



TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' CONCEPTS OF SUCCESS REVEALED THROUGH PHOTOVOICE

¹NIÑO WILKINS E. BELINO, ²JAE ANN M. CARINGAL, ³MAYBELYN E. DE LOS REYES,

⁴JOHN DANIEL ESCUADRA, ⁵JOHN BENEDICT S. ODEÑA, ⁶AMIEL A. ABACAN

¹0000-0002-3072-6633, ²0000-0002-2125-6924, ³0000-0002-1037-2612, ⁴0000-0003-0289-6659,

⁵0000-0001-5918-9176

¹wilkinsbelino7@gmail.com, ²jaeanncaringal9@gmail.com,

³maybelyndelosreyesebreo25@gmail.com, ⁴jedongescuadra@gmail.com,

⁵johnbenedictodena23@gmail.com, ⁶amiel.abacan@g.batstate-u.edu.ph,

^{1,2}Batangas State University, College of Teacher Education, Batangas City, Philippines

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine Teacher Education students' concept of success. A qualitative research design was used in this study. Correspondingly, photovoice method was also used as the approach of the researchers to have a detailed analysis regarding the subject under study. Oral and written interviews were also conducted to gather more responses from the participants. The research participants were 40 first-year College of Teacher Education students who selected through purposive sampling. The study revealed that Teacher Education students have different concepts of success, including satisfaction, contentment, faith, development, and the idea of overcoming challengers. Participants identified a number of factors that may hinder their success, including a lack of time management, lack of confidence, financial problems, and peer influence. Furthermore, faith and passion were the most essential values for success. The recommended career success strategies can also be integrated to assist students in achieving their goals and pave the way for their success.

Keywords: Success, Photovoice, Teacher Education Students, Values

INTRODUCTION

Success is an individual's goals and mission. It is perhaps the most desired feeling that every individual wants to pursue their dreams. People work hard for success throughout their lives. Once successful, they must continue to work hard, dedicate themselves and maintain a high level of skill to stay in the success category. Success is an accomplishment for this purpose. This is the theoretical definition of success, but in reality, it differs according to people's interests and goals. Success is far beyond the physical things people see, and real success is all about the feeling of satisfaction they get when they do something. Similar to student success, according to te Wierik et al. (2014), student success can be understood as getting students into and through college to a degree or certificate. On the other

hand, some factors hinder students to success. According to Gbollie and Keamu (2017), most students experience a lack of focus on making and accomplishing their tasks, leading them to a wrong path of taking and focusing on their decisions and plans. The inability to properly focus on a task is a major obstacle to success.

Several researchers have suggested various ways to succeed. To achieve life goals and be successful, everyone needs a plan and good decision-making. Academic success is a primary concern in all initial lives. Education is a pillar of every country in the world, so education plays a vital role in shaping every individual living in this world, according to Višňovsky and Zolcer (2016). Saying education is the road to success is another way of saying that education is very



important to all, without education there would be little progress in individual and collective lives as human beings. It is very important for students to pursue education in order to achieve life success. All students should be dedicated to their actions and decisions. The reason researchers came up with this topic is simply because of what they noticed when they encountered different types of students. Some students are more likely to become lazy and tend to delay their schoolwork. Instead of finishing the work they opt to go with their companions, leading to unfinished and unfinished school work. Other students experience heavy schedules and school tasks that lead to negative thinking in accomplishing tasks. The researchers' main goal is to make students realize that there are much more valuable things to do to succeed, so living miserably should never be an option. Researchers want to uphold those values have different ways to make someone triumphant. In addition, Batangas State University is developing different values to inculcate among students, just as researchers adhere to those values for decent living.

This study aims to instill students the significance of values, plans and goals to achieve success, to improve their skills and abilities as well as flexibility. It also aims to enhance a wide range of knowledge about the factors that may hinder students from achieving success and the most essential values of students that can be used to achieve success. Through this study, students will also be enlightened and will be able to fulfill their full potential. It also aims to create interesting concepts that students can use to experience success in different forms.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted to 1) determine the Teacher Education students' concepts of success revealed through photovoice; 2) identify the factors that may possibly hinder success; 3) determine the most essential values held by the students in achieving success; and 4) propose a career success strategy that may be used by the students.

