

Proposed National Service Training Program (NSTP) Syllabi for the Bachelor in Early Childhood Education Students of Salay Community College (Salay, Misamis Oriental, Philippines)

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Abstract

This study examined the alignment of the National Service Training Program (NSTP), particularly the Literacy Training Service (LTS), with the vision-mission, core values, and program outcomes of the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECEd) at Salay Community College. Anchored on cognitive constructivism and sociocultural theory, the study employed a descriptive qualitative single case study design using document analysis and semi-structured interviews with twelve fourth-year BECEd students, eight alumni, and seven NSTP teachers. Data were analyzed through thematic and document analysis to assess the development of cognitive knowledge, skills and abilities, and attitudes and values. Findings revealed that NSTP strongly aligns with the institution's vision-mission by enhancing students' civic awareness, leadership, problem-solving skills, and value formation, while effectively articulating the core values of sincerity, accordance, charity, and competence. However, alignment with BECEd learning outcomes was moderate to partial, particularly in integrating discipline-specific pedagogical competencies. NSTP implementation contributed to learner-centered practices, interdisciplinary learning, stakeholder collaboration, and inclusive approaches, though further alignment with early childhood education competencies is needed. The study concludes that enhancing the NSTP syllabus is essential to strengthen integration with institutional goals and program outcomes. It recommends sustained curriculum improvement, strengthened stakeholder collaboration, and expanded experiential learning opportunities. The study aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by promoting inclusive education, skill development, and community engagement. Its sustainability impact lies in strengthening educational, institutional, and community sustainability through improved curriculum alignment, civic responsibility, and socially responsive teacher preparation.

Keywords: Alignment, Bachelor of Early Childhood Education, Cognitive Knowledge, National Service Training Program, Service-learning, Skills and Abilities, Values Formation

1. Introduction

This study examines the alignment of the National Service Training Program (NSTP), particularly the Literacy Training Service (LTS), with the vision-mission, core values, and program outcomes of the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECEd) at Salay Community College. Grounded in Republic Act No. 9163, NSTP integrates civic responsibility, community engagement, and service-learning into higher education. The study synthesizes literature on NSTP, early childhood education, and the domains of cognitive knowledge, skills and abilities, and attitudes and values to inform the development of an enhanced NSTP syllabus aligned with institutional goals and national educational priorities.

1.1 Background on NSTP-LTS Alignment with BECEd Program Outcomes and Institutional Vision-Mission at Salay Community College

The National Service Training Program (NSTP), institutionalized through Republic Act No. 9163, is designed to develop civic consciousness, patriotism, and social responsibility among tertiary students. Its Literacy Training Service (LTS) component prepares students to deliver literacy and numeracy instruction to children, out-of-school youth, and communities in need, contributing to nation-building and SDG 4 on Quality Education. NSTP integrates service-learning, leadership development, disaster preparedness, environmental awareness, and community engagement into academic programs. It aims to develop responsible citizens, empower youth for nation-building, promote drug awareness, enhance disaster preparedness, and strengthen environmental sustainability and peace-building efforts. At Salay Community College, NSTP-LTS is implemented within the BECEd program to align academic preparation with community service. This study evaluates the alignment between NSTP, institutional vision-mission, and BECEd learning outcomes, particularly in cognitive knowledge, skills and abilities, and attitudes and values.

1.2 Themes and Insights on Cognitive Knowledge, Skills and Abilities, and Attitudes and Values in NSTP-LTS and BECED Students

Literature emphasizes NSTP as a service-learning framework that enhances leadership, civic engagement, and community connection (Pacatang & Montallana, 2022; Saban, 2020). It strengthens students' sense of responsibility and social awareness while linking academic learning to real-world applications (Latib et al., 2017; Balmeo et al., 2015). Early childhood education is critical for lifelong development and educational success (UNICEF, 2019), with strong evidence linking early learning to improved academic and social outcomes (Phillips et al., 2017). However, challenges such as learning gaps and developmental issues persist among Filipino children (Bautista & Aranas, 2023; Soliman et al., 2021). Cognitive knowledge supports structured learning and higher-order thinking (Nakiboglu, 2016; Ilma et al., 2022), while skills and abilities such as critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving are essential for academic and professional success (Butler et al., 2017; Kocak et al., 2021). Attitudes and values, including social responsibility and ethical behavior, shape learners' character and civic engagement (Maio et al., 2019; Roccas & Sagiv, 2017). These domains collectively contribute to holistic education and align with NSTP's goal of producing competent, values-driven, and community-oriented graduates.

