



School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) among Secondary School Teachers under New Normal

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aims: To determine the relationship among the demographic profile, level of management skills, and level of implementation of School Learning Action Cell (SLAC)

Study design: Descriptive - correlation

Place and Duration of Study: Department of Education, Division of Digos City, Davao del Sur during the Second Semester 2020-2021.

Methodology: The study involved 133 English teachers from seven public secondary schools. These teachers were involved in SLAC implementation. Complete enumeration was used in selecting the teachers.

Results: Most of the respondents' average age was 37, mostly female, and serving the Department of Education for 11 years and above. In the SLAC, respondents had been serving as members for two to three years. The level of management skills of those serving the SLAC and SLACs in terms of Topic and Implementation Process were described as very much ready. With regards to the relationship of respondents' demographic profile and the level of SLAC Implementation, the age and years rendered in SLAC had influenced to its implementation. Moreover, there was a very strong relationship between the level of management skills and SLAC implementation. Although the result did not show the entire situation in the country, the conduct of SLAC sessions could be sustained as well as its monitoring and evaluation to keep everyone updated in the new teaching pedagogy that might help address the challenges in the teaching-learning process.

Conclusion: Teachers who are in their late thirties and above and have experienced in handling SLAC may be given bigger responsibilities for SLAC implementation. Moreover, level of management of skills may be enhanced to improve the implementation of SLAC.

Keywords: School learning action cell (SLAC); secondary school teachers; Kapatagan National High School; Digos city.

1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of educational advancement is professional growth. Education must meet minimum quality requirements to enhance citizens' capacities and inform critical decisions affecting their welfare [1]. According to UNESCO in 2006, the teachers should utilize intuitive and encouraging ways to deal with the students' learning. The writing on instructive quality shows a clear connection between proficient instructor and instructive quality, especially in teachers' convictions and practices, students' learning, and instructive change implementation. In this context, Khokhotva [2] found that an teachers learn best through participation with colleagues in a worked-based learning.

A method for teachers' progress known as Learning Action Cell (LAC) was created to have a collective approach to planning, presenting, observing, evaluating, and reflecting on classroom lessons for teachers [3]. A report on the efficacy of using Learning Action Cell (LAC) model showed that it has many potentials to improve teachers' learning, information sharing, and collegiality. In Kazakhstan, this model has shown to be an effective tool for assisting instructors in dealing with the weight of instructional adjustments [2].

It was observed in the Philippines that the content of Learning Action Cell (LAC) model was centered on the 21st century skills and ICT Integration in instruction [4]. LAC also affected teaching science as it promote camaraderie, coordinated effort, acquired learning, and professional development (Vega, 2020). It was recommended that a Learning Action Cell (LAC) should be possible through the school- based Learning Action Cell (SLAC), which fundamentally works as an expert learning local area for teachers. Each SLAC should compose of a leader, a facilitator, a documenter, a resource person, and members and each member should share common goals, strong sense of moral purpose and requisite pedagogic and initiative skills [5].

Department of Education Order No. 18 s. 2014 mandated all schools in the Philippines that

midterm break should be allotted for teachers' individual assessment and collective performance, as well as the of conduct In-Service Training (INSET) including SLAC to assist teachers' professional development. However, with the onset of the COVID-19, the Philippine education system was forced to find alternatives ways in the conduct of its programs including the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC). In the conduct of SLAC, teachers observed the minimum health protocols set by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) or sometimes sessions were conducted through google meet and zoom when COVID-19 cases in the area was critical. Despite the unpredictable situation, schools conduct SLAC trainings because it aimed at supporting teachers and it answered the mandate of the Department of Education (DepEd). However, since its implementation and until the impact COVID-19, there was no assessment and monitoring conducted to show whether the SLAC was able to attain it goals of helping the teachers. Hence, it motivated the researcher to determine the level of implementation of School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) in the English Department among the secondary schools in Digos City, Province of Davao del Sur.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

