What Remains in Social Science Instruction During the Changing Times in a State-funded School in Southern Philippines: Moving Forward and What Can Be Done

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Abstract: **The study primarily aimed at determining and utilizing extent of the Social Science instructors on instructional materials, and framing a capacity development framework to secure the quality of instructional delivery in the changing times. It employed the descriptive design undertaking the purposive sampling which resulted in obtaining 26 respondents from the total population, thus descriptive statistics had been used in analyzing and interpreting the collected data. The results reflected how social sciences are being taught by the 26 purposively sampled respondents and showed that the underlying instructional materials or the non-technological ones remained as top materials that are often and occasionally being utilized, collectively implying that regardless that these are categorized as traditional and commonly used, are still being perceived as efficient and effective, such that optimizing and redesigning them to adapt to the changing landscape of instruction is elucidated in this paper through a capacity development program paradigm, in which the implementation is urgently recommended.**

Keywords: **Capacity development program; modern instructional materials; traditional instructional materials**

I. INTRODUCTION

The use of instructional materials is integral in the instructional process of the social sciences, for its utilization assures the efficiency of the implementation and attainment of the learning objectives towards the contextual understanding and internalization of meaningful insights on social change and development. With its reputation for being richly factual and conceptual, the selection of its appropriate instructional materials is of absolute importance to account for. The wide occurrence of the so-called online classes in these changing times is guided by the promise of Education 4.0 which calls the teaching-learning process to blend with the learning preferences of Generation Z students to achieve the optimum thereby the incorporation and utilization of smart technology in the classroom, vis-à-vis the realization of the Sustainable Development Goal No. 4 to guarantee quality education to all had created a prompt in academia to inquire about the instructional materials that Social Science instructors utilize and thereby bore a baseline for optimization. Fourtanè (2021) [4] implied that so that the 21st-century learning skills to flourish and be attained (i.e., critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and growth mindset), the teaching-learning process in higher education institutions must embrace the educational transformations that Education 4.0 has been describing, by extension magnifying what Hussin (2018) [9] discussed in his paper the trends to account for: the flexible learning through e-learning tools, higher order forms of learning tasks, differentiated instruction where the learning styles of students are what drive the process itself, project-based learning, field experiences, exposure to data interpretations, differentiated forms of assessment, involvement of the students in the curriculum design, and independent learning through their natural pacing.

Social Science instruction, like any other discipline, is always ignited and essentially optimized with the use of instructional materials to attain the teaching-learning objectives in transmitting knowledge, ideas, skills, and attitude, such that resourcefulness and creativity of available materials are greatly called upon. Posited by the scholars that magnified its capability and optimization, instructional materials vitalize the achievement of the most ideal outcome of the process (Masvaure, 2019) [10], after all as Ajoke (2017) [2] described in his paper, the use of instructional materials in Social Science ensures clarity of instruction to the learners. From these perspectives, what seems to be standing on the same ground is the fundamental role of instructional materials in the teaching-learning process, for it performs functions as the optimization of learners' classroom experiences, and acts as the fuels of the teacher in mobilizing the conduct of the lesson delivery.

The constructs of this study are built on inquiring about the instruction of social sciences through the lens of its *underlying instructional materials* that then yielded to capture the frequency of utilization. The word *'underlying'* is described as prime in such wise as can be physically observed in the teaching of social sciences in the locale, existing instructional materials had been listed and further investigated on their regularity of being used.

This inquiry had been geared towards determining the instructional materials of Social Science instructors with their extent of utilization and conceptualizing a capability-building framework to enhance and capacitate the skills of the instructors. In hindsight, this study echoed the axiom that evolution is the result of the attitude to adapt to change and elevate what remains, thereby the resonance of the signs of time has been more audible to Social Science instructors to be more accommodating to the call of the fourth educational revolution.

II. CONTEXTS

The general characteristics of instructional materials suggest that they can either be human or non-human, which nevertheless facilitates the acquisition, application, and/or evaluation of the learning domains as cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, for they are tools in the successful delivery of the lesson, specifically in this context the social science lessons. To an extent, these materials are being described as *"information repositories"* for which information on current events can be sourced (Olayinka, 2016) [14].

