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Lived Instructional Experiences of Araling Panlipunan Teachers in Teaching Grade 10 Learners: Pedagogical Practices, Classroom Challenges, and Learner Engagement in Public Secondary School

Jamille A. Dayag
Northeastern College, Santiago City
Cabagan Riverside National High School

jamille.dayag@deped.gov.ph

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explored the lived instructional experiences of Araling Panlipunan teachers in teaching Grade 10 learners at Cabagan Riverside National High School. Specifically, the study examined teachers' pedagogical practices, classroom challenges, and learner engagement experiences in Araling Panlipunan instruction. Using a qualitative phenomenological research design, the study involved purposively selected Grade 10 Araling Panlipunan teachers from the said public secondary school. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings revealed that teachers utilized contextualized and learner-centered pedagogical approaches such as collaborative discussions, inquiry-based activities, debates, role-playing, multimedia-assisted instruction, and community-related learning tasks. Participants perceived that these strategies enhanced learners' critical thinking, participation, and social awareness. However, teachers encountered instructional challenges related to limited instructional resources, overcrowded classrooms, varying learner motivation, reading comprehension difficulties, and insufficient time for in-depth classroom discussions. Despite these challenges, participants demonstrated adaptability and commitment in sustaining learner engagement through flexible and creative teaching approaches. The study highlights the importance of strengthening instructional support systems, improving access to educational resources, and enhancing professional development opportunities for Araling Panlipunan teachers in public secondary schools.

Keywords: Araling Panlipunan, pedagogical practices, learner engagement, classroom challenges, qualitative inquiry, public secondary schools

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Introduction

Araling Panlipunan is a vital component of secondary education that develops learners' historical understanding, civic consciousness, nationalism, social awareness, and critical thinking skills. As a core subject in the Philippine K to 12 curriculum, Araling Panlipunan equips learners with knowledge and values necessary for becoming informed, responsible, and participative citizens. Through the study of history, economics, geography, politics, and contemporary societal issues, learners are encouraged to develop analytical thinking, cultural appreciation, and social responsibility.

Teaching Araling Panlipunan in Grade 10 requires teachers to facilitate meaningful learning experiences that encourage learners to critically examine social realities, historical events, political structures, and contemporary societal concerns. Grade 10 learners are expected to analyze issues deeply, communicate ideas effectively, and participate actively in classroom discussions. Consequently, Araling Panlipunan teachers are tasked to employ pedagogical practices that foster active participation, inquiry, collaboration, and reflective learning.

The implementation of learner-centered and contextualized instructional approaches has become increasingly important in social studies education. Teachers utilize collaborative discussions, debates, role-playing, multimedia presentations, inquiry-based learning, and contextualized instructional materials to strengthen learner engagement and deepen conceptual understanding. According to Lev Vygotsky, learning occurs through social interaction and collaborative participation, emphasizing the importance of dialogue and interaction in knowledge construction. Similarly, experiential learning theory proposed by David Kolb highlights that learning becomes more meaningful when learners actively participate in reflective and experiential activities.

Despite the importance of Araling Panlipunan education, several classroom and instructional challenges continue to affect teaching effectiveness in public secondary schools. Existing literature identifies issues related to inadequate instructional resources, overcrowded classrooms, reading comprehension difficulties, varying learner motivation, limited multimedia facilities, and insufficient time for comprehensive classroom discussions. These challenges affect learner participation, instructional delivery, and classroom engagement.

In rural and public school contexts such as Cabagan Riverside National High School, teachers often encounter additional realities associated with limited educational resources and diverse learner needs. Understanding teachers' lived instructional experiences is essential in identifying pedagogical strengths, instructional barriers, and learner engagement strategies that influence effective Araling Panlipunan education.

Although previous studies have explored instructional practices in social studies education, limited qualitative inquiries have focused on the lived experiences of Araling Panlipunan teachers in teaching Grade 10 learners within public secondary schools in rural Philippine contexts. Exploring these lived experiences provides deeper insights into teachers' pedagogical adaptability, classroom realities, and learner engagement practices.

Hence, this study explored the lived instructional experiences of Araling Panlipunan teachers in teaching Grade 10 learners at Cabagan Riverside National High School. Specifically, it examined teachers'



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pedagogical practices, classroom challenges, and learner engagement experiences in Araling Panlipunan instruction.

Research Objectives

This study aimed to explore the lived instructional experiences of Araling Panlipunan teachers in teaching Grade 10 learners at Cabagan Riverside National High School.

