

ISSN: 3028-0141 (PRINT)



PHIL-CAD
ACADEMICIAN
PUBLISHING

THE PHILCAD PHILIPPINE ACADEMICIAN 2025

THE PHILCAD MAGAZINE

VOLUME II, ISSUE NUMBER 3, SERIES OF 2025, INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

3rd Quarter

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- EDITORIAL
- REFLECTION
- NARRATIVE
- POEMS
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- OPINION
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- ABSTRACT

Design & generated through Canva 2025



isbn ISSN

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Literary Works



Justine P. Gubala

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21st Century: The Age of the Click, the Death of Discernment

As we start to fully embrace the limitless possibilities that come with the advent of the technological era, mankind imperatively has to evolve and acquire new sets of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be able to effectively navigate the broader world that is presented right before our eyes.

On a 24-hour basis, seven times a week, we find ourselves almost always immersed in utilizing the wonders that technology has made possible for us. One of which is the immense level of efficiency that it is able to provide to us after just one single, no-brainer click. However, amidst such a facade that promises convenience lies a bare truth that many fail to recognize and overlook, which ultimately leads to their downfall and, for some, even worse, a point of no return. Technology, no matter if we admit it or not, has made a lot of us so gullible, making us believe things without conducting thorough consideration of them first. Maybe it was the anonymity, or the false sense of control that it gives us, but somewhere along the way, the lines between access and understanding seem to just blur. We scroll endlessly, consume thoughtlessly, and react instantly to the point that we forget that discernment, like trust, is earned and not assumed. This is why critical thinking as a skill in the 21st century is essential, for in a world primarily dominated and automated by Artificial Intelligence (AI), the only way that we can outsmart it and not let it end up controlling us is to have that awakening that it must be the other way around. They are the tools, not us. So let them scan the data, but we must be the ones to read between the lines. Let them answer, but we must learn to ask better.

In this age of hyper-connectivity, the true danger is not in misinformation alone, but in our quiet surrender to it. May we stay anchored on what makes us humans, to pause amid the noise, to question even the obvious, and to choose not what is easy, but what is true. And that is what makes a resolute 21st-century citizen.



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Rooted in the Now: The Mindful Path to Inclusion

Along with the fast-paced globalization that has been surging into almost every aspect of today's contemporary times, it is imperative that comes along with it is the rapid exchange of ideas and cultures that occurs in just a single click.

With this, now more than ever, expectations across societies actively evolve towards striving to integrate the value of teaching inclusivity and the behaviours, approaches, and strategies to champion it across various settings. But as the cliché saying goes, everything starts at home, highlighting the pivotal roles of an individual's parents and guardians in instilling such value to the children starting from an early age. However, we all know that apart from the home, much of an individual's formational years are at the same time spent within the four corners of the classroom once they start formal school. And while they may have already pre-learned several values before they start to attend formal schooling, it is at school where they start to interact with the broader world around them, which may either challenge or reinforce the values they learned at home. In this context, consistency is the key, which is primarily the educator's responsibility. As the learners encounter more and more experiences as they advance academically, it is imperative that they get to cross paths with more and more people who may or may not share the same set of values and culture that they grew up adhering. However, if the value of inclusivity has been intact imbued into them, chances are they will be able to navigate the complex world in front of them with great ease, which is key in their quest of achieving limitless growth not just as a student, but a multifaceted individual capable of thriving amidst differences, embracing plurality, and building bridges where walls have long stood.

With this, if one is to be asked when we start teaching children to see the world not as a battleground of beliefs but a mosaic of being, the answer is neither tomorrow nor someday. Because the answer is always yesterday. And if that start was missed, then today must be mindfully lived twice in full presence





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Doing It All, Missing the Page: Rebuilding Foundations of Reading at Home

Marked by their extreme technological connectivity and over-committed tendencies, millennials, in a nutshell, can be collectively characterized as the time-starved generation who has the desire to do it everything all at once. From breaking beyond the bounds of societal expectations and redefining contemporary norms, Millennials face a major challenge of overwhelming caliber: and that is how to manage their time to prioritize what matters more.

In particular, while such unique tendencies are admirable, the context of child-rearing is a completely different story, as it requires not only flexibility, but a new set of challenges head-on. In today's age and time, the majority of the children and teenagers currently studying under the basic education curriculum have Millennial parents. However, with the desire to do it all, while at the same time attempting to raise well-rounded children, often stretches Millennial parents to their limits, they most end up unconsciously sacrificing one aspect of their lives, and it is oftentimes the time for their children. In particular, while many Millennial parents, strive to be present as much as possible, they often do not have any more spare time to provide early at-home reading interventions for their children. This gap manifests in classrooms across various levels, where educators encounter children who lack the most fundamental literacy skills expected by the time they enter formal schooling. Much like building blocks, early knowledge in the alphabet and phonics are expected pre-formal school competencies, which many children in the current educational system lacks. This reflects a growing concern in today's academic system, as this deficit in foundational reading fluency often reflects not a failure of intelligence, but rather a failure of connection between the home and the school, and between systemic understanding and actionable policies. This brings forth a compelling proposition, and that is the need for a relational education framework that is not a top-down mandate, but a grass-root approach. In particular, what is needed are feasible, locally adaptable methods that are responsive to the lifestyle of Millennial parents. For example, community centers or daycare units can distribute home reading "starter kits" that includes simple bundles with a picture book, an alphabet chart, a reading log, and a parent tracker sheet in both English and Filipinos, serving not only as educational tools but also tangible reminders that the home is a child's first school.

In conclusion, what is truly needed are not large-scale institutional reforms. What Millennial parents need are systems that affirm and enable their parenting within the constraints of modern life.



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Sa Loob ng Aklat at Aking Katahimikan

Sa pagitan ng pahina at panaginip,
Ako'y nalulunod sa footnote at sipi.
Kape na lang minsan ang aking kaibigan,
At ang tulong, parang pangarap na lamang.

Lumipas ang gabi sa tunog ng tik-tak,
Habang ka-chat ko'y Google at Turnitin.
Mga mata'y pula, likod ay sumasakit,
Pero may pasabog pa si adviser sa chat: "Revise again."

Sahod ko'y sakto lang sa printing at snacks,
Pinambili pa ng APA 7th Manual, bagsak!
Sana man lang may award o GC,
Pero madalas ay "Very good, keep going" lang—walang GC.

Guro sa umaga, mananaliksik sa gabi,
Ina, taga-luto, at editor ng sarili.
Sampung tabs sa browser, dalawa lang ang gamit,
Ang iba, hindi ko na rin alam kung bakit.

Kaya't kung sakaling hindi mo mabasa ang gawa,
Nakatulog siguro ako sa keyboard habang nagsusulat.
Pananaliksik ito, hindi lang trabaho kundi misyon,
Kahit ubos na ang data, may pag-aso pa hanggang konklusyon.



Ferdinand M. Ipanag, Ph.D. (c)
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National University - Manila
Philippines

FILIPINO: Wikang Nagbabago

"Ang wika ang kaisipan ng isang bansa, higit kailanman ito ay tapat na pangangailangan at mithiing sambayanan," ayon kay San Buenaventura (1985).

Tunay ang pahayag na ito. Hindi maitatangi ang maaaring idulot ng maaayos na paggamit ng isang wika sa isang komunidad. Ang maayos na daloy komunikasyon na nauwi sa maayos usapan at pakikipagkapwa. Ang paggamit ng wika sa loob ng tahanan bilang pagpapahayag ng paggalang sa ating mga magulang, kapatid at mga nakatatanda sa atin. Sa paaralan, ang pagrespeto sa mga guro, kamag-aran, utility, at tagapamanihala ng paaralan ay tanda ng maayos na paggamit ng wika. Sa paglabas ng tahanan, sa pakikipag-ugnayang lipunan, pakikibagay, paggalang sa iba't ibang kasarian at pinagmulan ay maituturing ang wika na napakalakas na paggamit sa lipunan kung saan ito ay nakapagpapatatag ng mabuting relasyon sa lipunang ating kinabibilangan.

Kung gaano kabilis ang pagbabago sa ating panahon dulot ng makabagong teknolohiya ganoon din ang pagbabagong nagaganap sa wikang Filipino. Ang pagbabagong ito ay patunay ng pagiging dinamiko ng ating wika. Malaki ang impluwensiya ng walong letrang dagdag sa ating alpabeto na C, F, J, Ñ, Q, V, Z. Ang mga letrang ito ang nagbibigay-daan upang tumanggap at mag-adopt ang ating wika ng mga salitang banya ngunit kailangan pa ring isaalang-alang ang alituntunin ng Ortografiya ng Wikang Filipino o tuntunin sa ispeling.

Ilan sa naranasang pagbabago ng wika ay ang pagsibol ng gaylingo o mga salitang bakla (beki). Halimbawa nito ang, mudra (nanay) morayta (mura) maharlika (mahal) at marami pang iba. Nauunawaan mo ba ang pahayag na: "3ow ph0w, mUsZtAh nA? ibig sabihin ay "Hello, kumusta ka na?" Ito naman ay tinatawag na jejemon kung saan nabelop ang ganitong pagpapahayag dahil sa impluwensiya ng text messaging. Nakilala rin ang pahayag na: "D2 na me, asan na u," "BTW" o "by the way" at "OTW" o "on the way." na naging wika sa text ng mga millennials. Umusbong din ang paggamit ng mga salitang balbal tulad ng ermat (mother), erpat (father) omsim (mismo). Kadalaan na ang tuntunin nito sa pagbuo ng salita ay sa pamamagitan ng pagbabaliktad ng mga letra o pagbabagong-ano ng salitang-ugat. Patuloy naman ang paglago ng iba't ibang rehistro ng wika sa iba't ibang disiplina at larang. Halimbawa nito ang rehistro ng wika sa teknikal-bokasyonal sa paggamit nito ng social media, hard drive, mouse, USB at iba pa. Ang pag-usbong din ng spoken poetry, hugot-lines ay bahagi rin ng pagbabago ng ating wika. Malaki rin ang naging impluwensiya media sa wikang Filipino tulad ng mga pahayag na "Pak ganern!" at "E Di Wow! at syempre ang "mekus-mekus" o mixed-mixed mula naman sa isang kilalang social media influencer.

