

Instructional Practices During Catch-Up Fridays and Academic Performance of Junior High School Students in Araling Panlipunan

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Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic caused school closures which affected many students globally. Long periods of isolation resulted in the decline in education, particularly in basic skills like reading, writing, and arithmetic. Catch- Up Fridays was implemented with the aim of providing students with additional support and instruction to bridge learning gaps. This study evaluated the extent of instructional practices of teachers during Catch-up Fridays and how these were related to the academic performance of Junior high school students in Araling Panlipunan subject in the District of Sto. Nino, South Cotabato Division. This is descriptive-correlational study, 30 Araling Panlipunan teachers and 2,998 Junior high school students were selected as respondents. Total enumeration was applied to choose the teacher-student respondents. The data was analyzed using frequency, percentage, rank, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson r-moment correlation.

Findings revealed that the extent of instructional practices of teachers during Catch-up Fridays was often, which means that the instructional practice was frequently used with moderate consistency. The level of academic performance in Araling Panlipunan was statistically diverse. Junior high school students performed very satisfactory on the said subject. Instructional practices and students' academic performance were significantly related. Despite the positive effect of catch-up Fridays on students' academic performance, teachers encountered challenges particularly on the availability of sufficient resources, such as books, technology, and other learning materials, and the lack of sufficient quality-assured reading materials/reference materials during Catch-Up Fridays. It is suggested that school administrators must address these problems for the effectiveness of the implementation of the said program.

Keywords: Instructional Practices, Catch-up Fridays, Academic Performance, Araling Panlipunan, Common challenges encountered

INTRODUCTION

Education is crucial in shaping students' knowledge and skills for future challenges. However, due to COVID 19 pandemic, disruptions in the academic calendar can lead to learning gaps that greatly affect the students. To address this, the Department of Education implemented strategies like remedial classes and catch-up sessions. One such initiative is "Catch-Up Fridays," which provides extra instructional time for students to improve their academic performance and recover lost learning opportunities.

Within a global framework, several research studies have investigated the influence of instructional practices on student academic performance specially on giving remediation. The study of Hattie (2019) highlighted the significance of employing effective teaching methodologies, stressing the crucial influence of the educator on student learning outcomes.

In the context of the Philippines, educational research has concentrated on many facets of teaching methods and the academic achievement of students. The DepEd in the Philippines has always endeavoured to augment teaching approaches to better the standard of education (DepEd Order No. 31, 2022).

According to DepEd Order No. 013 series of 2023, which pertains to the implementation of the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP), there is a necessity to enhance Values, Health, and Peace Education, as these are crucial for the youth in the context of nation-building. The imperative for Peace Education arises from the 2022 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) findings, which indicate that bullying continues to be a widespread issue in public schools. There is a necessity for Filipino students, as global citizens, to develop and enhance peace competencies, enabling them to serve as peace builders and advocates within their communities. Concurrently, Health Education necessitates intensified advocacy to safeguard the overall health and well-being of learners.

In connection with these considerations, DepEd implemented Catch-up Fridays in all public educational institutions both in elementary and secondary. This program serves as a learning mechanism designed to enhance fundamental, social, and other pertinent abilities essential for fulfilling the objectives of the basic education curriculum. The primary aim of this program, being ungraded, is to enhance learning.

The effectiveness of catch-up programs depends upon the instructional practices employed by educators. In the context of junior high school students, particularly in subjects such as Araling Panlipunan, the instructional approaches can have a substantial impact on student learning outcomes, as this subject necessitates a profound comprehension of historical, social, and political concepts.

This study seeks to examine the teaching practices utilized by educators during Catch-Up Fridays and their effect on the academic performance of Junior High School students in Araling Panlipunan. This study aims to analyse the strategies employed by teachers and assess their efficacy to maximize catch-up programs, hence improving student learning and bridging performance disparities. The study will also examine if these techniques enhance recall, comprehension, and application of Araling Panlipunan principles among Junior High School learners.

This research will furnish essential insights to educators, school administrators, and policymakers in the formulation and execution of instructional techniques for catch-up programs aimed at enhancing student performance in fundamental.

However, there is a lack of scholarly research on the unique circumstances of instructional practices during Catch-up Fridays and the academic performance of students in Araling Panlipunan in the nation, particularly in areas such as Sto. Niño, South Cotabato, due to the nature of the program's recent implementation.

