Improving the Academic Performance in Araling Panlipunan through Merit Badges Method

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of Merit Badges Method in teaching Araling Panlipunan.

Methodology: The method employed was quasi-experimental design where both the control and experimental group were given pre-test and post-test. The data gathered were subjected to statistical treatment using mean and t-test to test the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the groups.

Findings: The result of the study proves that Merit Badges Method motivates the learners to become more involved, active and interested in learning. Learning still happen in the traditional way of teaching Araling Panlipunan but, much better performance among learners that were given intervention was recorded.

Limitation: The study is limited only on the effect of Merit Badges Method in teaching Araling Panlipunan. Only grade 10 students were selected to participate in the study.

Originality. This research provides insights of using motivation as strategy that will help teachers in teaching Araling Panlipunan.

Keywords: *Academic Performance, assessment, control group, experimental group, pre-test, post test*

I. INTRODUCTION

The last 50 years have seen huge growth worldwide in the provision of education at all levels. COVID-19 is the greatest challenge that these expanded national education systems have ever faced (Education and the Covid-19 Pandemic Published April 20, 2020). This pandemic has caused an unprecedented crisis in all areas. In the field of education, this emergency has led to the massive closure of face-to-face activities of educational institutions in more than 190 countries in order to prevent the spread of the virus and mitigate its impact (ECLAC, 2020).

It is common knowledge that education is the key to become productive citizens in our country so that most, if not all, parents are working hard to earn money just to sustain the needs of their children. Teachers often have a fair share of challenges. Teachers must ensure that the quality of learning remains, even with the absence of face-to-face experiences, from the planning of lesson plans to the conducting of classes, and distributing of assignments (Mayol, 2020).

But the learners were the most vulnerable in this educational situation. Some of the common

issues raised which could affect students were as to whether or not some students were able to concentrate at home especially if a parent had lost their job or if they were being expected to look after younger siblings while their parents were at work, and other similar situations that lead to a huge number of students who failed to submit their activities on time (Gillis, 2020)

As educators gear with the "new normal" set-up in this Covid-19 pandemic, this is the appropriate time for teachers to use their discomfort to forge a new paradigm. Teachers should not only be an issuer of educational content but a master curator of learning resources. Teachers should design efficient and effective strategies for continuous engagement of students (Gamiao, 2020).

While many learners are fluent and can continue to study independently, others are struggling to rapidly expand their skill sets and become fluent in this kind of new normal situation they have never, or perhaps only briefly, explored. That is the reason why schools need to walk a tightrope of keeping students motivated while not letting their own morale down. Student motivation should be a major concern, irrespective of all teachers and the institution itself (Nagpal, 2020).

This paper aimed to provide educators and policy makers with guidance and insights about the level of performance among learners in a remote learning situation and how a certain strategies and guidance of teachers in the learning process promotes a better learning outcome among students. Therefore, this research aimed to investigate on the effectiveness of using Merit Badges in improving the academic performance in Araling Panlipunan specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of performance of the control and experimental group before the intervention?
2. What is the level of performance of the control and experimental group after the intervention?
3. Is there a significant difference in the performance of the control and experimental group during and after the intervention?

B. Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the performance of the control and experimental group during and after the intervention.

II. BRIEF REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

The Department of Education's (DepEd) battle cry "Sulong Edukalidad" adheres to the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for School Year 2020-2021. The pandemic, as pointed out by DepEd, has brought changes to the lives and activities of the human race worldwide in ways that were never imagined or expected. The unprecedented situation brought about challenges and opportunities to the different sectors of the community and society (Abu, 2020).

The education department says over 24 million students are back to school this year, more than 3 million lower than last year's 27.7 million students. This pandemic caused a lot of struggles not only among parents and teachers but most of all, among learners who have no choice but to persevere.