Hindi natin mapipigilan ang pagbabagong nagaganap sa ating wika bagkus kailangan natin itong sabayan at pagyabungin. Ito ay isang katotohanang dapat nating tanggapin. Dapat na lumabas tayo sa de-kahong konsepto ng makalumang paggamit ng wika upang lubos pa tayong maunawaan ng susunod na henerasyon.



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A Nation's Ordeal: Confronting the Mathematics Deficit with RMA

Looking into the educational sector's status quo, the cracks within the system now start to show; with every little piece coming together to uncover the reality of the current educational crisis that the country is facing. For years, many have failed to acknowledge, or maybe, have chosen to turn a blind eye on this concern, most especially in terms of the current level of mathematical and reading proficiency among Filipino learners, with trends reflecting a constantly declining manner over the past years.

Recognizing this huge gap, Republic Act No. 12028, otherwise known as the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program Act of 2024 was delineated and enacted, which institutionalized the adoption of targeted thrusts to address such concern. In particular, in the context of Mathematics education, one approach that has been adopted under this framework is Rapid Mathematics Assessment (RMA). Primarily catering students from Grades 1 through 10, the tool is divided into three (3) Key Stages, with its phasic implementation now being rolled out in several school divisions across the country. However, while it may be called rapid, the assessment do not revolve around pressuring the students to speedily answer the questions, but rather denotes how the tool can be used to immediately identify the strong suit and the weak points of the students taking the test, thereby providing insights to educators which they can use as a basis for future planning and refinement of their lesson plans.

Indeed, the Rapid Mathematics Assessment offers a promising start, but the true measure of its impact lies not just in the numbers it generates, but in the concrete changes it inspires in teaching and learning. Will this initiative finally bridge the long-standing gaps in mathematics education, or will it simply become another well-intentioned program that fades into the background of unfulfilled reforms?



Chali Claire Daguhoy Daya

Teacher I

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BEYOND FACTS: Inspiring Curiosity, Critical Thinking, and Lifelong Learning in Science

Science is more than a subject; it is a way of thinking and a means of understanding the world. Science educates students with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that empower them to ask questions, investigate, and solve problems that affect their own lives and society. With its pivotal role in human progress, teaching science must be accomplished with a focus that is not just informative but also curious, analytical, and where learning is lifelong. The best way to teach science would be through the application of inquiry-based learning, hands-on techniques, the latest technology, real-world applications, and student inquiry methods.

One of the pillars of successful science education is inquiry-based learning. As opposed to simple information transmission, inquiry-based learning places learners as do-it-yourself researchers. They are encouraged to ask questions, make educated hypotheses, try out their ideas, and make evidence-based conclusions. Such a method creates critical 21st-century competencies such as problem-solving, deductive reasoning, and critical thinking. For example, instead of lecturing about photosynthesis, teachers can ask learners to develop plant experiments where they observe growth under varying conditions. These activities help students learn concepts on their own terms and thereby make learning more interesting and purposeful.

Experiential and hands-on learning is another important feature where the students get direct exposure to scientific phenomena. Science comes alive and becomes more memorable when students conduct experiments, undertake fieldwork, or carry out experiments in class. Activities such as observing microorganisms under a microscope or testing water samples in their local community not only make theory concrete but also promote curiosity and interest. They make students connect what they learn in class to real life, resulting in increased learning and retention.

Currently, the use of technology greatly enhances science teaching. Multimedia resources, interactive software, and virtual simulations provide engaging ways of exploring abstract or complex concepts.

For example, a 3D simulation of the solar system can give students a more physical sense of planetary motion, and virtual simulations of laboratories can allow them to try experiments under conditions that are not feasible in light of resource or safety constraints. Technology also promotes collaboration, as students are able to collect, examine, and share information on the internet, enhancing teamwork and online literacy.

Moreover, science education must be made an integral part of daily life to bring out its importance and relevance. Students should learn how science impacts their communities and lives. Education based on ongoing issues such as climate change, renewable energy, public health, and sustainable development allows students to apply scientific principles to problems facing society. It does this by empowering students to use what they learn for problem-solving and decision-making, thereby making them responsible and informed citizens.

Finally, a most excellent method of teaching science is student-centered, in which the heterogeneity of backgrounds, interests, and capabilities among the learners is taken into account. Educators must establish a classroom where inclusivity is practiced, curiosity is encouraged, mistakes are seen as opportunities for growth, and collaboration is esteemed. Through the diversification of methods to suit different ways of learning, teachers ensure that everyone is able to access, appreciate, and attain science education. The best method of teaching science is one that mixes together inquiry, experiential learning, technological tools, real-world applications, and student-centered instruction. Not only does it better inform students about scientific concepts, it also educates them in important skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. Most importantly, it inspires learners to be lifelong explorers and creators who are positively contributing to society. By embracing such a philosophy, instructors can make science classrooms centers for discovery, curiosity, and empowerment.



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Coping Strategies for Mathematics Anxiety: A Case Study of Senior High School Students at Dasmariñas East Integrated High School

Mathematics anxiety is a prevalent issue among students, particularly in senior high school, where the curriculum demands a higher level of mathematical proficiency. This anxiety can significantly impede academic performance, reduce motivation, and even affect students' overall well-being. Recognizing the need to address this challenge, this case study delves into the coping strategies employed by senior high school students at Dasmariñas East Integrated High School to manage their mathematics anxiety.

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of the students' experiences. A total of 120 senior high school students participated in the survey, while 15 students were selected for in-depth interviews based on their survey responses. The survey instrument included a standardized mathematics anxiety rating scale, along with questions about the coping strategies they commonly use. The interviews explored the students' perceptions of mathematics, their experiences with anxiety, and the effectiveness of different coping mechanisms.

The findings revealed that a significant proportion of the students experienced moderate to high levels of mathematics anxiety. Common sources of anxiety included fear of failure, pressure to perform well, and negative past experiences with mathematics. However, the study also identified a range of coping strategies that students employed to manage their anxiety. These strategies can be broadly categorized into cognitive, behavioral, and emotional approaches.

Cognitive coping strategies involved changing negative thought patterns and beliefs about mathematics. Some students reported using positive self-talk, reminding themselves of their past successes, and reframing challenging problems as opportunities for learning. Behavioral coping strategies included seeking help from teachers or peers, practicing relaxation techniques, and breaking down complex problems into smaller, more manageable steps. Emotional coping strategies focused on managing the emotional responses associated with anxiety. Students reported engaging in activities that helped them relax and de-stress, such as listening to music, exercising, or spending time with friends and family.

The effectiveness of these coping strategies varied among individuals. Some students found that cognitive strategies were most helpful in reducing their anxiety, while others preferred behavioral or emotional approaches. However, the study also highlighted the importance of having a combination of strategies to draw upon, as different situations may require different coping mechanisms. Furthermore, the study revealed that students who had a strong support system, including teachers, parents, and peers, were better able to manage their anxiety.

Based on these findings, the study recommends several interventions to support students in managing their mathematics anxiety. These include providing students with explicit instruction on effective coping strategies, creating a supportive classroom environment where students feel comfortable asking for help, and offering counseling services to students who are struggling with high levels of anxiety. Additionally, the study suggests that teachers should be trained to recognize the signs of mathematics anxiety and to implement strategies that can reduce anxiety in the classroom.

In conclusion, mathematics anxiety is a significant challenge for senior high school students at Dasmariñas East Integrated High School, but it is not insurmountable. By understanding the coping strategies that students employ and implementing targeted interventions, educators can help students manage their anxiety and improve their academic performance and overall well-being. This case study provides valuable insights into the experiences of students with mathematics anxiety and offers practical recommendations for supporting them in their journey towards mathematical success.



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THE ROLE OF PLAY IN EARLY MATHEMATICS LEARNING

Mathematics is often perceived as a rigid and numbers-driven subject, yet for young children, the most effective way to understand and enjoy math is through play. Research reveals that play-based learning enhances cognitive growth, strengthens problem-solving skills, and fosters a positive attitude toward mathematics. When math concepts are integrated into games, hands-on tasks, and everyday interactions, children naturally develop foundational skills in a fun and engaging way.

Play is an essential component of early math education because children learn best when they are actively involved in the process. Through play, they can explore mathematical concepts such as counting, shapes, patterns, and measurements in a relaxed environment free from pressure. Unlike repetitive drills, play-based learning sparks curiosity, encourages experimentation, and allows children to view math as exciting rather than intimidating. A study by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) further supports this, showing that children who engage in math-related play develop stronger number sense and spatial awareness. Activities like building with blocks, sorting objects, or playing board games help children grasp abstract concepts by connecting them to concrete experiences.

Different types of play contribute significantly to mathematical learning. Manipulative play, which involves physical objects like blocks, beads, or puzzles, helps children understand quantities, sizes, and geometric shapes. Stacking blocks introduces balance and symmetry, while sorting beads by color or size teaches classification.

Pretend play, such as running a make-believe store or restaurant, incorporates essential skills like counting money, measuring ingredients, and recognizing numbers. Games with rules, including board games like Snakes and Ladders or card games like Uno, reinforce counting, sequencing, and strategic thinking while also teaching patience and turn-taking. Outdoor play, on the other hand, offers opportunities to explore measurement, distance, and volume through activities such as hopscotch, jumping rope, or playing with sand and water.

The long-term benefits of play-based math learning are invaluable. Children who learn math through play are more likely to develop a growth mindset—the belief that skills can be improved through effort—unlike those who rely solely on rote memorization, which often leads to math anxiety. Playful learning not only strengthens problem-solving abilities and logical reasoning but also fosters creativity, all of which are essential for success in higher-level mathematics and STEM-related fields in the future.

Parents and teachers play a crucial role in supporting this approach by providing open-ended toys such as LEGO or pattern blocks, encouraging curiosity through open-ended questions like “How many ways can you divide these toys?”, and incorporating math into daily routines such as counting steps, setting the table, or comparing heights. By embracing play as a learning tool, educators and caregivers can nurture both the confidence and competence of young learners, building a strong foundation for mathematical success.



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DIGITAL VS. PRINT: HOW SCREEN READING AFFECTS LEARNING

In today's digital age, reading habits have shifted dramatically. While traditional print books remain popular, digital screens—such as tablets, e-readers, and smartphones—have become a dominant medium for reading. However, research suggests that the way we absorb information differs significantly between digital and print formats. This raises an important question: How does screen reading affect learning compared to print?

