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Research Article

Relationship between Students' Historical Awareness and their Appreciation of Local Cultural Heritage

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ABSTRACT

The K-12 curriculum brought a significant change in Social Studies/ Araling Panlipunan curriculum at the Basic Education level, but much still must be done to introduce relevant topics in history and culture following local contexts. As such, local historians and educators pursued its relevance to studying local history, particularly with the Kaysayang Lokal (KASALO) ng Pampanga, to embark to the mind of today's learners the local history of their place. With this, the study aimed to assess the local awareness of Junior High School students and its correlation to their appreciation of cultural heritage. The study utilized descriptive-correlational research designed that aims to determine the relationship of the variables. The respondents of the study consisted of 281 Junior High School students chosen through a simple random sampling technique. The results revealed that the students exhibited a slight awareness of their local history. Moreover, they have generally agreed to school-based initiatives to nurture cultural heritage appreciation. The Pearson-r correlation analysis revealed that the student's knowledge of KASALO did not significantly correlate to their appreciation of Kapampangan's local cultural heritage. The implications underlined the need for teachers to introduce more novel ways to integrate topics in local history in the AP classroom and strengthen local studies centers to promote the study of local history for the future.

Keywords: *Historical Awareness, Local Cultural Heritage, Appreciation, Junior High School Students*

Introduction

Most of what students learn from history are national or international in scope, leaving local history to scholars and researchers. However, integrating local history in the basic education curriculum provides students a chance

to immerse themselves in history, or at least in the process of documenting it. Local history is defined by its geopolitical constraints, which means that it is confined by a location with distinct political control that is even smaller than the nation-state (Florendo, 2011). This

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distinction is essential in identifying local or regional histories, particularly in historical pedagogies such as the ones integrated for the Araling Panlipunan (AP) classes at the secondary level. (Perez & Templanza, 2012) emphasized that local studies centers in the Philippines are flexible centers that house special collections of archaeological importance and manage a museum, archives, and special libraries. They also research history and culture in the various localities they serve.

One case in Turkey illustrated a method where a local history lesson is discussed through immersion, where students interview elders in the community or historical visit sites (Oguzhan, 2015). This kind of experience not only enriches the learning of history but also increases their empathic abilities.

In other words, learning local history emphasizes the importance of local history. It provides experiential learning opportunities and a student-centered classroom for learning history as facts and as an experience. Like site visits or landmark studies, simple activities can be articulated into elementary and secondary levels (Bischof, 2015). However, it is also vital for local history learning to be directed towards concrete learning goals and performance tasks (Aktekin, 2009).

Several studies in the recent literature put cultural heritage into the field of tourism. Still, the factors that contribute to the development of cultural heritage are found heavily with evidence in history, government, and politics: all within the bounds of the field of social sciences. As such, cultural heritage is essential in social studies teaching (Ocal, 2016). Moreover, components of cultural heritage education are integrated even in our K-12 curriculum. As such, they are teaching cultural heritage is essentially part of Social Studies/ AP education. Technology in virtual museums and geo-referencing software improves students' attitudes in learning history, an otherwise mundane and uninteresting subject for many students (Magro, de Carvalho, and Marcelino, 2014; Ismael & Al-Abdullatif, 2016).

Presently, integrating local history into Araling Panlipunan subjects falls into the initiatives of innovative superintendents or school heads. One study cites Batangas public schools'

initiatives to integrate Batangas local history into AP lessons (Ocampo & Delgado, 2014). Current efforts to sustain local history in the Philippines fall into programs and services delivered by local studies centers. For example, the Center of Bulacan Studies hosted by Bulacan State University in Malolos Bulacan conducts studies that evaluate Bulacan's cultural heritage and its natural heritage. At present, policy and house bills such as House Bill 3880 or the Local History Bill also help push through the agenda for including the teaching of local history into the classroom.

