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TECHNOLOGY PROFICIENCY OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ARALING PANLIPUNAN TEACHERS IN RELATION TO SOME SELECTED VARIABLES

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Abstract. This study tried to determine the level of technology proficiency of Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers in the private secondary schools in San Carlos City Division during the school year 2020-2021. Highest level of in-service training in ICT attended is significantly related to the teacher-respondents' level of technology proficiency. There is no significant difference in the assessments made by the teacher-respondents themselves and the school administrators on their level of technology proficiency. The Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers should attend trainings and seminars up to the national level to further enhance their technology proficiency. And the private secondary school administrators should conduct more in-service trainings in ICT.

Keywords. Technology proficiency, araling Panlipunan, junior high school

1 Introduction

As an educator in the 21st century, it is imperative to integrate technology into the curriculum for various reasons. In like manner, students need to be exposed to and be familiar with technologies in order to compete in the world marketplace; more so, integrate them in dynamic social environments. The world is dominated by technology in all forms, and to be successful, students must possess 21st-century skills. In addition, technology proficiency improves efficiency in teaching as well as facilitating learning. Being more efficient usually means that teachers have more time, and it allows additional space for innovation, planning, conversing, thinking, and creativity. Hence, technology can be instrumental in making teachers more proficient (Brown, 2018).

Technology is growing at a rapid pace. In the past five (5) years alone we have seen huge advancements in many fields of endeavor, and we will continue to see them grow. While these developments maybe hard to keep up with, it is something that all modern teachers need to do. The teacher need not only understand the latest in technology, but he must also know which digital tools are right for the students. It is a process that may take time but will greatly be influential in the success of the students (Smith, 2016).
In as much as teaching qualities are concern teachers inspire; something that comes along with the title. Modern educators have the ability to empower students to be critical thinkers, innovative, creative, adaptable, passionate, and flexible. They empower learners to solve problems, self-direct, self-reflect, and lead. They give them the tools to succeed, not only in school but in life (de Jesus, 2015).

Nonetheless, teachers must, of course, understand the material they teach. Naturally, different positions require different types and levels of skill, but even teachers of very young children need significant expertise. It is not enough for a first-grade math teacher to know how to perform basic arithmetic, for example. He or she must have a deep understanding of numbers and numeric relationships in order to be able to explain the material in a thorough and responsive way. As stressed by Johnson (2018), teachers must be able to perform the core responsibilities involved in the role, from comfortably using Microsoft Office to create materials to being comfortable providing disciplinary action as necessary.

More so, when pedagogy is enriched and reinforced by technology teachers are further enabled to identify and explore a wide variety of technological tools and devices in order to determine and select those that best respond to teaching and learning contents. Proficiency is the ability to use technology to communicate effectively and professionally, organize information, produce high-quality products, and enhance thinking skills. In classroom settings, technology proficiency refers to the ability of teachers to integrate technology to teach and facilitate, as well as to improve learning, productivity, and performance. These abilities are needed to participate in a technological world. Among teachers, basic proficiency in information technologies is typically used to communicate electronically, organize activities and information, and create documents in schools or higher-education institutions.

Proficiency in using technological tools and devices can be achieved through experience and instruction. It is necessary to introduce experimentation into teaching practices and maintain accessible technological tools and devices. Technology proficiency seems relevant to many aspects of the teaching profession, such as lesson preparation and development of teaching kids. Other aspects that impact teacher decisions to introduce technology into teaching and learning activities are teachers' beliefs about the way the subject should be taught and the skills associated with teacher competence in managing classroom activities using technology tools and devices. Therefore, teachers must be able to apply the technological knowledge and skills required in professional job roles and responsibilities in order to achieve the expected outputs.

The researcher who is a Social Studies teacher tried to find out the level of technology proficiency of Araling Panlipunan teachers in the Junior High School Department of private secondary schools in San Carlos City Division. Likewise, the researcher is interested to find out how well online instructions can be carried out especially during this hard time due to COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure the health safety of all learners, DepEd ordered the conduct of online classes in the basic education not until a vaccine will be produced to protect everyone from this deadly viral disease. In other words, face-to-face contact with the learners is still prohibited unless community quarantine will be lifted by the government.