1.3 Local, National, and Global Context of NSTP-LTS Implementation for BECED Students

Globally, early childhood education is recognized as essential for sustainable development and human capital formation, as emphasized in SDG 4 (UNICEF, 2019). Nationally, the Philippines implements NSTP under Republic Act No. 9163 to strengthen civic responsibility and nation-building. Locally, Salay Community College integrates NSTP-LTS into the BECED curriculum to address community literacy needs and align educational outcomes with institutional vision and core values. The institution promotes learner-centered education and continuous quality improvement to respond to societal and educational demands.

1.4 Theoretical and Conceptual Basis for NSTP-LTS Alignment with BECED Cognitive, Skills, and Values Domains

This study is anchored on cognitive constructivism and sociocultural theory. Cognitive constructivism emphasizes that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with experiences (Piaget, 1972; Williams, 2016). Bruner's framework highlights reflective learning and higher-order thinking. Sociocultural theory views learning as a socially mediated process shaped by interaction and collaboration. These theories support the development of cognitive knowledge, skills, and values through experiential and community-based learning. The conceptual framework focuses on the alignment between institutional vision-mission, BECED learning outcomes, NSTP implementation, and core values, leading to the development of an enhanced NSTP syllabus.

1.5 Research Gaps on NSTP-LTS Alignment with Institutional Vision-Mission and BECED Program Outcomes

Existing studies highlight the benefits of NSTP in promoting civic engagement and holistic development but show limited focus on its alignment with institutional vision-mission, program outcomes, and core values in specific academic programs such as BECED. This gap necessitates the present study to evaluate alignment and propose an enhanced NSTP syllabus tailored to Salay Community College, ensuring coherence between curriculum design, institutional goals, and community needs.

1.6 Alignment of NSTP-LTS and BECED Outcomes with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This study aligns primarily with: SDG 4 – Quality Education: NSTP-LTS promotes literacy, inclusive education, and lifelong learning opportunities (UNICEF, 2019). SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth: Development of skills, competencies, and employability among future educators. SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities: Community engagement, disaster preparedness, and social responsibility contribute to resilient communities. SDG 13 – Climate Action: Environmental awareness and sustainability initiatives within NSTP activities. These alignments reflect the role of education and community service in advancing sustainable development goals.

1.7 Importance of NSTP-LTS Alignment to Multidisciplinary Sustainability in Teacher Education and Community Development

This study contributes to educational sustainability by improving curriculum alignment and teaching effectiveness, ensuring that learning outcomes are relevant and responsive. It supports socio-economic sustainability by preparing graduates with competencies for community development and workforce readiness. It also advances community sustainability through civic engagement and service-learning, and institutional sustainability by strengthening alignment between curriculum, core values, and institutional goals. Furthermore, it promotes cultural and ethical sustainability by fostering values such as responsibility, empathy, and social commitment among future educators.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study used a descriptive qualitative research design to evaluate the alignment between NSTP, institutional vision-mission, and BECED learning outcomes. This design enabled the researcher to interpret participants' experiences and institutional documents without relying on numerical data. It focused on describing real-life practices, behaviors, and processes as they naturally occur (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). A single case study approach was adopted, concentrating on the NSTP course of Salay Community College as the unit of analysis. This allowed an in-depth exploration of program implementation within its real-life context, incorporating perspectives from students, teachers, and alumni. The approach provided a holistic understanding of how NSTP contributes to the development of cognitive knowledge, skills and abilities, and attitudes and values.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Salay Community College, a government higher education institution in Region 10 offering programs including the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECED). The institution operates under Republic Act No. 10931, which provides free tuition and financial assistance to eligible students, ensuring access to quality tertiary education. Data collection was conducted through face-to-face interviews in a controlled environment within the institution, ensuring clarity, confidentiality, and minimal disruption.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents included three groups: twelve fourth-year BECED students, eight BECED alumni, and seven NSTP teachers. The selected students had completed or nearly completed their specialized courses and were capable of providing insights on NSTP implementation and program outcomes. The alumni, who graduated in recent years, contributed reflective perspectives on how NSTP influenced their professional development. NSTP teachers provided instructional and implementation insights, as they were directly responsible for delivering the program.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was employed to select participants with direct experience in NSTP and the BECED program. This included twelve fourth-year students, eight alumni, and seven NSTP teachers. The sampling approach ensured that participants could provide relevant and meaningful information aligned with the study objectives (Vasileiou et al., 2018). Data collection continued until saturation was achieved, meaning no new themes or insights emerged. This ensured the completeness and credibility of the data (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Morse, 2015).