Thus, the researcher is interested to study on teacher's instructional practices in terms of planning, delivery and assessment and academic performance of Junior High School students in Araling Panlipunan subject. And also the common challenges encountered by teachers during the conduct of this program. The findings aim to provide insights that can inform instructional improvements and policy enhancements in remedial and enrichment programs. It is expected that this study will be most likely to reveal how these practices benefit the learners in the district and even in the region.

Research Questions

This study should determine the relationship between the instructional practices employed by teachers in Sto. Niño, South Cotabato during the conduct of catch-up Fridays, and the academic performance of their students during the school year 2023-2024. It should answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of the instructional practices of teachers teaching Araling Panlipunan during catch-up Fridays in terms of:
 - 1.1. instructional planning;
 - 1.2. instructional delivery; and,
 - 1.3. instructional assessment?
2. What is the level of academic performance of junior high school Araling Panlipunan students in terms of grade percentile average (GPA)?
3. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' instructional practices during catch-up Fridays and the academic performance of junior high school Araling Panlipunan students in Sto. Nino, South Cotabato?
4. What are the common challenges do junior high school Araling Panlipunan teachers encounter when conducting catch-up Fridays?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed quantitative research applying the Descriptive-Correlational Method to determine the relationship between the instructional practices of teachers during Catch-up Fridays in Sto. Niño, South Cotabato, in terms of planning, delivery, and assessment, and the academic performance of Junior High School Araling Panlipunan students during the school year 2023-2024.

The Descriptive-Correlation study design examined the relationships between two or more variables without any intervention by the researcher. It is a quantitative, non-experimental study. In a correlational study, variables must be assessed without intervention. (Creswell, 2014)

In determining the common challenges encountered by teachers, checklist questionnaires were utilized.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in Sto. Niño District located in the Province of South Cotabato. The municipality has one district headed by a District Supervisor. The Sto. Niño District is composed of five (5) public secondary schools.

The researcher was interested in this area, since she was working as a secondary teacher in this district and there was a lack of study in instructional practices during Catch-up Friday in this municipality.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study was two thousand nine hundred ninety-eight (2,998) Junior High School students, one thousand nine hundred forty-nine (1,949) from Sto. Niño National High School (SNNHS), two hundred fifty (250) students of Sto. Niño National School of Arts and Trade (SNN SAT), four hundred fifty (450) students of Panay National High School (PNHS), one hundred sixty-nine (169) students of Guinsang-an National High School (GNHS), and one hundred eighty (180) students of Katipunan National High School (KNHS) for the school year 2023-2024, and thirty (30) teachers teaching Araling Panlipunan in Junior High School.

Sampling Technique

The researcher used the complete enumeration for the teacher-respondents due to their limited numbers. The same is true with the student-respondents, total enumeration was also utilized to measure the level of their academic performance through their GPAs in Araling Panlipunan and how teacher's instructional practices related to it.

Data Gathering Instrument

The researcher used a survey questionnaire and Grade Percentile Average (GPA) in Araling Panlipunan in data gathering. The survey questionnaire was composed of two parts. The first part was composed of two sets that asked data for the research problem on the teachers' instructional practices and the common challenges encountered during Catch-up Fridays.

The first part of survey tool was a researcher made questionnaires. The instrument was composed of three (3) indicators such as instructional planning, delivery and assessment. In evaluating instructional practices, a 5-point Likert scale was utilized where 5 corresponds to Always, 4 to Often, 3 to Sometimes, 2 to Rarely, and 1 Never. The questionnaire was rated by teachers teaching Araling Panlipunan.

The second part of the questionnaires utilized a checklist form on the challenges encountered by Araling Panlipunan teachers during the conduct of Catch-up Fridays. The checklist form consists of ten (10) statements made by the researcher. The respondents checked the items in the column provided related to the experiences they encountered during the conduct of Catch-up Fridays. The checklist form was answered by the Junior high school teachers teaching Araling Panlipunan. A validity test was conducted to verify that the instrument precisely measures its target variable. In order to examine the substance and relevance, a group of research enthusiasts was consulted. The items' construction was checked using content validity. Item (I-CVI) and scale content validation (S-CVI) indices were computed. The validity test result was CVI=0.95 which was interpreted as acceptable (Yusoff, 2019).