METHODOLOGY

The research study used a qualitative research design that seeks to interpret meaning from the data gathered with regard to the concepts of success through the study of targeted participants. The instrument used as the main data gathering instrument was a photovoice – to reveal participants' concepts of success. According to Nykiforuk et al. (2011), it has grown in popularity as a qualitative research tool that allows researchers to imagine people's perceptions of their daily lives. This was used to visually depict student's perspectives about topics that are difficult to articulate using words alone. Written and formal interviews were conducted as supplemental data. Thematic analysis and modal ranking were used to interpret the results. There were 30 participants in the photovoice and 10 in the oral and written interviews. Research participants in the photovoice were chosen through purposive sampling as they qualified certain criteria established by the researchers. This study was conducted at the College of Teacher Education, Batangas State University Main I Campus.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Students' Concepts of Success

Through analysis and interpretation, themes emerged from the concepts of the success of Teacher Education students.

1.1 Overcoming Circumstances and Challenges

Table 1 presents the thematic analysis of emerging theme overcoming circumstances and challenges as a concept of success. It can be inferred that most concepts of success imply that as students, they may experience different challenges that may bring them down, but despite that there is still hope, another day when it can be considered an opportunity to strive harder to achieve success. Moreover, success for them is being brave while overcoming the obstacles they face.



Table 1

Emergence of the Theme Overcoming Circumstances and Challenges on the Concepts of Success

CODE	VERBATIM RESPONSE	EMERGING CONCEPT	EMERGING THEME
Research Participant 8	"This achievement is the <i>product of my challenges</i> that is considered part of my success"	Overcoming Challenges	Overcoming Circumstances and Challenges
Research Participant 12	"Success means achieving that level of euphoria with those people who have been with you through ups and downs of life. You attempt to <i>do everything on your own but you failed and then, they are there, ready to catch you and walk with you in your attempt of reaching your goals</i> "	Overcoming the failures and always attempting to reach one's goals	
Research Participant 13	"There is a right time for all the good things so we must learn to be patient and <i>bear all the burden, the pain, the weariness that hinders us from continuing our fight towards our goal</i> and be contented of what we have at the moment . It may be a <i>long and tiring journey but once we let our inner will to survive with patience, we can reach our destination—we can attain success.</i> "	Bearing all the burdens that hinder an individual to achieve goals and striving hard to attain success	
Research Participant 15	"Sometimes you go up and down, like a roller coaster, <i>waves that will break you down. But, your time is not done yet. Strive harder, be a fighter because you are stronger than you think of to reach your success</i> "	Striving harder to overcome struggles and to reach success	
Research Participant 16	"True happiness is felt at the time of success especially when success is a <i>product of suffering, night of crying and staying awake all night.</i> "	Overcoming Challenges	
Research Participant 17	"The clouds symbolize the <i>challenges and barriers</i> in achieving success in life, <i>we can always encounter different problems that may hinder our success but always remember that every darkness that we may encounter there is always an affiliated lightness which can serve as our way in achieving success.</i> "	There are always ways to overcome challenges	
Research Participant 18	"For me success is like a sunset because it is a <i>sign that a day has passed. Just like the journey of our life, no matter how hard it is, keep striving and you will reach the end.</i> "	Surviving in every challenge and striving to reach success.	
Research Participant 21	"As colonization ends in our homeland, we Filipinos are <i>able to raise our flag again</i> . Through the eye-opening wisdom of our success and freedom, we are enjoying right now. We should never forget those <i>bloody years of our fellow Filipinos that sacrificed their lives for the success we have.</i> "	Overcoming or surpassing the colonization and achieving freedom.	
Research Participant 22	"Success is defined through the ability to <i>surpass the hardships</i> life can afford it."	Surpassing hardships in life	
Research Participant 23	" <i>Sometimes we fall</i> and we take a step back <i>but then, we learn at the end of the day, still, we need to move forward and be better to be on top.</i> "	Standing again from falling and moving forward.	
Research Participant 27	" <i>We may be shaken by currents and waves, bumps that may trip us down</i> , but one thing is for sure; <i>sunrise is already gone but sunset will show</i> . This will not portray the end of everything; hence, <i>it will serve as the reminder for everyone that there is still tomorrow.</i> "	Overcoming different hindrances in life	Overcoming Circumstances and Challenges
Research Participant 30	"The true essence and meaning of success is by <i>being able to face life's difficulties with courage whatever happens no matter how hard the storm hits me, when I stand firm despite all of those, that can be called as a success.</i> "	Being able to face life's difficulties	

Through this, an individual becomes more dedicated to moving forward and improving his plans and strategies, developing flexibility, and

fulfilling their full potential which enables them to succeed.