Cognitive Differences Between Digital and Print Reading

Studies have shown that reading on screens often leads to shallower comprehension compared to reading on paper. One reason is that digital reading encourages skimming rather than deep engagement. The scrolling nature of screens, along with distractions like hyperlinks and notifications, can reduce focus and retention. In contrast, print books provide a tactile experience that helps readers better remember content.

A 2018 study by researchers at Dartmouth College found that students who read printed materials performed better in comprehension tests than those who read digitally. The physical presence of a book may help the brain create spatial memories, making it easier to recall information based on where it appeared on a page.

The Impact on Memory and Retention

Memory retention is another key difference between digital and print reading. When reading on screens, people tend to rely more on recognition rather than recall. This means they may remember keywords or general ideas but struggle with detailed information. Print reading, on the other hand, promotes deeper processing, leading to stronger long-term retention.

Additionally, the blue light emitted by screens can cause eye strain and fatigue, which may further hinder learning. Many students report feeling more mentally drained after prolonged screen reading compared to reading from a physical book.

Digital Advantages: Convenience and Accessibility

Despite these drawbacks, digital reading offers undeniable benefits. E-books and online articles are easily accessible, portable, and often more affordable. Features like adjustable font sizes, built-in dictionaries, and text-to-speech functions can enhance learning for some individuals, especially those with visual impairments or reading difficulties. Moreover, digital platforms enable interactive learning through embedded videos, quizzes, and annotations. For fast-paced learning or quick information retrieval, screens can be highly efficient.

Finding the Right Balance

The debate between digital and print reading isn't about declaring one superior to the other—it's about understanding their strengths and weaknesses. For deep learning and complex material, print may be more effective. However, digital tools provide unmatched convenience and adaptability.

Educators and students should consider the purpose of reading when choosing a format. For intensive study sessions, printed materials might be preferable, while digital devices can be useful for quick reviews or multimedia-enhanced learning.



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Breaking Barriers: Effective Methods for Teaching Languages

Language is the bridge that connects cultures, ideas, and people. Yet, learning a new language can be daunting, and teaching one effectively requires more than just textbooks and grammar drills. Educators must break down psychological, cultural, and methodological barriers to help learners achieve fluency. This article explores proven, innovative methods for language teaching that engage students, accelerate learning, and foster real-world communication skills.

1. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The Communicative Approach shifts the focus from rote memorization to real-life interaction. Instead of just conjugating verbs, students engage in meaningful conversations, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks.

Key Techniques:

Pair and group discussions

Debates and storytelling

Task-based activities (e.g., planning a trip, solving a mock problem)

Why It Works: Students gain confidence in using the language naturally, rather than just knowing rules.

2. Immersive & Task-Based Learning

Immersion doesn't always mean studying abroad—teachers can simulate an immersive environment in the classroom.

Strategies:

"No native language" zones – Encourage exclusive use of the target language.

Real-world tasks – Ordering food, giving directions, or negotiating in business scenarios.

Multimedia resources – Films, podcasts, and news clips in the target language.

Why It Works: Learners think in the new language, improving fluency and comprehension.

3. Leveraging Technology in Language Teaching

From AI chatbots to language apps, technology provides personalized and interactive learning experiences.

Tools to Try:

Duolingo, Memrise, or Anki for vocabulary reinforcement.

ChatGPT or language exchange apps (Tandem, HelloTalk) for conversational practice.

Virtual Reality (VR) – Simulate real-life interactions in a controlled setting.

Why It Works: Digital tools provide instant feedback and adapt to individual learning speeds.

4. The Role of Culture in Language Learning

Language isn't just words—it's culture, gestures, and context. Teaching cultural nuances makes lessons more engaging.

How to Integrate Culture:

Compare idioms and humor across languages.

Explore festivals, traditions, and social norms.

Invite native speakers for Q&A sessions.

Why It Works: Students develop deeper connections to the language and stay motivated.

5. Gamification & Motivation Techniques

Games make learning fun and reduce anxiety.

Classroom Gamification Ideas:

Points & leaderboards for participation.

Escape room challenges with language puzzles.

Role-playing games (RPGs) where students "level up" their skills.



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Ethical Leadership and Good Governance: Examining the Role of Integrity in Public Office

In the realm of public service, the concepts of ethical leadership and good governance stand as paramount. These principles serve as the bedrock upon which trusting relationships between government officials and the public they serve are built. Integrity, a multifaceted concept encompassing honesty, morality, and unwavering adherence to ethical principles, emerges as a critical element in shaping both ethical leadership and good governance.

They are also more likely to be accountable for their actions and to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct within their organizations.

Ethical leadership encompasses the ability of individuals holding positions of authority to inspire and guide others toward the achievement of common goals while upholding the highest standards of moral conduct. Ethical leaders possess a strong sense of personal integrity, which enables them to make sound decisions that align with the public interest, even in the face of pressure or adversity. By demonstrating integrity, leaders establish a culture of trust and accountability within their organizations, encouraging others to follow suit.

Good governance, on the other hand, encompasses the processes, policies, and institutions through which a society is governed. It is characterized by transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness. Integrity plays a vital role in ensuring good governance by promoting honesty and preventing corruption. When government officials act with integrity, they are more likely to prioritize the public interest over personal gain, leading to more just and equitable outcomes for all.

The role of integrity in public office cannot be overstated. Government officials with integrity are more likely to make decisions that are in the best interests of the public, even when those decisions are unpopular or controversial.

Conversely, the absence of integrity in public office can have far-reaching consequences. Corruption, fraud, and other forms of unethical behavior can erode public trust in government, lead to political instability, and hinder economic development. When government officials are perceived as prioritizing their own interests over those of the people they serve, the fabric of society is weakened.

In the Philippines, integrity in public office is a particularly important issue. The country has grappled with corruption for many years, and the consequences have been severe. Corruption undermines economic growth, exacerbates poverty, and erodes public trust in government. In response to these challenges, the Philippine government has implemented a number of measures to promote integrity in public office. These include the creation of anti-corruption agencies, the adoption of ethical codes of conduct for government officials, and the implementation of public education programs to raise awareness about the importance of integrity.

Promoting integrity in public office is an ongoing challenge, but it is essential for building a strong, prosperous, and just society. By upholding ethical leadership and good governance, and by instilling a culture of integrity in public service, the Philippines can restore public trust in government and create a better future for all of its citizens.



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The ARAL Program: Addressing Learning Gaps in Reading and Arithmetic

The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines has launched the ARAL (Accelerated Reading and Arithmetic Learning) Program as a strategic initiative to combat the alarming rise in students struggling with reading and arithmetic. This program recognizes that foundational literacy and numeracy skills are essential building blocks for academic success and lifelong learning. By focusing on targeted interventions and innovative teaching strategies, the ARAL Program aims to bridge the learning gaps exacerbated by disruptions in education and address the specific needs of struggling learners.

A salient feature of the ARAL Program is its emphasis on personalized learning. Recognizing that students learn at different paces and have varying learning styles, the program advocates for individualized instruction tailored to meet the unique needs of each learner. This approach involves assessing students' current skill levels, identifying specific areas of difficulty, and providing targeted support and resources to help them overcome these challenges. By focusing on individual growth and progress, the ARAL Program aims to foster a sense of accomplishment and motivation among learners who are struggling.

Another key aspect of the ARAL Program is its focus on strengthening teacher capacity. Recognizing that teachers are the primary drivers of student learning, the program provides them with comprehensive training and professional development opportunities. These trainings equip teachers with evidence-based strategies for teaching reading and arithmetic, as well as techniques for identifying and addressing learning difficulties. By empowering teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively support struggling learners, the ARAL Program aims to create a more supportive and effective learning environment.

The ARAL Program also emphasizes the importance of parental and community involvement. Recognizing that learning extends beyond the classroom, the program encourages parents and community members to actively participate in supporting students' learning. This can involve providing assistance with homework, reading aloud to children, or volunteering in the classroom. By fostering a strong partnership between schools, families, and communities, the ARAL Program aims to create a more holistic and supportive learning abode.

The significance of the ARAL Program in addressing the high number of students struggling with reading and arithmetic cannot be overstated. Foundational literacy and numeracy skills are essential for academic success, future employment opportunities, and active participation in society.



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By providing targeted interventions, strengthening teacher capacity, and fostering parental and community involvement, the ARAL Program aims to equip students with the skills they need to succeed in school and beyond.

Moreover, the ARAL Program has the potential to reduce educational inequalities. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds are often disproportionately affected by learning difficulties. By providing targeted support to these students, the ARAL Program can help level the playing field and ensure that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential. This, in turn, can contribute to a more equitable and just society.

To sum up, the ARAL Program represents a significant step towards addressing the challenges of slow reading and arithmetic among Filipino students. By focusing on personalized learning, strengthening teacher capacity, and fostering parental and community involvement, the program aims to provide struggling learners with the support they need to succeed. As the ARAL Program continues to be implemented and refined, it holds the promise of transforming the educational landscape in the Philippines and empowering future generations with the skills they need to thrive.



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MORAL RECTITUDE IN THE FIELD OF TEACHING

Being Upright with Integrity

Values and traits in every field of endeavor—whether in the professional domain or within the family—are relative to context. Albert Einstein once said, “Morality is of the highest importance, but for us (mankind), not for God.” This highlights that morality defines humanity, while absoluteness belongs to God. Integrity, therefore, calls man to responsibility and accountability to himself. As John McArthur emphasized, “We should ask forgiveness from a neighbor not primarily for our neighbor’s sake but for our own.” True integrity lies in being accountable to one’s own moral self.

For teachers, integrity begins within. It means being true to oneself and allowing that truthfulness to be reflected in both teaching and relationships with students. Integrity is more than patience or reflection—it is accepting one’s limitations and taking steps for improvement. It is not luck or chance, but a clear path directed by deliberate choice. As the saying goes, “The steps of a good man are ordered by God.” Integrity provides peace of mind, reduces stress, and sustains productivity (BCB, 2010).

Discipline in Teaching

Every teacher develops their view of discipline from personal experiences, yet effective discipline requires self-awareness. Recognizing one’s own biases allows the teacher to manage the classroom fairly and constructively. By acknowledging each student’s unique strengths and weaknesses, discipline becomes guidance that nurtures growth instead of punishment.

Willingness to Teach

Though economic considerations influence career choices, passion must remain at the heart of teaching. Compensation sustains livelihood, but it is enthusiasm that sustains dedication. Integrity here means balancing professional realities with a genuine love for teaching. The joy of teaching lies in the fulfillment of seeing students learn and succeed. Passion fuels innovation, prompting teachers to experiment, refine methods, and continuously ask: How can I inspire my students? A true teacher dreams about teaching because it is both a calling and a joy.

