

Realities Behind Teachers' Contextualization Practices in Teaching Araling Panlipunan

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Abstract

This study examines the realities behind teachers' contextualization practices in teaching Araling Panlipunan within the Philippine basic education system. Grounded in a qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach, the study sought to understand how teachers conceptualize contextualization, how they enact it in classroom practice, and what challenges and enabling conditions shape its implementation. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eleven junior high school Araling Panlipunan teachers from public secondary schools in the Alangalang District, Leyte Division. Findings reveal that teachers view contextualization as a process of relating lessons to learners lived experiences, local culture, and community realities, yet their actual practices vary widely depending on institutional demands, availability of resources, workload, and prior training. While teachers recognize the pedagogical value of contextualization in promoting engagement and meaningful learning, they encounter constraints such as limited time, insufficient localized materials, and frequent curricular adjustments. Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrate adaptive strategies and professional commitment, modifying lessons and drawing on community knowledge to sustain contextualized instruction. The study underscores the need for sustained professional development, consistent instructional guidance, and institutional support to strengthen contextualization practices. By highlighting teachers lived experiences, this research contributes to the discourse on culturally responsive and context-based pedagogy and supports Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education).

Keywords: Contextualization; Araling Panlipunan; Teaching Practices; Qualitative Research; Philippines

1. Introduction

Education systems worldwide continue to pursue reforms aimed at improving access, equity, and the quality of learning. Central to these reforms is the growing recognition that meaningful learning occurs when instruction is responsive to learners' social, cultural, and environmental contexts. This perspective has gained prominence as education systems confront persistent gaps between curriculum intent and classroom realities, particularly in culturally diverse and decentralized settings (UNESCO, 2017). Within this discourse, contextualization has emerged as a critical pedagogical strategy for enhancing relevance, learner engagement, and educational inclusivity.

In the Philippine education system, contextualization has been formally institutionalized through major policy reforms, most notably Republic Act No. 10533, otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013. This law restructured basic education through the K to 12 curriculum and explicitly mandated flexibility in curriculum development and implementation to allow localization, indigenization, and adaptation to learners' educational and social contexts (Republic Act No. 10533, 2013). The Department of Education (DepEd), as the primary implementing agency, has since emphasized contextualization as a guiding principle in curriculum design, instructional strategies, learning resources, and assessment practices. Through various department orders and memoranda, contextualization has been promoted as a means of making learning competencies relevant, meaningful, and responsive to community realities (Department of Education [DepEd], 2015).

Contextualization in the Philippine context is closely aligned with the broader goal of inclusive education. International frameworks advanced by organizations such as UNESCO and UNICEF conceptualize inclusive education as a process of addressing learner diversity by modifying content, approaches, and strategies to increase participation and reduce exclusion within education systems (UNESCO, 2017; UNICEF, n.d.). DepEd echoes this commitment through policies that emphasize cultural sensitivity, respect for diversity, and responsiveness to local contexts, encapsulated in the principle that "all means all" in education (DepEd, 2020). Consequently, contextualization is not merely an instructional technique but a policy-driven expectation that positions teachers as key agents in translating national standards into locally meaningful learning experiences.

Over the past decade, DepEd has issued extensive policy guidance to operationalize contextualization. Department orders have encouraged the development of localized and contextualized teaching and learning materials, the integration of local culture and history into classroom instruction, and the conduct of continuous professional development activities focused on contextualized teaching strategies (DepEd, 2013, 2015). Contextualization has also been embedded as an indicator in the School-Based Management (SBM) framework, where schools are assessed on the extent to which the implemented curriculum is localized and made applicable to community life (DepEd, 2012). Under this framework, varying levels of practice are identified, ranging from initial documentation of local contexts to the mainstreaming of best practices in curriculum localization.

At the regional and division levels, particularly in Eastern Visayas and the Leyte Division, numerous memoranda have reinforced these national directives. These issuances have called for the production, quality assurance, and utilization of contextualized learning resources, as well as the participation of teachers in training workshops and seminars on contextualization. Such sustained policy attention suggests that contextualization is regarded as a continuous and essential endeavor within the Philippine basic education system (DepEd Region VIII, 2020).