The way to implement awareness of local cultural heritage is by making local history known to students. However, the awareness of students on the cultural heritage assets itself is another issue. It is believed that damage to local heritage is partly due to the lack of community awareness and general non-involvement of the people in local conservation efforts. For instance, residents in Vigan City are highly involved in promoting heritage tourism of their city (Bacuyag et al., 2015), which explained the manageable situation of Vigan's heritage town. The same, however, cannot be said for the history of Escolta Street in Manila. Owners eventually abandon their properties because of deterioration and lack of resources for upkeep. While these properties are historical in age and appearance, they are not yet declared heritage centers for public funding to support their care and maintenance (Cruz, 2017).

Hence, this study aims to examine the relationship between high school students' awareness of the local history of Pampanga and their perception of Pampanga's local cultural heritage. This will be conducted by administering survey questionnaires on local cultural heritage perception and creating and analyzing Pampanga's local history test. Since there are no documented initiatives to integrate Pampanga's local history into classroom teaching, the study will also identify the various aspects of local history that can be learned and integrated into the current K-12 curriculum. Moreover, the study's findings seek to contribute to the existing literature on the connection between learning history through an appreciation of local cultural heritage. The insights from this study will contribute to culture-based

economic development in Pampanga. The study will also address gaps in the existing literature of using local history as a content subject in Araling Panlipunan classrooms and promote the local historical and cultural heritage of Pampanga.

Research Objectives

The study seeks to:

1. Determine the level of awareness of Junior High School students on the local history of Pampanga;
2. Determine the level of the Junior High School students' appreciation of Kapampangan cultural heritage;
3. Ascertain the correlation of students' level of awareness on local history and appreciation of local cultural heritage; and,
4. Determine the implications that may be drawn based on the findings of the study.

Methodology

Research Design

This study made use of descriptive correlation as the research design. As stipulated by (Best & Kahn, 2005), correlational research is a type of descriptive research where it aims to establish whether there a correlation between and among variables. Thus, the study aimed to assess the relationship between students' knowledge of Pampanga's local history with their appreciation of cultural heritage.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were Junior High School students from one public school in Pampanga, Philippines. The researcher used 281 Junior High School students as the study sample and employed simple random sampling techniques. The researcher used simple random sampling techniques since there is a large population in the school and the need to select a group of subjects for the study. Each respondent were chosen entirely by chance and each students of the population has an equal opportunity of being included in the sample. Every sample of a given size has a chance to be selected randomly (Easton & McColl, 1997).

Instrument of the Study

The present study used a self-developed questionnaire on local history awareness and a standardized questionnaire for local cultural heritage appreciation. The first part was on the students' awareness of local history. It is a ten-item questionnaire rated on a 5 point Likert Scale ranging from 5 (very high) to 1 (low). It is validated by a university professor, a school head, and a headteacher. Some indicators were modified as advised by the field experts.

To determine the appreciation of local history, the researcher adopted a standardized questionnaire from (Ahmed, 2017), where it provides an assessment from the students about cultural heritage appreciation. The survey is a Likert-type response item with five responses from 5 (very high) to 1 (low). The survey-questionnaire was reliable as can be gleaned from the Cronbach alpha value of .781

Data Analysis

In order to tabulate and analyse the data, the researcher used descriptive and inferential statistics in interpreting the survey questionnaire results. The researchers used Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) as the study's statistical tools to analyze the survey's given data. Students' historical awareness, as the study's independent variable, and appreciation of local cultural heritage, as the study's dependent variables, were quantified using descriptive statistics such as weighted mean analysis. On the other hand, to ascertain the correlation between the students' historical awareness and appreciation of local cultural awareness, the researchers utilized Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r).

Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings from the data-gathering phase of the study. The data gathered has been tabulated and analyzed, and placed in the following tables with explanations to determine if student awareness of local history is significantly related to their cultural heritage appreciation.