The following excerpt from the student's concept of success implies that achieving



success is difficult and cannot be achieved immediately, and different challenges must be faced that enable an individual to strive more for success:

“...we must learn to be patient and bear all the burden, the pain, the weariness that hinders us from continuing our fight towards our goal... it may be as long and tiring journey but once we let our inner will to strive with patience, we can reach our destination—we can attain success.” (Participant 13)

Another student's response suggests that the concept of success is attributable to one's experience and different views in life, specifically those challenges that hinder them from achieving their goals. To quote:

“...we can always encounter different problems that may hinder our success but always remember that every darkness that we may encounter, there is always an affiliated lightness which can serve as our way in achieving success.” (Participant 17)

It is a mixture of darkness and lightness to achieve success. These perceptions are often defined as being positive in life, and not all things will bring lightness or happiness; it's something to mix with challenges that will teach a lot of lessons and can be a tool to help an individual grow and be strong enough to conquer those instances.

1.2 Achievements and Accomplishments

Table 2

Emergence of the Theme Achievements and Accomplishments on the Concept of Success

CODE	VERBATIM RESPONSE	EMERGING CONCEPT	EMERGING THEME
Research Participant 2	“Success is one of the <i>major achievements in life</i> ”	Achievements in life	Achievements and Accomplishments
Research Participant 4	“Real success is when your <i>accomplished things</i> for the greater glory of the Lord.”	Accomplishing things	
Research Participant 8	“Success is the <i>fruit</i> of your own hard work. This <i>achievement</i> is the product of my challenges that is considered part of my success.”	Fruit and Achievement	
Research Participant 9	“Success for me is seeing my family proud of my <i>achievements</i> .”	Achievements	
Research Participant 13	“We can only say that we are truly successful if we <i>achieved our goals</i> .”	Achieving Goals	
Research Participant 20	“Batangas State University symbolizes success because there is an <i>achievement of desired visions and planned goals</i> . There are many accomplishments and it became a center of excellence despite its difficulties.”	Achievement of desired vision and Goals	
Research Participant 21	“As colonization ends in our homeland, we Filipinos are <i>able to raise our flag again</i> . Through the eye-opening wisdom of our heroes, we are capable of achieving the success and freedom, we are enjoying right now.”	Achievement of the freedom of the Filipinos	
Research Participant 24	“Success is a <i>collection of achievements</i> ”	Achievements	

Table 2 shows researchers' analysis that having achievements and accomplishments indicates success. According to one student, citing his concept of success:

“Batangas State University symbolizes success because there is an achievement of desired visions and planned goals.” (Participant 20)

This concept supports the idea of Mueller (2017) that success is the state of achieving and



accomplishing a goal. Success refers to achieving the desired vision and planned goals. Furthermore, this can be a certain status describing an individual who also becomes prosperous and has a favorable outcome.

Moreover, the concept of accomplishments and achievements on the subject under study

refers not only to the above-mentioned achievements, but also to the idea of achieving freedom of the Filipinos as the colonization ends, with the great help of the Philippine heroes, the Filipinos were able to raise their flag again and prosper their lives and cherish them.

1.3 Faith in God

Table 3

Emergence of the Theme Faith in God on the Concept of Success

CODE	VERBATIM RESPONSE	EMERGING CONCEPT	EMERGING THEME
Research Participant 4	"Real success is when you <i>accomplished things, for the greater glory of the Lord.</i> "	Having faith in God in accomplishing things	Faith in God
Research Participant 5	"You have good success because <i>God is with you, knowing and obeying God's word</i> is the only way to have true success."	Faith	
Research Participant 6	"... that is what success really means, by <i>responding to what God has planned for you.</i> "	Having faith in God	
Research Participant 14	"True success is <i>walking with God and experiencing the joy of His presence and favor in your life</i>	Having faith in God	
Research Participant 19	"The thing that represents my idea about success is the <i>Holy Bible</i> . The real success in life begins with <i>obeying God's command, to repent and believe in Jesus Christ.</i> "	Believing in God	
Research Participant 28	"... life is totally successful when you are <i>living with God.</i> "	Faith in God	
Research Participant 29	"Success for me is represented by a bamboo tree, wherein it symbolizes <i>faith</i> , patience, perseverance, growth and development, and humility."	Faith	

