School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) Implementation and Its Impact on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan Teachers

Karen Kaye B. Erfe [1], Mary Grace D. Gallego, PhD. [1]

1 – Sultan Kudarat State University

Abstract

School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) is a school-based professional learning community designed for the development of teachers, mandated by the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines. This study sought to evaluate the level of SLAC implementation and its impact on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers in Sto. Niño District, Sto. Niño, South Cotabato. A descriptive and correlational research design was used in this study, and 34 Proficient (Teacher I- III) secondary Araling Panlipunan teachers were considered respondents. Due to their limited number, the total enumeration sampling technique was used to select the teacher-respondents. Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, Pearson r moment correlation and One- way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), t-test, and Tukey- Kramer Multiple Comparison tests were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that The SLAC is fully implemented in secondary schools in the district in terms of content and pedagogy, content assessment, ICT integration and 21st century skills and curriculum contextualization with no significant difference in the level of implementation. Furthermore, SLAC had a very strong impact on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan teachers in terms of pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competence. The impact of SLAC implementation on the Personal Competence of teachers is slightly lower yet remains highly significant. Moreover, the level of SLAC implementation has a strong relationship with the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers. The age, the teaching experience, and the classroom observation ratings of the respondents also had a significant influence on the professional development and SLAC implementation.

Keywords: School Learning Action Cell, Professional Development, Proficient teachers

INTRODUCTION

In an era characterized by rapid globalization and technological advancements, education systems worldwide face the pressing challenge of adapting to evolving pedagogical demands. This includes the quality of instruction, where teachers, as agents of change and education, must possess the perseverance to acquire new skills and adjust to emerging trends.

Additionally, in a world where knowledge is essential, a teacher must deal with new kinds of cooperation, collaboration, and new ways of obtaining knowledge in a networked environment. Teaching in a knowledge-based culture requires these new skills (Suri, 2016).

In recent years, the Philippines' education changes have placed greater importance on teachers' collaborative learning and professional development. One such initiative is the DepEd Order 35 series 2016, which creates the School Learning Action Cell (LAC) as a K–12 basic education program and school-based ongoing professional development plan. This school-based professional learning community aims to enhance teaching strategies and increase student learning outcomes.

SLACs also foster teamwork, collaboration, continuous learning, and innovation among teachers. They provide opportunities for teachers to share best practices, discuss instructional challenges, and collectively develop strategies to improve their teaching delivery. According to Binauhan's (2019) research, training and development programs like the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) give teachers the attitudes, abilities, and knowledge they need to perform well.

In the context of Araling Panlipunan, effective teaching is a crucial subject in shaping students' understanding of history, culture, society, and governance. The quality of teaching in Social Studies affects how students grasp complex concepts and influences their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. However, many teachers face challenges such as outdated teaching methods, limited resources, and a lack of professional development opportunities, which can negatively impact student learning outcomes.

The School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) offers a potential solution to these challenges by providing a platform for Araling Panlipunan teachers to collaborate, reflect, refine their teaching practices, and develop professionally. This research aims to investigate the level of SLAC implementation and how it affects the professional development of secondary Araling Panlipunan teachers in Sto. District, Sto. Niño, South Cotabato, since not all schools implementing SLAC are tracked and assessed regularly.

Additionally, the study can shed light on the role of SLAC in fostering meaningful changes in teachers' performance, offering guidance for school administrators and policymakers to refine teacher development programs further.

Research Questions

This study investigated the level of SLAC implementation and its impact on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers. It answered the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:

1.1. age;

1.2. sex;

1.3. educational attainment;

1.4. teaching experience in years during the SLAC implementation, and

1.5 classroom Observation ratings for the last three years (2021-2024) during SLAC implementation?

2. What is the level of implementation of SLAC among teachers in the areas of:

    2.1. content and pedagogy;

    2.2. content assessment;

    2.3. 21st-century skills and ICT integration in teaching Araling

      Panlipunan; and

    2.4. curriculum contextualization as rated by the respondents?

3. What is the perceived impact of SLAC Implementation on the Professional Development of the respondents in the areas of:

    3.1. pedagogical competence;

    3.2. personal competence;

    3.3. social competence; and

    3.4. professional competence?

4. Is there a significant difference in the level of SLAC Implementation in the areas of:

    4.1. content and pedagogy;

    4.2. content assessment;

    4.3. 21st-century skills and ICT integration in teaching Araling

      Panlipunan; and

    4.4. curriculum contextualization as rated by the respondents?

