

Meeting Learners' Needs: The Effect of Differentiated Instruction on Grade 6 Araling Panlipunan Achievement

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Abstract

This study primarily aimed to evaluate the utilization of differentiated instruction and its relationship to Grade 6 learners' academic achievement in Araling Panlipunan. Specifically, it sought to determine the extent to which Araling Panlipunan teachers apply differentiated instruction in terms of content, process, and products, and to examine the academic performance of Grade 6 learners. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed in this study. The participants included Araling Panlipunan 6 teachers, and data were collected using researcher-made and standardized questionnaires. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, and mean were used to analyze teachers' profiles and the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction. Correlational analysis was applied to determine the relationship between teachers' profiles and the use of differentiated instruction. Findings revealed that most teachers are middle-aged, female, single, assigned to barangay schools, holders of a BS degree with MA units, with an average teaching experience of nine years, and have attended division-level trainings. Among the three criteria of differentiated instruction, "products" was always utilized, while "content" and "process" were often utilized. The academic performance of Grade 6 learners improved from satisfactory in the first quarter to very satisfactory in the second quarter. Moreover, there was no significant relationship between teachers' profiles and the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction. In conclusion, differentiated instruction is applied to varying degrees, with products being the most consistently utilized. The study highlights the potential of differentiated instruction in enhancing learners' academic achievement in Araling Panlipunan and provides valuable insights for teachers aiming to tailor instruction to meet learners' diverse needs.

Keywords: Differentiated instruction, academic achievement, Grade 6 learners

1. Introduction

Social networking sites (SNS) like Facebook have been used for a variety of educational purposes and help students in e-Learning. Differentiated instruction is a framework of teaching that involves providing different learners with different learning avenues (often in the same classroom). Students vary in culture, socio-economic status, language, sex, motivation, ability, personal interests and more, and teachers must be aware of these varieties as they plan curriculum. By considering varied learning needs, teachers can develop personalized instruction so that all children in the classroom can learn effectively.

This was confirmed by Tomlinson (2008) when he said that differentiated instruction is the process of ensuring that what a learner learns, how he learns it, and how he demonstrates what he has learned is a match for the students' readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning. Differentiated classroom is a classroom that includes all students and responds to students' variety in readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles. To be successful in the delivery of lessons, a teacher sets different expectations for students' task completion upon their individual needs. As stressed out by Anderson (2007), differentiation stems from beliefs about differences among learners, how they learn, learning preferences, and individual interests. Therefore, differentiation is an organized, yet flexible way of proactively adjusting teaching and learning methods to accommodate each child's learning needs and preferences to achieve maximum growth as a learner. To understand how the learners learn and what they know, pre-assessment and ongoing assessment are essential. This provides feedback for both teachers and learners, with the ultimate goal of improving learning. Delivery of instruction in the past often followed a "one size fits all" approach. In contrast, differentiation is individually student centered, with focus on appropriate instructional and assessment tools that are fair, flexible, challenging, and engage learners in meaningful ways.

Anderson (2002) corroborated that after teaching a lesson, a teacher might break students into small "ability" groups based on their readiness. The teacher then gives each group a series of questions, based on each group's appropriate level of readiness-skills, related to the objectives of the lesson. Another way to group the learners could be based on their learning styles. The main idea behind this is that learners are at different levels and learn in different ways, so a teacher cannot teach them all the same way.

The goals of differentiated instruction are to develop engaging tasks that challenge and enhance learning for each learner. This instructional approach is driven by the data from learners, assessments results, and from the outcomes of other screening tools. Pre-assessments can gather information about each learner's learning needs and preferences. Assessments should be used as a tool to create clear and meaningful instruction that guides each learner towards challenging but not frustrating activities.