1. Scopes on the utilization of instructional materials in the teaching of social sciences through varying lenses

In the research of Abdelraheem and Al-Rabane (2005) [1], 970 Omani students participated in a 14-item questionnaire that included every piece of teaching material available in a social studies class. The results showed that in terms of the degree of consumption, the boards, maps, tables, illustrations, and graphs were used frequently while globes, films, and computers were the least frequently used ones, for which this result displays that of Ghanizadeh et al. (2020) [5] indicating that teachers tend to rely mostly on the traditional rather than modern instruction, despite the flourishing digital age of teaching and learning. One might speculate if this was due to the resources' accessibility or simply the social studies teachers' preference because they were accustomed to using the conventional materials, or the perception that traditional instructional materials are still better than the modern ones considering the highly conceptualized nature of the lessons.

Since the advent of computers at the turn of the new millennium, embracing and improving 21st-century teaching has consistently focused on the use of technology as a teaching tool. Students demonstrated motivation to complete the classwork with a significant amount of self-confidence in their work, competence in using the technology employed, and most importantly, the mastery of the topic content, according to Heafner (2004) [7], who noted that teachers assigned the students a project involving the creation of a PowerPoint slide as a campaign advertisement for their senatorial bet in a state's election. In addition to the creativity, they showed by working with their classmates in a cognitively challenging interchange of ideas, students started to think beyond the task and understood the relevance of advertisement methods in launching a campaign, which increased their interest in the topic.

Finally, the use of technology in the activity dramatically increased students' active participation since they were familiar with it and found it relatable. This, in turn, made them uncomfortable and made them love working on the task. It not only offers a great opportunity for them to apply their creative skills but also sparked an interest in the issue among them as reflected in their works, diverging from the usual practice whereby subconsciously they are treated as a complete waste of time or boredom. Technology paves the way for students' interests to take off and from there motivation and passion to learn and perform arise. This transforms the traditional attitude toward social studies from boredom to excitement, intensified by confidence and exhibiting originality and talent. Additionally, because it is flexible, it enables both the teacher and the pupils to think outside the box and explore different options.

On another spectrum, the frequency of the use of highly technological instructional materials depends largely on the school environment itself as the results of Abdelraheem and Al-Rabane (2005) [1] showed that the use of the computer, which is classified as a highly technological material, appeared to be least frequently utilized. That is, as Heafner (2004) [7] elucidated in her study in North Carolina, U.S.A. that the incorporation of technology-based materials potentiates an increase in the students' motivation to study social studies, with its richly factual and conceptual nature of topic contents.

In the absence of technology-based resources, faculty-prepared instructional modules are being utilized (Hamora et al., 2022) [6]. Anent to the Philippine context where internet connectivity, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, has been the top problem in the implementation of online classes no less the use of technology-driven instructional materials, had impelled the experience of remote learning through the use of modules for learners who could not afford or no access to the internet at all (Moralista & Oducado, 2020) [11]. However, what remains critical in the utilization of the module at the point are its content, organization, scaffolding from the teachers on its underlying process of accomplishing, and its capacity to make the learner collaborate with other learners hence communicate their learning experiences, which according to the findings of Rotas & Cahapay (2020) [16] have all been the categories of the problems in the implementation of the remote learning in the Philippines, such that there were observed vagueness on the contents of the materials, overloaded activities yielding or relating to conflict with home responsibilities, financial related problems, physical health compromises, and mental health struggles.

III. METHOD

1. Design

This study used a quantitative approach through the descriptive design, and respondents were chosen through a purposive sampling procedure, respecting and taking into

account the personal decision of the 15 faculty who had collectively decided not to participate in the survey for reasons of academic freedom. As a result, 26 out of 41 faculty of the Social Sciences Department of a public-funded school in Southern Philippines (the school's name has been withheld for privacy and anonymity) were included in the study.

The questionnaire utilized was an adaptation of a Likert scale from Abdelraheem & Al-Rabane (2005) [1] that included the most prevalent teaching resources that are observable as well in the locale whereas a specific portion was intended to capture the other materials. Before the utilization of the questionnaire, content analysis, reviews, and approval from the experts, the department chairpersons of the Social Sciences and Professional Education in the locale, and from the statistician had been secured to establish its suitability. The respondents then responded by rating their level of usage: 5 if they always do it, 4 if they do it frequently, 3 if they do it occasionally, 2 if they seldom do it, and 1 if they never do it. Frequency counts and means were generated as part of the analysis to examine the interpretations; however, this process was slightly sped up because quick interviews were held to amplify the respondents' justifications for their responses.