Table 3 shows the thematic analysis of the theme faith in God based on the concept of success. As one participant quoted:

"True success is walking with God and experiencing the joy of His presence and favor in your life." (Participant 14)

Success will never be achieved unless guided by the Almighty God. Having faith in Him can be strength to fulfill one's goals and to see them happy and content with having a successful life and a mindset that, through faith in God, all things are possible. Moreover, Corley's study (2016) was supported by this analysis in which faith in God enables people to overcome every obstacle in their path to success. Likewise, according to

Wood and Hilton (2012), having faith is an inspiration for excellence and the ability to overcome barriers. It is a major source for an individual to succeed, especially in the academics of students.

1.4 Satisfaction and Contentment

In Table 4, it can be inferred that being satisfied and contented with what an individual has on process is already a success. It is also evident in their responses that success refers not only to material things, but also to an individual's feeling as he achieves satisfaction and contentment.

**Table 4***Emergence on the Theme Satisfaction and Contentment on the Concept of Success*

CODE	VERBATIM RESPONSE	EMERGING CONCEPT	EMERGING THEME
Research Participant 1	"Success is simply the <i>feeling of satisfaction</i> and happiness one gets from leading a particular way of life or carrying out a particular activity. To become successful, it is necessary to never give up until the <i>aim of happiness</i> and <i>satisfaction</i> in life is fully met."	Feeling of Satisfaction	Satisfaction and Contentment
Research Participant 3	"Success defines the <i>contentment</i> , peace of mind and sheer happiness."	Contentment	
Research Participant 9	"Success is defined by how <i>contented</i> and enjoyable your life is."	Contentment	
Research Participant 13	"There is a right time for all the good things so we must learn to be patient... and <i>be contented of what we have at the moment</i> . A person with a patient soul a <i>contented mind</i> and a humble heart—that is a real successful person."	Being contented with what one person have	
Research Participant 25	"Success is not always about material things, sometimes <i>what matter is/how contented</i> and what is your feeling after achieving something"	Contentment	
Research Participant 26	"As for me, success is when you are happy and <i>satisfied</i> with your profession in the real meaning of success is the <i>genuine emotional satisfaction</i> that you and other people around you are feeling"	Feeling of Satisfaction	
Research Participant 28	"Success is defined as happiness and <i>contentment</i> of what you have in your life."	Contentment	

According to the student quoted:

"...success is when you are happy and satisfied... the real meaning of success is the genuine emotional satisfaction that you and other people around you are feeling." (Participant 26)

The concept of contentment, particularly satisfaction, supports Antaramian and Lee (2017) who claim that happiness is linked to positive educational outcomes. Several studies have shown satisfaction as a significant facilitator of student engagement and academic achievement

among students. Moreover, satisfied college students are more likely to succeed in their academic and extracurricular activities. Students believed that success was described as the satisfaction of completing tasks during their careers. For them, the greatest gratification comes from serious hard work and effort when completing a given mission to achieve the goals they desired. It is also linked to higher academic aspirations, higher academic self-efficacy, more perceived goal success, and lower academic stress.

1.5 Happiness

In Table 5, it was discovered that happiness emerged in the students' concept of success. From one student's response excerpt:

"True happiness is felt out the time of success." (Participant 16)

This implies that success is also the feeling of happiness that an individual can experience, especially when it's a product of life struggles.


Table 5
Emergence of the Theme Happiness on the Concept of Success

CODE	VERBATIM RESPONSE	EMERGING CONCEPT	EMERGING THEME
Research Participant 1	"Success is simply the <i>feeling of satisfaction</i> and <i>happiness</i> one gets from leading a particular way of life. To become successful, it is necessary to never give up until the <i>aim of happiness</i> and satisfaction in life is fully met."	Feeling of Happiness	Happiness
Research Participant 3	"Success defines the contentment, peace of mind and <i>sheer happiness</i> ."	Happiness	
Research Participant 13	"Success means <i>achieving that level of euphoria</i> with those people who have been with you through ups and downs of life."	Achieving Happiness	
Research Participant 16	" <i>True happiness</i> is felt at the time of success especially when success is a product of suffering, night of crying and staying awake all night."	True Happiness	
Research Participant 26	"As for me, success is when you are <i>happy</i> and satisfied with your profession."	Feeling of Happiness	
Research Participant 28	"Success is defined as <i>happiness</i> and contentment of what you have in your life."	Happiness	

Moreover, achieving great happiness and excitement indicates success. This instance is more valuable especially when an individual is with people who are always with him in time of success and circumstances.

