

Instructional Processes, Psychological Attributes and School Environment of Students in Araling Panlipunan: A Causal Model

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Abstract— This study generally sought to determine the performance of students in Araling Panlipunan. Specifically, it aimed to determine the level of students' performance in Araling Panlipunan, assess the level of instructional processes in the teaching and learning of Araling Panlipunan curriculum among learners, ascertain the learners' level of psychological factors in Araling Panlipunan, identify the level of school environment of students in Araling Panlipunan; correlate the students' academic performance to instructional processes, psychological factors, and school environment; identify the variable that best predicts students' performance, and develop a causal model of students' performance in Araling Panlipunan. The study utilized the descriptive-correlational and causal-comparative research designs. This was conducted among 488 grade seven learners in Lanao del Sur I Division, ARMM using the instrument of Abrami (2007) and data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage distribution, correlation, regression and path analysis. The questionnaire was pilot-tested to fifty (50) students with reliability coefficients of 0.98., 0.98 and 0.98, respectively, for instructional processes, psychological factors and school environment. Grade 7 students have approaching proficiency performance in Araling Panlipunan. Instructional process particularly curriculum is moderately positive in learning Araling Panlipunan. Learners are positively motivated to learn and have a moderately positive attitude towards Araling Panlipunan. Learners have a positive outlook in their school environment, specifically on the facilities and equipment available, classroom climate conditions, learners' interaction, cultural relations and administrative support. Moreover, learners' performance is correlated to instructional processes, particularly curriculum. Learners' performance is also correlated to school environment factors, particularly cultural relations, which is also the best predictor variable for learners' academic performance in Araling Panlipunan. The best fitting model on learners' performance in Araling Panlipunan is anchored on cultural relations and students' attitude toward the subject.

Index Terms— Curriculum, Attitude, Motivation, Learners, Culture, School Environment, Classroom Climate, Performance, Administrators, Facilities.

1. Introduction

After so many years of independent statehood, the Philippines faces a number of crucial problems which require a high level of vision, a courageous type of leadership, a

substantial amount of discipline and plain hard and honest work on the part of the Filipinos (need source). One of the eminent roles of education is to produce Filipino graduates who will provide solutions or be responsive of their country's problems and who will work and serve their country. The Philippine education system, particularly the public schools, is beset by different problems, which the government should readily find a solution in order to make public service more meaningful. Educational welfare of the citizenry could be addressed to its fullest Education underwent substantial reform and changes during the past decade. In response to the public clamour for relevance, quality and excellence in education, numerous education innovations were introduced. Seminars, public consultations, conferences and workshops were held to orient education and school administrators and other stakeholders to these innovations. A series of measurements to assess students' performance was implemented, from the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) to the National Elementary Achievement Test (NEAT) and National Secondary Achievement Test (NSAT) and finally the National Achievement Test (NAT). The National Achievement Test (NAT) is an examination given annually to assess the competency of both public and private school students. The students' knowledge and skills are tested in the subjects of Mathematics, English, Science, Filipino and HEKASI for grade school, while Mathematics, English, Science, Filipino, and Araling Panlipunan are tested for high school. The test is administered by the Department of Education's National Education Testing and Research Center (NETRC).

Manuscript revised April 07, 2024; accepted April 08, 2024. Date of publication April 10, 2024.

This paper available online at www.ijprse.com
ISSN (Online): 2582-7898; SJIF: 5.59