6

Students challenges

Whatever mode of flexible learning the school may implement, teachers and administrators are undoubtedly concerned with maintaining student engagement. Many challenges come to mind, but they can generally be divided into three general categories according to Engagement as a Challenge: Getting Student's Attention in the New Normal of Learning, 2021 and these are administrative, social and motivation. Administrative, because some modes of learning are conducted without a teacher or facilitator, and students may get confused on how they could progress through the course, especially if they are not aware of the expected or desired outcome. At times, students might need the continuous guidance of their teachers through virtual means. Next is social, administrators can expect their students to feel isolated, since these modes of learning are conducted without the interaction between students and teachers seen in the traditional classroom. The last one is motivation, as students are compelled to continue their education from their own homes; they face an entirely different set of distractions that may hinder them from completing the required coursework.

Importance of Motivation

Motivation is the force which provides the impetus for human behavior, causing individuals to initiate and sustain goal-directed actions (Bear, 2020). It is related to the person's will to embrace or get involved in a task or a process of action and serves to explain why individuals pursue some courses of action but avoid others (Alkaabi, S., Alkaabi, W., Vyver G., 2017)

A student may be unmotivated for a variety of reasons: They may feel that they have no interest in the subject, find the teacher's methods un-engaging or be distracted by external forces. It may even come to light that a student who appeared unmotivated actually has difficulty learning and is in need of special attention.

While motivating students can be a difficult task, the rewards are more than worth it. Motivated students are more excited to learn and participate. Some students are self-motivated, with a natural love of learning. But even with the students who do not have this natural drive, a great teacher can make learning fun and inspire them to reach their full potential.

There are six ways to get the students excited about learning and these are, clearly define objectives, lever age competition, giving students some control, designing a reward system, knowing your students and tracking their progress ("Technology Enhanced Learning in Higher Education; Motivation, Engagement and Academic Achievement," 2019)

Setting expectations and making reasonable demands encourages students to participate, but sometimes students need an extra push in the right direction. Offering students small incentives makes learning fun and motivates students to push themselves. Incentives can range from small to large giving a special privilege to an exemplary student, to a class pizza party if the average test score rises. Rewards give students a sense of accomplishment and encourage them to work with a goal in mind

Role of Teachers

According to Davion (2017), teachers can increase students' motivation to learn. While students may have an innate desire to learn, the external support provided by the teacher has a significant impact on students' learning. The teacher's role in motivation includes, but is not limited to, creating an environment conducive to learning. The teacher's role in encouraging

support of students' autonomy, relevance, and relatedness of the material increases motivation to learn. Additionally, the teacher's ability to develop students' competence, interest in subject taught, and perception of self-efficacy are all important factors that influence students' motivation to learn.

One of the most difficult aspects of becoming a teacher is learning how to motivate your students. It is also one of the most important. Students who are not motivated will not learn effectively. They won't retain information, they won't participate and some of them may even become disruptive (Teach.com, 2020). The nature of motivation and learning strategy use is vital to improving student learning outcomes. Teachers must be trained to integrate the essence of motivational beliefs and the need for students to use all kinds of strategies during instructions. In addition, teachers should assist their students to clearly understand the need for them to build up beliefs like task value, self-efficacy for learning and performance, intrinsic goal orientation, and control for learning beliefs as well as use of critical thinking, effort regulation, and peer and help seeking strategies to enhance their learning process. For instance, teachers can promote students' task value for lessons by stressing the value of education to students' future (Gbollie & Keamu, 2017).

Covid 19 pandemic brought a lot of educational challenges not only among teachers but most specially to the learners. Learners experienced the lack of motivational drive for them to continue studying because of the different factors like family obligation, distraction and lack of guidance.

Providing motivational support among learners in this time of pandemic is a huge factor that will contribute to their educational needs, that is why teachers role in providing motivation in this time of pandemic is very vital.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study was anchored on the Self Determination Theory of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation by Ryan and Deci 2020. According to Ryan and Deci, to be motivated means to be moved to do something. A person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated.

In Self-Determination Theory there is a distinction between different types of motivation based on the different reasons or goals that give rise to an action. The most basic distinction is between intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, and extrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome.

Intrinsic motivation is defined as the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence. When intrinsically motivated a person is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external prods, pressures, or rewards.