2.5 Research Instrument

The study utilized a semi-structured interview guide to collect qualitative data from participants. This instrument allowed flexibility while ensuring that key topics related to NSTP implementation, core values, and program outcomes were consistently addressed (Kim et al., 2017). The interview guide was validated through expert review involving qualified professionals and underwent pilot testing to ensure clarity, relevance, and reliability. The validation process strengthened the credibility of the instrument and ensured alignment with the study objectives.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection began with securing institutional approval and obtaining informed consent from participants. The researcher conducted face-to-face multisectoral interviews, ensuring participants were informed about data privacy and recording procedures. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded for analysis. Document analysis was also conducted on institutional and NSTP-related documents to evaluate alignment with vision-mission and program outcomes. Data were organized, coded, and interpreted to identify patterns and themes relevant to the research questions.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The study employed document analysis and thematic analysis. Document analysis involved systematic review and interpretation of institutional and NSTP documents to assess alignment with vision-mission and BECED learning outcomes (Patton, 2014). Thematic analysis was applied to interview data by identifying, coding, and grouping patterns into themes. The researcher reviewed and refined themes to ensure accuracy and relevance to the research questions. Data synthesis integrated findings from documents and interviews to provide a comprehensive evaluation of NSTP implementation.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were observed throughout the study. Formal permission was obtained from the institution, and informed consent was secured from all participants. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained. The researcher ensured accurate and unbiased interpretation of data while minimizing potential harm to participants. Data were securely stored, and participants' rights and dignity were upheld. All recommendations from the Research Ethics Committee were addressed, including revisions to consent procedures, sampling design, and data protection measures to ensure compliance with ethical standards.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Alignment of NSTP with the Vision-Mission of Salay Community College

3.1.1 Cognitive Knowledge Development through NSTP Implementation

The findings showed that NSTP documents demonstrated strong alignment with the institution's vision-mission through the development of students' cognitive knowledge, including understanding of legal frameworks, civic awareness, national security, environmental issues, and socio-civic concerns. Evidence from manuals, accomplishment reports, action plans, outreach programs, and memoranda of agreement indicated that students were able to acquire, apply, and expand knowledge through service-learning activities. These results indicate that NSTP effectively supports intellectual growth beyond classroom instruction, aligning with the institutional goal of producing globally competitive and self-directing graduates. The integration of civic and legal knowledge enhances students' awareness of their societal roles, consistent with service-learning frameworks that strengthen civic engagement and knowledge application (Pacatang & Montallana, 2022; Saban, 2020; Latib et al., 2017; Balmeo et al., 2015).

3.1.2 Skills and Abilities Developed through NSTP Activities

The results revealed that NSTP implementation strengthened students' skills and abilities, including leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, and organizational skills. Documents showed that students actively participated in community service, awareness campaigns, emergency preparedness, and outreach programs, demonstrating discipline, responsibility, and practical competencies. These findings suggest that NSTP provides authentic learning environments where students apply skills in real-world contexts. This aligns with the institution's mission of producing responsible and productive citizens and supports the development of competencies necessary for professional and social engagement. The emphasis on experiential learning reflects the importance of continuous improvement and applied skills development (Jackson et al., 2018; Crisostomo et al., 2016; Wetzel, 2023; Raj et al., 2022).

3.1.3 Attitudes and Values Formation through NSTP Participation

The findings indicated that NSTP strongly contributed to the development of attitudes and values such as responsibility, compassion, volunteerism, respect for diversity, leadership, and social responsibility. Students demonstrated these values through participation in community service, outreach programs, and collaborative activities. These results highlight that NSTP effectively nurtures ethical and civic-oriented individuals, aligning with the institution's mission and vision. The cultivation of values through experiential learning supports character formation and social responsibility, consistent with studies emphasizing the role of values in civic education and identity formation (Zanella et al., 2017; Low et al., 2016; Maio et al., 2019).