Although the Department of Education exerted efforts to improve the quality of education in the country, there still is a gap between the learners' academic performance and standards set by the department. Several trainings and workshops had been conducted to fully equip the teachers; and differentiated instruction is one of the many strategies that teachers may employ to meet the diverse needs of learners in their respective classes. Differentiated instruction is a pedagogical-didactical approach that provides teachers with a starting point for meeting students' diverse learning needs. Although differentiated instruction has gained a lot of attention in practice and research, not much is known about the status of the empirical evidence and its benefits for enhancing student achievement in secondary education. The current review sets out to provide an overview of the theoretical conceptualizations of differentiated instruction as well as prior findings on its effectiveness. Then, by means of a systematic review of the literature from 2006 to 2016, empirical evidence on the effects of within-class differentiated instruction for secondary school students' academic achievement is evaluated and summarized. After a rigorous search and selection process, only 14 papers about 12 unique empirical studies on the topic were selected for review. A narrative description of the selected papers shows that differentiated instruction has been operationalized in many different ways. The selection includes studies on generic teacher trainings for differentiated instruction, ability grouping and tiering, individualization, mastery learning, heterogeneous grouping, and remediation in flipped classroom lessons. The majority of the studies show small to moderate positive effects of differentiated instruction on student achievement. Summarized effect sizes across studies range from $d = +0.741$ to $+0.509$ (omitting an outlier). These empirical findings give some indication of the possible benefits of differentiated instruction. However, they also point out that there are still severe knowledge gaps. More research is needed before drawing convincing conclusions regarding the effectiveness and value of different approaches to differentiated instruction for secondary school classes.

Differentiation is a hot-topic in education nowadays. Policy-makers and researchers urge teachers to embrace diversity and to adapt their instruction to the diverse learning needs of students in their classrooms (Schleicher, 2016; Unesco, 2017). Differentiation is a philosophy of teaching rooted in deep respect for students, acknowledgment of their differences, and the drive to help all students thrive. Such ideas imply that teachers proactively modify curricula, teaching methods, resources, learning activities, or requirements for student products to better meet students' learning needs (Tomlinson et al., 2003). When teachers deliberately plan such adaptations to facilitate students' learning and execute these adaptations during their lessons we call it differentiated instruction. A number of developments in education have boosted the need for differentiated instruction. First, contemporary classes are becoming relatively heterogeneous because of policies focused on detracking, the inclusion of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and inclusive education in which special education students (SEN) attend classes along with non-SEN students (Rock et al., 2008; Tomlinson, 2015). Since early stratification of students may have unintended effects on the educational opportunities of students with varying background characteristics, addressing students' learning needs by teaching adaptively within heterogeneous classrooms has been proposed as the best choice for a fair educational system (Oakes, 2008; Schütz et al., 2008; Schofield, 2010; OECD, 2012, 2018).

In addition, even within relatively homogeneous classrooms, there are considerable differences between students that need attention (Wilkinson and Penney, 2014). Second, the idea that learners have different learning needs and that a one-size-fits-all approach does not suffice, is gaining momentum (Subban, 2006). Policy makers stress that all students should be supported to develop their knowledge and skills at their own level (Rock et al., 2008; Schleicher, 2016) and there is the wish to improve equity or equality among students (Unesco, 2017; Kyriakides et al., 2018). When the aim is to decrease the gap between low and high achieving students, teachers could invest most in supporting low achieving students. This is called convergent differentiation (Bosker, 2005). Alternatively, teachers may apply divergent differentiation in which they strive for equality by dividing their efforts equally across all students, allowing for variation between students in the learning goals they reach, time they use, and outcomes they produce (Bosker, 2005).