Happiness as success supports the point referenced in Walsh et al. (2018) that several

studies have shown that happiness is linked to a variety of life achievements, one of which is career success. It is derived from career success and can also contribute to better academic engagement. Happiness is characterized by an individual's ability to appreciate every moment while fulfilling their goals and needs.

1.6 Growth and Development

Table 6
Emergence of the Theme Growth and Development on the Concept of Success

CODE	VERBATIM RESPONSE	EMERGING CONCEPT	EMERGING THEME
Research Participant 2	"After all the challenges that we've been, <i>there is lesson to be learned; lessons</i> that we can use to achieve our goals."	Lessons as way for growth and development	Growth and Development
Research Participant 11	" <i>Studying</i> can be done by a person who wants to learn. <i>Learning from what you study</i> is what is important than just studying. <i>Knowledge from education</i> is a weapon for a person to survive the battle he faces in this cruel world"	Acquiring Knowledge for Growth and Development	
Research Participant 16	"It is the result of <i>preparation, hard work and learning from failure</i> ."	Development through learning from failure	
Research Participant 29	"Success for me is represented by a bamboo tree, where in it symbolizes faith, patience, perseverance, <i>growth and development</i> and humility."	Growth and Development	



Table 6 presents the thematic analysis of the growth and development themes that indicate the students' concept of achieving success. This concept supports the idea of an article in Brian Tracy International (2011) involving different success factors, especially an individual's growth and development. It is used that, by growing and developing different aspects of one's life, it increases the opportunity to succeed. Education, skills, good habits, positive attitudes and creativity can lead to success.

The analysis showed that growth and development are about preparation, hard work and learning from failures, according to one student (Participant 16). In connection with this, another student cited:

"After all the challenges that we've been there is lesson to be learned." (Participant 2)

This implies that there are challenges that an individual may encounter, and that there is different learning that can be brought from it. In addition, educational knowledge is a way for an individual to grow more and develop skills and learning that will lead him to success.

2. Factors Hindering Students' Success

Whatever an individual's status is, everyone wants success. Unfortunately, success is not easy for anyone, and never will. There are factors that prevent individuals from achieving the epitome of success.

Based on interviews conducted by researchers, the interviewees specified factors that may hinder success. Most say lack of time management and class schedules are some of the hurdles they experience. Such factors make it difficult for them to engage in other important things. To quote the answers shared by one of the participants:

"...one of the most common problems I usually encounter is my afternoon schedule where I struggle to attend classes and perform school task. Besides, it's also difficult for me to manage my time and use it to finish my activities. Considering that I have multiple courses to meet, that requires me to divide my time with the task assigned to me."

This upholds Kapur's (2018) concept that students commonly have a busy schedule, resulting in a lack of time management. Therefore, it is vital for them to generate awareness of effective plans and time management skills that will stimulate their ability to succeed.

Furthermore, it was stated that some habit of delaying and ignoring important things could be a reason not to achieve a specific goal. In addition, some of the research participants interviewed also cited financial and family issues as one of the factors that hinder success. Citing another shared answer by a participant:

"I think it's a financial problem... Even if a person wants to pursue his dream, if he has a financial problem, he can't do it or pursue it. So, if that's the situation, be realistic in life, it will be really hard for you to pursue your dream if you don't have money."

More so, lack of consistency and self-confidence, judgment of other people and negative thinking also prevails as factors that hinder success as they have experienced along the way of being a student and being a future educator. This supports Mwaura's concept (2011) that students possess different characteristics that differ from others where different notions may arise and may hinder success. Therefore, students must have positive feelings about the things they are doing, they must also have discipline, diligence and resourcefulness to achieve their goals. In addition to this, it supports Srinivas and Venkat Krishnan's study (2016) that when students experience difficulties, they tend to have negative thoughts and lack confidence and consistency in what they want to accomplish. All this can contribute as major obstacles that drag them out of their original routine or plans, but can be prevented and turned into a positive one.