IV. RESULTS

Results showed that while COVID-19 takes into account the shifting instructional landscape that drastically changed the nature of the teaching-learning process, these instructional resources have nonetheless evolved into timeless instruments in social science education (N=26). Interestingly, whiteboards and textbooks were frequently used while more specialized content-based tools (workbooks, newspapers, computers, videos, journals, illustrations, tables, charts, periodicals, diagrams, magazines, and photographs) were only occasionally used. This suggests that these materials are only occasionally used depending on the content where they are perceivably appropriate, for example, workbooks were used in sociology and social economics. Since these tools have evolved digitally and are now embedded in various applications and devices, such as the computer, which is one of the materials that had been occasionally employed and utilized, they have been used less frequently than the use of paintings, CDs, and DVDs, graphs, maps, timelines, models, and the globe.

Of the department's entire faculty, 63 percent (26) were found in the sample and ended up as respondents. While out of the 26, 11 (42 percent) were men and 15 (females) (58 percent). According to the profile, the majority (54%) of respondents were married, and the majority (58%) of respondents identified as female, demonstrating the gender gap (0.769) in the Philippine statistical index that indicates there are more female teachers in the nation than male teachers (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2011) [15].
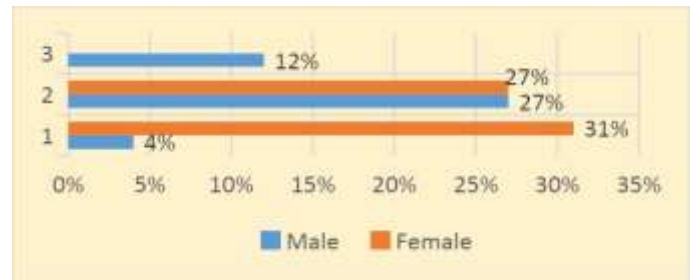

Fig. 1 Percent distribution of respondents

The department manifested its utilization of the underlying instructional materials in its instruction corroborating the collective interpretation of the results. Of all the instructional materials, Table 1 shows the top 20 which appears at first sight that the department utilizes non-technological materials over the technological ones, although three are sighted as technological its utilization extent is occasional to seldom. Inquiring it further to elucidate, the occasional utilization of these materials is factored a lot by the nature of the topic's content. In the brief interviews, two respondents shared their practice of utilizing workbooks in their socio-cultural anthropology and microeconomics classes, containing the guidelines for field studies and social-economic computations that students had to accomplish *"which in turn is appropriate in the flexible online learning"* (Respondent 1, personal communication, February 1, 2021); while Respondent 3 in her virtual lectures on history-related topics comfortably used photographs and periodicals which according to her *"makes it even more efficient these days because you don't need to print them out like what happens in face-to-face learning. On top of that, with the digital versions, the students can individually examine them anytime and anywhere through their phones or other devices"* (personal communication, February 5, 2021).

The five topmost used materials were: whiteboard (4.35), textbooks (4.31), workbooks (3.69), newspapers (3.69), computers (3.62), and videos (3.42). An important point was that textbooks and whiteboards were both used to varying degrees. Even though they are considered to be traditional teaching tools, social science content is richly factual and conceptual, so *"books are indispensable and if it is a book it follows with the idea that it underwent reviews and fact-checking, at the very least when its content is being transpired to the learners it must be framed and illustrated as simple and actual as possible, hence the extent of using the whiteboard"* (personal communication, February 20, 2021).

From workbooks down to the last, the extent was interpreted as occasionally to seldom, respectively, since notably all these can be generated by one device as the *'computer'* that got the 4th rank. However, while this technological material has the natural capacity to embed the rest of the materials its utilization extent is still occasional as compared to the non-technological materials- whiteboards and textbooks that are being utilized as often.

Table 1. Frequency Of Utilization

Material	Type	Mean	Rank	Frequency
Whiteboard	Non-technological	4.35	1	Often
Textbooks	Non-technological	4.31	2	Often
Workbooks	Non-technological	3.69	3	Occasionally
News Papers	Non-technological	3.69		Occasionally
Computer	Technological	3.62	4	Occasionally
Videos	Technological	3.42	5	Occasionally
Journals	Non-technological	3.27	6	Occasionally
Illustrations	Non-technological	3.23	7	Occasionally
Tables	Non-technological	3.15	8	Occasionally
Charts	Non-technological	3.12	9	Occasionally
Periodicals	Non-technological	3.08	10	Occasionally
Diagrams	Non-technological	3.04	11	Occasionally
Magazines	Non-technological	3.03	12	Occasionally
Photograph	Non-technological	3.00	13	Occasionally
Paintings	Non-technological	2.81	14	Seldom
CDs and DVDs	Technological	2.77	15	Seldom
Graphs	Non-technological	2.65	16	Seldom
Maps	Non-technological	2.62	17	Seldom
Timeline	Non-technological	2.42	18	Seldom
Models	Non-technological	2.31	19	Seldom
Globe	Non-technological	2.23	20	Seldom
Overall mean		3.08		Occasionally