Extrinsic motivation thus contrasts with intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing an activity simply for the enjoyment of the activity itself, rather than its instrumental value (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

The study used an Input-Process-Output Model to show the research paradigm of the study. In the IPO model, a process was viewed as a series of boxes (processing elements) connected by inputs and outputs. Information or materials object flows through series of tasks or

activities based on a set of rules or decision points. Flow chart and process diagrams are often used to present the process. What goes in the input; what causes the change is the process; what comes out is the output. (Agus, A. & Aziza, N., 2019)

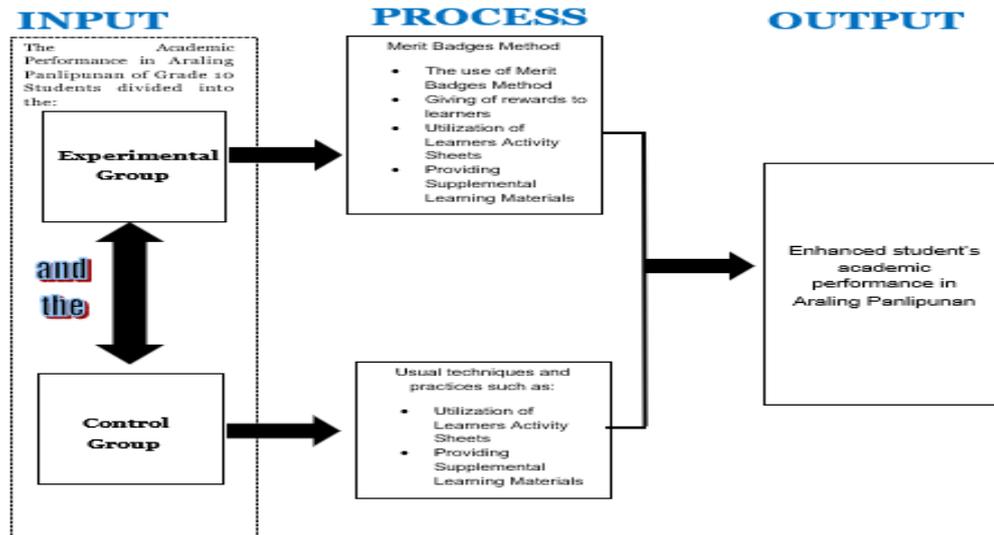Figure 1 illustrates the IPO model of the study.

Figure 1. The Research Paradigm on the Effect of Merit Badges Method in Relation to the Academic Performance of Grade 10 Students

The major concept of this study was focused on the use of Merit Badges Method in teaching Araling Panlipunan.

The research paradigm that guided this study was seen in Figure 1. The researcher used the Input, Process, Output or IPO model.

The input box contains the experimental and control group of grade 10 students in Langgas National High School.

The process box involved the different approaches and activities that commenced by the researcher to gather valid data on the designated problem which yielded the necessary findings and conclusions as a basis for offering sound and feasible recommendations.

For the output box, an enhanced student's academic performance in Araling Panlipunan was eventually became the outcome or result of study.

III. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Forty-seven students from Grade 10 Evergreen and another forty-seven students from Grade 10 Buerano were the subjects of the study. Grade 10 Buerano was the experimental group where the researcher conducted the Merit Badges Method in teaching Araling Panlipunan, while Grade 10 Evergreen was the control group were the researcher utilize the usual method in teaching Araling Panlipunan. The researchers chose these groups of respondents because these two sections were the only Grade 10 section in Langgas National High School. These two were considered to be both hetero sections.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The method that employed was quasi-experimental a kind of research that involves the manipulation of an independent variable without the random assignment of participants to condition or orders of conditions. In this study both the control and experimental group were given pre-test and post-test. The data gathered were subjected to statistical treatment using mean and t-test to test the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the groups.

The experimental group was subjected to Merit Badges Method as an interventional approach in teaching Araling Panlipunan. Merit Badges Method aimed to provide a motivating strategy for students to survive in the new normal situation of studying.

In the implementation of Merit Badges Method , the researchers provided different kinds of Merit Badges as a reward for students depending on the good traits that the students manifest. Some of the rewards that were given are : Most Organized Output of the Week, Most Punctual, Most Creative, Best Performance Task Output, With Complete Outputs, and Parents' Perfect Attendance. These badges were attached to the students output weekly or as necessary.