5. Is there a significant difference between the perceived impact of SLAC implementation in the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan teachers in terms of:

    5.1. pedagogical competence;

    5.2. personal competence;

    5.3. social competence; and

    5.4. professional competence?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the SLAC implementation level and its perceived impact on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers?

7. Is the Demographic profile of the Araling Panlipunan teachers significantly influential on their Professional Development and the SLAC Implementation?

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized descriptive and correlational research design. It aims to examine and describe the relationship between various factors in a manner other than a cause-and-effect one (Clarete et al., 2023).

This study used a descriptive design to describe the demographic profile of the respondents, the level of implementation of the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), and the perceived impact of the SLAC implementation on the Professional Development of secondary Araling Panlipunan teachers in Sto. Niño District, Sto. Niño, South Cotabato. Salaria (2012) defines descriptive research as gathering information about prevailing conditions or situations for description and interpretation.

Also, it utilized the correlation analysis method, using statistical analysis to investigate how strongly two continuous variables were related. This can be applied to the School Learning Action Cell and the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan teachers. This analysis is useful because the researcher wants to determine the relationships between the variables.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in Sto. Nino District in the Municipality of Sto. Niño located in the Province of South Cotabato. The municipality is a lone district with 12 (twelve) elementary schools and 5 (five) secondary schools implementing the School Learning Action Cell. The said district claimed to be one of the top-performing districts in the province.

The researcher was also interested in the study setting since she works as an Araling Panlipunan teacher in one of the district's secondary schools. Specifically, the researcher conducted the study in secondary schools, where she found that SLAC programs and activities were not tracked and assessed regularly and were not yet recognized by the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC), unlike in elementary schools, where teacher participants in SLAC sessions were able to gain Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Units.

In terms of topography, the location of the schools was very accessible to transportation by focusing also on a specific geographic area, like Sto. Niño District, the research can address the unique context, challenges, and opportunities within this community (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Respondents of the Study

The study's respondents were secondary Proficient (Teacher I-III) Araling Panlipunan public school teachers in the Sto. Niño District, Sto. Niño, South Cotabato. They were all regular personnel based on the plantilla items who were at least three (3) years in service. The researcher considered a population of thirty-four (34) teachers participating in SLAC sessions.

Sampling Technique

Due to the limited number of Araling Panlipunan respondents, complete enumeration was employed to determine them. According to Abrol (2021), information was collected from every member of the population in a complete enumeration census. Furthermore, complete enumeration sampling was used when the small population shared well-defined features, such as those in Proficient Araling Panlipunan teachers with direct experiences and participation in SLAC sessions.

Data Gathering Instrument

The researcher adopted and modified the questionnaire to gather the relevant data for the study through teachers' responses. The content was derived from readings of related literature and studies by Delos Santos (2023) on the School Learning Action Cell and Competencies of Elementary Teachers and Deala and Lopez (2024) on the School Learning Action Cell Implementation and its impact on the personal and professional development among elementary teachers.

The questionnaire had three parts. Part I focused on the demographic profile of the respondents, including their age, sex, educational attainment, years in service during the SLAC implementation, and Classroom Observation Ratings for the last three (3) years (S.Y. 2021- 2024). Part II consisted of items on the level of SLAC implementation among teachers in Content and Pedagogy, Content Assessment, 21st-century Skills, ICT Integration, and Curriculum Contextualization among Araling Panlipunan teachers in Sto. Niño District.

Part III focused on the respondents' perceptions of the SLAC implementation's impact on their professional development in pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competence.

The Results-based Performance Management System (RPMS) evaluation process includes the Classroom Observation Ratings of Proficient Araling Panlipunan teachers. According to DepEd Memo No. 004, s. 2022 & DepEd Memo No. 008, s. 2023, this tool was used for assessing teachers' proficiency on seven (7) indicators with a COT rating and a transmuted RPMS rating of: 7–5 (outstanding), 6- 4 (very- satisfactory), 5- 3 (satisfactory), 4- 2 (unsatisfactory), and 3- 1 (poor).

To analyze the level of implementation of School Learning Action Cells (SLAC) in terms of content and pedagogy, content assessment, 21st-century skills and ICT integration, and curriculum contextualization, a five (5) point Likert scale was used where 5 corresponds to always, 4 to often, 3 to sometimes, 2 to rarely, and 1 to never.