V. DISCUSSION

Respondent 7 stated in her interviews that *"since these subjects are abstract"*, one of the reasons teachers chose to employ teaching tools like textbooks and worksheets. Therefore, teachers are forced to stick with traditional or non-technological methods because, with these materials, I could quickly illustrate the lengthy contents of the subject with students watching it in real-time, and if it turned out to be difficult for the students to understand, I could simply erase it and create new illustrations, all without the hassle of slow internet connections and the like. Even though they aren't utilized as regularly as the previous three, the usage of computers and videos is a consolation (personal communication, February 20, 2021). The lack of highly technical resources may also be a factor in the usage of these specific teaching materials. Despite an increasing number of people employing advanced technology, not all instructors have one of them, for example, a computer. The only devices that teachers are willing to use are those that are low-tech, possibly as a result of their limited financial resources. The risk of using instructional resources inadequately, which might have devastating repercussions on students' learning of social science subjects, can be seen as a drawback here. If this risk is not addressed, it will likely occur. The results of Asogwa, et al. (2021) [3] in a sample of 5, 726 students demonstrate that instructional materials do correlate with and have an increasing impact on students' academic performance. These results are similar to those of Nwagbata, et al. (2021) [12] who noted how such inadequacy contributed to students' failures in external evaluations. The results were comparable to the findings of Okobia (2011) [13] which revealed that without any difference between social sciences specialists and non-specialists, the tendency of the teachers to utilize non-technological instructional materials over the highly technological ones is mainly factored by the failure of authorities that are charged with the responsibility for the curriculum implementation, hence in this study the school administrators themselves.

Collectively, the respondents agreed that the cost of producing and maintaining technological instructional materials, the teacher's reluctance to improvise, the lack of a resource room for storage, and the teachers' familiarity with the materials were all likely factors in why teachers used traditional instructional materials. Respondent 11 contended that teachers preferred to use simple teaching tools like the whiteboard, textbooks or workbooks, and computers because *"these were always available and easy to use and those technological materials would take a portion of time to learn; and despite the advent of online classes, the whiteboard is still frequently used through the applications embedded in virtual classrooms"* (personal communication, February 21, 2021).

In retrospect, what rises above these perspectives of the practicality of utilizing what is available is the resilience to survive the changes that times have been calling. The absence of funds to replace the existing instructional materials then and there and the desperation to adjust to drastic changes that COVID- 19 calls to the teaching-learning process had subconsciously allowed the instructors to discover the capacity of the existing materials to fit into the phenomenon of online learning and thereby intensify them to be more mobilized and function efficiently and effectively in the instructional process. On the results, one can see that during the changing landscape of instruction, what remains is the nature of social sciences content and how it can still be possibly transferred in contextual forms to the students by utilizing the underlying instructional materials in response to the call of times. Above all, the resiliency in embracing the changes to evolve is not a *trampoline* that what happens now and what happens next is measured by mere minutes (Hurley, 2020) [8], rather it's epigenetic in the process whereby the evolution of these existing materials may take time but along the way, changes are transcending in bits and pieces.
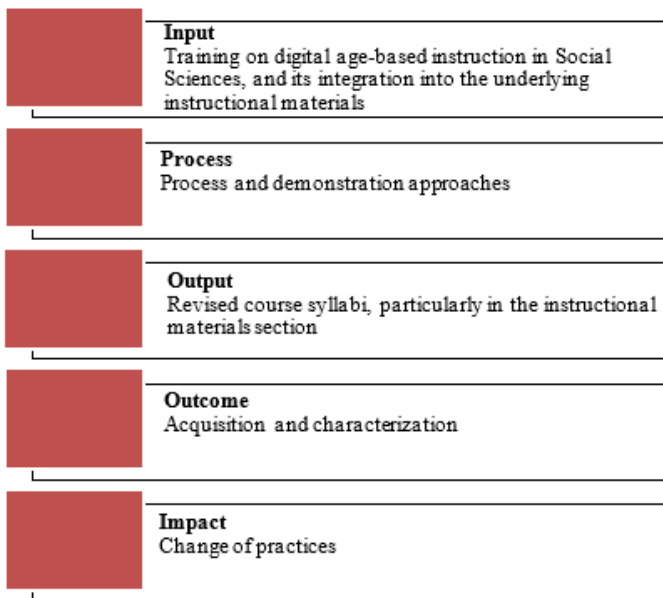
Fig. 2 Capacity development framework