Despite this strong policy environment, evidence indicates that the actual practice of contextualization in schools remains uneven. Data from SBM validation reports show that only a small proportion of schools have reached higher levels of practice in curriculum localization and contextualization, particularly at the secondary level (DepEd Region VIII, 2020). Similarly, a review of learning resource repositories such as the Learning Resource Management and Development System (LRMDS) reveals a limited number of contextualized materials for Araling Panlipunan at the junior high school level, with minimal representation from Eastern Visayas (DepEd, 2022). These gaps raise important questions about how contextualization is interpreted, enacted, and sustained in everyday teaching practice.

The challenges surrounding contextualization have been further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitated rapid shifts to alternative learning delivery modalities. In response, DepEd introduced the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan, which reiterated the importance of contextualizing learning strategies and materials to suit diverse learner circumstances (DepEd, 2020). While contextualization remained a highlighted strategy during this period, its application was largely confined to printed self-learning modules, activity sheets, and supplementary materials, particularly in contexts where distance learning modalities predominated. This situation underscored the adaptive demands placed on teachers and highlighted the need to examine how contextualization is practiced under constrained and changing conditions.

Within this context, Araling Panlipunan occupies a particularly significant position. As a learning area concerned with history, culture, society, and civic life, it is inherently contextual in nature. The subject provides a natural platform for integrating local narratives, community experiences, and socio-cultural realities into instruction. However, despite its conceptual alignment with contextualized teaching, there is limited empirical research that documents how Araling Panlipunan teachers actually practice contextualization, the challenges they encounter, and the strategies they employ to navigate policy expectations and classroom realities.

Existing studies on contextualization in the Philippines have largely focused on higher education settings, subject-specific interventions, or quantitative measures of instructional effectiveness (Bonganciso, 2015; Obiedo & Jugar, 2017). Few investigations have examined contextualization as a lived practice among basic education teachers through qualitative inquiry that foregrounds teachers' perspectives and experiences. Moreover, while policy compliance is often assumed, there is limited empirical evidence that systematically explores the extent to which teachers' practices align with official mandates or how institutional structures, workloads, and resource constraints shape and sometimes limit these practices.

Addressing this gap is essential, as teachers' interpretations and enactments of contextualization ultimately determine whether policy intentions translate into meaningful classroom experiences. Understanding the realities behind contextualization practices requires attention not only to formal guidelines but also to teachers' professional dispositions, accumulated experiences, access to resources, and capacity to adapt to evolving educational demands. Such an inquiry can provide nuanced insights into why contextualization remains challenging despite sustained policy support and how existing practices might be strengthened.

This study therefore seeks to explore the realities behind teachers' contextualization practices in teaching Araling Panlipunan. Anchored on practice theory, social practice theory, and adaptation theory, it examines how teachers understand and enact contextualization, the challenges they encounter in its implementation, and the opportunities for improving practice within their specific educational contexts. By focusing on junior high school Araling Panlipunan teachers in the Leyte Division, this study aims to generate empirically grounded insights that can inform teacher professional development, contextualized resource production, and policy refinement. Ultimately, documenting teachers'

lived experiences of contextualization contributes to a deeper understanding of how curriculum reforms are realized at the classroom level and how contextualized teaching can be more effectively supported in Philippine basic education.

2. Material and methods (Heading 1, IJSAIR heading level 1)

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design using a descriptive phenomenological approach to explore the realities behind teachers' contextualization practices in teaching Araling Panlipunan. Qualitative research is appropriate for examining meanings, interpretations, and lived experiences within natural settings (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Descriptive phenomenology, rooted in Husserlian philosophy, focuses on describing participants' firsthand experiences of a phenomenon while bracketing researchers' assumptions to the greatest extent possible (Christensen et al., 2017). This approach allowed the study to capture how contextualization is understood, enacted, and experienced by teachers in everyday instructional practice.

2.2. Research Locale

The study was conducted in seven public secondary schools in Alangalang District, Leyte Division, Eastern Visayas, Philippines, a district characterized by a substantial population of junior high school teachers and reflective of typical public secondary school contexts within the division. The locale provided a relevant setting for examining contextualization practices within the framework of national and regional education policies. To ensure confidentiality and protect institutional identities, participating schools were anonymized and coded as AA1 to AA7 (Allen & Wiles, 2016).