2 Review of Related Literature

All the reviewed related studies cited have provided the researcher critical insights and broader perspective on the nature and focus of the present study. To some extent these guided this present study along in-depth organization and analysis so the pertinent answers to the set of problems/questions presented could be more meaningfully considered.

The studies conducted by Bebell (2016), McCannon (2016), Cuban (2015) and Pourhosein (2016) made use of descriptive research design which is similar to the research method used in the present study. These studies focused on the integration of technology in their classes. Previous studies delved on the teachers' skills in internet and at the same time their competency level in the integration of technology.

Also, the investigation made by Murphy (2017) focused on the technology-related skills of teachers and students' performance. While the findings of Villar (2015), Malone (2016), Miller (2017) and Cupper (2017) focused on the performance and impacts of different technology use, effective approaches to technology integration and faculty technology literacy and training in their pedagogy.

All related studies were found to have bearing and significance to the present study because these are all concerned with the technology integration in the classroom.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study made use of the descriptive method of research. According to Sevilla (2016), the descriptive method is designed for the investigator to gather information about existing conditions. Basically, descriptive research answers the question "what is?" In solving a problem or formulating a course of action, several sorts of information may be needed. The principal aim in employing this method is to describe the nature of a situation as it existed at the time of the study and to explore the causes of the phenomena.

The descriptive method of research was employed to describe the professional profile of the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers in the private secondary schools in San Carlos City Division. Likewise, the same method was used to describe the respondents' level of technology proficiency as assessed by themselves and their school administrators.

3.2 Sources of Data

The respondents that were considered in this study are the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers including the administrators in the 16 private secondary schools in San Carlos City Division.

3.3 Statistical Treatment of Data

The professional profile variables of the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers were described using frequency counts and percentages. For the level of technology proficiency of the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers as assessed by the teacher-respondents and their school administrators, average weighted mean was used and the results were interpreted using a 4-point Likert scale. To determine the relationship between the professional profile variables and the level of technology proficiency of the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers, Contingency Coefficient was employed. To determine the difference between the assessment of the teacher-respondents and their school administrators as to the level of technology proficiency of the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers, t-test was used. The Statistical Procedure for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in the processing of data and computation of the desired statistical measures.

4 Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

4.1 Relationship Between the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan Teachers' Professional Profile Variables and Their Level of Technology Proficiency

One of the main concerns of this study is the significant relationship between the professional profile variables of the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers in terms of highest educational attainment, specialization, length of teaching experience in Araling Panlipunan and highest level of in-service training in ICT attended and their level of technology proficiency along word processing, spreadsheet preparation, database management and electronic presentation.

Table 1 reveals that the professional profile variable highest educational attainment is not significantly related to their technology proficiency along word processing (.280), spreadsheet preparation (.065), database management (.089) and electronic presentation (.092). The computed significant values reflected on the same table also show that these are higher than the alpha level of significance which is at .05. In this case, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted and that highest educational attainment of the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers is not significantly related to their technology proficiency along the areas considered in this study.

Table 1. Relationship Between the Professional Profile of Junior High School Araling Panlipunan Teachers and their Level of Technology Proficiency

Professional Profile Variables	Technology Proficiency Skills								Decision
	Word Processing		Spreadsheet Preparation		Database Management		Electronic Presentation		
	Corr.	Sig.	Corr.	Sig.	Corr.	Sig.	Corr	Sig.	
Highest Educational Attainment	.245	.280	.290	.065	.306	.076	.123	.089	Accept Ho
Specialization	.255	.337	.213	.761	.302	.296	.135	.640	Accept Ho
Length of Teaching Experience in Araling Panlipunan	.293	.310	.408	.368	.577	.146	.258	.371	Accept Ho
Highest Level of In-service Training Attended in ICT	.293	**.032**	.577	**.035**	.189	**.040**	.258	**.041**	**Reject Ho**

Along the variable specialization, it could be noted from the same table that all the computed significant values are higher than the significant value which is .05. Results show that the null hypothesis in this case is again accepted. Therefore, the acceptance of the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between specialization and level of technology proficiency of the teacher-respondents along word processing (.337), spreadsheet preparation, (761), database management (.640) and electronic presentation (.546) is hereby upheld.