The results are intended to guide the Department of Education in its efforts towards the improvement of the quality of education in public schools and to provide appropriate intervention for the students. According to the study of Rayos (2012), a score of 75% on highest indicates mastery of the subject and 50% to less than 75%, near mastery, while a score of below 50% indicates low mastery. The NAT results guide decision-makers in formulating policies relative to progression and promotion of students, especially in the public school system. This will determine the deficiencies of students that need further intervention. According to DepEd Secretary Bro Luistro, "NAT is just a part of the report card of DepEd and the whole education system." Results of this indicator will help them formulate appropriate interventions that aimed improvements of the education system (Philippine Star, 2012). The results of the tests in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) were not encouraging. According to a report, for school year 2004-2005 and 2005-2006, the students of ARMM, along with those from the NCR and Western Visayas, were in bottom 3. Students in Lanao del Sur, being part of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, indeed belonged to the three lowest performers. In other words, students in Lanao del Sur scored lowest in Araling Panlipunan, along with other subjects covered by the NAT. This problem can be ascribed to many factors, including the kind of instructional processes, psychosocial preparation of the students, and the school environment. According to the Department of Education, enhancing the basic education is urgent and critical, hence the government has to come up with proposals which do not disrupt the current curriculum, affordable for both government and families and aligned with international standards. The curriculum is the heart of education, without it, there would be no schools, and without schools there would be no education system. Palma (2009) pointed out that when it comes to developing the society or developing the individual human being, or both, the curriculum has a vital role to play in the school system. At present, students who finish basic education do not possess sufficient mastery of basic competencies due to inadequate instruction time or time on task. The present curriculum designed for twelve (12) years, School Year 2010-2011, the Department of Education initiated in designing the K to 12 Curriculum, otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum. Learners who are already Curriculum and will graduate, as they expected after fourth year. As one of the key subjects in the National Achievement Test (NAT), performance in Araling Panlipunan is a must for all students wanting to improve. Thus, this study is conducted to at least investigate problems in student performance in Araling Panlipunan and consequently address concerns in improving performance in the NAT.

2. Framework

This study is anchored in the theory of Constructivism which was deeply supported by Mvududu (2005) and Mills (2003). It

is a framework for thinking about how students can learn in given situations and how others can mediate in the process of learning. In constructivism, the students are actively and individually viewed as constructivists who are constructing their own knowledge, rather than copying knowledge transmitted, delivered or conveyed to them. Further, the individuals particularly the students construct new knowledge internally by transforming, organizing and reorganizing previous knowledge. They can also construct knowledge externally, through environmental and social factors that are influenced by culture, language and interactions with others (Mills, 2003). Also, constructivism as stated by Mills (2003) suggests that new knowledge is not passively received by students through textbooks and lectures, or by simply asking students to memorize facts; instead, meaning is acquired through a significant interaction with new knowledge. In addition, she pointed out that regardless of how clearly a teacher explains a concept, students will understand the material only after they have constructed their own meaning for the new concept. This may require restructuring and reorganizing the new knowledge and linking it to previous knowledge. Contextualizing curriculum, the achievement of this teaching efficacy in the K to 12 can be supported with the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for Republic Act (RA) 10533, under Sec. 10.2, which provides that "K to 12 Curriculum shall be contextualized and globalized." Thus, the curricula shall be flexible enough to enable and allow schools to localize, indigenize and enhance them based on their respective educational and social context. These provisions challenge the creativity of human motivation that highlights the importance of the psychological need for autonomy.

Although the initial work leading to the self-determination theory dates back to the 1970s, research on the self-determination theory has truly mushroomed during the past decade (Deci & Ryan, 2008). In the self-determination theory, focus is on qualitative, rather than on quantitative differences in motivation. This means that they rather focus on the quality and type of motivation than on the amount of motivation. This finding is reiterated by Deci and Ryan (2008) when they reveal that the theory focuses on types, rather than merely on the amount of motivation, paying particular attention to autonomous motivation, controlled motivation and a motivation as predictors of performance and well-being outcomes. Central to the self-determination theory is the distinction between autonomous and controlled motivation (Areepattamannil & Freeman, 2008). Deci and Ryan (in Areepattamannil & Freeman, 2008) state that only autonomously motivated behaviors are considered fully self-determined, because these motivations are either innate to the person or have been fully assimilated with the core self through the process of integration. This type of motivation is also referred to as intrinsic motivation. Self Determination according to Mnyandu (2001) refers to the experience of freedom in initiating behavior which is called Autonomous behavior or intrinsic motivation. The self-determination theory