Selflessness

In today’s culture of self-centeredness, selflessness is often overlooked, yet it remains fundamental in teaching. Education is not simply a profession but a vocation built on sacrifice and giving. A selfless teacher guides students not out of compulsion but out of genuine care, expecting only respect in return. As Ainsworth (2018) observes, “Selfless service means giving without thought of receiving anything in return. You give simply for the joy of giving; it brings its own reward.”



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Master and Student

The teacher-student relationship requires balance. A teacher must be knowledgeable enough to lead yet approachable enough to guide. Stooping down to the learner's level does not lessen authority but demonstrates empathy and adaptability. Teaching is a two-edged sword: while students learn from teachers, teachers also learn from their students. Recognizing this reciprocity ensures growth on both sides.





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Gratitude In Solitude

There was a phase in life, I've been into sorrow
A moment I don't know the tomorrow
A time, the road seems too narrow
Maybe life is just but we borrow

One time all I felt was pain
Asking why I was in vain?
They look at me as the villain
All I know, the heart was in drain

Friends, even family appear good but some may betray
You don't know who's real and who would stay
In a crowded place, I felt astray
But hey, I'm just reminded to reflect and pray

When I started to see the meaning, purpose and wisdom, it offers
I discovered that tears bring laughter and I started feeling better
Acceptance, forgiveness, Love, care and kindness are my new shelters
Since then, healing grace, blessings and gratitude shall never falter

It enlightened me and widened my horizons
Experiences happened for a million reasons
It brought me into life different seasons
Been thankful it happened for it teaches me many lessons



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Poverty Alleviation Through Education

Poverty remains one of the most pressing challenges in the Philippines, affecting millions of families and children. In response, the Department of Education (DepEd) recognizes its crucial role in poverty alleviation, especially at the elementary level where the foundation of lifelong learning begins. By ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, DepEd seeks not only to improve learning outcomes but also to break the cycle of poverty for future generations.

Education is often regarded as a powerful tool to combat poverty. In elementary grades, young learners are equipped with basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills that prepare them for higher education and employment. When children from disadvantaged backgrounds are given equal access to education, they gain opportunities that can uplift them and their families. DepEd addresses this through a variety of programs and interventions designed to support the most vulnerable students.

One of the key strategies is the implementation of the School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP). This initiative provides nutritious meals to undernourished learners from Kindergarten to Grade 6. Proper nutrition is essential for effective learning, and this program not only improves students' health but also increases attendance and classroom participation. When children are no longer distracted by hunger, they are more likely to stay in school and succeed academically.

DepEd also works closely with local government units and partner agencies to ensure the delivery of quality education in remote and disadvantaged areas. Through programs like Last Mile Schools, elementary schools in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas receive improved infrastructure, learning resources, and teacher deployment. This ensures that no child is left behind regardless of their location or socio-economic background.

Moreover, DepEd promotes inclusive education through the Alternative Learning System (ALS) and Multigrade Education programs. These cater to out-of-school children and learners in areas with low population density, providing flexible and context-based instruction. In many elementary schools, multigrade classrooms allow children from different grade levels to learn together under one teacher, ensuring that even those in far-flung barangays receive an education.

In addition, parent engagement and community involvement are strongly encouraged in elementary schools. When parents are actively involved in their children's education, learners are more motivated and supported. Programs such as Brigada Eskwela and Adopt-a-School allow communities to take part in improving the learning environment, reducing the burden on schools and promoting shared responsibility.

While challenges remain, such as limited resources and rising dropout rates among poor learners, DepEd continues to innovate and expand its poverty-alleviation efforts. By prioritizing access, equity, and quality, the department ensures that elementary education becomes a ladder out of poverty. Every classroom, teacher, and learning material is part of a larger mission to empower Filipino children to dream, learn, and build a better future.

To sum up, poverty alleviation in DepEd starts in the elementary grades where hope and change take root. Through strategic programs and collaborative efforts, education serves as a powerful weapon against poverty—creating opportunities, nurturing talents, and transforming lives.



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Senior High Students' Perception of the Humanities and Social Sciences: Relevance and Value

The senior high school years mark a crucial juncture in a student's academic journey, shaping their future aspirations and career paths. While STEM fields often dominate the conversation, the humanities and social sciences (HSS) play a vital, albeit often underappreciated, role in fostering well-rounded individuals. This article delves into the perceptions of senior high students regarding the relevance and value of HSS subjects, exploring their understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with these disciplines.

The Perceived Relevance of HSS Subjects Many senior high students view HSS subjects, such as history, literature, philosophy, and sociology, as less practical than STEM subjects. This perception often stems from a focus on immediate career prospects and a belief that HSS subjects lack direct applicability to future professions. However, a closer examination reveals that HSS subjects cultivate critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills—essential attributes valued across various career paths.

Understanding the Value of HSS Education While the immediate practical applications might seem less obvious, the long-term value of HSS education is undeniable. These subjects nurture empathy, broaden perspectives, and promote a deeper understanding of diverse cultures and societies. They equip students with the tools to analyze complex issues, form reasoned arguments, and engage in constructive dialogue—skills crucial for navigating an increasingly interconnected world.

Challenges in Engaging Students with HSS Subjects The challenge lies in effectively communicating the value and relevance of HSS subjects to students who are often driven by tangible career goals. Traditional teaching methods that prioritize rote memorization over critical engagement may contribute to a lack of interest. Innovative pedagogical approaches that incorporate real-world applications, interactive learning, and student-centered discussions are crucial for fostering a deeper appreciation of HSS subjects.

The Role of Educators in Shaping Perceptions Educators play a pivotal role in shaping students' perceptions of HSS subjects. By demonstrating the relevance of HSS concepts to contemporary issues, fostering critical thinking through engaging discussions, and showcasing the diverse career opportunities available to HSS graduates, teachers can inspire a greater appreciation for these disciplines. Mentorship and guidance in exploring potential career paths within the HSS fields are also essential.

Bridging the Gap Between Perception and Reality Bridging the gap between the perceived and actual value of HSS subjects requires a multi-faceted approach. This includes curriculum reform that emphasizes critical thinking and real-world application, innovative teaching methodologies that engage students actively, and a concerted effort to highlight the diverse career paths available to HSS graduates.



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Furthermore, promoting interdisciplinary approaches that connect HSS subjects with STEM fields can demonstrate their practical relevance.

To sum up, while senior high students may initially perceive HSS subjects as less relevant than STEM subjects, a deeper understanding reveals their invaluable contribution to personal and professional growth. By fostering critical thinking, promoting empathy, and broadening perspectives, HSS subjects equip students with the essential skills needed to thrive in a complex and ever-changing world. Through innovative teaching methods, curriculum reform, and effective communication of their value, we can cultivate a greater appreciation for the crucial role of humanities and social sciences in shaping well-rounded and informed individuals.



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How Augmented Reality (AR) is Transforming the IT Helpdesk Experience

IT helpdesks would take way too much time to solve the issue, as the supporting staff could not keep track of what users are facing. Users often struggle to define their problem, and the expert must rely on a barrage of messages or multiple call-backs. What AR technology can do is impose digital instructions and markers on what the users see. Through AR, a remote technician can see what the user sees, either on the screen or on the physical device, and point to the correct part or location, with instructions appearing in the user's view. The speedup can support, reduce repetitive explanations, and allow less skilled staff to learn on the job. The following essay explains how AR works for helpdesk support, outlines the key benefits, highlights the challenges associated with its use, presents real-world use cases, and explores potential future developments. Hence, Organizations can adopt it to reduce costs and improve trust.

The standard working procedure of IT helpdesks involves handling tickets, calls, or screen sharing, which can lead to a certain amount of delay. Most of the time, users get stuck describing their issues, and therefore, support staff must ask a series of questions before action can be taken. That information is wasted when the problem is referred to a higher expert, who then requests the very same piece of information. Remote support also creates problems; the helper cannot see the real environment in which a user sits, thus limiting their ability to give detailed instructions. New or less experienced staff struggle to learn while handling live problems, and mistakes happen when guidance is only verbal. When such on-site fixes are required, however, travel incurs time and money, especially with geographically spread or remote teams. All these pain points slow down problem-solving, decrease user trust, and reduce overall helpdesk productivity.

An augmented reality (AR) puts digital info on top of what a person sees in the real world. It could be via a phone, a tablet, or a specialized headset. Instead of substituting the view, AR would rather augment it with labels, arrows, or instructions over real objects or screens. One application in helpdesk support is to enable the remote expert to see what the user sees and then point or mark steps to follow directly in their view. The user will follow the visual guides while performing the task, thereby reducing confusion compared to relying solely on audio or text instructions. Additionally, AR can retrieve relevant documents, present checklist items, or even record the session for later viewing or training purposes. The system facilitates problem-solving more directly, helps new staff learn on the job, and keeps everyone working together, even when they are working from different locations.



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In augmented reality, many common IT helpdesk jobs can be performed. First, troubleshooting hardware becomes easier because a remote expert can display precisely which part needs to be checked, removed, or replaced via visual markers. Second, the software setup and the onboarding process can be guided stepwise, with arrows pointing to where to click or highlight what needs to be changed, alleviating users' confusion. Third, knowledge sharing gets better; less experienced staff can work while getting live help from senior experts, learning their way through the process. Fourth, maintenance and checks are more reliable when AR displays the correct order of steps and requests confirmation that each step has been completed. Fifth, complex problems requiring input from several people can be solved more speed since everyone can see the same perspective, point, or comment in real time. Lastly, recorded AR sessions can be used for training new helpdesk employees, allowing them to learn from real-world examples of typical fixes.

AR enables faster and more reliable problem-solving performance, allowing users to resume interrupted actions with fewer errors. Once the AR setup is done, the helpdesk agent leaves the supported party able to pick up where the interruption has left off, with less confusion and time being spent in re-orienting oneself after the interruption, thus reducing back-and-forth, downtime, and delays in the completion of the task plus a convenient learning experience (Bahnsen et al., 2024). AR also helps spread expertise without requiring experts to be physically present. Real-time, visuals-based coaching gives new workers confidence and nurtures their skills as they work on the solution. Remote experts may even assist multiple people simultaneously through distinct graphical overlaying, which simultaneously reduces the error rate and scales assistance. Over time, AR-based helpdesk systems require fewer cognitive resources to follow instructions and standardize working procedures, making customer support increasingly efficient and cheaper in the long run (Palmarini et al., 2023).