Table 1. Awareness of Students on Local History of Pampanga

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. The Capampangan language originated from Malayan language.	2.86	Moderately High
2. Pampanga became a province on December 11, 1571.	3.66	High
3. At present, the province of Pampanga is comprised of nineteen (19) municipalities and three (3) cities.	3.06	Moderately High
4. The word "pampang" where Pampanga came from means "river bank".	3.54	High
5. Haring Sinukuan, who said to be living in Mt. Arayat according to folklore, is the god of ancient Capampangans.	3.15	Moderately High
6. Jose Abad Santos is the first Capampangan who became chief justice.	3.16	Moderately High
7. Tarik Suliman is the hero of Macabebe who fought against the Spaniards in the Battle of Bangkusay.	4.19	High
8. Bacolor is the first capital of Pampanga.	3.00	Moderately High
9. Diosdado Macapagal is the first Capampangan who became president.	3.58	High
10. St. Augustine Church in Lubao is the oldest church in Pampanga.	3.10	Moderately High
Average	3.33	Moderately High

As can be gleaned from Table 1, it presents the awareness of Junior High School students on the local history of Pampanga. It is shown that the awareness of Junior High School students on the local history of Pampanga is moderately high, as evidenced by the general mean value of 3.33.

It reflects that students know where the name of their province came from and the well-known personality that came from Pampanga. These students' results show that while they exhibited moderately high awareness of some ideas, much is still desired regarding the extent of their awareness in Kapampangan local

history. Local history content is very different from national and global accounts being discussed as part of the formal curriculum in Social Studies/ Araling Panlipunan subjects in high school today. However, these results can still come from the same reluctance among high school students to learn history. It has already been pointed out that hesitation in learning history affects the students' historical culture (Obeidat et al., 2011). In the Philippine context, it can also be viewed as a result of material investment constraints and support for propagating local history in schools (Ocampo and Delgado, 2014).

Table 2. Students' Cultural Heritage Appreciation

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. I learned a lot regarding local history in high school	3.36	Moderately High
2. The knowledge I have learned regarding Pampanga is sufficient	3.26	Moderately High
3. Knowledge on Kapampangan culture is displayed in an interesting manner	2.93	Moderately High
4. The school administration is providing tours to culturally important local sites	2.67	Moderately High
5. The number of educational trips to local historical sites is enough	2.70	Moderately High

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
6. I am very keen in participating at these trips	2.94	Moderately High
7. What I see in local historical sites is related to my knowledge of it	3.37	Moderately High
8. My teachers have a good grasp of knowledge about Kapampangan local history and culture	3.51	High
9. Integrating local history in the curriculum can raise awareness and importance of local history	3.55	High
10. Films/ school plays can raise awareness of local cultural heritage	3.67	High
11. I am in support of a local history subject or topics in the high school level	3.48	Moderately High
Average	3.22	Moderately High

Table 2 present the student's appreciation of local cultural heritage. It illustrates that the appreciation of Junior High School students on the local cultural heritage is moderately high, as can be gleaned from the general weighted mean of 3.22.

It can be deduced from the analysis that the students find their curriculum supportive of their awareness and appreciation of cultural heritage. They find instructional materials and aids such as films, school plays, and field trips as possible ways to nurture their appreciation of cultural heritage. The last item has the highest average among all the things, which indicates their support for complementing their

current instruction with topics or subjects that highlight KASALO or Kapampangan local history. The National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 forbids the schools through the leadership of the Department of Education to "formulate the a contextualized cultural heritage education programs both for local and overseas Filipinos to be integrated in the curriculum" (Ocampo and Delgado, 2014). Thus, these results are expected to manifest within respondents coming from a DepEd school. It has been scheduled that steps to teach an appreciation for cultural heritage have been taken care of by their Araling Panlipunan subjects.