To analyze the perceived impact of School Learning Action Cell Implementation on the Professional Growth and Development of Araling Panlipunan regarding Pedagogical, Personal, Social, and Professional competence, a five (5) point Likert Scale was also used where 5 corresponds to strongly agree, 4 to agree, 3 to undecided, 2 disagree, and 1 to strongly disagree.

Krosnick and Fabrigar (1997) recommend using a five-point (5) itemized rating scale as a more reliable rating scale. When a midpoint is included, the effects of responder bias tend to diminish, and data quality is enhanced.

The researcher asked permission from the School Heads to utilize the teachers' COT ratings for the study. The respondents also signed a data privacy consent form.

Furthermore, a validity test was performed to ensure the instrument measured what it intended to measure. Five (5) evaluators: three (3) Master Teachers and SLAC Leaders, and two (2) Curriculum experts validated the study instruments. To ensure the instructions were clear and the study's goals were fulfilled, these subject-matter experts critically evaluated the instrument. Scale content validation (S-CVI) and item content validation (I-CVI) indices were calculated. The researcher used an acceptable CVI of 1 (Yusoff, 2019).

Moreover, a reliability test was conducted using the instrument's internal consistency method based on the results of pilot testing. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), reliability is the extent to which the study methodology produces steady and consistent outcomes. Additionally, a measure was considered reliable if it had the same result when applied to the same measurement item several times. The Cronbach alpha was computed to determine the reliability of the research instrument used in this study. The tool's reliability was facilitated through a pilot test in secondary schools in Norala District, South Cotabato. The result of the reliability test was 0.97804, which was considered excellent.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study focused on implementing the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) and its impact on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers in Sto. Niño District, Sto. Niño, South Cotabato. The geographical scope was limited to this region, providing a context-specific analysis. The study involves all secondary schools and all secondary Proficient (Teacher I-III) Araling Panlipunan teachers in Sto. Niño District, South Cotabato Division. Master Teachers were not included as respondents since they are categorized as Highly Proficient teachers who demonstrate a high level of performance in their teaching practice, perform classroom observations, and provide technical assistance to Proficient teachers (DepEd Order No. 2, series of 2015).

The participants were chosen based on specific criteria to ensure relevance to the research objectives. The study was time-bounded to the year SY 2016-2024, which covered the years of implementation of the SLAC, assessing the level of Implementation and its perceived impact on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers. The research questions were adopted and modified to address the relationship between the SLAC and teachers' professional development within the defined scope.

Statistical Treatment

This study used several statistical treatments to present, analyze, and interpret the data. Statistical treatment is essential for using data in the right form. The responses from the completed questionnaires and classroom observation ratings were properly encoded, processed, and analyzed using Microsoft Excel software. The data were computed using the appropriate statistical tools.

The data were treated using frequency counts and percentage distributions for the respondents' profiles. The mean was computed to analyze the level of Implementation of SLAC in different areas and its perceived impact on the respondents' professional development in different areas.

The one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was utilized to analyze the differences in the Level of Implementation of SLAC in Content and Pedagogy, Content Assessment, 21st-century skills, ICT integration, and Curriculum Contextualization as rated by the respondents. It was also used to analyze the differences in the impact of SLAC on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers in terms of pedagogical competence, personal competence, social competence, and professional competence. The Tukey-Kramer Multiple Comparison test was also used to determine which professional development component has the highest impact on SLAC implementation.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation or Pearson r Correlation was employed to analyze the significant relationship between the SLAC Implementation level and the perceived impact on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan teachers. The use of Pearson r correlation allows for the testing of statistical significance. It is crucial to determine whether any observed correlation between the extent of SLAC implementation and the perceived impact of SLAC Implementation is likely to be due to chance or if it reflects a genuine relationship (Field, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents according to Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
28-32	14	41
33-37	9	26
38-42	4	12
43-47	5	15
48-52	1	3
53-57	1	3
Total	**34**	**100**

Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents are aged 28- 32 with a percentage rate of 41%, while 9 or 26% of them belong to the 33-37 years old range, 5 or 15% of them are aged 43-47, and 4 or 12% of them belong to 38-42 years old age group. Moreover, respondents aged 48-52 and 53-57 reveal the lowest frequency of 1 or with a 3% rate. This implies that there are more secondary Araling Panlipunan Teachers I- III in Sto. Niño District, Sto. Niño, South Cotabato who are aged 28-32.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents according to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	12	35
Female	22	65
Total	**34**	**100**

Table 2 presents that most respondents were female, 22 or 65%, compared to 12 male respondents, who had a 35% rate. This implies more female secondary Araling Panlipunan Teachers I—III in Sto. Niño District, Sto. Niño, South Cotabato.

