; educational inquiry	Faculty development is multidimensional. Effective educational development should involve skills, methods, reflection, disciplinary knowledge, institutional development, and scholarly inquiry rather than isolated training.	Conceptual review rather than an empirical evaluation; it does not identify one specific faculty development model that is universally effective.
Freeman et al. (2014)	International	Meta-analysis	Students from 225 studies in STEM higher education	Active learning; traditional lecture; student performance; failure rate; student engagement	Active learning significantly improves student performance and reduces failure compared with traditional lecture-based teaching.	Primarily focused on STEM disciplines; findings may not directly generalize to all General Education subjects.
UNESCO (2015)	International	Policy Report/Conceptual Synthesis	N/A	Quality education; equity; inclusion; lifelong learning; teacher competence; educational change	Quality education requires inclusive, equitable, relevant, and lifelong learning opportunities. Teacher capacity and institutional responsiveness are important in addressing changing educational and societal demands.	Provides a broad international policy perspective rather than empirical evidence specifically concerning higher education faculty or Philippine GE instruction.
Phuong, Duong, & McLean (2015)	Southeast Asia	Literature Review	Studies concerning faculty development in Southeast Asian HEIs	Faculty development; pedagogical competence; self-directed learning; professional learning; training effectiveness	Faculty development in Southeast Asia commonly emphasizes pedagogical competence and self-directed learning.	Regional evidence is limited and does not specifically address Philippine state colleges and universities or General Education faculty.
Steinert et al. (2016)	Multi-country/International	Systematic Review	111 faculty-development studies	Faculty development; teaching effectiveness; knowledge; skills; attitudes; confidence; teaching behavior; institutional outcomes	Faculty development programs generally improve teaching knowledge, skills, confidence, attitudes, and teaching practices.	Most studies focused on health-professions education; long-term organizational and student-learning outcomes were less frequently investigated.
Marsh (2007)	International	Scholarly Review	University students and faculty represented in previous research	Student evaluations; teaching effectiveness; reliability; validity; potential bias; usefulness	Student evaluations can provide meaningful evidence about teaching effectiveness when valid instruments and appropriate procedures are used.	Student evaluations alone cannot fully represent instructional quality and may be affected by student, course, and instructor characteristics.
Phuong, Cole, & Zarestky (2018)	International; North American evidence prominent	Systematic Literature Review	22 publications concerning faculty development for teacher	Faculty development; pedagogy; technology integration; workshops;	Faculty development programs commonly emphasize pedagogical improvement and technology	Evidence is concentrated in particular geographic and institutional contexts. More

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Author/Year	Country	Design	Participants	Key Variables	Major Findings	Limitations
			educators	mentoring; developmental relationships	integration. Formal workshops and developmental relationships are frequently used to improve faculty competence.	research is needed on organizational outcomes and effects on student learning.
Hervas (2021)	Mainly United States; International Literature	Systematic Review	21 studies involving higher-education faculty	Lesson study; faculty development; pedagogical knowledge; lesson design; teaching approaches; reflection; collaboration	Lesson study can improve pedagogical knowledge, lesson design, and approaches to teaching. Peer learning and collaborative reflection can contribute to faculty professional development.	Most studies originated in the United States and involved relatively small numbers of faculty, with concentration in mathematics and language-related disciplines.
Lidolf & Pasco (2020)	International	Systematic Literature Review	35 empirical studies	Educational technology; faculty professional development; technology integration; faculty as learners; instructional designers; researchers	Faculty technology development should go beyond technical skills and emphasize pedagogical application.	Studies varied in context, design, and professional-development approaches; therefore, no single technology-development model can be universally applied.

3.1 *Synthesis of Literature*

As researchers review the literature, they find that programs which develop faculty members make instruction in General Education more effective. In those texts authors frequently discuss how teachers learn together and how they guide one another. It is common for the studies to describe how instructors create new teaching methods and how organizations provide resources. By using methods that focus on the needs of students, teachers improve how they work. There is general agreement across studies that instructors must participate if a curriculum is to change successfully and when faculty members are active in those processes, the way they teach is of a higher standard.

Literature reveal that interrelationship exists among faculty development, curriculum reform, and flexible learning practices. Indeed, many people believe that faculty development programs are highly necessary because instructors' teaching skills and digital abilities are improved by these initiatives, which then assists in executing curriculum reforms and inclusive teaching methods. In a related manner, assistance from the higher education institution and quality assurance setups build the environment that allows faculty members to continue using new teaching styles. This mutual relationship shows that instructional improvement in General Education depends on a balanced cooperation between faculty competence, institutional assets, and administrative support systems.

According to the theories of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model, workload of faculty, pressure of technology, and changes in teaching methods can create extreme work stress. Indeed, it has been observed that instructional effectiveness is reduced by these heavy demands when proper support from the educational institution is not provided. On the other hand, mentoring programs, cooperative learning groups, administrative help, and professional development opportunities serve as valuable assets so that faculty members can easily adjust to teaching shifts and maintain their growth. In a similar way, the concepts of Adult Learning Theory show that self-reflection, learning by doing, and working together are highly valuable for upgrading faculty competence and instructional innovation.

3.2 Research Gap

There is also other notable gaps found in the body of literature. First, there is a dearth of studies investigating the long-term impact of faculty development and curriculum transformation on teaching effectiveness. Second, literature pertaining to localized research concerning General Education instruction at Philippine State Colleges and Universities is still lacking. Literature fails to provide sufficient information about the well-being, stress level, and workload issues of faculty members amidst shifting instructional environments.

This gap justifies the significance of this research study since there is indeed a necessity to formulate faculty development programs appropriate for General Education teachers in higher education institutions. There is little empirical data on the evaluation of general education instruction at Philippine state universities and colleges, despite the fact that many research have examined faculty development and teaching efficacy in higher education. Furthermore, not much research has looked at how the outcomes of instructional assessments might be used to create faculty development programs tailored to individual institutions. Therefore, this study aims to close this gap by evaluating the general education instruction quality and using the results to inform the creation of a responsive faculty development program.

3.3 Significance of the Findings

The findings of the literature review are significant to teachers, students, and State Universities and Colleges (SUC's)

Teachers/Practitioners. Learner-centered teaching, active learning, aligned assessment, feedback, and technology integration are among the effective teaching strategies that the findings assist educators in identifying. Through cooperation, training, mentoring, and reflective practice, they also offer a foundation for ongoing professional development.

Students. Better instructional strategies can give students more interesting, inclusive, and significant learning opportunities. Student engagement, critical thinking, and learning outcomes can all be strengthened by effective instruction, suitable assessment, and prompt feedback.

SUCs and schools. The results can help SUCs create faculty development programs that are responsive, enhance instructional assessment, and offer suitable resources and institutional support. Additionally, they can support institutions in implementing the curriculum more effectively and encouraging ongoing development in general education instruction.

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