Although the concept of differentiated instruction is quite well-known, teachers find it difficult to grasp how differentiated instruction should be implemented in their classrooms (Van Casteren et al., 2017). A recent study found that teachers across different countries infrequently adapt their instruction to student characteristics (Schleicher, 2016). Struggling students may work on too difficult tasks or, conversely, high ability students may practice skills they have already mastered (Tomlinson et al., 2003). Clearly, more information about effective practices is needed. A recent review and meta-analysis of differentiated instruction practices in primary education shows that differentiated instruction has some potential for improving student outcomes, when implemented well (Deunk et al., 2018). However, these results may not generalize directly to secondary education, since the situation in which teachers teach multiple classes in secondary education is rather different in nature compared to primary education (Van Casteren et al., 2017). For secondary education, evidence for the

benefits of differentiated instruction is scarce (Coubergs et al., 2013). The bulk of studies in secondary education focus on differentiation of students between classes by means of streaming or tracking (Slavin, 1990a; Schofield, 2010). Alternatively, the current study seeks to scrutinize which empirical evidence there is on the effectiveness of within-class differentiated instruction in secondary education, how studies operationalize the approach, and in which contexts the studies were performed.

One of the primary goals of effective teaching is to foster children's learning outcomes and help them become self-directed, problem-solvers, and creative thinkers. These attributes are necessary to be successful in life, not just at school. As such, schools must provide these opportunities within the curriculum to help students practice and develop these skills (Maduakolam & Ogo, 2010). However, the balancing act deals with standards and classrooms containing diverse learners with different socio-economic statuses, interests, and learning styles. Children do not all learn the "same thing in the same way on the same day." Consequently, teachers must consider each learner within the learning community based on needs, readiness, preferences, and interests. In order to effectively do this, teachers need to adopt a method that enables them to plan strategically and provide various options to reach targeted standards, goals, and objectives successfully. Differentiated Instruction (DI) allows teachers to meet learners where they are and offers challenging, appropriate options for them to achieve success. A close look at educational institutions may reveal that many instructors teach and assess learners similarly without paying attention to learners' diverse learning needs. One way to accomplish this is to emphasize differentiated instruction not merely as an instructional strategy but as a critical teaching and learning philosophy that all prospective teachers should use in teacher education programs (Ireh & Ibeneme, 2010). According to Tomlinson & Imbeau (2010), this teaching philosophy follows this set of beliefs.

Differentiated instruction is grounded in the recognition that learners of the same age differ in their readiness to learn, interests, learning styles, experiences, and life circumstances, and that these differences are substantial enough to significantly affect what pupils need to learn. It also assumes that learners learn best when they can connect the curriculum to their interests and life experiences, and that the primary role of schools is to maximize the capacity of every child. In this context, contemporary classroom teachers are expected to develop routines that address, rather than ignore, learners' differences in readiness, interest, and learning profile. Educational institutions must likewise establish systems that support effective teaching and the modeling of differentiated instruction. Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) describe differentiation as classroom practice that balances attention to individual pupils and course content. They explain that at the heart of differentiated classroom practice is the modification of curriculum-related elements such as content, process, and product based on learner readiness, interest, and learning profile in mixed-ability classrooms. Differentiation is not a new concept; rather, it is a teaching theory founded on the idea that instruction must respond to the diverse needs and varying abilities of learners in a classroom (Gregory, 2003; Tomlinson, 2009). By nature, differentiated instruction supports constructivist learning theory and is reinforced by empirical research on how learner readiness, interests, and intelligence preferences influence pupils' motivation, engagement, and academic growth in schools (Tomlinson & Allan, 2000). Differentiated Instruction tailors lessons to meet each learner's interests, needs, and strengths, giving learners flexibility and helping teachers personalize instruction. The teacher, who is central to the success of differentiated instruction, is therefore challenged to facilitate learning for pupils with varying readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles.