3.2 Alignment of NSTP with BECED Learning Outcomes

3.2.1 Cognitive Knowledge Alignment with BECED Outcomes

The results showed that NSTP moderately to negligibly aligned with BECED cognitive learning outcomes. Students demonstrated understanding of Republic Act 9163, NSTP components, sustainability concepts, and civic values. They were able to identify, explain, and contextualize these concepts in relation to their future roles as educators. However, the alignment remained limited as cognitive knowledge was not consistently integrated with early childhood education-specific content. While students developed awareness and understanding, the connection to pedagogical application required strengthening. This supports the view that cognitive development must be contextualized within discipline-specific learning for meaningful application (Thomas et al., 2019; Ilma et al., 2022; Bottini & Doeller, 2020; Ludgyga et al., 2022).

3.2.2 Skills and Abilities Alignment with BECED Outcomes

The findings revealed partial alignment between NSTP and BECED skills and abilities. Students demonstrated competencies in creating awareness campaigns, performing emergency procedures, developing community projects, and conducting classroom-based action research. These findings indicate that NSTP contributes to skill development, particularly in critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation. However, these skills were not fully aligned with early childhood education competencies, suggesting a need for intentional integration. The importance of applying skills in authentic contexts supports the development of professional competencies (Wangi et al., 2018; Rogers, 2021; Pedler et al., 2019; Butler et al., 2017; Haynes et al., 2016; Kocak et al., 2021).

3.2.3 Attitudes and Values Alignment with BECED Outcomes

The results indicated partial alignment in attitudes and values between NSTP and BECED outcomes. Students demonstrated citizenship, nationalism, empathy, inclusivity, and social responsibility through service-learning activities and community engagement. These findings suggest that NSTP plays a significant role in shaping students' professional identity as future educators. However, the alignment requires further strengthening to ensure that values formation directly supports pedagogical competencies. The integration of civic values into teaching practice aligns with the development of socially responsible educators (Maio et al., 2019; Roccas & Sagiv, 2017; Manfredo et al., 2016; Thorne et al., 2020).

3.3 Articulation of Core Values through NSTP Implementation

3.3.1 Sincerity, Accordance, Charity, and Competence in Practice

The findings showed that NSTP effectively articulated the core values of Salay Community College, including sincerity, accordance, charity, and competence. Participants reported that NSTP activities fostered respect, teamwork, volunteerism, accountability, and ethical behavior. These results indicate that NSTP provides experiential learning opportunities that reinforce institutional values in real-life contexts. The integration of these values supports holistic student development and aligns with both constructivist and sociocultural perspectives, emphasizing learning through interaction and collaboration (Toprak et al., 2020; Tuulik et al., 2016; Hayward et al., 2017; Boysen et al., 2016; Bugnariu et al., 2015; Komalasari & Saripudin, 2018; Liu & Lin, 2017; Dieste et al., 2019; Brown & Bright, 2017; Ivers, 2019).

3.4 Articulation of ECE Program Outcomes through NSTP Implementation

3.4.1 Promotion of Values and Human Dignity in Teaching Practice

The findings revealed that NSTP promoted values such as empathy, respect, and responsibility, contributing to the articulation of ECE program outcomes. Students and alumni recognized the importance of integrating these values into teaching and community engagement. These findings suggest that NSTP strengthens the moral and professional foundation of future educators. The emphasis on values supports the development of educators who advocate for children's rights and social equity, aligning with ECE learning outcomes (Lumpkin, 2015).

3.4.2 Development of Learner-Centered Pedagogical Practices

The results indicated that NSTP supported the development of learner-centered teaching practices through collaborative activities, instructional planning, and community-based learning experiences. This suggests that NSTP provides opportunities for pedagogical development, although alignment with ECE-specific competencies remains partial. The integration of service-learning into pedagogy supports innovative and collaborative teaching approaches (Lombardi et al., 2021; Al-Kubaisi, Shahbal, & Khan, 2022; Muliati et al., 2022).

3.4.3 Interdisciplinary and Community-Based Learning Integration

The findings showed that NSTP incorporated interdisciplinary learning through activities related to health, safety, environment, and civic education. Students demonstrated the ability to integrate knowledge across disciplines in community contexts. These results highlight the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in education, supporting holistic learning and community engagement. The integration of multiple disciplines enhances problem-solving and innovative thinking (Williams, 2016).