The internal consistency approach was employed to assess the instrument's reliability. Creswell (2014) indicated that reliability refers to the extent to which a research method produces reliable and

consistent outcomes. It is considered reliable if its application on the same object of measurement yields consistent findings across multiple instances. Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The reliability of the instruments was facilitated by a pilot test conducted in Norala National High School. The reliability test result was 0.9331, which was considered excellent. The interpretation of the calculated α was based on the following scale (George and Mallery, 2003).

On the other hand, measuring the academic performance of the Junior High School students in Araling Panlipunan the Grade Percentile Average in School Year 2023-2024 was used. The analysis and interpretation were interpreted according to the scale stated in DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015.

Data Gathering Procedure

A letter request to the Dean of the Graduate School was made seeking permission to conduct the study. The same request letter was sent to the Schools Division Superintendent of South Cotabato. The approved letter of request was attached to the letter for the School Principal of five (5) public secondary schools in the municipality of Sto. Niño, South Cotabato, regarding the purpose. A courtesy call was made regarding the mechanics in the administration of the survey questionnaire and requesting respondents' records from the teachers teaching Araling Panlipunan.

The survey questionnaires and the GPA was gathered right after its administration. The data from the respondents was recorded, organized and analyzed.

Statistical Treatment

This study used several statistical treatments for presentation, analysis, and interpretation to treat the gathered data. Once data is gathered from the respondents, the responses from the accomplished questionnaires are properly encoded, processed, and analyzed using Microsoft Excel software. The data were computed using the appropriate statistical tools.

The frequency, percentage and rank were used to analyze the common challenges encountered by teachers during Catch-up Fridays. The mean and standard deviation were used to describe and interpret the result of the extent of instructional practices of teachers and the students' academic performance of Junior High School students in Araling Panlipunan during Catch-up Fridays.

To interpret the findings on the quality of result of the extent of instructional practices of teachers during Catch-up Fridays, the mean range with corresponding interpretation as shown was used:

RATING	RANGE OF MEANS	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	INTERPRETATION
1	4.20 – 5.00	Always	The instructional practice is constantly and extensively used.
2	3.40 – 4.19	Often	The instructional practice is frequently used with moderate consistency.

3	2.60 – 3.39	Sometimes	The instructional practice is used occasionally, with some consistency.
4	1.80 – 2.59	Rarely	The instructional practice is seldom used but not consistent.
5	1.00 – 1.79	Never	The instructional practice is not ever used.

The grading scale below was applied to determine the level of academic performance of Junior High School learners in Araling Panlipuan as contained in DepEd Order No 8, s. 2015.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation or Pearson r was utilized to find out the relationship between the instructional practices during Catch-up Fridays and academic performance of Junior High School Araling Panlipunan students. The use of Pearson r correlation allows for the testing of statistical significance. It is crucial in determining whether any observed correlation between instructional practices and academic performance is likely to be due to chance or if it reflects a genuine relationship (Field, 2013)

Grading Scale	Descriptive Rating	Interpretations
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90 – 100	Outstanding	Performance represents an extraordinary level of achievement, commitment in terms of quality outputs and written works.
85 – 89	Very Satisfactory	Performance exceeds expectations. All goals and targets were achieved above the established standards.
80 – 84	Satisfactory	Performance met expectations in terms of quality outputs and written work.
75 – 79	Fairly Satisfactory	Performance failed to meet expectations, and/or one or more of the most critical goals were not met.
Below 75	Did Not Meet Expectations	Performance was consistently below expectations, and/or reasonable progress toward critical goals was not made.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1. Summary of Instructional Practices During Catch-up Fridays of Junior High School Araling Panlipunan Teachers

Indicators	N	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
Instructional Planning	30	4.23	0.52	Always

Instructional Delivery	30	4.15	0.49	Often
Instructional Assessment	30	4.10	0.45	Often
Overall Mean	30	4.16	0.44	Often

The data above indicate that Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers exhibit a high level of instructional practices during Catch-up Fridays, with an overall mean score of 4.16, suggesting that they "Often" implement effective instructional practices.