Despite this, many teachers continue to apply a one-size-fits-all approach in their classrooms, overlooking the uniqueness of each student even when they recognize the need to respond to learner diversity (Tomlinson, 2009). Addressing learner differences can promote better interaction between teachers and students through scientific principles and foundations that ensure students understand the most relevant information and facts (Tulbure, 2011). For this reason, differentiated instruction is viewed as an essential teaching strategy that many countries have begun to adopt in order to address students' varying needs, inclinations, interests, and levels of understanding, which may help improve academic achievement (Njagi, 2015). Although differentiated instruction has gained considerable attention as a means of improving student performance, important gaps remain in the empirical literature. Numerous studies have examined the relationship between differentiated instruction and academic achievement. Some, such as Alsalhi et al. (2021) and Yavuz (2020), found a significant positive relationship, whereas others, including El Masry (2017), Güvenç (2021), and Yavuz (2020), found no relationship between differentiated instruction and academic achievement. These findings suggest inconsistency in earlier research. In addition, previous studies such as Alsalhi et al. (2021), El Masry (2017), and Yavuz (2020) gave little attention to Iraqi English, focusing instead on other countries and other subject areas. Yet English plays an important practical role for both individuals and society because it enhances analytical and problem-solving abilities that improve pupils' functional capacities. According to the findings of Boaler (2002), different teaching strategies for males and females also produce different effects on academic performance when students are guided according to their interests, learning preferences, and readiness levels in ways that support personal development and learning. Thus, differentiated instruction may contribute to equity in education and social justice by addressing the diverse learning needs of students.

Several gaps become evident from the preceding discussion. Prior research has concentrated largely on the relationship between differentiated instructional methods and academic achievement in other countries. Moreover, earlier studies have

produced contradictory results and have paid limited attention to English as a discipline, especially among university students. These disparities have motivated researchers to examine the effect of differentiated instruction on academic attainment. The current study therefore aims to determine how various instructional approaches affect Iraqi students' academic performance at different levels. The research is composed of five chapters: the first chapter contains the introduction, the second chapter presents the theoretical and empirical literature, the third chapter discusses the methodology including demographics, sample size, and data collection methods, the fourth chapter contains the data analysis and discussion of findings, and the final chapter presents the discussion, conclusion, and recommended actions. A number of studies have already demonstrated the effectiveness of differentiated instruction in improving students' academic performance. However, research on teachers' actual utilization of differentiated instruction remains limited. Furthermore, most studies in this area are foreign, and only a few have been conducted in the Philippines. Anchored in this situation and the significant gap in the literature, the researcher believes that additional investigation is needed, particularly on the utilization of differentiated instruction. Such research may also serve as a basis for developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating plans by school heads regarding teachers' use of differentiated instruction.

This study sought to assess the utilization of differentiated instruction and the academic achievement of Grade 6 learners in Araling Panlipunan in the Schools Division Office of Tarlac Province during the school year 2024–2025. Specifically, it aimed to determine the profile of Grade 6 Araling Panlipunan teachers in terms of age, sex, civil status, school assignment, highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and relevant trainings and seminars attended. It also sought to determine the extent of teachers' utilization of differentiated instruction in terms of content, process, and products; to establish whether there is a significant relationship between the teachers' profile and their extent of utilization of differentiated instruction; to identify the academic achievement of Grade 6 learners during the first and second quarters; and, based on the findings, to propose an intervention program that could improve the performance of Grade 6 learners in Araling Panlipunan through the utilization of differentiated instruction.

2. Material and methods

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. This design was considered appropriate because it provided a better and deeper understanding of the phenomenon through an in-depth examination, which served as a basis for improving the utilization of differentiated instruction and, in turn, enhancing learners' academic achievement. The respondents of the study were 130 Araling Panlipunan teachers from the Schools Division Office of Tarlac Province. They were purposively chosen because they were utilizing differentiated instruction in their respective classes.

The study used both a researcher-made and a standardized survey questionnaire to gather the data needed. The first part of the questionnaire identified the profile of the Araling Panlipunan 6 teachers in terms of age, sex, civil status, school assignment, educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and trainings and seminars attended related to differentiated instruction. The second part determined the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction in terms of content, process, and product. The items in this section were taken from the Teacher Self-Reflection on Differentiated Instruction by Tomlinson (2013). The third part gathered data on the academic achievement of Grade 6 learners.