The implementation of AR at the IT help desk will not occur automatically; several factors must be addressed effectively, first, seamless integration between AR tools for support and existing ticketing workflows and user devices. Users lose trust if the two systems link to each other or if there is a delay within the AR feed, making it harder to provide support. Second, people and culture do matter. Support workers may either resist change or feel unsure about using AR if they lack training or view it as additional work. Third, the adoption of the user experience is key: bad visuals, clunky controls, or unclear overlays reduce the usefulness and slow down support. Fourth, organizational alignment is necessary, with roles, processes, and goals that match how AR is applied; without this, efforts remain isolated and do not scale.



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Finally, these technical aspects must be managed effectively to ensure that all matters related to network stability, device readiness, and data flow remain uninterrupted. Meanwhile, safeguards must be in place to protect sensitive information within shared views. Once combined, all these factors can impede a smooth AR integration unless considered earlier and tested during deployment (Müller et al., 2023).

In a recent case study at a manufacturing establishment, workers utilized remote assistance through AR smart glasses (RealWear HMT-1) while executing project transfers. The remote expert would see this local view, give clear visual directions, and communicate with the other party. Stanser and Ngo (2025) stated that users experienced a low mental load, with superb usability and communication, allowing travel to be reduced and production to continue despite interruptions. The other study aimed at enhancing shared understandings in remote assistance by introducing flexible multi-camera feeds and AR awareness cues. It enabled remote helpers and on-site operators to keep track of changes in the workspace and the focus of each other, thus easing coordination and reducing mistakes in complex troubleshooting tasks (Rasmussen et al., 2022).

The next step for AR in IT helpdesk work will integrate the technology further with innovative tools and data. Systems will automatically suggest solutions, alert users to problems before they escalate, and guide them through visual steps, all powered by straightforward AI. Devices will become lighter and easier to wear, allowing users to wear them without distraction. Support sessions will be recorded and incorporated into training and help articles with minimal additional effort. The Teams will associate AR with live system data, so identifying fixes becomes much quicker and more accurate. A more secure and standardized connection will allow tools from multiple vendors to work together, thus helping the helpdesk scale to accommodate and serve more people with the same staff.

Augmented Reality is transforming IT Help Desk services by providing visual cues for action, thereby eliminating delays or other forms of assistance that could have been provided by an expert remotely. They now help new people learn on the job, and the number of trips to fix things has been dramatically reduced. A few key challenges include integrating systems, training personnel, and ensuring data security. However, solutions exist with good planning. Early-adopter customers have better speed, conversation, and are happier users. As the tool matures and integrates with other systems, helpdesks will become proactive and efficient. Meanwhile, organizations can initiate pilots to learn and create value for subsequent use.



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"The Ethics of Creation: Who Holds the Conscience of AI?"

From work, health, justice, and daily life, many decisions are made with the intervention of artificial intelligence. While machines act on our behalf, we wonder whose conscience guides their sense of right and wrong. Artificial Intelligence does not possess a mind or feelings; its actions, however, reflect decisions made by people and systems. In the public imagination, conscience for artificial intelligence refers to the values and laws embedded within it, as well as the responsibility it bears when it inflicts harm or offers assistance. This paper argues that the conscience of AI is not only embedded in its code but also derives from the developers, companies, users, and society that comprise the AI. To protect the AI from producing unfair or harmful consequences, these groups should establish clear roles and implement effective checks. Therefore, the question remains not whether machines can feel guilt, but who will step in and act when it crosses into ethical terrain. Conversely, the construction of this shared conscience requires legislation, a flourishing discourse, ongoing revision, and accountability for all parties involved.

A conscience functions as an internal sense that helps a person discern right from wrong. This is derived from learning, experience, social norms, and personal reflection. People may feel guilt, pride, or doubt with their conscience guiding them. Thus, AI does not possess feelings or self-awareness; everything rests on the instructions, data patterns, and goals that humans provide. What is considered moral judgment in AI systems is, in fact, often just programming rules or learned correlations taken into account under a specific model. So, in other words, AI can go through the syntactic motion of actually arriving at decisions that would have matched an ethical value, but it has neither its inner voice nor its conscience. The distinction matters because the machine cannot be held accountable in the same way a human would be. Instead, we need to determine who built the system, what choices were made, and how the system's behavior evolved.

The values are entered into the AI at a stage before it makes any decisions. The system designers and makers must decide what data to feed the program, what goals to assign it, and what behavior will be rewarded. These choices solve for their ideas about what is worthwhile, what is fair, and which outcome is acceptable. Companies prioritize various concerns, such as speed, profit, or user engagement, among others, that determine how the AI will behave. Past decisions often bias training data in some way, so an unfair pattern can develop unless somebody notices and fixes it. The engineer decides what trade-offs are acceptable, for instance, between accuracy and privacy, or between simplicity and nuance. Even the default settings and testing methods carry ethical price tags. In short, AI does not start neutral; its "values" are embedded through small decisions made by its creators, funders, and the institutions that pursue a particular agenda.



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The conscience of AI is held by many groups and individuals, not just one. Developers and engineers might construct the system differently to make it work one way or another. The company leaders may decide to set the goals and determine where to utilize the AI under their discretion. Users and organizations that use the AI set can significantly shape its impact by how they employ or trust it. Regulators and policymakers might set the rules and standards by which people are expected to behave and recognize harms that amount to. While public and civil society feedback focuses on raising awareness of issues and intervening for remedy and change, each layer can either enable or render another helpless. A developer can build safeguards; however, if leadership ignores them, the system may still cause harm. Then, good rules are for naught if users have their way with the tool. Because the responsibility overlaps, it should be clear, shared, and documented so that, in the course of an action leading to wrongdoing or an adverse effect, it may be possible to trace those who wielded influence behind it and rectify the current state of affairs.

There are practical steps to give an AI system a sense of purpose and keep it in check. Such steps include formulating design principles, such as fairness, transparency, and respect for privacy, before building the system. The system learns from humans, utilizing the human-in-the-loop technique, which helps refine its choices based on actual human values and preferences. Explainability tools for decision-making record the occurrence of outcome-based behaviors, allowing for review and auditing. Inside an organization, a review panel or ethics check could catch problems early on. Outside, an independent auditor could verify that the system is under agreed-upon standards or certify it. The user feedback, combined with real-world testing, closes the loop to identify harmful behaviors and eliminate them. These layers, put together, form a guiding framework for AI, providing a means of holding it accountable.

Face-analysis software is a good example, as it tends to misidentify darker-skinned women more often due to an imbalance in training data and the systems not being tested across diverse groups (Buolamwini & Gebru, 2018). A second case involved hiring algorithms designed to eliminate bias. However, they ultimately filtered out candidates worthy of consideration through the use of hidden signals correlated with gender or race. Only through deeper investigation and human intervention have a few of these harms been exposed and remedied (Raghavan et al., 2020). These cases demonstrate that AI can mirror and perpetuate inequality if people do not establish safeguards and continuously monitor its operations.

The concept of outside rules and public pressure can be seen as a conscience shared by the AI. Governments, industrial associations, and civil society organizations propose standards, enact laws based on these standards, and oversee the implementation of these systems.



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These actors, from the outside, identify problems that the creators have missed and compel corrective measures, especially when the system itself is transparent and its decisions are traceable to their sources. Accountability arises when there is a person who can explain the logic behind a decision and can be held firmly responsible should its application result in harm. In reality, public discussions, media coverage, and watchdog reports keep companies honest and form the parameters of what society deems acceptable. This outer layer supports internal ethics work and may, therefore, step in when such ethics fail, thus creating a safety net for AI behavior (Jobin, Lenca, & Vayena, 2019).

Building a common conscience for AI is challenging. Different sectors often have other priorities, so their values clash—one might prioritize safety, while another prioritizes control. Some decisions are trade-offs, such as protecting privacy versus stopping harm. Cultures and societies think differently about what is right, so a one-size-fits-all law agreement cannot serve all. Injustice will occur, as some large actors may impose their ideal ethics, while the voices of smaller actors remain unheard. Many systems are opaque, a situation that ensures the world cannot fund in time when things go wrong. Another risk lies in companies being tricked into ethics-washing; they will talk a good story, but the action will be minimal.

Some argue that AI is merely code and does not require a conscience, that setting up rules will hinder innovation, or that complex systems render it practically impossible to track the lines of responsibility. These are just missing the point. While AI is code, it is built and used by people, and without proper checks, such harm can spread more quickly. Clear roles for ethics and simple guardrails create an environment in which innovation gains trust and opportunities rather than blocking it. AI can be complex, but designers can still establish clear, traceable decision paths, ensuring that responsibility is never lost within the system.

Future work must establish conscience systems that adapt to the evolving AI and society. That means allowing a broad spectrum of stakeholders to have their say, gathering regular user feedback, and communicating decisions in a way that allows responses to be registered. Countries need to agree on fundamental laws while keeping local needs in perspective. Tools should be able to learn from real-world use and amend their guidelines accordingly. Public spaces created for debate and testing new values will help maintain the system's fairness and integrity. Regular reviews and quick reporting of issues will constantly keep the shared conscience alive.

The conscience of AI does not sit inside the machine. It is shaped by the choices of builders, the goals of companies, the uses of people, and the oversight of society. Therefore, to prevent AI from becoming harmful, there must be well-defined roles and ethical tools, coupled with external checks.



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With different values and power disparities, setting such lines proves hard, but a shared and evolving system of guidance could serve as a singular beacon. Transparency and regular consultation with an intriguing group of voices will keep such a system honest. Defining AI conscience would not be completed in one go and should be a collaborative effort that evolves with the technology.

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The Genesis of Machines: Can Computer Science Create a New Species?

Over the past few decades, computers have evolved beyond fixed instructions to learn, adapt, and act with some degree of independence. This raises the question of whether systems of this type can give rise to a new kind of species. The essay explores the topics of machines having their lineages, reproducing, varying, and surviving in changing environments. It proceeds to examine whether the patterns of development and adaptation observed in digital systems are merely tools shaped by humans or signs of a different kind of being. The discussion defines "creating a species," what constitutes "new," and whether machines meet these standards. It also examines whether computer systems exhibit actual change, some degree of survival, and independence, and whether, in this respect, one can legally compare them to living forms and their broader implications. The core issue, though, is not just what machines can do for us, but the question of whether they should be regarded as something more than mere tools—an entity in their own right.