Instructional planning of teachers scored highest in this dimension, with a mean score of 4.23, indicating that they "Always" engage in effective instructional planning practices. This finding is consistent with research emphasizing the importance of instructional planning in enhancing student learning outcomes (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

On the otherhand, teachers scored a mean of 4.15 in instructional delivery, indicating that they "Often" implement effective instructional delivery practices. This finding aligns with studies highlighting the significance of instructional delivery in promoting student engagement and motivation (Hativa, 2013).

Lastly, in instructional assessment, teachers scored a mean of 4.10, indicating that they "Often" engage in effective instructional assessment practices. Research supports the importance of instructional assessment in informing instruction and enhancing student learning outcomes (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Overall, the findings suggest that Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers demonstrate a strong commitment to implementing effective instructional practices during Catch-up Fridays. However, areas for improvement exist, particularly in instructional assessment, where teachers can further refine their practices to better inform instruction and enhance student's academic performance.

Table 2. Level of Academic Performance of Junior High School Araling Panlipunan Students in terms of GPA

Schools	N	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
Guinsang-an NHS	3	86.40	0.80	Very Satisfactory
Katipunan NHS	3	87.60	0.68	Very Satisfactory
Panay NHS	4	86.90	1.44	Very Satisfactory
Sto. Nino NHS	17	87.20	1.48	Very Satisfactory
Sto. Nino NSAT	3	87.40	1.23	Very Satisfactory

The table presents the academic performance of Junior High School students in Araling Panlipunan in terms of their Grade Point Average (GPA) across different schools. The data includes the number of students (N), the mean GPA, the standard deviation (SD), and a verbal description of the performance.

Among the five public secondary schools in the district of Sto. Nino, students from Katipunan National High School got the highest mean of 87.60 in terms of their GPA in Araling Panlipunan subject. The level of academic performance is "Very Satisfactory", this means that performance of students in Araling Panlipunan exceeds expectations.

Even though Guinsang-an National High School got the lowest mean of 86.40 still the level of academic performance is very satisfactory.

Overall, the results show that all the schools have students who are performing at a "Very Satisfactory" level, with GPAs ranging from 86.40 to 87.60. The variation in performance, as indicated by the standard deviations, is relatively small in most schools, suggesting consistent performance among students within those schools, although Panay NHS and Sto. Nino NHS show slightly more variation in their GPAs.

Research suggests that high academic performance is linked to effective instructional practices (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), teacher support (Hativa, 2013), and student motivation (Ames, 1992). The findings of this study support these assertions, as the high academic performance across schools may be attributed to effective instructional practices, such as those implemented during Catch-up Fridays.

Table 3. Correlational Analysis between the Teachers' Instructional Practices during Catch-up Fridays and the Students' Academic Performance

GPA	Instructional Planning	Instructional Delivery	Instructional Assessment	Instructional Practices
Pearson's r	0.598	0.698	0.856	0.794
p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001

Notes: df=28; $p < .05$, significant

Table 3 presents the correlational analysis between teachers' instructional practices during Catch-up Fridays and students' academic performance, specifically their GPA. The analysis examines four key components of instructional practices: instructional planning, instructional delivery, instructional assessment, and overall instructional practices.

The Pearson correlation coefficients reveal positive and significant relationships between all the instructional practices and students' GPA. Instructional planning shows a moderate positive correlation with GPA ($r = 0.598$, $p < .001$), indicating that effective planning is associated with better academic performance. Instructional delivery has a stronger correlation ($r = 0.698$, $p < .001$), suggesting that how the lessons are delivered to students also plays a crucial role in improving their academic outcomes. Instructional assessment demonstrates an even stronger correlation ($r = 0.856$, $p < .001$), implying that regular and effective assessments contribute significantly to students' GPA. Finally, the overall instructional practices, which likely encompass all aspects of teaching, show a very strong correlation with GPA ($r = 0.794$, $p < .001$), reinforcing the importance of integrated teaching strategies in enhancing student performance.

These results highlight the importance of comprehensive instructional practices in improving academic outcomes. Previous studies support these findings, suggesting that well-planned lessons, engaging teaching

methods, and continuous assessment significantly impact students' academic performance. For example, a study by Hattie (2009) emphasizes that feedback and assessment, key components of instructional practices, are among the most powerful influences on student achievement. Similarly, instructional planning and delivery are also critical factors that support student learning, as evidenced by research indicating that clear goals, structured lessons, and active teaching strategies are linked to higher academic success (Guskey, 2003).