This purpose of this study was to determine the level of implementation of the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) among the public secondary schools English Teachers in Digos City, Davao del Sur. The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Determine the demongraphic profile of the school personnel, namely, SLAC leaders and teachers in terms of:
 1. age
 2. sex
 3. position
 4. number of years in service
 5. position in the SLAC session
 6. number of years in SLAC

2. Determine the level of management skills of school in the implementation of the SLAC in terms of:
 1. SLAC leader
 2. facilitator
 3. documenter
 4. member
 5. resource person
3. Determine the level of implementation of SLACs in terms of:
 1. Topic
 2. Implementation process
4. Examine the significant relationship between the demographic profile and the level of School Learning Action Cell (SLAC).
5. Examine the significant relationship between the level of management skills and the SLAC implementation.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The success of any academic institution relies on teachers' performance and on how they function towards their roles, responsibilities, and other related tasks at hand. This study was of considerable importance to all public secondary schools in the Digos City Division and redounds to the benefit of the following individual or group of individuals:

Officials of the Department of Education (DepEd). The results of the study would help the DepEd officials to be aware of the problem encountered by the teachers throughout the implementation of the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC). Thus, they would enhance the the guidelines and implementing rules and regulations for the program.

School Administrators. The results of the study would guide the school administrators to strengthen their leadership in organizing the SLAC program. They need to ensure that the standard procedures of holding regular SLAC sessions were developed, followed, and maintained.

Teachers. The results of the study would increase the understanding of the teachers on their significant role and responsibilities in the total academic performance of the pupils, as well as in areas that needed improvement, as part of the SLAC's implementation.

Future Researchers. The results of the study would help future researchers to investigate further on related topics for additional information. Another study with similar topic may be conducted qualitatively.

1.3 Scope and Limitations

This study was focused on the level of implementation of School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) among the seven public secondary schools of Digos City, Davao del Sur. The study involved 133 academic individuals involved in SLAC implementation. This study was conducted during the second semester of school year 2020-2021. Moreover, this study used the descriptive-correlation research method. With the limited number of respondents and scope, San Jose and Mortos [6] mentioned that results could not generalize the entire population. It means that the findings were only applicable to those public schools which participated in the study.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Research Design

The study assessed the level of implementation of the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) among the public secondary schools in the English Department. It included the relationship between demographic profile and the level of implementation of SLAC and relationship between the level of management skills and level of implementation of teachers. The study used the descriptive correlational method. It endeavored to describe and find out the association of the mentioned variables.

2.2 Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were the seven public secondary school heads and SLAC leaders/ Department Chair, seven SLAC facilitators, seven SLAC documenters, seven SLAC resource persons, and 105 SLAC members in the English Department among public secondary schools of Digos City.

2.3 Research Instrument

In determining and analyzing the implementation of the SLAC program in the public secondary schools in Digos City for the School Year 2020-2021, the researcher used a standardized questionnaire patterned from the SLAC implementing guidelines. The questionnaire was

mandated by the DepEd. It was divided into three parts: Part I: the socio-demographic profile; Part II: level of management skills, and Part III: level of implementation.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered using the standardized questionnaire were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted. To analyze the level of implementation of SLAC program, the researcher used the scale below.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher followed the following steps in obtaining the data for this study. First, a permission and endorsement letters signed by the graduate school dean were obtained. The same letters were given to the Schools Division Superintendent of Digos City Division. Second, the letters were sent to the Public Schools Administrator of Digos City Division. Another request letter was sent to the School Heads to ask permission and approval for the conduct of the study in their schools. With the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the inability to conduct research face-to-face, data gathering procedures were conducted through google forms. The form was sent to the respondents' email or messenger. The data obtained were tallied, collated, and given to a statistician for analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Demographic Profile of the School Personnel

It was noted in the results that the youngest respondents were 23 years old while the oldest

was 62 years old. On the other hand, most of the respondents were 38 years old. The data also showed a standard deviation of 9.81 and 37.85 as the average age of the respondents. It implies that the respondents were generally at the height of working age. Binoya [7] mentioned that older the individuals have more favorable and enthusiastic attitude towards work than the younger ones. With the data analysis results, younger respondents had slight interest on the SLAC. It further implies that as teachers get older, they tend to become capable in doing school management.