distinguishes between different types of motivation based on the different reasons or goals that give rise to an action (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The self-determination theory distinguishes between three types of motivation, namely: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and a motivation. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be valuable to students. The self-determination theory heavily emphasizes the role of the self-perception of competence as an antecedent of autonomous academic motivation (Ahmed & Bruinsma, 2006) or intrinsic motivation. This implies that the self-determination theory points out that for intrinsic motivation to be present in a student, the student needs to have a positive academic self-concept. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are completely different and at opposite ends of a spectrum of self-determined behavior. Ryan and Deci (2000) stated that intrinsic motivation has been operationally defined in two ways. Firstly, it implies that the activity is done out of the free choice of the individual. No one forces him/her to do a particular activity, and yet he/she does is there assumed that intrinsic motivation is present.

Secondly, intrinsic motivation is the self-report of the individual of the interest in and the enjoyment of the activity. Once more it is assumed that intrinsic motivation exists (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation is a kind of motivation that comes from within the individual. It does not require any external element in order to be present. Intrinsically motivated students are driven from within. They have the inner need and they want to be competent and successful. They generally have more curiosity about everything than students without intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation implies doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction that it brings rather than for some separable consequence (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It is intrinsic motivation that drives an individual to do something in order to attain certain goals. There is a self-perpetuating energy behind intrinsic motivation that can function in the complete absence of extrinsic motivation (Sikhwari, 2004) or any external rewards. Three types of intrinsic motivation have been identified, namely intrinsic motivation to know (IMTK), intrinsic motivation to accomplish things (IMTA) and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation (IMTES) (Cokley et al., 2001).

Intrinsically motivated behaviors, which are performed out of interest, satisfy the innate psychological needs for competence and autonomy and are the prototype of self-determined behaviour. Deci and Ryan (2000) view the need for self-determined behavior as an important motivator inherent in intrinsic motivation that is closely intertwined with the need for competence. Intrinsic motivation in respect of university courses, for instance, would be reflected in the active involvement in the course, the enjoyment of the lectures, the classes and the readings, and an intrinsic interest in the course material (Harackiewicz et al., 1998). They also assert that intrinsically motivated students love learning, and their questions to their instructors are more likely to concern the material itself, than what will be covered in the exam.

Thus, extrinsically motivated behavior can vary in the extent to which they represent self-determined behavior (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Some researchers and theorists maintain that extrinsically motivated behaviors are non-autonomous. This means that the behavior is not self-determined. Ausubel, Kolensik, Lamprecht and Deci (in Crous et al., 2000) pronounce that the following characteristics are typical of people who are extrinsically motivated: (1) they are usually unsure of themselves and their own abilities; (2) they are not creative; (3) their performance depends largely on external pressure or encouragement; (4) they have no ambition to extend their knowledge beyond the basics; (5) they show a high degree of detachment and do nothing that is not expected of them; (6) they tend to be pessimistic about their chances of success; (7) they concentrate on the realization of short-term objectives; (8) they rely heavily on the help from their lecturers, and on other external factors such as recognition, approval and encouragement; (9) they are often tense and anxious about the possibility of failure; (10) people or things external to themselves determine their standards and the extent to which they will succeed in their learning activities; and (11) they strive for the social approval of friends, lecturers, their parents and other significant people in their lives. Directed by the aforementioned literature and theories, this study is formulated. Its focus is to assess the problems encountered in the implementation of K to 12 Program in the Grade Seven Araling Panlipunan Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Lanao del Sur Division 1. At present, the modules are available for this subject area from first grading up to fourth grading periods and it is already evaluated and conducted on the use of the curriculum directions in Araling Panlipunan curriculum. This study tried to examine the relationship among these variables that may be enhanced in designing the prospect that is envisioned by the Grade Seven Araling Panlipunan mentors in improving the implementation of said modules program in the public and private institution in the Division of Lanao del Sur 1.