Specifically, it sought to:

1. examine the pedagogical practices utilized by Araling Panlipunan teachers in teaching Grade 10 learners;
2. explore the classroom challenges encountered by Araling Panlipunan teachers during instruction;
3. determine teachers' experiences regarding learner engagement in Araling Panlipunan classes; and
4. identify the coping mechanisms and instructional adaptations employed by teachers in addressing instructional and classroom challenges.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore and understand the lived instructional experiences of Araling Panlipunan teachers in teaching Grade 10 learners.

Participants and Locale of the Study

The participants consisted of eight purposively selected Grade 10 Araling Panlipunan teachers from Cabagan Riverside National High School. Participants were selected based on their teaching experience and involvement in handling Grade 10 Araling Panlipunan classes.

Data Collection Procedure

Semi-structured interviews were utilized to gather in-depth information regarding teachers' pedagogical practices, classroom experiences, learner engagement strategies, and instructional challenges. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and audio-recorded with participants' consent.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the framework of Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke. Coding, categorization, and thematic interpretation were conducted to identify recurring patterns and themes.

Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical principles including informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, anonymity, and respect for participants' rights throughout the conduct of the study.

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Results and Findings

Theme 1: Contextualized and Learner-Centered Pedagogical Practices

Participants consistently described the implementation of contextualized and learner-centered pedagogical practices in teaching Grade 10 Araling Panlipunan classes. Teachers emphasized the use of collaborative discussions, inquiry-based activities, debates, role-playing, group reporting, reflective questioning, multimedia-assisted instruction, and contextualized examples related to current societal issues and local community experiences.

One participant shared:

“Mas naiintindihan ng learners ang lessons kapag iniuugnay sa current issues at tunay na nangyayari sa komunidad.”

Another teacher explained:

“Interactive discussions encourage learners to analyze issues critically and express their own opinions.”

Participants highlighted that contextualized instructional approaches increased learner participation and improved conceptual understanding of historical, political, economic, and societal topics. Teachers observed that learners became more interested and engaged when lessons were connected to real-life experiences, contemporary social issues, and local community situations.

Several participants explained that collaborative learning activities promoted active interaction and encouraged learners to share perspectives during classroom discussions. Teachers observed that debates, group reporting, and role-playing activities enhanced learners' communication skills, critical thinking abilities, and confidence in expressing opinions.

One participant remarked:

“Kapag may debates at group activities, mas active at mas confident ang learners.”

Another teacher stated:

“Learners participate more when they are allowed to discuss real societal issues.”

Participants also emphasized the effectiveness of multimedia-assisted instruction in facilitating learner engagement and comprehension. Teachers utilized videos, presentations, online resources, and visual materials to explain historical events, political systems, and social realities more clearly.

The findings indicate that learner-centered and contextualized pedagogical practices strengthen learner participation, social awareness, and critical thinking among Grade 10 learners. These findings support the constructivist perspective of Lev Vygotsky which emphasizes the importance of collaborative interaction and socially mediated learning experiences. The findings likewise align with the experiential learning theory of David Kolb which highlights active participation and reflective engagement as essential components of meaningful learning.

Theme 2: Classroom and Instructional Challenges in Araling Panlipunan Teaching

Participants identified several classroom and instructional challenges affecting the effective implementation of Araling Panlipunan instruction in Grade 10 classes. Common concerns included overcrowded classrooms, insufficient instructional materials, varying learner motivation, reading



comprehension difficulties, limited multimedia resources, and inadequate time for comprehensive classroom discussions.

One participant stated:

“Some learners struggle in understanding lengthy readings and historical texts.”

Another teacher shared:

“Large class sizes make classroom discussions difficult to manage.”

Participants emphasized that reading comprehension difficulties significantly affected learners’ ability to analyze historical documents, political concepts, and complex societal issues. Teachers observed that some learners experienced difficulties interpreting texts, identifying key ideas, and connecting lessons to broader societal contexts.

Several participants also highlighted learner disengagement and low classroom participation among some students. Teachers explained that certain learners lacked confidence in expressing opinions during discussions and often remained passive during collaborative activities.

One participant remarked:

“May learners na nahihiyang magsalita lalo na kapag mahirap ang topic.”

Teachers further emphasized that overcrowded classrooms hindered effective classroom management and limited opportunities for individualized learner support. Participants explained that managing discussions and monitoring group activities became difficult when handling large groups of learners.

Another participant explained:

“Mahihirapan kang ma-monitor lahat ng learners kapag masyadong marami ang klase.”

Participants likewise identified inadequate multimedia facilities and insufficient instructional resources as barriers to effective teaching. Teachers noted that limited access to projectors, internet connectivity, updated learning materials, and visual resources affected the quality of lesson delivery and classroom engagement.