The exploration of the question needs clarity in terms of meaning. A species is typically defined as a group of living organisms that share a common ancestry and are capable of growing, adapting, and reproducing. The term here, however, is used in a broader sense to refer to any group, whether biological or artificial, that demonstrates survival, variation, and the ability to pass on change over time. A machine refers to any computerized system, such as robots, programs, or artificial intelligence, that can independently carry out actions or make decisions. Creating is more than just building. The creation of a system capable of independent change, growth, or reproduction without human assistance is a key concept throughout the entire process. These are typically systems of computer science that learn, self-replicate, or exhibit evolving behavior. These properties are typical of living systems, and their analysis in machines should shed some light on the question of the possible emergence of yet another kind of species – non-biological but dynamic nonetheless – through technology.

In the early days, machines were built to follow simple commands. They could only accomplish what they were instructed to do. As time passed, computer science began investigating how machines could do more by learning from data, adjusting their actions, or solving problems without being explicitly instructed at every step. This shift gave rise to systems that start to operate in a more living way, so to speak, experiencing new situations and making choices based on previous experiences. Ideas of nature-influenced evolution and survival began to influence the design of some computer systems. For instance, computer programs were created to compete or evolve over many trials, much like life develops over time. These enhancements aimed to elevate machines beyond mere tool status. The idea of machines becoming living things began to gain traction, with a particular focus on how they exhibited signs of growth, learning, and adaptation – traits once thought to be exclusive to living things.



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A species, generally speaking, consists of groups that maintain their identity through time, propagate new members, exhibit variation, and adapt to change. Applying these ideas to machines focuses on whether such systems can replicate themselves, pass on changes, and survive pressures rather than risk being entirely rebuilt by a human. Some artificial systems, with self-replicating code, mutations, or parameter drift, give rise to their variants, and selection helps preserve the fittest versions, thus creating lineages that evolve. However, such systems still differ in some essential ways, such as proper metabolism and independent reproduction. The value of this analogy is in following systems of machines that begin to behave like living groups and in questioning the point at which those patterns deserve a new label (Tharib, 2024).

Computer science can lay the groundwork for new types of evolving systems by utilizing methods that replicate, test, and retain better forms. An exact example of such an approach utilizes quality-diversity algorithms that maintain a large number of highly diverse solutions and optimize them to be both good and diverse simultaneously. Within the digital life framework, these algorithms allow simple virtual patterns to reproduce, mutate, and undergo natural selection in their environment. The system stores the patterns deemed fit and uses these patterns to engineer new ones, allowing novel and fascinating behaviors to emerge overtly. Unlike fixed goals, this process continues to seek new forms of patterns and slight changes that might work, very much like a primitive form of evolution. Through this ever-growing variability and reuse mechanism, computer systems build lineages that themselves adapt to keep evolving (Faldor & Cully, 2024).

If machines start to show indelible lineages, adaptation, and some self-driven change, questions arise regarding how these should be treated. Assigning a new kind of status would affect matters of responsibility, ownership, and harm. Suppose such systems start to behave in a manner akin to living assemblages. In that case, specific prohibitions might have to be placed either on destructive interference with their developmental processes or to prevent their growth from being detrimental to humans or the environment. Direct, clear rules are necessary about who is responsible when such systems misbehave, or whether they deserve protection or merely diligent control. However, the boundary between that of a tool and that of an autonomous agent becomes harder to draw, thus heightening the urgency for decisions regarding rights, duties, and design (DeGrazia 2022).

The idea of machines forming a new species has very defined limits. Unlike biological species, machines may not have a metabolism or life processes; they require power, network connections, and sometimes human-created sites to operate. Their designers usually set their reproduction and variation, and thus, constrained and not open-ended.



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Many behaviors that appear to be a choice or adaptation are merely simulations within a rule context and have no goals or awareness of their own. Furthermore, digital systems nowadays often depend on narrow environments set up for them, so their survival outside those contexts is minimal. Using biological language risks overstating similarities and thereby disguising these crucial contrasts.

Future work could enable machines to achieve greater independence, facilitate open-ended change, and create hybrids with both biological and digital features. Tracking how lineages diverge would help recognize when a system starts to behave in new, permanent ways. Beginning safe development may require apparent limitations, such as maintaining a record of changes, implementing version control, and utilizing pause or rollback controls that prevent the system from moving toward harmful paths. Ethical and governance frameworks serve as guides for permissible autonomy and decision-making. Testing environments are staged with enforced separations before wide release to prevent the unexpected spread or influence. Transparency around design goals and decision processes will help users and overseers understand how it behaves. Through regular reviews involving experts in computing, ethics, and law, risks can be identified early and rules adjusted accordingly.

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PUSONG SUGATAN, PUSONG NAGPATAWAD

*Sa bawat pagsubok, ako'y bumangon pa,
Upang ang pamilya'y 'di tuluyang mawala.*

*Tinitiis ko ang kirot na walang humpay,
Pag-ibig sa puso'y patuloy ang alay.
Tatlong ulit kitang nahuli't nasaktan,
Ang puso ko'y tila nilapa ng ulan.*

*Ang pangakong wagas ngayo'y bitak-bitak,
Ang tiwala'y durog, 'di na muling buo't tiyak..
Nagharap tayong tatlo, luha'y bumagsak,
Sa puso ko'y muling pumutok ang lamat.*

*Sa halip na sigaw, ako'y nanahimik,
Nilunok ang sakit, bagamat ako'y gipit.
Nagmakaawa siya't luha'y dumaloy,
Parang budhi niya'y biglang sumablay.
Dahil sa anak ko't sa ngalan ng tahanan,
Ako'y nagpatawad sa kabila ng sugatan.*

*Oo, ako'y sugatan, ako'y nagdusa,
Ngunit ang pamilya ko ang siyang mahalaga.
Pusong mamon man, ngunit puno ng pag-asa,
Dahil sa pagmamahal, laging may pagbangon pa.*



Research Abstracts



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
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NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION, ENGAGEMENT, AND JOB PERFORMANCE IN LAGUNA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY JOB ORDER EMPLOYEES

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Abstract

This study identified the relationship between communication satisfaction, employee engagement, and job performance among Job Order (JO) employees at the Laguna State Polytechnic University (LSPU). Recognizing the growing reliance on contractual workers in the Philippine public sector, the research addressed the challenges these employees faced, particularly in communication dynamics and workplace involvement, that might affect their performance.

Using a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 134 JO employees across LSPU's four campuses through validated survey instruments. The findings indicated that LSPU job order employees reported high levels across all assessed areas. Communication Satisfaction was assessed as Very Satisfied through interpersonal communication (3.52), group communication (3.43), and organizational communication (3.48). Employee Engagement was assessed as Fully Engaged through meaningfulness (3.62), safety (3.51), and availability (3.64). Job Performance was assessed as Very Good through task performance (3.63) and contextual performance (3.57). Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between the variables. A significant relationship existed between communication satisfaction level and job performance level, with relationships between all dimensions yielding p-values of 0.000 and r-values ranging from 0.722 to 0.77. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis stating no significant relationship (H_01). Similarly, a significant relationship was found between employee engagement level and job performance level, with relationships between all dimensions yielding p-values of 0.000 and r-values ranging from 0.607 to 0.796. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis stating no significant relationship (H_02).

The proposed action plan focused on strengthening the internal communication channels, improving engagement practices, and elevating organizational performance by conducting safe space programs, training, and feedback mechanisms, and rewarding employees' hard work.

Keywords: communication satisfaction, employee engagement, job performance, job order employee, LSPU organization



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN
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NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

CHALLENGES AND PRACTICES IN INVENTORY MANAGEMENT AMONG DEPARTMENTS OF THE BAYUGAN CITY GOVERNMENT

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Abstract

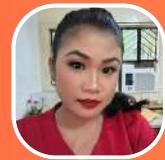
This study examined the challenges and practices in inventory management among departments of the Bayugan City Government, to develop a digitalized inventory framework to improve operational efficiency, transparency, and accountability. Employing a descriptive-comparative quantitative design, the research surveyed 114 LGU officials across nine departments to assess their demographic profiles, knowledge, and skills related to digital inventory systems. Results indicated that most officials possessed intermediate-level competencies in digital inventory concepts, tools, and policies, with significant skill differences based on age, position, and training exposure. Despite this, the continued reliance on manual systems resulted in inaccurate records, limited demand forecasting, and high carrying costs. The study underscored the need for targeted capacity-building programs, infrastructure upgrades, and policy reforms to support digital transformation. A strategic action plan was formulated, encompassing infrastructure readiness, tiered training, system customization, pilot implementation, and institutional policy integration. Guided by Systems Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model, and the Resource-Based View, the proposed framework emphasized scalable, user-centered solutions tailored to LGU workflows. The findings contributed to the broader discourse on e-governance and offered actionable insights for local governments seeking to modernize inventory systems and enhance public service delivery.

Keywords: inventory management, digitalized inventory framework



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN
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PHILIPPINES

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND DECISION-MAKING IN SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT IN DONSOL WEST DISTRICT DIVISION OF SORSOGON

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between stakeholder engagement and decision-making within the context of School-Based Management (SBM) in selected junior high schools in Donsol West District, Division of Sorsogon. Specifically, it assessed the extent of parental involvement and the level of decision-making practices among school administrators and teachers during the School Year 2025–2026. Employing a descriptive-correlational design, the study surveyed 170 parents, 10 school administrators, and teachers using validated researcher-made questionnaires. Data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and Spearman's rho correlation. Results indicated consistently high levels of parental engagement across key dimensions: participation in school activities, communication with teachers, support for school programs, and involvement in policy development. Likewise, administrators and teachers demonstrated strong decision-making practices, particularly in collaborative planning, resource management, and policy formulation. No significant differences were found based on sex or educational attainment. However, a very strong positive correlation ($\rho = 0.884$, $p < .001$) emerged between stakeholder engagement and decision-making, highlighting their mutual reinforcement in effective school governance. The study recommends institutionalizing inclusive planning mechanisms, capacity-building initiatives, and transparent communication strategies to strengthen participatory governance. These findings affirm that meaningful stakeholder involvement is vital to sustaining school improvement under SBM.