Length of teaching experience in Araling Panlipunan is the professional variable that is used to find out if it is significantly related to the teacher-respondents' level of technology proficiency along the four areas considered in this study. Table 4

reveals the findings and results of the study. It could be noted that all the computed significant values appear to be higher than the significant value at .05 level. In this regard, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the respondents' length of teaching experience in Araling Panlipunan and their level of technology proficiency along word processing (.310), spreadsheet preparation (.368), database management (.146) and electronic presentation (.371) is hereby accepted.

Highest level of in-service training in ICT attended is the 4th professional variable used to determine the significant relationship with the teacher-respondents' level of technology proficiency along word processing (.032), spreadsheet preparation (.035), database management (.050) and electronic presentation (.041).

It is noteworthy that the computed significant values obtained are all lower or equal to the alpha level of significance which is .05. In this case, the null hypothesis which states that the highest level if in-service training in ICT attended is not significantly related to the respondents' level of technology proficiency is hereby rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis shows that in-service training in ICT attended is significantly related to the level of technology proficiency of Junior high School Araling Panlipunan teachers in the private secondary school in San Carlos City Division.

4.2 Difference in the Assessment of the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan Teachers Themselves and Their School Administrators on Their Level of Technology Proficiency

Looking intently at Table 2, it could be deduced that along word processing the assessments made by the teacher-respondents and their school administrators has a mean difference of 1.467 and the computed t-value of 1.621. Whereas, the critical value of t is 2.045 which clearly shows that it is higher than the computed t-value. Because of this, it could be deduced that in this case the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. The acceptance of the null hypothesis clearly shows that there is no significant difference in the assessments made by the Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers and their school administrators.

Table 2. Difference in the Assessment Made by the Teachers Themselves and their School Administrators as to the Level of Technology Proficiency of the Teacher-Respondents

Technology Proficiency Skills	Mean Difference	t-value	Critical Value	Decision
Word Processing	1.467	1.621	2.045	Accept Ho
Spreadsheet Preparation	2.350	1.791	2.045	Accept Ho
Database Management	1.200	1.246	2.045	Accept Ho
Electronic Presentation)	2.171	1.110	2.045	Accept Ho
Over-all Assessment)	**1.264**	**1.571**	**1.980**	**Accept Ho**

Based on the data reflected on the same table that along spreadsheet preparation, the assessments of both groups of respondents show that the computed t-vale which is 1.791 is lower than the critical value, hence it could be deduced that the null hypothesis is also accepted in this case. The acceptance of the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the assessments of the teachers themselves and their school administrators is hereby accepted because the critical value is higher than the computed t-value.

Along database management, results show that again the computed t-value of 1.246 is lower that the critical value of 2.045. In this case, the null hypothesis is also accepted thereby proving that there is no significant difference in the assessments made by the teachers themselves and their school administrators.

Lastly, along electronic presentation data show that the critical value (2.045) is higher than the computed t-value (1.110). Therefore, it could be deduced that there is no significant difference in the assessments made by the teachers themselves and their school administrators prompting the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

5 Conclusion and Recommendation

A typical Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teacher is a BS graduate, major in Araling Panlipunan, has short teaching experience and has attended in-service training in ICT in the division level only. Both teachers and school administrators believed that the respondents are proficient in the use of technology in teaching. Highest level of in-service training in ICT attended is significantly related to the teacher-respondents' level of technology proficiency. There is no significant difference in the assessments made by the teacher-respondents themselves and the school administrators on the level of technology proficiency of the teacher-respondents.

The Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers should continue honing their technology proficiency. Private secondary school administrators should conduct more in-service trainings in ICT. The Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers should attend trainings and seminars up to the national level to further enhance their technology proficiency. Similar studies should be conducted focusing on other areas not included in this study.

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