Table 3. Demographic Profile of the Respondents According to Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bachelor's Degree	6	18
With Master's Units	24	70
Master's Degree	3	9
With Doctorate Units	1	3
With Doctorate Degree	0	0
Total	**34**	**100**

Table 3 shows that 24 or 70% of the teacher-respondents earned Master's Units, while 6 or 18% were Bachelor's degree holders. Among the 34 respondents, 3 or 9% were Master's Degree holders, while only 1 or 3% had earned Doctorate units. This implies that most respondents enroll in post-graduate programs that offer them professional development and career advancement opportunities. Teachers can improve their skills, attitudes, and knowledge through professional development opportunities, which help schools with curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Gamboa, 2023).

Table 4. Demographic Profile of the Respondents According to Years in Service during SLAC Implementation

Years in Service	Frequency	Percentage (%)
3	4	12
4	1	3

5	2	6
6	6	17
7	5	15
8	16	47
Total	**34**	**100**

It can be gleaned from the table 4 that during the implementation of SLAC, 16 or 47% of the teacher-respondents rendered 8 years in service, 6 or 17% rendered 6 years, and 5 or 15% rendered 7 years in teaching. Meanwhile, 24 or 12% rendered 3 years, 2 or 6% rendered 5 years, and only 1 with the rate of 3% rendered 4 years in service. These findings imply that most respondents have participated in the SLAC sessions from its implementation through the Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 35, series of 2016 as a K to 12 Basic Education Program and School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy, making them well-positioned to evaluate the impact of SLAC implementation. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) states that more seasoned educators are better able to assess the efficacy and practicality of training programs because they have a more in-depth understanding of instruction and better reflection abilities. Their ability to track trends and developments over time makes them reliable informants for program assessment.

Table 5. Demographic Profile of the Respondents According to Ratings on Classroom Observations from 2021- 2024

School Year	SD	Mean	Description
2021-2022	0.11	4.79	Outstanding
2022-2023	0.12	4.80	Outstanding
2023-2024	0.11	4.80	Outstanding
Overall Mean		**4.80**	**Outstanding**

As shown in table 5, the mean ratings of the respondents for all three school years are very close, with values of 4. 79 for S.Y. 2021- 2022, 4.80 for S.Y. 2022- 2023, and 4.80 for S.Y. 2023- 2024. These scores based on the RPMS rating and transmutation table fall under the Outstanding category, indicating that the respondents consistently performed at a high level over the years by using well-connected pedagogical aspects of the indicator in the rating tool to create an environment that addresses individual group learning goals (DepEd Memorandum No. 004, s. 2021 & DepEd Memorandum No. 008, s. 2022). The standard deviation (SD) values range between 0.11 and 0.12 and show very little variation in the ratings, which

indicates that the ratings of the respondents were closely clustered around the mean, suggesting the outstanding performance of the teachers. In addition, the consistency in high mean scores and low standard deviation (SD) across the three years suggests that Proficient teacher respondents maintained a high level of outstanding performance. Moreover, the overall section mean of 4.80 reinforces that the respondents' ratings remain outstanding across all three years. This is due to creating engaging, motivating, and supportive learning environments that increase student engagement and participation (Hattie, 2009).

Table 6. Summary of the Level Implementation of SLAC

Areas	Section Mean	Description
Content and Pedadogy	4.43	Always
Content Assessment	4.36	Always
21st Century Skills and ICT integration	4.47	Always
Curriculum Contextualization	4.40	Always
Overall Mean	**4.42**	**Always**

As presented in the table 6, 21st Century Skills and ICT integration topped the list of areas of SLAC that is always implemented in schools with a mean of 4.47. Content and Pedagogy came very closely with a mean of 4.43. The mean of 4.40 for Curriculum Contextualization and 4.36 for Content Assessment also imply that there is consistent practice and implementation of SLAC on the said areas. Overall, data reveal that the SLAC activities in all areas were fully implemented in schools with the overall mean of 4.42. This is supported by the findings of Corpuz and Salandanan (2015), that collaborative discussions within professional learning communities can significantly improve instructional planning and classroom delivery. Bubb and Earley (2007) also emphasized that collaborative learning models, such as SLAC, are most effective when they are content-driven and pedagogically relevant, thereby fostering continuous improvement in teaching quality. The results are consistent with the findings of Santos and Abad (2021) that SLAC has been pivotal in developing collaborative professional learning communities within schools, contributing to the overall development of teachers' skills in modifying and adapting the curriculum to meet student needs.