2.3 Participants of the Study

The participants consisted of eleven (11) junior high school Araling Panlipunan teachers selected through purposive sampling, a strategy commonly used in qualitative research to obtain information-rich cases relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Vasileiou et al., 2018). Inclusion criteria required participants to be licensed secondary education graduates majoring in Social Studies or Social Science, have at least five years of teaching experience, be currently teaching Araling Panlipunan, and have attended at least one contextualization-related training. All identified teachers consented to participate, and data saturation was achieved when additional interviews yielded no new themes or insights (Guest et al., 2012).

2.3. Research Instruments

Data were collected primarily through a semi-structured interview guide composed of open-ended questions that elicited teachers' understandings, practices, challenges, and perceived opportunities related to contextualization. Semi-structured interviews are widely used in qualitative research as they provide consistency across interviews while allowing flexibility for probing and clarification (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The interview guide underwent expert validation to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research objectives (Majid et al., 2017). Supplementary data were gathered through document review of lesson plans, weekly home learning plans, and contextualized instructional materials provided by participants.

2.4. Data Collection Procedure

Prior to data collection, formal approval was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent of Leyte, followed by endorsements from district supervisors and school heads. Informed consent was obtained from all participants after they were briefed on the purpose of the study, data use, and confidentiality measures (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2017). Individual interviews were conducted either face-to-face or through virtual platforms, depending on health protocols and participant availability, with each session lasting approximately 45–60 minutes. Interviews were audio-recorded with permission, transcribed verbatim, and supplemented by follow-up interviews when clarification or elaboration was required.

2.5. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The process involved familiarization with the data through repeated reading of transcripts, generation of initial codes, identification and review of themes, and clear definition and naming of final themes. This method allowed for systematic identification of patterns across participants' narratives while remaining flexible to the complexity of qualitative data. Reflexive memo-writing was used throughout the analysis to document analytic decisions and emerging interpretations (Caulfield, 2019).

2.6. Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity were strictly observed throughout the study. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without consequence, and pseudonyms were used to protect identities in transcripts and reports (Allen & Wiles, 2016). Audio recordings, transcripts, and documents were securely stored and accessible only to the researcher. Institutional permissions were obtained prior to data collection, ensuring compliance with ethical standards for research involving human participants.

2.7. Research Reflexivity

The researcher acknowledged her professional background as an educator and her prior involvement in instructional initiatives related to contextualization, which could influence data interpretation. To address this, reflexivity was practiced through ongoing self-examination, bracketing of assumptions, and deliberate grounding of interpretations in participants' narratives rather than personal experiences (Jootun et al., 2009; Palaganas et al., 2017). Reflexive notes were maintained throughout the research process to enhance transparency and methodological rigor.

2.8. Trustworthiness of the Study

The trustworthiness of the study was established using the criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, as recommended for qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was enhanced through member checking, where selected participants reviewed summaries of findings to verify accuracy (Barbour, 2001). Dependability and confirmability were supported through detailed documentation of research procedures and analytic decisions, while transferability was strengthened through rich descriptions of the research context and participants, allowing readers to assess applicability to similar educational settings.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Contextualization Practices of Araling Panlipunan Teachers

Analysis of participants' narratives revealed that contextualization is practiced in varied ways, shaped largely by teachers' personal interpretations, professional experiences, and exposure to policy directives. While all participants expressed familiarity with the term, their practices reflected differing levels of depth and alignment with formal definitions of contextualization as articulated in Department of Education (DepEd) policies (DepEd, 2015).

Theme 1: Contextualization as the Process of Relating the Curriculum

Most teachers described contextualization as the process of relating lesson content to learners' immediate environment and lived experiences. This practice involved using familiar community examples, local events, and observable social realities to explain abstract concepts in Araling Panlipunan. Teachers emphasized that students demonstrated greater engagement and comprehension when lessons were linked to situations they regularly encountered.

This finding aligns with DepEd's definition of contextualization relating curriculum competencies to a particular setting or situation to make learning meaningful and relevant (DepEd, 2015). It also supports Giamellaro's (2017) assertion that contextualization strengthens learning by connecting content and context through experience. From a practice theory perspective, this approach reflects teachers' *habitus*—internalized dispositions shaped by prior teaching experiences and local classroom realities—which guide their instructional decisions (Bourdieu, 1977; Mahar, 2021).

However, the findings suggest that this form of contextualization is often limited to illustrative examples rather than systematic integration of local knowledge into curriculum planning and assessment. While teachers demonstrate intentional efforts to relate lessons to learners' contexts, contextualization frequently remains episodic rather than embedded across instructional processes.