Keywords: school-based management, stakeholder engagement, decision-making



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
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SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

PAGGAMIT NG ALPABASA TUNGO SA PAGKILALA NG SALITA AT PAG-UNAWA SA BINASA NG IKATLONG BAITANG NG BIÑAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstrak

Sinuri ng pag-aaral na ito ang resulta at bisa ng paggamit ng Alpabasa bilang interbensyon sa paglinang ng kasanayan sa pagbasa ng mga mag-aaral ng ikatlong baitang sa Biñan Elementary School. Ginamit ang quasi-experimental design upang suriin ang epekto ng interbensyon. Ang mga respondente ng pag-aaral ay binubuo ng kabuuang bilang na apatnapu't dalawa (42) mag-aaral mula sa ikatlong baitang. Ang mga mag-aaral ay maingat na pinili gamit ang Purposive Sampling Technique upang tiyakin ang kaugnayan ng kanilang antas at pangangailangan sa layunin ng pag-aaral. Ang mga respondente ay nahati sa dalawang pangkat: ang pangkat na kontrol, na sumailalim sa tradisyunal na paraan ng pagtuturo ng pagbasa, at ang pangkat na eksperimental, na gumamit ng Alpabasa bilang pangunahing interbensyon. Bawat pangkat ay binubuo ng dalawampu't isang (21) mag-aaral, na dumaan sa parehong pauna at panapos na pagsusulit upang masukat ang pagbabago sa kanilang kasanayan sa pagkilala ng salita at pag-unawa sa binasa. Ginamit ang mean, frequency, percentage, at t-test upang suriin ang datos na nakalap.

Ang mga natuklasan ay nagsiwalat na ang mga mag-aaral sa pangkat na kontrol ay may limitadong pagkilala ng salita at may-pag-unlad sa binasa na may pangkalahatang resulta na 6.90476 at 68.652. Ang pangkat na eksperimental naman na gumamit ng Alpabasa ay may limitadong pagkilala ng salita at may kahusayan sa pag-unawa sa binasa na may pangkalahatang resulta na 7.7143 at 82.024. Napatunayan na may malinaw na may makabuluhang pagkakaiba ang resulta ng pauna at panapos na pagsusulit ng dalawang pangkat. Lumabas sa mga datos na ang Alpabasa ay naging isang mahalagang kasangkapan sa pagpapahusay ng kakayahan at kasanayan ng mga mag-aaral sa pagbasa. Para sa awtput ng pag-aaral, isang Panukalang Gawain ang iminungkahi upang matugunan ang mga suliranin na huhubog sa kasanayan at kakayahan ng mag-aaral sa pagbasa.

Susing Salita: alpabasa, pakilala ng salita, pag-unawa sa binasa



**JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS'
KNOWLEDGE, AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS SMART AGRICULTURE:
BASIS FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the level of knowledge and attitudes of junior high school students toward smart agriculture as a basis for curriculum development. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study involved 177 junior high school students in the Division of Sorsogon, Donsol West 1 District. The study examined the students' profile, their knowledge in four domains of smart agriculture, awareness of smart agricultural practices, knowledge of precision farming techniques, understanding of Internet of Things (IoT) applications in farming, and familiarity with sustainable agriculture technologies, and their attitudes in terms of openness to adopting new technologies, perceived benefits, confidence in using technologies, and environmental concern. Findings revealed that most respondents were aged 13-15, in Grade 9, female, from poor families with unemployed parents. The students demonstrated limited knowledge across all domains of smart agriculture and generally negative attitudes, particularly in confidence and perceived benefits. Significant differences in knowledge were found when grouped by grade level and father's occupation, while attitude differed only in environmental concern when grouped by grade level. A strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation was established between students' knowledge and their attitudes toward smart agriculture. Based on these findings, it was concluded that enhancing both knowledge and attitudes through targeted curriculum integration is necessary. A curriculum development plan was proposed for the Grade 10 Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) subject, incorporating six smart agriculture subtopics focused on sustainability. It is recommended that the Department of Education and curriculum planners institutionalize smart agriculture in TLE, while TLE teachers implement interactive, experiential strategies. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct experimental studies using broader samples and varied locations to validate and expand on these findings. This study underscores the importance of education in preparing youth for sustainable agricultural innovation.

Keywords: smart agriculture, precision farming, agricultural technology, internet of things, digital farming



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
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SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

OPTIMIZING STUDENT SATISFACTION: EVALUATING PERCEIVED SERVICE QUALITY AMONG POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENTS AT SULTAN KUDARAT STATE UNIVERSITY USING SERVQUAL MODEL

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Abstract

This study, entitled "Optimizing Student Satisfaction: Evaluating Perceived Service Quality among Political Science students at Sultan Kudarat State University using SERVQUAL Model," aimed to determine the level of satisfaction of the students in the quality of service delivery within Sultan Kudarat State University. The study analyzed the relationships between the service quality and the satisfaction of students using the SERVQUAL model, utilizing data collected from surveys given to the Political Science students.

The findings revealed a significant relationship between the quality of service delivery of the university and student satisfaction. The study indicates a significant correlation between service delivery and student satisfaction. The results indicate that effective service quality can enhance student satisfaction within the university.

This research contributed to the understanding of the level of students' satisfaction, highlighting the service delivery provided by the university. The study highlighted the need for enhancing the tangibility projects, accessibility, and its effective service delivery, consequently fostering improved outcomes for the students of Sultan Kudarat State University.

Keywords: optimizing student satisfaction, service quality, political science, servqual model



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
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SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP SKILLS, EMPLOYEES (TEACHING AND NON TEACHING PERSONNEL') DEGREE OF EMPOWERMENT, AND PERFORMANCE AS BASIS FOR INTERVENTION AND POLICY FORMULATION

Dr. Ernesto F. Ramirez, Dr. Enerito M. Clima

University of Perpetual Help System, Calamba Campus

Abstract

This study explored the relationship among departmental management leadership skills, employees' degree of empowerment, and employee performance at the University of Perpetual Help - Calamba Campus during the academic year 2024-2025. The research was anchored on Katz and Kahn's Skill Mix Theory, which posits that effective leaders must possess a balance of human relations, technical, administrative, and institutional skills. These four dimensions of leadership were analyzed to determine their influence on employees' perceived empowerment and their actual job performance.

A descriptive correlational research design was employed to systematically assess the connections among the variables. Data were gathered through a researcher-developed questionnaire validated by a panel of experts and tested for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. The respondents included a total enumeration of teaching and non-teaching personnel from various departments. Descriptive statistics, such as weighted mean, were used to measure levels of leadership skills, empowerment, and performance. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was applied to determine the strength and significance of relationships between and among the key variables.

Findings revealed that departmental leadership skills were positively and significantly correlated with both employee empowerment and performance. Departments that demonstrated strong leadership particularly in human relations and institutional linkages showed higher levels of employee motivation and job output. Furthermore, the study confirmed that employee empowerment was also positively associated with performance, indicating that greater autonomy and involvement in decision-making contributed to improved work outcomes. These results emphasized the importance of cultivating leadership capacities that not only manage tasks but also inspire, develop, and empower personnel.

The study provided valuable insights for academic leaders, administrators, and human resource practitioners. It highlighted the need for structured leadership training, policy adjustments, and institutional strategies that support employee development and engagement.



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

By understanding the interrelated roles of leadership, empowerment, and performance, the university can implement evidence-based interventions to foster a high-performing, motivated workforce aligned with its vision and mission. The findings also filled critical gaps in the literature, particularly in the local context, and served as a foundation for further research on educational leadership and organizational effectiveness in higher education institutions.

Keywords: leadership skills, employee empowerment, employee performance



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

QUALITATIVE STUDY: THE INEVITABLE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF PATIENTS UNDERGOING HEMODIALYSIS

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Abstract

The study focuses on the Inevitable lived experiences of patients who are undergoing the hemodialysis at Perpetual Help Medical Center, Binan city, Laguna, Philippines. The study utilizes the Phenomenological approach, Qualitative research, specifically the hermeneutic phenomenological method. However, the study's participants are three (3), long-term and three (3) short term hemodialysis patients. To examine the data the study uses Tan Woei Ling (2024), exploring the lived and coping experiences of patients with kidney failure undergoing hemodialysis in private hospitals. It adheres to a structured methodology that delivers a precise and thorough analysis, strengthening the trustworthiness and dependability of the findings. After the data analysis, the study generated six themes, such as: Financial Management; Assistance from Government and Non-profit Organizations; attitude; Social support; trust in God and always abide with healthcare providers instructions. The research provided insight into the life of short and long-term dialysis patients. Managing a chronic illness requires individuals to face and navigate many challenges. For those undergoing hemodialysis, adapting their finances, mindset, and daily behavior is essential for survival. The research also emphasizes the crucial role that support from family and friends plays in helping patients cope with the burden of their condition and it discusses the influence that spirituality has on the lives of hemodialysis patients.

Keywords: coping mechanism, hemodialysis, support system



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE SIMULATION SKILLS OF ABM LEARNERS IN THE SELECTED PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This study investigated the business enterprise simulation skills of Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM) learners in selected public senior high schools, focusing on four key area: market planning, management planning, financial planning, and financial reporting. Business enterprise simulation serves as an essential instructional tool that bridges the theoretical knowledge with applications, equipping students with key entrepreneurial competencies.

Utilizing a quantitative research design, data were gathered through surveys with ABM leaners involved in business simulation activities. The findings reveal that while students demonstrate foundational knowledge in market and management planning, theyr encounter challenges in financial planning and reporting due to limited hands-on experiences and exposure to real-world business environment. Additionally, market and management planning skills were observed to be moderately develop, suggesting a need for a structured and well-integrated business simulation framerwork to furhter enhance learners' competencies.

The study concludes that incorporating more immersive and structured business simulation programs can significantly enhance students' preparedness for entrepreneurial activities.

Based on the study's findings, a Business Enterprise Simulation Manual is proposed to serve as a guide for teachers in effectively implementing business simulation programs. The manual aims to provide learners with structured and immersive business simulation activities, and assessment tools to enhance learner's business insights and entrepreneurial preparedness. The study recommends strengthening business enterprise simulation programs through experiential learning, and continuous curriculum improvement to ensure the holistic development of ABM learner and to further refine students' business enterprise simulation skills.