The sex profile discloses that the dominant gender was female. It was determined that majority of the school personnel or instructors in the English Department in seven secondary schools of Digos City Division were female dominated. This means the hegemony of femininity dominated the teaching profession among the research locales. Khurshid et al. [8] observed that secondary teachers were mostly female and were more self-efficacious than males, while Anderson [9] also supported the result that there was a great difference of the number of female and male teachers. Female instructors exhibited higher self-efficacy than male teachers, hence, teaching profession was dominated by women. They presented the logic that teaching was regarded a female profession.

Result shows that 54 or 51.43% was Teacher I; 14 or 13.33% was Teacher II; 22 or 20.95% was Teacher III; 10 or 9.52% was Master Teacher I; 3 or 2.86% was Master Teacher II; and 2 or 1.90% was school head. Dominant among the position was Teacher I. This implies that the plantilla positions held by majority of the teacher-respondents were teacher I.

Scale	Parameter Limits	Description	Interpretation
1	4.01 - 5.00	Exceptionally Ready	English teachers' readiness on the implementation of SLAC exceeds the expectation.
2	3.01 - 4.00	Very Much Ready	English teachers have high readiness in the implementation of SLAC.
3	2.01 - 3.00	Ready	English teachers have basic readiness in the implementation of SLAC.
4	1.01 - 2.00	Quite Ready	English teachers have minimum readiness in the implementation of SLAC.
5	0.00 - 1.00	Not Ready	English teachers lack readiness in the implementation of SLAC.

Table 1. Age Profile of School Personnel in the English Department of Seven Secondary Schools in Digos City Division for School Year 2020-2021

Minimum	23
Maximum	62
Mode	38
Mean	37.85
Standard Deviation	9.81

Table 2. Sex profile of school personnel in the english department of seven secondary schools in Digos city division for school year 2020-2021

Sex	F	Rf (%)
Male	19	18.10
Female	86	81.90
Total	105	100.00

Table 3. Position profile of school personnel in the english department of seven secondary schools in Digos city division for school year 2020-2021

Position	F	Rf(5)
Teacher I	54	51.43
Teacher II	14	13.33
Teacher III	22	20.95
Master Teacher I	10	0.52
Master Teacher II	3	2.86
School Head	2	1.90
Total	105	100.00

Table 4. Number of years of school personnel in the english department of seven secondary schools in Digos city division for school year 2020-2021

Number of Years	F	Rf(5)
1 year and below	12	11.43
2-4 years	21	20.00
5-7 years	18	17.14
8-10 years	19	18.10
11 years and above	35	33.33
Total	105	100.00

Result revealed that 12 or 11.43 % of English school personnel rendered service for 1 year and below; 21 or 20% rendered 2-4 years; 18 or 17.14% served for 5-7 years; 19 or 18.10% served for 8-10 years; and 35 or 33.33% for 11 years in service and above. This indicated that

most teacher-respondents had spent at least 11 years with the Department of Education.