Theme 2: Contextualization as the Integration of Lessons

Another dominant interpretation of contextualization identified among participants was its association with integration, either across subject areas or between lesson content and local culture. Teachers described contextualization as integrating Araling Panlipunan lessons with other subjects or embedding discussions within broader community narratives. This integration was perceived as a strategy to deepen understanding and make learning more holistic.

This perception resonates with literature on interdisciplinary and integrated teaching, which suggests that learning becomes more meaningful when concepts are connected across domains (Lubrica et al., 2018). Within Araling Panlipunan,

integration often involved linking historical topics with current local issues or integrating civic concepts with community practices. From the lens of social practice theory, this reflects how teachers adapt their practices based on institutional expectations and available opportunities within their teaching environments (Schatzki, 2002; Penuel et al., 2016).

Nevertheless, the findings also indicate that integration is sometimes conflated with contextualization, leading to conceptual ambiguity. While integration can be an element of contextualized teaching, equating the two may narrow teachers' understanding of contextualization as a broader pedagogical approach encompassing curriculum design, instructional strategies, learning resources, and assessment practices (DepEd, 2015).

Theme 3: Contextualization as the Use of Contexts

A third theme highlights teachers' emphasis on using context as a tool for meaning making, often derived from textbooks or prescribed learning materials. Teachers described contextualization as modifying textbook content, simplifying explanations, or providing situational examples to help learners grasp concepts. In this view, context functions primarily as a pedagogical aid to comprehension.

This practice reflects what Giamellaro (2017) describes as secondary or realized contextualization, where learning is mediated through indirect experiences rather than direct engagement with local realities. While such practices support learner understanding, they may limit the transformative potential of contextualization when community knowledge and lived experiences are underutilized. From an adaptation theory perspective, this approach demonstrates teachers' attempts to adjust instruction within constraints such as limited time, standardized materials, and scarce locally developed resources (McLeod, 2020).

Collectively, these themes indicate that teachers' contextualization practices are shaped by varied interpretations, resulting in fragmented applications. Although teachers exhibit commitment to making learning relevant, practices are often dependent on individual understanding rather than a shared and systematic framework.

3.2. Challenges in the Practice of Contextualization

The second major category of findings centers on the challenges and constraints teachers encounter in practicing contextualization. Seven themes emerged, illustrating how structural, professional, and personal factors intersect to shape instructional practice.

Theme 1: Practice Is Limited to Memory

Several teachers reported that their knowledge of contextualization relied largely on memory of previous trainings, with limited access to written guides or reference materials. As a result, contextualization practices were often improvised and inconsistent, depending on what teachers could recall rather than on clearly articulated frameworks.

This finding highlights a gap between professional development initiatives and sustained instructional practice. Without accessible references and continuous reinforcement, contextualization becomes vulnerable to misinterpretation. Practice theory explains this limitation as a consequence of weak institutional support, where habitus is not reinforced by structures that sustain practice over time (Bourdieu, 1977; Fazioli, 2020).

Theme 2: Difficulties in Retaining Contextualization Knowledge from Training

Teachers also expressed difficulty retaining and applying knowledge gained from trainings, particularly when such training was infrequent, theoretical, or disconnected from classroom realities. Participants emphasized that without follow-up support, the skills and strategies introduced during workshops were difficult to sustain.

This challenge mirrors findings in teacher professional development literature, which emphasize that one-off trainings are insufficient for meaningful pedagogical change (Creswell & Poth, 2018). From a social practice theory perspective, the absence of ongoing institutional scaffolding limits teachers' ability to integrate new practices into their daily routines (Penuel et al., 2016).

Theme 3: Contextualization Practice and Adapting to Changes

Teachers highlighted the challenge of adapting contextualization practices to frequent educational changes, including curriculum revisions, policy updates, and shifts in learning modalities. These changes often required teachers to prioritize compliance with new requirements over the refinement of contextualized instruction.

Adaptation theory provides insight into this challenge, as teachers are required to continually assimilate and accommodate new demands (McLeod, 2020). While teachers demonstrated resilience and flexibility, constant adaptation reduced the time and cognitive resources available for reflective contextualization.

Theme 4: Difficulties and Challenges in Teaching Hinder Practice

Participants cited instructional challenges, such as large class sizes, diverse learner needs, and limited instructional time, as barriers to effective contextualization. Teachers noted that addressing foundational learning gaps often took precedence over designing contextualized activities.