PERCEIVED IMPACT OF SLAC IMPLEMENTATION ON THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ARALING PANLIPUNAN TEACHERS

Table 7. Summary of the Perceived Impact of SLAC Implementation on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan teachers.

Areas	Section Mean	Description
Pedagogical Competence	4.40	Strongly Agree

Personal Competence	4.21	Strongly Agree
Social Competence	4.45	Strongly Agree
Professional Competence	4.39	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	**4.36**	**Strongly Agree**

Table 7 summarizes the results of the impact of SLAC implementation on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan teachers in areas of Pedagogical Competence, Personal Competence, Social Competence and Professional Competence. As shown and as perceived by the respondents the SLAC implementation had a very strong impact on their Professional Development in four areas. The overall mean of 4. 36 implies that the high level of SLAC implementation in Sto. Niño district had a very strong impact on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan teachers helping them in them improve their Pedagogical, Personal, Social and Professional Competence. This is similar to the findings of Culajara (2023) that there is a statistically significant increase in teacher self-efficacy after participating in SLAC sessions and activities. Moreover, Aquino et al. (2023) also found out that collaborative problem-solving through SLAC sessions positively influences professional competence of teachers.

Difference in the level of SLAC implementation

Table 8. Analysis of the Levels of SLAC Implementation in Four (4) Areas.

Source of Variation	Df	sum of squares	Mean square	F- comp	p- value
Between	3	0.24	0.08	0.67	0.58
Within	132	16.25	0.12		
TOTAL	**135**				

$\alpha=0.05$ level of significance

The fourth research problem investigates possible differences in the implementation of SLAC in terms of content and pedagogy, content assessment, 21st-century skills. ICT integration in teaching Araling Panlipunan, and curriculum contextualization, as rated by the respondents. The study's findings are shown in Table 8. Since F-computed is 0.67 with a p-value of 0.58, which is greater than $\alpha=0.05$, the variation among means of the four areas of implementation is due to chance. The level of SLAC implementation in content and pedagogy is as good as in content assessment, 21st-century skills and ICT integration, and curriculum contextualization. The results then imply that the differences in SLAC implementation across the four areas are insignificant, and the school's implementation is relatively consistent. Andaya (2020) highlighted that no significant disparity in the quality of implementation across these domains, suggests balanced support for teacher competencies through SLAC.

Difference in the Impact of SLAC implementation on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan teachers

Table 9. Analysis of the Impact of SLAC Implementation in the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan Teachers according to Competence.

Source of Variation	Df	sum of squares	Mean square	F- comp	p- value
Between	3	1.17	0.39	3	0.03
Within	132	17.03	0.13		
TOTAL	**135**	**18.20**			

α=0.05 level of significance

Table 10. Separation of Means of the Four Areas of Professional Development

Components of Professional Development	Section Mean
Pedagogical Competence	4.40[a]
Personal Competence	4.21[b]
Social Competence	4.45[a]
Professional Competence	4.39[a]
Overall Mean	**4.36**

The fifth research problem analyzes the impact of SLAC on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers in the areas of pedagogical competence, personal competence, social competence, and professional competence. Tables 9 and 10 illustrate the study's findings. Since F-computed is 3 with a p-value of 0.03, which is less than α=0.05, the variation among means of impact of SLAC implementation classified into four professional development components is greater than expected by chance. It implies that SLAC affects different competencies in professional development to varying degrees. The analysis is extended using the Tukey—Kramer Multiple Comparison Test to determine which professional development component impacts SLAC implementation more. Social competence has the highest mean rating (4.45) on the impact of SLAC implementation, comparable to social and professional competence. However, personal competence has a lower mean rating (4.21), which is too different from the rest of the professional development components suggesting it is less impacted by SLAC implementation and needs further improvement and focus. The findings are also consistent with the study of Antiola and Ferenal (2024), that SLAC has a significant positive impact on teachers' instructional skills which are closely related to professional competence but has no strong effect on teachers' personal competence.