The data-gathering procedure involved the construction, editing, and reproduction of sufficient copies of the questionnaire, securing permission from the Schools Division Superintendent to conduct the study, distributing and retrieving the survey questionnaires, grouping and tabulating the collected data, subjecting the data to statistical treatment with corresponding analysis and interpretation, and drawing implications, findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the results. After the data were collected, they were collated, tallied, analyzed, and interpreted using a 5-point rating scale. The level of utilization of differentiated instruction was classified as follows: 4.4–5.0, always utilized; 3.7–4.3, often utilized; 2.8–3.6, frequently applied and utilized; 1.9–2.7, rarely utilized; and 1.0–1.8, not utilized.

To ensure valid and accurate results, appropriate statistical measures were employed. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, simple percentage, and weighted mean were used to determine the profile of the Araling Panlipunan teachers, the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction, and the academic achievement of the learners. Pearson r correlation and Chi-square correlation were also used to determine the significant relationships among the variables of the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Profile of the Araling Panlipunan 6 Teachers

The findings showed that most of the Araling Panlipunan 6 teachers were between 31 and 45 years old, with 90 teachers or 69.2 percent belonging to this age group, while none were 60 years old and above. This indicated that the majority of the teachers were in their middle years and were still active in the service, with more opportunities for professional growth and development. In terms of sex, 110 or 84.62 percent were female, while 20 or 15.38 percent were male, showing that most of the Araling Panlipunan 6 teachers were females. As to civil status, 70 or 52.8 percent were single and 60 or 46.2 percent were married, which suggested that single teachers slightly outnumbered married teachers. With regard to school assignment, 110 or 84.62 percent were assigned in rural schools, while 20 or 15.38 percent were assigned in urban schools, implying that the majority of the respondents were teaching in barangay schools. In terms of educational attainment, 60 or 46.15 percent were BS degree holders with MA units, 40 or 30.77 percent were master's degree holders, 10 or 7.69 percent were doctorate degree holders, 10 or 7.69 percent had MA degree with doctoral units, and 10 or 7.69 percent were BS degree holders. This implied that most of the Araling Panlipunan teachers had only earned masteral units and had not yet fully advanced in their professional growth and development. In terms of teaching experience, 50 or 38.5 percent had been teaching for 6 to 9 years, 40 or 30.8 percent had 2 to 5 years of experience, and 20 or 15.4 percent each had either 10 years and above or 1 year and below of teaching experience. These results suggested that most of the teachers were experienced but not yet highly seasoned. As regards trainings and seminars attended related to differentiated instruction, 70 or 53.8 percent had attended division-level trainings, 20 or 15.4 percent had attended district-level trainings, 20 or 15.4 percent had attended school-level trainings, 10 or 7.7 percent had attended regional-level trainings, and 10 or 7.7 percent had not attended any. This indicated that the teachers still needed more advanced trainings and seminars related to differentiated instruction in order to be better equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to address the diverse needs of 21st century learners.

3.2. Extent of Utilization of Differentiated Instruction in Terms of Content

The findings revealed that the weighted means for the indicators under content ranged from 3.80 to 4.80, with interpretations of often utilized and always utilized. Among the 13 indicators, only two were interpreted as always utilized: following the curriculum that is based on major concepts and generalizations, which obtained a weighted mean of 4.80, and determining learners' learning styles, which obtained a weighted mean of 4.40. These results implied that the Araling Panlipunan 6 teachers strictly adhered to the curriculum and made efforts to identify the learning styles of their learners. On the other hand, the indicators that received the lowest weighted means of 3.80 were tapping the assistance of co-teachers for unfamiliar lessons and knowing individual learner culture and expectations and relating these to instruction. The average weighted mean for content was 4.20, interpreted as often utilized, which manifested that the Araling Panlipunan 6 teachers were efficient in utilizing differentiated instruction in terms of content.