Data presented that 4 or 3.81% of the respondents claimed that they were SLAC leaders; 11 or 10.48% was SLAC facilitators only; 5 or 4.76% was SLAC documenters; 66 or 62.86% was SLAC members; 1 or 0.95% was SLAC resource person; 1 or 0.95% was SLAC leader at the same time facilitator; 1 or 0.95% was SLAC leader and member; 1 or 0.95% was SLAC leader or resource person; 4 or 3.81% was SLAC facilitator at the same time resource person; 3 or 2.86% was SLAC documenter and member; 1 or 0.95% was SLAC member and resource person; 3 or 2.86% was SLAC facilitator, member, and resource person; 1 or 0.95% was SLAC documenter, member, and resource person; 2 or 1.90% was SLAC leader, facilitator, documenter, member, and resource person; and 1 or 0.95% was SLAC facilitator, documenter, member, and resource person. Data connote that majority of the school personnel who were previously and currently teaching English subjects are SLAC members with 66 or 63%. On the other hand, there were 2 or 2% of them who served with five positions as SLAC leader, facilitator, documenter, resource person and at the same time member. This implies that SLAC in seven public schools are dominated by members.

Result revealed that 22 or 20.95% of the school personnel served in SLAC for below 1 year; 47 or 44.76% rendered service in SLAC for 2-4 years, 17 or 16.19% served for 4-6 years; 12 or 11.43% rendered service for 6-8 years; 2 or 1.90% for 8-10 years; and 5 or 4.76% rendered service for 12 years and above. The dominant number of years in the SLAC was 2-4 years comprising of 47 teachers or 44.76% of the respondents. This means that most of the participants were Teacher I and were newly employed. It implies that SLAC members are neophyte and need more trainings.

According to DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016, SLAC is an outlet for new and experienced teachers. It is an avenue to engage in collaborative learning sessions; to tackle and shared issues encountered in the school. It further implies that albeit SLAC has been implemented in public elementary and secondary schools across the country, it has yet to be fully institutionalized.

Table 5. Position in the SLAC school personnel in the english department of seven secondary schools in Digos city division for school year 2020-2021

Position	F	Rf(5)
SLAC Leader	4	3.81
SLAC Facilitator	11	10.48
SLAC Documenter	5	4.76
SLAC Member	66	62.86
SLAC Resource Person	1	0.95
SLAC Leader; SLAC Facilitator	1	0.95
SLAC Leader; Member	1	0.95
SLAC Leader; Resource Person	1	0.95
SLAC Facilitator; Resource Person	4	3.81
SLAC Documenter; Member	3	2.86
SLAC Member; Resource Person	1	0.95
SLAC Facilitator; Member; Resource Person	3	2.86
SLAC Documenter; Member; Resource Person	1	0.95
SLAC Leader; Facilitator; Documenter/ Member; Resource Person	2	1.90
SLAC Facilitator; Documenter; Member; Resource Person	1	0.95
Total	105	100.00

Table 6. Number of Years of slac school personnel in the english department of seven secondary schools in Digos city division for school year 2020-2021

Number of Years	F	Rf(5)
Below 1 year	22	20.95
2 - 4 years	47	44.76
4 - 6 years	17	16.19
6 - 8 years	12	11.43
8 - 10 years	2	1.90
10 years above	5	4.76
Total	105	100.00

3.2. Management Skills of School Personnel in the English Department of Seven (7) Secondary Schools

Table 7 revealed the level of management skills in the implementation of the SLAC by the SLAC leader, facilitator, documenter, member, and resource person with a mean rating of 3.25, 3.33, 3.35, 3.60, and 3.40 respectively. Overall, the level of management skills of those serving the SLAC had a mean of 3.39. It implies that the committees have high readiness to implement the School Learning Action Cell. It also revealed that SLAC obtained the highest mean among others. As conceptualized in Department Order No. 35, s. [10], a teacher must be a SLAC member since it was necessary upon the DepEd to ensure every teacher's continuing professional advancement. Oracion [5] stressed out that teachers become more prolific through trainings and seminars which increase every learner's knowledge, abilities, and attitudes for them to be

internationally competitive. Among the committees, the SLAC resource person got the lowest rank which obtained a mean rating 3.40. However, this rating was still described as very much ready. It means that the SLAC resource person was well prepared to conduct SLAC sessions, including identifying areas for development, reviewing session outcomes with the SLAC leader, and organizing materials and equipment to be used during the SLAC session. According to Whitehouse [11], good educational institutions ensure that teachers have access to both methods to professional development programs. This concept came to reality because the Philippine Educational System encourages teachers to continue their professional development. Teachers can gain expert knowledge and specific abilities by undergoing rigorous trainings.