A. Objectives of the Study

This study generally aimed to develop a causal model on the performance of learners in Araling Panlipunan. Specifically, it aimed to: (1) describe the level of learners' performance in Araling Panlipunan; (2) assess learners' instructional processes in Araling Panlipunan in terms of curriculum; (3) ascertain the learners' level of psychological factors in Araling Panlipunan in a) attitude and b) motivation; (4) determine the level of school environment of learners' in Araling Panlipunan in the following components: a) facilities/equipment, b) classroom climate, c) learners' interaction, d) cultural relations and e) administrative support; (5) correlate learners' academic performance and a) instructional processes, b) psychological factors and c) school environment; (6) identify which variable best predicts learners' performance in Araling Panlipunan; and (7) develop a causal model of learners' performance in Araling Panlipunan.

3. Methodology

A. Research Design

This study integrated the use of descriptive-correlational and causal-comparative research designs. It used descriptive research as it attempted to describe the levels of learning modules, psychological factors, school environment and learners' performance. The correlational research design was used to explore and determine the degree of relationship that exists between the independent and dependent variables of the study. Furthermore, causal-comparative method was used to establish a causal model that best fits the performance of learners in Araling Panlipunan. According to Brewer and Kubn (2013), a causal-comparative design is “a research design that seeks to find relationships between independent and dependent variables after an action or event has already occurred.” The researcher's goal is to determine whether the independent variables affected the outcome of learners' performance.

B. Participants

The study covered 488 grade seven learners enrolled in first grading in the selected secondary schools in the Division of Lanao del Sur 1. The randomly selected secondary schools were: Abeden Memorial NHS (35), Datu Mamintal Adiong Mem. NHS (65), Datu Palawan Disomimba NHS (40), Molundo NHS (70), Poona Lumabao NHS (40), Pangandaman Provincial Science NHS (40), Ragayan NHS (58), Saguwaran NHS (60), Sitty Amanie Moh. Kiram NHS (40), and Sultan Macalawi Memorial NHS (40). The grade seven learners are the respondents of the study.

C. Instrument

There were three instruments used in this study specifically utilized to gather relevant data on instructional processes, psychological factors and school environment factors. The instruments underwent pilot-testing using fifty (50) student-respondents in Jamiatu Marawi Al-Islamia, Marawi City.

Instructional process is measured in the form of the curriculum's effectiveness on the performance of students in Araling Panlipunan. It was modified from Abrami (2007) and was pilot-tested for reliability and obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.98, which means that the items are reliable. The following 5-point Likert scale, range, descriptive rating and qualitative interpretations:

Scale	Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly positive
4	3.51-4.50	Agree	Positive
3	2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderately positive
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree	Negative
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Highly Negative

D. Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher wrote a letter addressed to the school superintendent for approval and to every secondary school principal of Lanao del Sur I Division request in permission to conduct the study. The questionnaires were then administered to the respondents. The researcher then retrieved the questionnaires after the respondents were finished answering them. Afterwards, collected data were subjected to computation, statistical analysis and interpretation.

E. Statistical Technique Used

Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentages were used to determine the level of students' performance, attitude, motivation and instructional processes, psychological factors and school environment factors. In addition, Pearson product-moment correlation was also used to analyze the relationships between the independent and dependent variables of the study. Stepwise multiple regression analysis was employed to find out the predictors of learners' performance. Moreover, path analysis was used to determine the best fitting model. This has the following standard indices: Root Mean Square Error Approximation (RMSEA), Goodness of Fit Indices (GFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Norm Fit Index (NFI), and Tucker Lewis Index (TLI).