This finding aligns with research suggesting that contextualized teaching requires additional planning, resources, and instructional flexibility (Obiedo & Jugar, 2017). When teaching conditions are demanding, contextualization may be perceived as an added burden rather than an integral instructional approach.

Theme 5: Level of Imposition Challenges Practice

Some teachers perceived contextualization as a top-down mandate, imposed through policies and documentation requirements. This perception resulted in compliance-oriented practices, where contextualization was performed primarily to meet administrative expectations rather than to enhance learning.

From a practice theory standpoint, this reflects tension between institutional structures and individual agency. When teachers experience contextualization as externally imposed, intrinsic motivation to deepen practice may diminish (Schmidt, 2018).

Theme 6: Contextualization Practice amidst Lack of Resources and References

A significant challenge identified was the lack of contextualized learning resources, particularly materials relevant to the local context. Teachers reported limited access to validated resources, leading to reliance on self-made or improvised materials.

These findings underscore systemic gaps in resource development and dissemination. Despite policy emphasis on contextualization, insufficient material support constrains teachers' capacity to implement it effectively (DepEd, 2022).

Theme 7: Multiple Workloads and Shifting Priorities

Teachers consistently emphasized heavy workloads and multiple responsibilities as major constraints. Administrative tasks, ancillary duties, and reporting requirements often competed with instructional planning time.

This theme reinforces the cumulative impact of structural pressures on teaching practice. Even when teachers value contextualization, competing priorities reduce opportunities for sustained and reflective implementation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.3. Opportunities for Improving Contextualization Practices

Despite the challenges identified, teachers expressed optimism regarding the potential for improving contextualization practices, reflecting professional commitment and adaptability.

Theme 1: Room for Improvement in Implementation

Teachers identified opportunities for enhancing contextualization, including sustained and practice-oriented training, availability of locally developed reference materials, and stronger instructional leadership. Participants emphasized the importance of collaborative mechanisms such as Learning Action Cells and mentoring to support continuous learning.

This theme reflects teachers' recognition that contextualization is a developmental practice requiring institutional support. From an adaptation theory perspective, teachers demonstrated readiness to accommodate improved structures that would enable more effective contextualization (McLeod, 2020). Aligning policy expectations with classroom realities may allow contextualization to evolve from compliance-driven practice to meaningful pedagogical innovation.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

This study set out to explore the realities behind teachers' contextualization practices in teaching Araling Panlipunan within the Philippine basic education system, particularly among junior high school teachers in the Leyte Division. Anchored on practice theory, social practice theory, and adaptation theory, the study examined how teachers understand contextualization, how they enact it in their instructional practices, the challenges that constrain its implementation, and the opportunities for improving its practice. The findings reveal that contextualization is widely recognized by teachers as an important pedagogical approach, yet its classroom enactment remains varied, fragmented, and often constrained by structural and institutional factors.

The results demonstrate that teachers conceptualize contextualization in multiple ways: as relating curriculum content to learners lived experiences, integrating lessons across subjects and local culture, and using contextual examples primarily drawn from textbooks or instructional materials. These interpretations indicate that while teachers are responsive to policy mandates encouraging contextualization, their practices are largely shaped by personal understanding, prior experiences, and professional habitus rather than by a shared and systematic framework (Bourdieu, 1977). Consequently, contextualization is frequently implemented at a surface level—through examples and illustrations—rather than as a comprehensive instructional strategy embedded in curriculum planning, resource development, and assessment.

The study further reveals that contextualization practices are significantly affected by a range of challenges. Teachers reported limited retention of knowledge from training, insufficient access to locally relevant instructional resources, heavy workloads, and competing administrative demands. These challenges are compounded by frequent curricular and policy changes, which require teachers to continually adapt their practices. From the perspective of adaptation theory, teachers are engaged in constant processes of assimilation and accommodation to respond to evolving educational demands; however, this continuous adjustment often reduces opportunities for reflective and sustained contextualization (McLeod, 2020).

Importantly, the findings highlight a tension between policy expectations and classroom realities. Although contextualization is strongly emphasized in national and regional education policies, its implementation is often perceived by teachers as a compliance-driven requirement rather than as a deeply internalized pedagogical commitment. This perception aligns with social practice theory, which emphasizes that institutional structures and power relations shape how practices are taken up by individuals (Schatzki, 2002; Penuel et al., 2016). When contextualization is experienced as externally imposed and insufficiently supported, teachers may comply with documentation requirements without fully integrating the practice into their instructional repertoire.