3.3 Implementation of SLAC of School Personnel in the English Department of Seven Secondary Schools

Table 8 shows the level of implementation of School Learning Action Cell in terms of topic for SLAC session and the implementation process. Over-all mean shows that both obtained a description of "very much ready." It implies that all teaching tactics, activities, and curriculum implementation are in line with the K-12 Basic Education Program's content and methodology. This further implies that the SLAC members have prepared contextualize materials which students can relate. According to Alexander [12], curriculum needs to integrate macro and define

educational goals and content with micro teaching and evaluation. On the other hand, Gigante and Firestone [13] identified the challenges of transformation which were self-renewal, professional advancement, knowledge expansion, and lifelong learning. Hence, the teacher development component through its Learning Action Cell Team created resource materials and packages for teachers implementing LACs including the use of ICT in classroom instruction. SLAC's ICT training prepared teachers to be globally competitive. Teachers' active participation in the trainings assist in the establishment of a positive learning environment, enhancement of teaching-learning conditions, and the updating of current instructional technology, as well as encouraging them to become better teachers in the modern world.

3.4 SLAC Implementation Process

The data manifested that the SLAC implementation process was very much ready. Brownwell et al. [14] identified peer coaching, collaborative consultation, study groups, and mentorship are essential strategies for teachers to maintain their professional development, particularly during the implementation of curricular reforms. Bernardo and Mendoza [15] mentioned that those curricular reforms can be acquired through in-service trainings for teachers. SLAC members are expected to identify professional progress and focus some concerns to be discussed or handled during the in-service training or SLAC session, guided by the SLAC leader and facilitator. Leaders of SLACs should keep an eye on these activities to see how much they are helping to enhance student outcomes. According to the findings of the study, all SLAC committees were well-prepared for the implementation process of creating line-item budgets from the school MOOE and other external funds. Scribner et al. [16] averred that professional learning

communities model is likely to be effective and long-lasting when those responsible for its execution were included in the decision-making process.

Table 9 shows the relationship of respondents' demographic profile and level of the SLAC implementation. Statistical analysis revealed that there was a significant relationship between respondents' demographic profile and level of the SLAC implementation on areas including age and number of years in SLAC. It implies that age of respondents is significantly affect the level of implementation of SLAC with a Chi-square value of 21.223 and p- value of 0.047 at 0.05 level of significance. This further implies that age and number of years in SLAC matter among teachers. As shown in the data, the average age of the respondents was 37.85 and the dominant number of years rendered in SLAC Program was 2 to 4 years. It showed direct correlation which showed that the older the participants become the more they enhanced their SLAC performance. Cacho [17] conceptualized that those individuals within the early 30's were most likely to be more efficient and flexible with enriched socializing and mental flexibility. On the other hand, in terms of position (p-value = 0.913), years in service (p-value =0.71) and SLAC position (p-value= 0.324) showed no significant relationship to the level of SLAC implementation. This means that sex, position, years in service, and SLAC position do not significantly correlate with SLAC implementation.

Table 10 shows the relationship between level of management skills and SLAC implementation. Data revealed a significant relationship between the level management skills and SLAC implementation with a p-value of 0.00. This implies that there is a strong relationship between management skills and SLAC implementation. This further implies that without the management skills, SLAC implementation could not be possible. Capili-Balbalin [18] opined

Table 7. Level of management skills of school personnel in the english department of seven secondary schools in Digos city division, S.Y. 2020-2021

Position	Mean	Description
SLAC Leader	3.25	Very much ready
SLAC Facilitator	3.33	Very much ready
SLAC Documenter	3.35	Very much ready
SLAC Member	3.60	Very much ready
SLAC Resource Person	3.40	Very much ready
Overall	3.39	Very much ready