3.4.4 Collaborative Partnerships and Stakeholders Engagement

The results revealed that NSTP fostered collaboration with internal and external stakeholders through outreach programs and partnerships. Students developed teamwork, communication, and coordination skills. This indicates that collaborative engagement strengthens learning outcomes and supports community-based education. Such partnerships enhance the relevance of educational programs and promote shared responsibility (Alkan et al., 2021).

3.4.5 Adaptive and Inclusive Teaching Practices

The findings indicated that NSTP moderately supported adaptive teaching strategies and inclusive practices. Students demonstrated creativity, empathy, and responsiveness to diverse learners. These results suggest that while NSTP contributes to inclusive education, further alignment with ECE pedagogy is needed. Adaptive teaching is essential for addressing diverse learning needs (Bautista & Aranas, 2023; Zanella et al., 2017).

3.5 Overall Synthesis of Findings

The findings revealed that NSTP is highly aligned with the vision-mission of Salay Community College, particularly in developing cognitive knowledge, skills and abilities, and attitudes and values. However, alignment with BECED learning outcomes was moderate to partial, indicating gaps in integrating discipline-specific competencies. These results emphasize the need for enhanced NSTP syllabi that intentionally integrate early childhood education principles into civic engagement activities. Strengthening this alignment will ensure that NSTP not only fulfills its national mandate but also contributes effectively to the professional development of BECED students.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The findings revealed that the National Service Training Program (NSTP) of Salay Community College aligns with the Early Childhood Education (ECE) curriculum learning outcomes by implementing key provisions of Republic Act 9163 and reinforcing competencies such as content and pedagogical knowledge, innovative thinking, and practical skills through activities like lesson planning, team teaching, and emergency procedure demonstrations. NSTP effectively supports the institution's vision and mission by developing well-rounded, responsible, and globally competitive graduates who demonstrate academic competence, integrity, social awareness, and commitment to community development. It also

strengthens ECE program outcomes through the promotion of positive values, respect for human dignity, learner-centered teaching, stakeholder collaboration, and inclusive practices. Furthermore, NSTP articulates the core values of sincerity, accordance, charity, and competence by fostering integrity, adherence to laws and ideals, compassion, and the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for civic engagement. The enhanced NSTP syllabus ensures continued alignment with institutional goals by addressing current social issues, community needs, and technological advancements, thereby promoting meaningful learning experiences and holistic student development.

It is recommended that Salay Community College continuously strengthen the integration of NSTP with the ECE curriculum by sustaining the implementation of Republic Act 9163 topics and reinforcing practical applications such as emergency procedures, lesson planning, team teaching, and community-based engagements. The institution should maintain initiatives that promote academic excellence, integrity, social awareness, and civic responsibility while enhancing learner-centered approaches, inclusive strategies, and stakeholder partnerships. The NSTP program should consistently uphold the core values of sincerity, accordance, charity, and competence through structured activities that promote service, collaboration, and ethical practice. Continuous enhancement of the NSTP syllabus is necessary to ensure alignment with the vision, mission, and learning outcomes by incorporating current social issues, community needs, and technological developments. Furthermore, BECED students, teachers, administrators, and stakeholders should actively participate in strengthening NSTP implementation through collaboration, reflective practice, and sustained institutional support to promote civic engagement, leadership development, and holistic professional growth.

The study is limited to the context of Salay Community College and focuses specifically on the alignment between NSTP, the ECE curriculum, and institutional vision, mission, and core values, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other institutions or academic programs. The analysis is based on existing NSTP documents, participant responses, and the current syllabus, which may not fully capture long-term impacts or variations in implementation across different contexts. Additionally, the study primarily examines cognitive knowledge, skills and abilities, and attitudes and values, and does not extensively explore other possible dimensions of program effectiveness, thereby suggesting the need for further research involving broader populations, comparative settings, and longitudinal approaches.

Compliance with ethical standards

This study adhered to established ethical standards throughout its conduct. Formal permission was obtained from the institution, and informed consent was secured from all participants prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained. The authors ensured accurate and unbiased interpretation of data, minimized potential harm to participants, and safeguarded all collected data through secure storage. All procedures were carried out in accordance with recommendations from the Research Ethics Committee, including considerations on consent procedures, sampling design, and data protection measures.

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