

Title: ATEM-Plus (Accelerated Teacher Education Model-Plus): An Evaluation
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Abstract

This study intended to look into the feedback on the entire program of the ATEM-Plus students, the faculty, the supervising instructors and the cooperating teachers in order to evaluate and recommend whatever is necessary for curriculum design and program effectiveness.

Three (3) sets of instruments for three (3) groups of respondents were used in this evaluation process: a) ATEM-Plus for Student Evaluation; b) ATEM-Plus for Faculty Evaluation; and c) ATEM-Plus for Supervising Instructor/Cooperating Teacher Evaluation.

Comparing data from the 1st ATEM batch is intended in order to provide greater perspective in assessing the procedural and policy differences observed in the ATEM-Plus and how to fine tune the program before a third batch of ATEM is opened.

There is no doubt that the ATEM, a 3-year BEEd program, has earned high praises from its students, faculty, and the supervising instructors and cooperating teachers. From the two (2) ATEM batches, the students have manifested their competence and knowledge well, as evidenced by the academic honors reaped upon graduation. Moreover, their faculty has commended the quality of the graduates. Regardless of the young age of the students, the academic community and stakeholders believe in their promising potential and commend their resilience, industriousness and dedication to teaching.

In the area of teacher qualifications, what stands out from the suggestions of the ATEM-plus respondents point to the importance of in-depth orientation of the faculty, and the possession of desired qualities such as dedication, consideration and creativity.

Among the problems encountered by the ATEM-Plus students are the following: 1) too hectic class schedule (They have classes from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); 2) Some teachers' lack of consideration and creativity; 3) the grading system (a ceiling grade was imposed in one subject.); and 4) the numerous requirements.

The positive experiences of the students under the program include: 1) the valuable exposure which refers to the challenges they face in the accelerated BEEd program; 2) the importance of time management, 3) diligence in preserving scholastic standing and constructive coping skills to handle difficulties and conflicts.

When asked if they were capable of teaching all subjects in the elementary grades, there were more ATEM Plus than ATEM respondents who thought that they would need help in some subjects like EPP and MAPE. The first batch of respondents were more confident, only three of them said they would need help. All the ATEM Plus respondents said they were either capable or very capable of teaching Mathematics, but some of them need help in teaching the other subjects. The two batches of ATEM students rated themselves highly (the lowest rating was 6 in a scale of 10) in terms of their desire to teach in the elementary grades after graduation. Most of them intend to teach for at least five years.

The faculty members teaching in the ATEM-Plus answered affirmatively when asked if they were knowledgeable and well-informed about the ATEM-Plus, and most of them answered no when asked if they encountered any problems in the program. Those who had problems said there was very limited time to teach the courses. They applied a wide-range of teaching-learning styles, more than what they usually utilized in regular classes. Among their teaching/learning methods and strategies were the following: Base learning method, group dynamics, lecture, simulated activities, cooperative learning, interactive approach and paper presentation. They attended ATEM-Plus faculty conferences set by the ATEM-Plus Committee. They had favorable attitudes towards the ATEM program. They suggested that the ATEM courses be taught on a semestral basis, not quarterly. Among those which they wanted to be improved in the program are: 1) selection process; 2) selection and orientation of faculty; 3) strong coordination among departments; and 4) class schedule and room assignments.

The supervising instructors/cooperating teachers answered that the ATEM-Plus students are better than the ATEM students in terms of preparation and utilization of instructional materials, directing teaching-learning activities, presenting the lesson, creativity, being innovative, work attitude, interpersonal skills and in knowledge and understanding of pupils. They said that the students have well-prepared instructional materials, provide appropriate activities, present lessons well, show creativity and have rapport with the students. They gave the following as the outstanding personality traits demonstrated by the ATEM-Plus students: a) smooth interpersonal relations; b) industrious/cooperative/committed; and c) knowledgeable/smart.