Time constraints also emerged as a significant challenge. Participants explained that discussing complex historical, political, and social issues required sufficient time for reflection, analysis, and interaction; however, limited instructional periods restricted deeper classroom engagement.

The findings suggest that institutional limitations, classroom conditions, and learner-related difficulties significantly affect instructional effectiveness and learner participation in Araling Panlipunan education. These challenges hinder teachers’ ability to maximize collaborative discussions and inquiry-based instructional approaches.

Theme 3: Enhancing Learner Engagement Through Interactive and Inquiry-Based Activities

Participants consistently perceived that interactive and inquiry-based instructional activities enhanced learner engagement, participation, and motivation in Grade 10 Araling Panlipunan classes. Teachers observed that learners became more attentive, participative, and reflective when lessons involved collaborative discussions, debates, issue analysis, multimedia presentations, and community-related learning activities.

One teacher remarked:

“Learners become more active when they are encouraged to share ideas and opinions.”



Another participant explained:

“Group discussions and debates help learners understand different perspectives about societal issues.”

Participants emphasized that inquiry-based learning activities encouraged learners to ask questions, analyze information critically, and develop independent thinking skills. Teachers observed that learners became more engaged when discussing controversial or relevant societal concerns connected to their daily lives and communities.

Several participants highlighted that collaborative activities promoted peer interaction, teamwork, and communication skills. Teachers explained that learners became more confident in participating when classroom activities encouraged shared learning experiences and respectful exchange of ideas.

One participant shared:

“Mas nagiging open ang learners kapag collaborative ang activities.”

Participants further noted that multimedia-assisted instruction sustained learners’ attention and improved lesson comprehension. Videos, infographics, documentaries, and visual presentations made lessons more dynamic and understandable for learners with diverse learning styles.

Teachers also emphasized that learner engagement increased when activities encouraged creativity and reflection. Reflective writing tasks, role-playing, and situational analyses enabled learners to connect classroom lessons with social realities and personal experiences.

The findings reveal that learner engagement in Araling Panlipunan education is strengthened through interactive, collaborative, and inquiry-based instructional practices that accommodate learners’ developmental characteristics and interests. These findings support learner-centered educational approaches emphasizing participation, collaboration, and critical inquiry in enhancing classroom engagement.

Theme 4: Instructional Adaptability and Teacher Commitment

Despite instructional challenges, participants demonstrated adaptability, resilience, and commitment in sustaining meaningful Araling Panlipunan instruction. Teachers explained that they continuously modified teaching approaches, improvised learning materials, contextualized examples, and adjusted classroom activities according to learner needs and available resources.

One participant shared:

“We adjust teaching strategies depending on learners’ interests and level of understanding.”

Another teacher stated:

“Teachers need creativity and patience in discussing social and historical issues.”

Participants emphasized that flexibility and resourcefulness were necessary in addressing classroom limitations and maintaining learner engagement. Teachers described using locally available examples, community-based situations, and simplified instructional materials to make lessons more understandable and relatable.

Several participants also explained that they adapted classroom activities to accommodate learners with varying comprehension levels and participation capacities. Teachers provided additional explanations, scaffolded questioning, and individualized support to struggling learners.

One participant remarked:



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“Kailangan talagang maging patient at flexible kasi iba-iba ang learning abilities ng learners.”

Participants further emphasized the importance of emotional support and positive classroom relationships in encouraging learner participation. Teachers observed that supportive classroom environments helped learners become more confident in expressing ideas and participating in discussions.

Another teacher explained:

“Kapag supportive ang environment, mas willing silang magsalita at mag-share ng ideas.”

Participants also demonstrated strong professional commitment despite workload pressures and instructional challenges. Teachers emphasized their dedication to developing socially aware, critically thinking, and responsible learners through meaningful Araling Panlipunan instruction.

The findings suggest that teacher adaptability, instructional resilience, and commitment significantly contribute to sustaining effective Araling Panlipunan education in public secondary schools. Teachers' ability to innovate, contextualize instruction, and maintain positive classroom environments enables meaningful learner engagement despite institutional and classroom constraints.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that Araling Panlipunan teachers at Cabagan Riverside National High School implement learner-centered, contextualized, and inquiry-based pedagogical practices that promote meaningful learner participation, critical thinking, and social awareness among Grade 10 learners. Teachers utilized collaborative discussions, debates, role-playing, multimedia-assisted instruction, and reflective learning activities to facilitate deeper understanding of societal and historical concepts.

These findings support the constructivist theory of Lev Vygotsky, which emphasizes the significance of collaborative interaction and social engagement in knowledge construction. Similarly, the findings align with the experiential learning theory of David Kolb, highlighting the importance of reflective participation and active learning experiences in strengthening conceptual understanding.