Table 2. Training Design

Component	Strategy	Expected output	Resource person
Digital-based instructional materials for Social Science instruction	Process approach	Demonstrations Revision of instructional materials section at the course syllabus	Faculty of Technology for Teaching and Learning
Incorporating digital-based instructional materials into underlying Social Science instruction			
Monitoring and evaluation framework			

Goal	Projection	Monitoring and evaluation framework		
		Data needed	Source	Method
Enrichment of prior knowledge and skills	Change of practices is expected to be fully manifested by the participants a year after the program	Performances Testimonies Observations	Participants and students	Surveys and focus group discussion
Development of new knowledge and skills				

1. Paradigm of capacitating the teachers

The survey results edified a dichotomy of whether or not to continue utilizing the underlying materials in teaching social sciences. However, the changing times and the changing landscape of education putting high regard on the general nature of learners in this 21st century that has been shaped by the digital age and more so being shaken by the COVID- 19 Pandemic, poses an indication of *spicing up* the arena by embracing a little bit of *change* and intensifying what practically remains useful nevertheless with sustainable effective teaching and learning processes. What can be drawn from the data is a framework of capacitating the teachers-training them on how to integrate modern instruction nonetheless pairing it with what's practical on their end, after all, any form of change entail funding which remains a challenge on the part of the Philippine government those instructors do not have full control being at the receiving end of what's available and what's being generally appropriated. Hence, objectives will fundamentally target the enrichment of prior knowledge and skills and the development of new knowledge and skills.

The modality of the training will follow both the process and demonstration approaches, whereby knowledge transfer will be further translated with hand-on activities for assimilation, accommodation, integration, and characterization of the competencies to achieve the so-called 'equilibrium' between the available instructional materials and what can be done to optimize it with the use of the new information and skills. Fundamentally, the process will follow through: planning, involving the instructors who will be participants accounting for their time and setting of expectations; commencement of the training; and culmination were demonstrations of actually utilizing the knowledge and skills transfer.

VII. CONCLUSION

Despite being categorized as traditional and common, non-technological instructional materials such as whiteboards, text and workbooks, newspapers, and computers are frequently utilized in the instruction of social sciences during these changing times and are quite perceived as essential from the words of certain respondents and more importantly from their utilization extent more so in the time of online classes. The findings showed that these tools need to be further refined to adjust to the evolving nature of instruction and increase the efficiency and efficacy of the teaching delivery to the students, as opposed to just being viewed as being out of date by some. By doing so, the utilization extent of computers which is already a must in this day and age might be increased, given its natural capacity to embed and improve the utilization efficiency of the materials that are perceived as important.

The school where the inquiry was conducted is already an established institution in the province, which based on the results gave rise to the question of what more could be expected of other institutions.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The department must come up with an action plan, framing the mechanisms of optimizing the utilization of existing instructional materials gearing towards more ways to use these materials in these changing times, and these could evolve with the emergence of modern instructional materials in the post-COVID-19 pandemic. This plan must then be mechanized by the instructors themselves, putting into prime consideration the learners' perspectives.

2. As one of the gaps seen in the results, the department

must find ways to ensure efficient internet connection, since this appears to be the subconscious hurdle as to why the use of the computer as a tool is just occasionally utilized.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The informed consent of the respondents was done by educating them on the nature, intent, and direction of this inquiry, respecting their time to decide whether or not they would like to participate and the nature and extent of their participation. Their rights, privileges, and the safeguards in place to protect the secrecy of their names and the responses they supplied were all outlined in the permission form that was issued. The decision to omit the school's name from this article was ultimately reached through a focus group debate.

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Interview transcripts:

1. Respondent 1, personal communication, February 1, 2021
2. Respondent 3, personal communication, February 5, 2021
3. Respondent 7, personal communication, February 20, 2021
4. Respondent 11, personal communication, February 21, 2021