Despite these challenges, the study also reveals a strong sense of professional optimism among teachers. Participants expressed willingness to improve their contextualization practices and identified concrete opportunities for enhancement, including sustained professional development, availability of locally developed and validated learning resources, collaborative instructional planning, and stronger instructional leadership. These findings underscore teachers' agency and adaptability, suggesting that with appropriate institutional support, contextualization can evolve from fragmented practice into a meaningful and transformative pedagogical approach.

The study, in totality, concludes that contextualization in Araling Panlipunan is a dynamic and socially situated practice shaped by teachers' habitus, institutional structures, and adaptive responses to change. Strengthening contextualization therefore requires not only policy mandates but also coherent systems of support that align professional development, resource provision, workload management, and instructional leadership. Addressing these interconnected factors is essential to realizing the intended goal of contextualization—making learning relevant, meaningful, and responsive to learners' social and cultural realities.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the practice of contextualization in Araling Panlipunan and similar learning areas.

For Teachers. Teachers are encouraged to deepen their conceptual understanding of contextualization beyond the use of contextual examples and lesson integration. Engaging in reflective practice, collaborative lesson planning, and peer mentoring can help teachers develop a more holistic approach to contextualized teaching. Teachers may also document and share effective contextualization practices within their schools or districts to build a shared repertoire of strategies grounded in local realities. Continuous professional learning, whether through formal training or self-directed study, is essential to sustaining meaningful contextualization.

For School Administrators and Instructional Leaders. School heads and department leaders play a crucial role in creating conditions that support contextualization. Administrators are encouraged to institutionalize collaborative

platforms such as Learning Action Cells (LACs) that focus specifically on contextualized instruction. Allocating protected time for instructional planning, reducing non-teaching workloads where possible, and recognizing exemplary contextualization practices can foster a culture that values instructional innovation. Instructional supervision should emphasize formative support rather than compliance, helping teachers refine their contextualization strategies in response to learners' needs.

For the Department of Education and Policy Makers. DepEd is encouraged to strengthen the alignment between contextualization policies and classroom realities. This includes designing professional development programs that are sustained, practice-oriented, and responsive to teachers' contexts rather than one-time training events (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The development and dissemination of locally relevant, validated contextualized learning resources—particularly for Araling Panlipunan—should be prioritized to address gaps identified in learning resource repositories. Additionally, policy frameworks may benefit from clearer operational guidelines that articulate what high-quality contextualization looks like across curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

For Teacher Education Institutions. Pre-service teacher education programs are encouraged to integrate contextualization as a core pedagogical principle across coursework and practicum experiences. Embedding contextualized lesson design, community-based learning, and culturally responsive pedagogy into teacher preparation can help future teachers develop the habitus necessary for sustained contextualization practice (Bourdieu, 1977). Partnerships between teacher education institutions and basic education schools may further support the alignment of theory and practice.

For Future Researchers. Future studies may build on the findings of this research by examining contextualization practices in other learning areas or educational levels, or by employing mixed-methods designs to explore relationships between contextualization and learner outcomes. Longitudinal studies may also provide insights into how contextualization practices evolve over time in response to policy reforms and professional development initiatives. Comparative studies across regions or divisions may further illuminate contextual factors that enable or constrain contextualization.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study complied with institutional ethical guidelines. Participation was voluntary and confidentiality was maintained.

Conflict of interest statement (optional) (IJSAIR-I-sub heading no numbering)

The author declares no conflict of interest or competing interest related to the publication of this manuscript or any institution or product mentioned herein.

Statement of informed consent

Ethical approval was obtained and informed consent was secured from all participants.

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Author's short biography

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The author holds a Master of Arts in Teaching (Social Science) and has 31 years of professional experience in the field of basic education, serving in various capacities as an educator, department head, administrator, and currently as a school head. Her academic and professional work is grounded in extensive engagement with classroom instruction and school leadership, which informs her scholarly inquiry. Her research interests primarily include curriculum contextualization, social studies (Araling Panlipunan) education, teaching and learning in basic education, and school governance and administration. Through qualitative and practice-based research, she explores how instructional policies and reforms are enacted in school contexts, with particular emphasis on teachers' practices, curriculum implementation, and leadership in public basic education.