3. Values held by the Students' in Achieving Success

Table 7 reflects researchers' analysis of the values that students must possess in order to



achieve success, and it was found that having faith in God must prevail before anything else.

Table 7

Modal Ranking on the Values held by the Students' in Achieving Success

VALUES	MODAL RANK
Faith	1
Passion	1.5
Responsibility	3
Hard Work	3
Determination	3
Patience	7
Time Management	8
Creativity	8.5
Confidence	9
Excellence	10

This supports Wood and Hilton's (2012) concept that connotes having faith in God is actually a major source and motivation for achieving good academic performance in students. Likewise, William and Isaac (2016) believed that spirituality's role supports academic performance and leads to academic success. As reflected in some photovoice participants' interpretation, it is quoted:

"Real success is when you accomplished things for the greater glory of the Lord." (Participant 4)

To quote another response from one of the interviewees:

"The best thing I can do is pray. I also experienced depression. The first thing I did was approaching the Lord. I decided to move away and find myself through faith from Him"

Besides having faith in God, a passion for what an individual does is also essential for success. Passion involves different aspects that an individual puts heavy effort into accomplishing something. It's someone's desire to be focused and interested that an individual can possess and go beyond the call of duty, to achieve exceptional results. Supporting Thompson's (2019) concept, passion can lead them through difficult times and possess the ability to achieve whatever goals they desired. Responsibility, determination and hard work have the same or equal rank that these three values are also useful and categorized by research participants as it gives sufficient

realization and firmness to succeed that requires the qualities to be developed. Connected to what was discussed about passion and hard work, as one of the interviewees said:

"...you should get to be strategic in life. If you have no money, work for it. If you can't ask your parents and you're really struggling, be strategic, work again, be a working student because it will help you to be a successful person..."

Another shared response by one of the participants as it supports the concept of success through determination:

"...they must keep on going even though they are facing hindrances and challenges are always part of the journey..."

Patience, time management, and creativity are the values that participants ranked among the lowest values in the study. Confidence and excellence are the same way participants ranked as the least essential among other values. Based on the written interview conducted, the participants were much in favor of the other values, rather than thinking that they will only succeed through excellence.

4. Career Success Strategies

This study focused on teacher education students' success concepts revealed through photovoice. The study also determined the factors that hinder success and the values that students must uphold to achieve their goals and succeed.

Parallel to this, the significant findings revealed in the study guided researchers to develop different career success strategies. Researchers presented these strategies to help motivate students to do their work. This can help students learn about the things they need to integrate into their daily lives to succeed in the tasks they worked on. It aims to provide a positive outcome for students to build a right set of habits in life and help them develop their skills and abilities. Integrating such strategies requires consistent and persistent action for an individual to learn, adjust and evaluate their capabilities, resulting in a high probability of success.



CONCLUSIONS

With the study's major findings as the bases, the researchers drew the following conclusions that overcoming circumstances, achievement, faith in God, satisfaction, happiness, and growth and development were determined as concepts of success of teacher education students, thus this gives substantial data on how they conceptualize their idea of success. Different factors such as lack of time management, lack of self-confidence, financial issues and peer influence were also identified, based on participants that may hinder them in achieving success. Furthermore, the most important values of success are faith and passion. Career success strategies are proposed that students can integrate to achieve their goals and succeed with it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the topic of determining Teacher Education students' success concepts and considering the findings and conclusion of this study, there are multiple options and directions for future researchers. Besides determining the success concepts of the students from the College of Teacher Education Department, it is recommended that the above variable be studied from other department students. The study may focus on the students' difficulties with regard to the environment where they belong, which these difficulties may also affect and interfere with success. Future researchers may consider this study as the basis for future research on success concepts, factors that may hinder success, values that student must uphold, and career success strategies that students can integrate to achieve success.

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AUTHORS' PROFILE



Niño Wilkins E. Belino, Undergraduate student at Batangas State University, College of Teacher Education Department.



Jae Ann M. Caringal, Undergraduate student at Batangas State University, College of Teacher Education Department.



Maybelyn E. De Los Reyes, Undergraduate student at Batangas State University, College of Teacher Education Department.



John Daniel Escuadra, Undergraduate student at Batangas State University, College of Teacher Education Department.



John Benedict S. Odeña, Undergraduate student at Batangas State University, College of Teacher Education Department.



Amiel A. Abacan, Faculty at Batangas State University, College of Teacher Education Department.

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