Relationship between the Level of SLAC Implementation on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan Teachers

Table 11. Analysis of the Relationship between the Level of Implementation of SLAC and its Impact on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan Teachers

Variables	R	p- value
Implementation of SLAC and Impact of SLAC	0.76	<0.0001

α=0.05 level of significance

The sixth research problem concerns the relationship between the SLAC implementation level and its perceived impact, as shown in Table 11. The data analysis shows that since r=0.76 (strong relationship) with p-value = <0.0001, it is less than enough to claim that r = 0.76 is greater than expected by chance. This implies that SLAC is an effective professional development strategy, and the higher SLAC implementation results in greater professional benefits for teachers. The finding is similar to the claims of Reyes et al. (2017) and Sanchez et al. (2018) that SLAC effectiveness was correlated with higher levels of pedagogical efficacy among teachers and SLAC participation was associated with improved instructional mastery, professional development, and teaching practices.

The Influence of Demographic Profile of the respondents in the Professional Development and the SLAC implementation.

Table 12. Summary of the significant influence of the demographic profile of the respondents on the impact of SLAC implementation on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers.

Variables	p- value	Interpretation
Age	0.003	Statistically significant
Sex	0.38	Not statistically significant
Educational Attainment	0.08	Not statistically significant
Teaching Experience in Years during the SLAC Implementation	0.003	Statistically significant
Classroom Observation Rating	0.004	Statistically significant

α=0.05 level of significance

As presented in table 12, the age of the respondents with p- value of (0.003), teaching experience in years during the SLAC implementation (p- value of 0.003), and their Classroom observation ratings (p- value of 0.004) has significant influence on the impact of SLAC implementation on the professional development

of Araling Panlipunan teachers. These variables likely play key roles on how SLAC contributes to the teachers' professional development. The outcomes corroborate Sanchez et al. (2018) discoveries that age moderately affected teachers' satisfaction with SLAC implementation and its impact on their professional development. It aligns with the study of Krosnick (2018) that sex differences in survey responses were minimal and often non-significant, suggesting that sex does not significantly influence the responses. Sanchez et al. (2018) found also that educational attainment was not a significant predictor of teacher responses to a survey on SLAC implementation, suggesting that educational attainment does not significantly influence responses. Furthermore, the SLAC implementation appears equally effective across different educational levels. A study by Brawner et al. (2019) also found that classroom observation ratings were a significant outcome of SLAC implementation, with teachers who participated in SLAC showing improvement in their teaching practices

Table 13. Summary of the significant influence of the demographic profile of the respondents on the implementation of SLAC.

Variables	p- value	Interpretation
Age	0.0007	Statistically significant
Sex	0.54	Not statistically significant
Educational Attainment	0.34	Not statistically significant
Teaching Experience in Years during the SLAC Implementation	0.03	Statistically significant
Classroom Observation Rating	0.001	Statistically significant

α=0.05 level of significance

Table 14 presents the data analysis on the influence of the age of respondents in the implementation of SLAC, the age of the respondents with p- value of (0.0007), teaching experience in years during the SLAC implementation (p- value of 0.03), and their Classroom observation ratings (p- value 0.001) has significant influence on the impact of SLAC implementation on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers. These variables likely play key roles on how SLAC was implemented in schools. On the other hand, the sex and educational experiences of the respondents does not influence the SLAC implementation in school. According to Guskey (2002), experienced teachers value continuous learning and professional development initiatives like SLAC. The results also align with the study of DuFour and Eaker (1998), which states that perceptions of implementation effectiveness are more likely influenced by factors such as culture, leadership support, and prior experience rather than sex or gender. Furthermore, Lave and Wenger (1991) support the findings that learning is more effective in a social context where all individuals contribute regardless of educational background. Since SLAC functions as a collaborative learning system, its implementation depends on participation and support rather than the participants' educational attainment. Moreover, teachers with longer service tend to be more engaged in professional learning communities and are more likely to appreciate the benefits of SLAC in improving instructional practices (Garet et al., 2001). These results align with those of Manzano et al. (2011), who found that when teachers conduct thorough classroom observations, they can better assess their students' progress and adjust their teaching methods. This, in turn, affects professional learning communities like SLAC.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn in light of the findings and the hypothesis that was put to the test.