The main instrument used in this research was an instrument from a test bank that undergone series of item analysis to determine the validity of each test item. This instrument consisted of thirty item test questions that measured the different skills of students like knowledge skills, comprehension, analyzing, and application skills. Questions were selected depending on the topics or lessons covered by the learning competencies in Araling Panlipunan 10 during the third quarter.

The researcher sought permission to conduct this study from the office of the principal/OIC of Langgas National High School through a letter. Upon the approval of the principal/OIC, instrument was distributed to gather all the needed data to achieve the aim of the study.

Lastly, all the data gathered were tallied, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Merit Badges Method as an intervention strategy provided to the Grade10 learners of Langgas National High School is an effective strategy to enhance the learner's academic performance.

It was observed that this method or strategy have led to increase academic participation among learners in Araling Panlipunan. This study, however utilized a pre-test and post-test that covered Araling Panlipunan Competencies for quarter 3.

Table 1: Pre-test Result of Experimental and Control Group

	Pretest	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Scores	Control Group	40	14.50	3.810	.602
	Experimental Group	40	12.30	3.048	.482

Table1. The table above shows the level of performance of the control and experimental group before the intervention. The control group recorded a mean of 14.50 and a standard deviation of 3.810 with Standard Error Mean of .602 while the experimental group recorded a

mean of 12.30 and a standard deviation of 3.048 with Standard Error Mean of .482.

These data shows that the control group has a higher mean compare to the experimental group but the standard deviation of the experimental group is more dense compare to the control group.

Table 2: Post-test Result of Experimental and Control Group

Posttest		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Scores	Control	40	20.60	5.692	.900
	Experimental	40	26.50	3.789	.599

Table 2. The table above shows the level of performance of the control and experimental group after the intervention. The control group recorded a mean of 20.60 and a standard deviation of 5.692 with Standard Error Mean of .900 while the experimental group recorded a mean of 26.50 and a standard deviation of 3.789 with Standard Error Mean of .599. The mean results of the control and experimental group also revealed that experimental group performs better than the control group.

The experimental group shows a much denser standard deviation compare to the control group which means that the experimental group members have almost in the same level of understanding compare to the control group.

Table 3: Difference in the Pre-test Result of Experimental and Control Group

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Scores	Equal variances assumed	2.056	.156	2.852	78	.006	2.200	.771	.864	3.736
	Equal variances not assumed			2.852	74.421	.006	2.200	.771	.663	3.737

Table 3. Using the Confidence Interval in the table it can be seen that the lower value of 0.664 and upper value of 3.736 does not certain and cross the value of zero, therefore there is a significant difference in the pre-test of the control and experimental group.

Table 4: Difference in the Post-test Result of Experimental and Control Group

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Scores	Equal variances assumed	4.924	.029	-5.457	78	.000	-5.900	1.081	-8.052	-3.748
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.457	67.893	.000	-5.900	1.081	-8.058	-3.742

Table 4. Using the Confidence Interval in the table it can be seen that the lower value of -8.052 and upper value of -3.748 does not certain and cross the value of zero. It is also evident that the P-value (sig.) is less than the level of sig which is 0.05, therefore there is a significant difference in the pre-test of the control and experimental group that rejected the null hypothesis.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The study conducted primarily aimed of exploring the effect of Merit Badges Method as a motivational strategy on the achievement and performance of learners. It has been revealed by the result that :

1. The academic achievement is affected when the teaching strategy were enhanced.

2. Merit Badges Method motivates the learners to become more involved, active and interested in learning.

3. Motivating the learners is important as well as innovation and creativity in teaching is vital in attaining better learning achievement among students especially in this time of educational crisis brought by pandemic.

4. Learning still happen in the traditional way of teaching Araling Panlipunan as shown in Table 1 and 2 but we cannot hide the fact that a much better performance among learners that were given intervention was recorded in Table 3 and 4.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result of the study it is recommended that:

1. Teachers should create different ways of motivating their students and strategies to enhance the teaching and learning process.

2. Teachers should not stick to the traditional way of teaching because learners were far away different from then and now.

3. It is also recommended that Merit Badges Method should be implemented at all grade level in the school to accomplish the desired academic achievement.

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