Moreover, these findings are consistent with the notion that instructional quality directly affects student learning outcomes. Effective instructional practices, particularly during dedicated learning periods like Catch-up Fridays, provide opportunities for targeted interventions and personalized teaching approaches that can address gaps in student understanding, leading to improved academic performance. Thus, teachers' proactive engagement in planning, delivering, assessing, and refining their teaching strategies significantly contributes to students' success.

Common Challenges Encountered by Junior High School Araling Panlipunan Teachers during Catch-up Fridays

These were the experiences met by teachers in conducting Catch-up Fridays. The teachers teaching the subject was asked to check the challenges they encountered in the conduct of the said program. Table 4 shows the result that answers the fourth research problem.

Table 4. Challenges Encountered by Junior High School Araling Panlipunan Teachers during Catch-up Fridays (N=30)

Experiences of Teachers	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. There is a clear class schedule for the conduct of catch-up Fridays.	28	93%	1
2. Enough support is coming from the school administration to the teachers during Catch-up Fridays.	27	90%	2
3. Proper orientation about the conduct of Catch-up Fridays results in a clear understanding of the program.	25	83%	3
4. Catch-up Fridays are not an additional workload for the teachers.	23	77%	4
5. Sufficient time to prepare for the needed activity during Catch-up Fridays.	19	63%	5
6. The students are motivated and interested in learning during Catch-up Fridays.	17	57%	6
7. The parents are involved and supportive in the conduct of Catch-up Fridays.	15	50%	7
8. Adequate training and skills development of teachers in Catch-up Fridays activities.	13	43%	8

9.Availability of sufficient resources, such as books, technology, and other learning materials.	11	37%	9.5
10.There are sufficient quality-assured reading materials/reference materials to be integrated into all subjects during Catch-Up Fridays.	11	37%	9.5

Table 4 highlights the common challenges encountered by Junior High School Araling Panlipunan teachers during the implementation of Catch-up Fridays. The responses from the 30 teachers are organized into various categories that reflect the experiences encountered during the conduct of the said program.

A key finding is that majority of teachers with a percentage of 93% responded that there was a clear class schedule for the program, which is a positive aspect as it allows for structure and consistency. This finding supports research emphasizing the importance of clear organizational structures in educational settings (Marzano, 2007).

However, challenges emerged regarding the availability of resources and quality-assured reading materials. Only 37% of teachers felt there were enough learning materials, books, and technology to effectively implement Catch-up Fridays. This shortage of resources is a significant obstacle, as studies have found that resource availability is strongly correlated with effective teaching and learning outcomes (Hattie, 2009).

Conclusions

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

1. Instructional practices during Catch-Up Fridays are typically implemented frequently, demonstrating a high level of commitment among teachers, even though there is still room for improvement, particularly in the area of ensuring consistent application across all aspects.
2. The Junior High School students performed better in Araling Panlipunan subject with the used of different instructional practices made by the teachers when teaching the subject specifically on the conduct of catch-up Fridays sessions.
3. The instructional practices of teachers affect the academic performance of students and stated that enhanced instructional practices contribute meaningfully to improved student outcomes.
- 4.Despite the positive effect of instructional practices on students' performance, teachers in Araling Panlipunan encountered problems specifically with the availability of instructional materials. The effective incorporation of instructional content across subjects is hindered by these limitations, emphasizing the need to enhanced resource provision to fully support the program's objectives and improve teaching and learning outcomes.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are strongly recommended considering the foregoing findings.

1. Based on the positive result of instructional practices during Catch-up Fridays on the academic performance, it is suggested to continue the said practices more consistently and may the school administration will support teachers in terms of professional development through seminars and trainings for them to enhance skills in teaching.
2. With the very satisfactory level of academic performance of Junior high school students in Araling Panlipunan, subject teachers may explore and use other different strategies to improve more the proficiency of learners.
3. Given the fact that instructional practices during catch-up Fridays have something to do with the academic performance of students, it is suggested that there is a regular evaluation on the said program. And to use evaluation findings to refine and improve the Catch-up Fridays program, ensuring that it remains effective in supporting students' academic success.
4. DepEd officials may create and disseminate high-quality, relevant instructional materials to support teachers in implementing effective instructional practices.
5. Future and similar studies may be conducted in other areas to further validate the results of this study.

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