Table 3 Relationship of Student Awareness of Local History and Appreciation of Cultural Heritage

Indicators	Pearson r	P-Value	Interpretation
Level of Awareness in History and Appreciation of Cultural Heritage	.049	.893	Non-Significant

The correlation analysis showed a Pearson-r value of .049. This indicates that the students' awareness of local history has a weak positive correlation with students' appreciation of cultural heritage in Pampanga. This result suggests that when the students' awareness of KASALO increases, their appreciation for Kapampangan cultural heritage increases by .049. The correlation results indicate that the students with a better appreciation for cultural heritage also have a correspondingly better appreciation for their awareness level in history. Meanwhile, the correlation's p-value is .893, which indicates that the positive correlation

found in the Pearson-r statistic is not significant for this study.

Pedagogical Implications

The study's correlation analysis result is interesting in that it explained that there was a significant relationship between students' awareness of local history and their appreciation for local cultural heritage in Pampanga, but it is a weak negative correlation. The results must be understood with caution. For one, the relationship items are school-based approaches to nurture an appreciation for local cultural heritage. While the students were

mostly in agreement with the items under local cultural heritage, their awareness results were mainly on the Slightly Aware scale. Perhaps, the appreciation of local cultural heritage they have nurtured has yet to translate to significant positive gains in their awareness. They believe that their teachers are instrumental in their appreciation for local cultural heritage, but they have not been made aware of as much desired on their local history.

Thus, a critical implication of these results is that teachers must continue to explore novel ways to make students learn about local history better. It is not enough that they know the local history but nurtures an appreciation for it as well. (Hood, 2018) demonstrated social media use in promoting local communities through digital storytelling of community history and maximizing user engagement in these interactive social media posts. (Magro et al., 2014) took the technology further and made traveling routes using GPS positioning and maps through mobile devices for students to explore castle routes in a local community. However, the exposure that educational trips provide is instrumental to a more personal outlook towards local history. Studies by (Bischof, 2015) and (Taneo, 2017) only offer more evidence that educational tours need not be far excursions and can lead to significant gains in local history student learning if utilized properly and strategically.

Another implication of the study is the importance of strengthening local studies centers. (Perez & Templanza, 2012) state that local studies centers in the Philippines hold various historical and cultural significance collections. These centers can be utilized to develop the study of local history through research. Teachers should not only be involved in the propagation of awareness of local history but, as much as possible, to lead in its preservation and study. Local studies centers can be strengthened by coordinating with them for special lesson units or topics or arrange a special tour or presentation for several classes. Local studies centers can also have connections with significant cultural or historical persons. The students' exposure to these figures would undoubtedly spark interest in them regarding their local cultural heritage.

Conclusions

Based on the study's raise objectives and findings, this study concluded that the Junior High School students showed moderately high levels of awareness of their Kapampangan local history. Also, Junior High School students have shown a moderately high appreciation towards Kapampangan's local cultural heritage. Pearson-r correlation analysis showed that the two variables have a weak negative correlation at .049. Moreover, the relationship was found to be not significant at .893 ($p < .05$). Hence, the given null hypothesis of the study is hereby accepted.

Recommendations

The researcher proposes the following recommendations in light of the present study; teachers should provide more novel ways to teach local history. More creative ways are needed for students to connect with their local histories and understand their community role. This can be accomplished by using innovative teaching methods or using technology. Students can learn local history better when they are immersed in important historical or cultural sites. School administrators should note this and arrange educational tours that can be beneficial to students' learning. Educational tours need not be far, and the local community is rich with these exposure sites. Curriculum planners should also consider creating complementary lesson guides for integrating local history in current Araling Panlipunan content. The K-12 curriculum aims to decongest learning, but local history's content is as important as national or global history. Thus, curriculum planners should set contextualized lesson guides for local history in feasible unit areas in the Araling Panlipunan curriculum. Future researchers can probe deeper into the findings of the study. It is suggested that they use other constructs in measuring local cultural heritage that is not school-based constructs. A larger sample size may also bring out more significant and generalizing results.

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