Table 8. Level of implementation of slac of school personnel in the english department of seven secondary schools in Digos city division, S.Y. 2020-2021

Implementation	Mean	Description
A. Topics for SLAC		
1. Learner diversity and student inclusion	3.41	Very much ready
2. Content and Pedagogy of the K-12 Basic Education Program	3.33	Very much ready
3. Assessment and reporting in the K-12 Basic Education Program	3.32	Very much ready
4. 21 st Century skills and ICT Integration in instruction and assessment	3.34	Very much ready
5. Curriculum contextualization, localization, and indigenization	3.30	Very much ready
B. SLAC Implementation process	3.29	Very much ready
Overall	3.33	Very much ready

Table 9. Chi-square summary of the significant relationship between the demographic Profile and the Level of SLAC implementation S.Y. 2020-2021

	Chi-Square Value	P-value	Decision
Age	21.223	0.047	Reject H0
Sex	5.959	0.202	Failed to reject H0
Position	9.012	0.913	Failed to reject H0
Years in service	19.796	0.71	Failed to reject H0
SLAC position	17.996	0.324	Failed to reject H0
Years in SLAC	35.194	0.019	Reject H0

Table 10. Relationship between level of management skills and SLAC Implementation S.Y. 2020-2021

Variable	r-value	Degree of Relationship	p-value	Decision
Level of Management Skills and SLAC Implementation	0.896	Very Strong	0.00	Reject H0

that the advocacy of the Department of Education to provide equitable and quality basic education can be ensured. This is accomplished through executing the duties and obligations of a competent and efficient teacher on a regular basis and analyzing the K-12 curriculum implementation.

4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Summary

Based on the analyses and interpretations of the data gathered, the following findings are drawn. Most of the respondents are at average age of 37, mostly female (81.90%), serving the Department of Education 11 years and above. In the SLAC, the respondents are serving as members (62.86%) for 2-4 years. Generally, the respondents are mostly female. On the level of management skills in the implementation of the SLAC, it shows that the SLAC leader, facilitator, documenter, member, and resource person are

rated 3.25, 33.33, 3.35, 3.60, and 3.40, respectively. Overall, the level of management skills of those serving the SLAC has a mean of 3.39, described as very much ready. It further reveals that the overall mean for the level of implementation of the SLAC among schools both in the topics and process are described as very much ready with a mean score of 3.33.

The relationship of respondents' demographic profile and the level of School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) implementation reveals that only age (p-value = 0.047) and years rendered in SLAC (p-value = 0.019) show a significant relationship to the level of implementation of SLAC implementation; while sex (p-value = 0.202), position (a p-value = 0.913), years in service (p-value = 0.71), SLAC position (p-value = 0.71), do not show any significant relationship. Moreover, there is a very strong relationship between the level of management skills and SLAC implementation which has an r-value of 0.896 and p-value of 0.000 which is significant. Moreover, there is a very strong relationship

between the level of management skills and SLAC implementation which has an r-value of 0.896 and p-value of 0.000 which is significant.

4.2 CONCLUSION

Teachers who are in their late thirties and above and have experienced in handling SLAC may be given bigger responsibilities for SLAC implementation. Moreover, level of management of skills may be enhanced to improve and sustain the implementation of SLAC.

4.3 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The conduct of SLAC sessions may be sustained to keep everyone updated in the new teaching pedagogy and to immediately address the challenges in the process of teaching-learning.
2. Since the level of management is very much ready, it is recommended that SLAC leaders design pedagogical innovations to elevate and advance teaching performance with the use of modern classroom tools like e-portfolio, virtual/flip classrooms, digital assessment strategies, etc.
3. The Department of Education may continue to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the School Learning Action Cell, particularly in the Digos City Division, and consider establishing a reward system for outstanding SLAC implementers.
4. Similar study may be conducted to validate the results of this study.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the authors.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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