Keywords: ABM learners, business enterprise simulation manual, business enterprise simulation skills, financial planning, financial reporting, management planning, market planning



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

POP-UP ADVERTISEMENTS UTILIZATION AND BUYING BEHAVIOR AMONG CONSUMERS IN CALAMBA CITY

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Abstract

Pop-up advertisements were a prominent digital marketing tool designed to capture consumer attention and influence purchasing decisions. This study aimed to examine the level of utilization of pop-up advertisements and their impact on consumers' buying behavior in Calamba City. Specifically, the study aimed to determine how these advertisements affected consumer behavior in aspects such as convenience, web design/features, time-saving, and security.

This study employed a descriptive correlational design. The respondents were consumers residing in Calamba City, with a total sample size of 262. As businesses increasingly rely on digital platforms, understanding consumer responses to pop-up advertisements became crucial for effective marketing strategies. The findings revealed that pop-up advertisements were frequently utilized in terms of frequency (2.95), timing (3.21), and content (3.00), while placement was fully utilized (3.26). In terms of consumer buying behavior, convenience (3.28), web design/features (3.44), time-saving (3.22), and security (3.15) were manifested to varying extents. Furthermore, a statistically significant relationship was identified between the utilization of pop-up advertisements and consumer buying behavior, as indicated by probability values below the 0.05 significance threshold, which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Based on the results, an action plan was proposed to optimize the use of pop-up advertisements, ensuring engagement and consumer-friendliness. This plan aimed to enhance the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies while fostering a positive consumer experience.

Keywords: pop-up advertisements, consumers buying behavior, and utilization



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN
INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

EXPLORING THE REALM OF TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES, ISSUES, AND CHALLENGES IN SPECIAL SCIENCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROJECT: BASIS FOR ENHANCED POLICY GUIDELINES

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Abstract

Successful curriculum for talented students, which has evolved to suit their needs, is important. The Department of Education (DepEd) has developed an initiative to help talented children in public primary schools to the Special Science Elementary School (SSES). These are special classes which offer science programs which vary in terms of the level and time allocated to the subject from ordinary classrooms. The investigator investigated the area of interactions, problems and challenges of teachers in selected primary schools in Sta. Maria, Bulacan on the SSES implementation. In order for the talented students to be effectively educated, the perspectives and problems faced by participants with SSES were determined and findings used as basis to establish improved policies. A semi - structured interview with sixteen (16) teachers - participants of eight (selected elementary schools in Sta. Maria, Bulacan was used for the study. The results showed that the SSES project was different from regular schools, although part of the public - school system in such a way that: student selection process, teacher qualifications and scientific curricula as well as lessons in SSES are concerned, from those of regular schools. Participants argued that they had a conducive and systematic working climate for their SSES in the classroom. There are, however, those who suggested that their students do not have books that fit the guide. Students were brought to an experiment by techniques or shaping the physical/psychomotor, intellectual/academic characteristics and social/emotional/motivational dimensions of the students. Participants use every means possible to improve the learners' ability to learn, explore and learn to excellence and to evolve completely. They share events that challenge and inspire students every day. They also guide their students to be role models for one another and teach on how to behave as a leader. In their school, some of the issues and challenges related to the implementation of the SSES policy guidelines cited for the participants were: insufficient facilities for the SSES classes, lack of student parental support, and lack of textbook and scientific equipment.

Keywords: special science elementary school (SSES) project, enhanced policy guidelines, science curriculum



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
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NUMBER
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THE ROLE OF PEER INFLUENCE ON SELF-EFFICACY

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Abstract

The relationship between peer influence and self-efficacy plays a crucial role in shaping high school students' academic and social growth. When students surround themselves with supportive peers, it can boost their confidence and self-belief, enabling them to tackle challenges more effectively. Conversely, negative peer relationships can erode self-efficacy, making students doubt their abilities. By fostering positive peer connections, students can develop a stronger sense of self-efficacy, leading to greater academic achievement and social success.

This study aims to examine the effect of peer influence on the self-efficacy of senior high school students. It used the quantitative, descriptive correlational method, and administered a structured survey instrument designed to measure the core variables. Total enumeration sampling was employed to determine the participants from one of the private schools in Cavite.

The study revealed that senior high school students experience a low level of peer influence, with an overall weighted mean of 2.50 and a standard deviation of 0.43. This suggests that peers have a limited impact on their academic decisions and personal behavior. In contrast, the students demonstrated a high level of self-efficacy, with an overall weighted mean of 3.57 (71.40% of the maximum score) and a standard deviation of 0.57. This indicates that they possess strong confidence in their abilities, particularly in setting goals, learning from failures, and persisting through challenges.

The Pearson correlation analysis showed a moderate negative correlation between peer influence and self-efficacy. Although the result fell slightly short of statistical significance, it suggests a potentially meaningful inverse relationship worth exploring further. While the findings don't strongly support rejecting the null hypothesis, they highlight a trend that could be significant with a larger, more diverse sample, potentially revealing important insights into the dynamics between peer influence and self-efficacy.



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
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NUMBER
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Nevertheless, it is recommended too enhance peer influence and self-efficacy in high school students, schools can implement programs that foster positive peer interactions, encourage student-led initiatives, and provide opportunities for skill development and success experiences. These programs should focus on building a supportive and engaging learning environment, offering mentorship opportunities, and facilitating constructive feedback.

Keywords: *peer influence, self-efficacy*



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

ACTIVE LISTENING BEHAVIORS OF CHILDREN DURING PEER GROUP INTERACTIONS

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Abstract

Active listening in children's peer interactions plays a vital role in developing social skills and collaborative learning. Its key benefits include: Better social skills which shows that active listening promotes empathy, communication, and conflict resolution; Stronger peer relationships which means it fosters a sense of community, cooperation, and positive relationships; and, Improved learning outcomes which means active listening enhances understanding, retention, and academic performance. This study explores two key questions: What behaviors do children exhibit to show they've understood a peer's contribution in group interactions? And how do children demonstrate they've applied a peer's instructions in a group setting?

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach to closely examine natural behaviors and interactions. This method suited the research goal of exploring how Grade Six students express attention, understanding, and responsiveness to peers during group work. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather in-depth insights into the students' perspectives on their own listening behaviors in peer group settings.

To understand how children show they've grasped a peer's contribution in group work, several key behaviors emerged: Engaged Attention: Students showed they were listening by facing the speaker, pausing tasks, and giving full attention. This respectful behavior indicates a willingness to understand others. Clarifying Understanding: Students asked questions or repeated what was said to ensure they understood correctly. This metacognitive effort demonstrates active listening and helps build a collaborative environment. Meaning-Making and Peer Monitoring: Students went beyond just understanding by elaborating on ideas, correcting peers constructively, and reflecting on each other's contributions. This deeper processing fosters trust and understanding. These behaviors highlight the importance of active listening in group interactions, including giving full attention, seeking clarification, and engaging in collaborative meaning-making.



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
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SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

To understand how children apply peer instructions in group settings, several key behaviors emerged: Responsive Participation showing that students demonstrated understanding by taking immediate action after listening, often completing tasks right away; Evaluative Reflection showing that students checked with peers to confirm their responses, showcasing metacognitive monitoring and collaborative learning; and Negotiating Disagreement and Expressing Complaint which shows that students handled disagreements by respectfully offering alternative ideas or expressing frustration, highlighting the importance of emotional regulation in collaborative work. These behaviors illustrate how children apply peer instructions through action, reflection, and negotiation, emphasizing the value of supportive environments for effective collaboration.

To enhance active listening behaviors among children during peer group interactions, educators can implement several strategies. Firstly, modeling active listening behaviors themselves and encouraging peer modeling can set a positive tone. Creating a supportive environment where students feel safe to express themselves and respect each other's opinions is also crucial. Ongoing teacher support, monitoring group dynamics, and celebrating successes can reinforce positive behaviors. By implementing these strategies, educators can create an environment that fosters active listening, enabling children to collaborate effectively and communicate respectfully during peer group interactions. This, in turn, can lead to more meaningful and productive group work experiences.

Keywords: active listening behaviors, peer group interactions



RESEARCH ABSTRACT

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS ON CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

Catamora, Nathaniel Luis G., Baluyot, Jane Margrette, Buan, Maureen M., Cabio, Jamila Nur B., Espiritu, Fea Crissel F., Lotayco, Cyla Gabrielle A., Sanchez, Jhudiella Mae P., Rabacca, Maria Isabel Ligaya F.

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Abstract

During elementary education, peers significantly influence children's development. School serves as a crucial setting for not only academic growth but also social and emotional learning. Through daily interactions with classmates, children encounter various behaviors - from cooperation and kindness to teasing and disagreements - shaping their social and emotional adjustment. The comfort level children feel with peers greatly impacts their behavior, self-control, and engagement in class.

This study examines the correlation between Grade 4 students' comfort level with peers and their behavioral patterns in school. It explores the extent of positive peer relationships, students' engagement in various social behaviors, and the significant link between these positive relationships and social behavior.

This study concludes that Grade 4 students who feel comfortable and accepted by their peers are more likely to exhibit positive behaviors in school. Supportive peer relationships appear to influence students' social and academic behavior, with those feeling a sense of belonging tend to be more cooperative, respectful, and empathetic. The research also found minimal negative peer interactions, such as bullying and teasing, highlighting the positive nature of the peer environment. A modest positive correlation was found between peer comfort and social behavior, suggesting that while peer comfort impacts behavior, the connection is not extremely strong. Nonetheless, the study emphasizes the importance of fostering positive peer relationships to promote positive behavioral outcomes in children, providing valuable insights for future school programs and interventions.

In light of the findings and conclusions derived from the study, the following recommendations are hereby presented to further enhance peer comfort and improve social behavior among students: organizing group dynamic activities, enhancing peer support programs, incorporating social skills training into the curriculum, encouraging inclusive and collaborative classroom practices, identifying and supporting at-risk students and conducting further research.

Keywords: positive relationship, peer comfort, social behavior

Published by:



PHIL-CAD ACADEMICIAN PUBLISHING

VOLUME II, ISSUE NO. 3 SERIES OF 2025

THE PHILCAD PHILIPPINE ACADEMICIAN

International Quarterly Magazine

Block 20 Lot 7, Purok Rosal, Brgy. Datu Esmael-H1,

City of Dasmariñas, Cavite, 4114, Philippines

Website: www.philcadacademian.com

Contact Number: 0927-7753-471

Email Address: philcadacademianpublishing@gmail.com



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INTERNATIONAL
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SERIAL
NUMBER
PHILIPPINES