3.3. Extent of Utilization of Differentiated Instruction in Terms of Process

The findings showed that the weighted means for the indicators under process ranged from 3.80 to 4.60 and were interpreted as often utilized and always utilized. The highest weighted mean of 4.60 was obtained by the indicator that focused on providing activities that required learners to apply and extend understanding. This suggested that the teachers used appropriate activities suited to the different abilities of the learners and provided tasks that challenged their understanding. Meanwhile, the lowest weighted mean of 3.80 was obtained by the indicator on using learner preference groups or learning preference centers. This indicated that the teachers believed learners learned best in their preferred groups and environments. The average weighted mean for process was 4.20, interpreted as often utilized, suggesting that the teachers were flexible and effective in delivering the lesson process and in ensuring the transfer of learning.

3.4. Extent of Utilization of Differentiated Instruction in Terms of Products

The results disclosed that the weighted means for the indicators under products ranged from 3.90 to 4.80 and were interpreted as often utilized and always utilized. The highest weighted mean of 4.80 was obtained by the indicator on scheduling portfolio day to let parents know the performance of their children. This manifested that informing parents about their children's performance had a strong impact on improving learners' academic achievement. The lowest weighted mean of 3.90 was obtained by the indicator on providing multiple modes of expression in the final product, which was interpreted as often utilized. This suggested that the teachers were aware of the different ways by which learners could demonstrate their final outputs. Overall, the average weighted mean for products was 4.40, interpreted as always utilized. This implied that the Araling Panlipunan teachers were efficient in utilizing differentiated instruction in terms of products and were consistently attentive to the learning outcomes of their learners.

3.5. Academic Achievement of Learners

The findings showed that during the first quarter, 108 learners or 40.1 percent obtained grades ranging from 80 to 84, interpreted as satisfactory, while none obtained a grade below 75 or did not meet expectations. In the same quarter, 93 learners or 34.6 percent obtained grades of 85 to 89, interpreted as very satisfactory, 39 or 14.5 percent obtained grades of 90 to 100, interpreted as outstanding, and 29 or 10.8 percent obtained grades of 75 to 79, interpreted as fairly satisfactory.

During the second quarter, 109 learners or 40.5 percent obtained grades of 85 to 89, interpreted as very satisfactory, 83 or 30.8 percent obtained grades of 80 to 84, interpreted as satisfactory, 55 or 20.4 percent obtained grades of 90 to 100, interpreted as outstanding, 21 or 7.8 percent obtained grades of 75 to 79, interpreted as fairly satisfactory, and 1 learner or 0.4 percent obtained a grade below 75 or did not meet expectations. These findings revealed that most learners obtained satisfactory grades in the first quarter and very satisfactory grades in the second quarter. This indicated an improvement in learners' academic achievement from the first to the second quarter, although it was notable that one learner obtained a grade below 75 in the second quarter.

3.6. Relationship between the Profile of Teachers and the Extent of Utilization of Differentiated Instruction

The results showed that the profile variables sex, civil status, school assignment, and educational attainment had p-values of .511, .444, .112, and .567, respectively. These findings indicated that there was no significant relationship between these profile variables and the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction. On the other hand, age, length of experience, and trainings and seminars had r-values of -.147, -.505, and -.068, with p-values of .633, .078, and .852, respectively. Based on the presented results, the hypothesis stating that there was no significant relationship between the profile of the Araling Panlipunan teachers and the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction was accepted, except for age, length of experience, and trainings.

3.7. Relationship between the Profile of Teachers and Learners' Academic Achievement

The findings revealed that the profile variables sex, civil status, school assignment, and educational attainment had p-values of .607, .444, .876, and .218, respectively. These results showed that there was no significant relationship between these profile variables and learners' academic achievement. On the other hand, age, length of experience, and trainings and seminars had r-values of .075, .202, and .094, with significance values of .808, .508, and .797, respectively. Based on the results presented in the study, the hypothesis stating that there was no significant relationship between the profile of the teachers and the learners' academic achievement was accepted, except for age, length of experience, and trainings.