The study further revealed that interactive and inquiry-based instructional approaches significantly enhanced learner engagement and classroom participation. Teachers observed that learners became more motivated and participative when lessons were connected to real-life societal issues and current events. These findings corroborate the study of Gloria Ladson-Billings which emphasized that culturally relevant and contextualized instruction improves learner engagement and promotes meaningful learning experiences.

Moreover, the findings support the work of Geneva Gay on culturally responsive teaching, which emphasizes the integration of learners' lived experiences and community realities into instructional practices to improve participation and academic engagement. By contextualizing lessons and incorporating collaborative discussions, teachers created inclusive learning environments that encouraged critical thinking and social interaction.

However, the study also identified several classroom and instructional challenges affecting effective Araling Panlipunan instruction. Participants emphasized overcrowded classrooms, insufficient instructional materials, limited multimedia resources, reading comprehension difficulties, and time constraints as major barriers to learner engagement and instructional effectiveness. These findings are consistent with studies by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development which highlighted



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that resource limitations and classroom overcrowding negatively affect instructional quality and learner participation in public education systems.

Reading comprehension difficulties likewise emerged as a significant challenge affecting learners' ability to analyze texts and interpret complex societal issues. This finding aligns with the work of Paulo Freire, who emphasized that critical literacy and comprehension are essential in enabling learners to critically examine societal realities and engage meaningfully in social discourse.

Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrated strong instructional adaptability, creativity, and resilience. Participants modified instructional strategies, improvised learning materials, and provided individualized learner support to sustain classroom engagement. These findings support studies emphasizing the role of teacher resilience and adaptive pedagogy in maintaining effective instruction within resource-constrained educational contexts.

Overall, the findings suggest that learner-centered and contextualized pedagogical practices significantly contribute to meaningful learner engagement, critical thinking, and social awareness in Araling Panlipunan education. However, strengthening institutional support systems, instructional resources, and teacher development programs remains essential in addressing instructional and classroom challenges in public secondary schools.

Conclusion

The study explored the lived instructional experiences of Araling Panlipunan teachers in teaching Grade 10 learners at Cabagan Riverside National High School. Findings revealed that teachers employ contextualized, collaborative, inquiry-based, and learner-centered pedagogical practices that promote learner participation, critical thinking, and social awareness.

Teachers perceived that interactive discussions, debates, multimedia-assisted instruction, and collaborative learning activities enhanced learner engagement and strengthened learners' understanding of historical, political, and societal concepts. These instructional practices created more meaningful and participative classroom experiences among Grade 10 learners.

However, the study also revealed several classroom and instructional challenges including overcrowded classrooms, limited instructional resources, inadequate multimedia facilities, reading comprehension difficulties, varying learner motivation, and insufficient instructional time. These challenges affected learner participation, classroom management, and instructional effectiveness.

Despite these barriers, teachers demonstrated instructional adaptability, resilience, creativity, and commitment in sustaining meaningful Araling Panlipunan instruction. Through contextualized examples, flexible teaching approaches, and supportive classroom environments, teachers maintained learner engagement and promoted reflective learning experiences.

The study concludes that learner-centered and inquiry-based pedagogical practices play a vital role in strengthening learner engagement and critical thinking in Araling Panlipunan education. Nevertheless, sustained institutional support, adequate educational resources, and continuous teacher professional development remain essential in improving instructional quality and classroom engagement in public secondary schools.



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Implications of the Study

The findings of the study provide important implications for educational leaders, curriculum planners, policymakers, and classroom practitioners. Schools may strengthen support for Araling Panlipunan instruction by providing updated instructional materials, multimedia resources, internet access, and technology-assisted learning facilities that enhance classroom engagement and instructional delivery.

Professional development programs focusing on inquiry-based instruction, critical pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching, and learner-centered instructional strategies may further strengthen teachers' pedagogical competencies and classroom management skills. Schools may likewise encourage collaborative learning communities among Araling Panlipunan teachers to promote instructional innovation, resource-sharing, and reflective teaching practices.

The study also highlights the importance of implementing interventions that improve learners' reading comprehension, analytical thinking, and communication skills to support active participation in classroom discussions and critical inquiry activities. Teachers may continue integrating contextualized and community-based learning experiences that connect classroom instruction to learners' social realities and lived experiences.

Furthermore, educational institutions may consider reducing classroom overcrowding and improving instructional infrastructure to create more supportive and interactive learning environments. Future researchers may conduct similar studies in other educational settings and regions to further explore instructional experiences, learner engagement practices, and pedagogical innovations in Araling Panlipunan education.

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