4. Results And Discussion

This study generally aimed to determine the performance of learners in Araling Panlipunan. Specifically, it aimed to determine the level of learners' performance in Araling Panlipunan, assess the level of instructional processes in the teaching and learning of Araling Panlipunan curriculum among learners, ascertain the learners' level of psychological factors in Araling Panlipunan in terms of attitude and motivation, identify the level of school environment of learners in Araling Panlipunan in the following components: facilities and equipment, classroom climate, learners' interaction, cultural relations and administrative support, correlate the learners' academic performance to curriculum, psychological factors and school environment, identify the variable that best predicts learners' performance Araling Panlipunan, and develop a causal model of learners' performance in Araling Panlipunan. The study utilized two research designs, the descriptive-correlational and causal comparative research methods. The data were gathered using modified survey questionnaires adapted from Abrami (2007) and analyzed using mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage distribution and correlation, regression and path analyses. The questionnaire was pilot-tested to fifty students, with reliability coefficients of 0.98, 0.98 and 0.99, respectively, for instructional processes, psychological factors and school environment. More than one-thirds (3.5%) of the student-respondents got a developing level of performance in Araling Panlipunan with scores ranging from 75-79.

Almost half (43%) of the learners have achieved proficient and/or advanced proficiency level with scores ranging from 85-89 and 90-98, respectively. The learners have moderate positive perceptions on curriculum (AWM-3.32). The attitude of students is neutral or moderately positive (AWM-3.24), while motivation is perceived as positive (AWM-3.54). The levels of school environment are described as moderately positive in terms of facilities and equipment (AWM-3.36), classroom climate (AWM-3.48), learners' interaction (AWM-3.19), cultural relations (AWM-3.19), and administrative support (AWM-3.22). There was a significant relationship between learners' performance and cultural relations (0.125, $p < 0.006$). On the other hand, no significant association was observed on curriculum, attitude, motivation, facilities/equipment, classroom climate, learners' interaction and administrative support to learners' academic performance. Moreover, results of regressions analysis revealed that cultural relations with a beta weight of 0.125 proved to be the best predictor of the academic performance of students in Araling Panlipunan. Path analysis showed that the causal model 4 was the best fit model as it satisfies the criterion indices that CMIN/DF-0.412, p -value-0.800, GFI-0.999, CF1-1.00, NFI-0.998, TLI-1.013, and RMSEA-0.00. The model suggests that the outcome of learners' performance in Araling Panlipunan is affected by their cultural relations and attitude towards the subject. This rejects the null hypotheses, "there is no significant relationship between performance and the independent variable", and "there is no variable that predicts learners' performance."

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are hereby drawn. The respondents have different level of performance in Araling Panlipunan. Majority have moderate to advanced proficiency level. The students have enough confidence on the curricular activities and modules used in Araling Panlipunan. They are positively motivated to learn the subject. They have moderate positive outlook in their school environment, particularly on the facilities and equipment, classroom climate, learners' interaction, cultural relations and administrative support. Only cultural relations are significantly related to and a predictor of learner's performance in Araling Panlipunan. The best fitting model is one indicating that the academic performance of students is anchored on the cultural relations and attitude towards the Araling Panlipunan.

A. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusions, the following are recommended: Parents are urged to help promote the morale and expectations of their children in order to encourage them in their academic studies and help them become well-adjusted in 115 their school environment. They may provide meaningful activities children's learning development. Home that helps their teachers are encouraged to provide alternative choices in their instructional designs and teaching styles including the ways of communication in their school and classroom. Teachers

are also encouraged to create varied learning activities that will engage and motivate their students. In addition, quality instructional materials may be developed for use in the teaching-learning of Araling Panlipunan. The Department of Education, policy makers, educators and school administrators may continue to create and implement programs that will help develop the instructional process of the Araling Panlipunan curriculum. A more comprehensive approach in evaluating the school's curriculum may also be established. Moreover, a conducive school environment is also recommended to stimulate students learning. The school may be provided with adequate learning facilities and teaching aid materials, well-trained teachers and better resources and quality support from the government and the school administration. The teachers and school administrators are encouraged to recognize and consider the cultural, religious, and/or ethnical differences present in their schools. The cultural relations may also be considered in reviewing the curriculum framework in order to make appropriate and acceptable instructional resolutions that will promote students learning. Further studies may be conducted to verify and validate the findings of the study and to determine other factors that may affect students' academic achievement.

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