3.8. Relationship between the Extent of Utilization of Differentiated Instruction and Learners' Academic Achievement

The results indicated that content and learners' academic achievement had an r-value of .418 and a significance value of .155, while process and learners' academic achievement had an r-value of .396 and a significance value of .181. These findings signified that there was no significant relationship between content and process and the learners' academic achievement. Meanwhile, products and learners' academic achievement had an r-value of .247 and a significance value of .416, which, based on the study's presentation, was interpreted as indicating a significant relationship. Thus, the hypothesis stating that there was no significant relationship between the extent of implementation of differentiated instruction and learners' academic achievement was accepted except for products. The results could mean that the teachers were still improving in their utilization of differentiated instruction.

3.9. Summary of Findings

The study primarily aimed to evaluate the utilization of differentiated instruction and learners' academic achievement. It utilized the descriptive-correlational research design and involved Araling Panlipunan teachers as respondents. Using a researcher-made and standardized questionnaire as the main instrument for gathering data, the findings revealed that most of the teachers were middle-aged, female, single, assigned in barangay schools, BS degree holders with MA units, had around 6 to 9 years of teaching experience, and had attended trainings at the division level. Among the three criteria for the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction, only products were always utilized, while content and process were often utilized. The learners' academic achievement increased from satisfactory in the first quarter to very satisfactory in the second quarter. Furthermore, there was no significant relationship between the profile of the Araling Panlipunan teachers and the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction. In light of these findings, it was concluded that differentiated instruction in terms of content and process was often utilized, while products were always utilized.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several conclusions were drawn. The study generally aimed to determine the impact of the utilization of differentiated instruction on the academic achievement of Grade 8 learners in La Union Division. The results showed that most of the Araling Panlipunan teachers were middle-aged, female, single, assigned in barangay schools, holders of a BS degree with MA units, had about nine years of teaching experience, and had attended trainings at the division level. In terms of the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction, only products were always utilized, while both content and process were often utilized. With regard to the academic achievement of Grade 8 learners, the findings revealed an increase from satisfactory in the first quarter to very satisfactory in the second quarter. As to the relationship of variables, the results showed that there was no significant relationship between the profile of the Grade 8 teachers and the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction, except for age, length of experience, and trainings. Likewise, there was no significant relationship between the profile of the Grade 8 teachers and the learners' academic

achievement, and there was also no significant relationship between the extent of implementation of differentiated instruction and the learners' academic achievement.

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, several recommendations were proposed. Teachers should continue pursuing higher studies and attending relevant trainings in order to keep themselves updated with new trends and innovations in addressing the needs of diverse learners. The Department of Education, through School-Based Management, should further emphasize the utilization of differentiated instruction to ensure that the needs of all learners in the classroom are addressed and that no learner is left behind. School heads should also include the utilization of differentiated instruction in their supervisory plans to strengthen its implementation in the classroom. In addition, school heads should conduct constant monitoring to ensure the effectiveness of the utilization of differentiated instruction. Finally, a follow-up study with a broader scope and wider coverage was recommended to generate more comprehensive findings and strengthen the existing results of the study.

The study was limited to determining the impact of the utilization of differentiated instruction on the academic achievement of Grade 8 learners in La Union Division. It focused only on the profile of Araling Panlipunan teachers, the extent of utilization of differentiated instruction in terms of content, process, and products, the academic achievement of learners during the first and second quarters, and the relationship among the variables considered in the study. The respondents were confined to the identified teachers within the specified locale, which means that the findings may not be generalized to all teachers and learners in other divisions or subject areas. Moreover, the study relied mainly on survey data and the measured academic performance of learners within a limited period, which may not fully capture other factors that could influence academic achievement.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards in research. Permission was obtained from the concerned authorities before the conduct of the study, and participation of the respondents was voluntary. The confidentiality and privacy of the participants were properly observed, and all information gathered was used solely for academic purposes.

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