1. The demographic profile of the respondents indicates a group of highly qualified and experienced educators. Their consistent participation in SLAC sessions over the span of eight years (2016–2024) reflects a strong commitment to continuous professional development. The outstanding classroom observation ratings sustained over the last three school years further underscore their teaching competence and instructional effectiveness.

2. Secondary schools in Sto. Niño District, Sto. Niño, South Cotabato, has effectively and fully implemented the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) program in terms of content and pedagogy, content assessment, the integration of technology and 21st-century skills, and the contextualization of the curriculum.

3. SLAC had a very strong impact on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers in terms of pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies which contribute not only to their teaching effectiveness but also to the holistic development of their roles as educators.

4. The differences in SLAC implementation across the four areas are insignificant and the school's program implementation is relatively consistent.

5. There is a significant difference in its impact on teachers' professional development which implies that SLAC affects different competencies in professional development to varying degrees. The impact of SLAC in the personal competence of teachers is too different from the rest suggesting it is less impacted by SLAC implementation and needs further improvement and focus.

6. The results also indicate a strong positive relationship between SLAC implementation and its impact on teachers' professional development. This demonstrates that a higher level of SLAC implementation corresponds to greater improvements in teachers' competencies.

7. The impact of SLAC Implementation and its effects on Professional development are heavily influenced by demographic parameters, including age, teaching experience, and outstanding classroom observation ratings.

8. Overall, this study affirms that SLAC is an effective professional development program that enhances the teaching quality and professional competencies of Araling Panlipunan teachers.

Recommendations

In light of the conclusion mentioned above, the following are the recommendations:

1. Given the respondents' strong professional qualifications majority having master's degree and their consistent participation in SLAC (School Learning Action Cell) sessions over an extended period (2016–2024), it is recommended that this group be tapped as peer mentors or facilitators in future professional development initiatives. Their sustained engagement in the SLAC program, paired with their excellent classroom observation ratings indicates a high level of teaching competence and reflective practice. By positioning them in mentorship roles, schools can promote a culture of collaborative learning and capacity-building within the teaching community.

2. Noting that SLAC is fully implemented in secondary schools, it can be suggested that schools may strengthen and ensure the continuous implementation of SLAC sessions focusing on content and pedagogy, content assessment, 21st-century skills and ICT integration, and curriculum contextualization. School administrators may also provide adequate time, resources, and support to sustain the SLAC implementation.

3. As found out, the SLAC implementation had a strong impact on the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers, especially in terms of pedagogical, social, and professional competence. Thus, it is recommended to continue implementing the SLAC as a regular and structured professional development program in all secondary schools by continue providing capacity-building seminars, collaborative learning and networking sessions, parent-teacher engagement strategies, innovative teaching methods workshops, and leadership development programs for all teachers to further enhance their skills and knowledge.

4. Since the analysis revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of SLAC implementation across the four key areas of content and pedagogy, content assessment, 21st-century skills and CT integration, and curriculum contextualization it is recommended that the current implementation strategies be maintained and possibly standardized across all areas.

5. Based on the results, the impact of SLAC implementation on the Personal Competence of Araling Panlipunan teachers is slightly lower yet remains highly significant. Therefore, SLAC sessions are recommended to integrate self-reflection activities, confidence-building exercises, stress management techniques, and similar activities that promote teachers' overall well-being. SLAC can also be more effective if it includes mentorship programs and peer support to encourage teacher participants and boost their confidence.

6. With the strong relationship between SLAC and the professional development of Araling Panlipunan teachers, it is suggested that there is a regular evaluation. The evaluation findings will be useful in refining and improving the SLAC implementation, ensuring that it supports teachers' professional development and students' learning outcomes. SLAC leaders may also work on the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC) Accreditation of their SLAC activities through the Continuing Professional Development System (CPDAS) to ensure that they continue to meet standards for teacher competency development.

7. Considering the significant influence of the age, teaching experience, and outstanding classroom observation ratings of the respondents on the SLAC implementation and its impact on the Professional Development of Araling Panlipunan teachers, SLAC sessions may also include age-specific professional development opportunities that would cater to the unique needs and interests of different age groups. It is also better to strengthen the mentorship program through SLAC, where experienced teachers and teachers with outstanding observation ratings can support or guide other colleagues.

8. Further research and evaluation are recommended to assess the long-term impact of SLAC and validate the study's results.

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