

Lesson Study and Its Impact on Professional Development: The Case of Quirino Province, Philippines

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Abstract

Lesson Study, a professional development program, is acclaimed as an international good practice in leveraging the teaching-learning process particularly in reciprocating teachers' development towards an optimized students' participation and learning outcomes. This study is aimed at determining the general provisions of conducting LS along the professional development of the teacher-respondents in the locale of the study. Employing 223 classroom teachers and school heads in a DepEd-Division through Descriptive Research design, the following are known: The activities and procedures of LS are afforded very often. No significant differences were posted on the provisions of these activities and procedures when the respondents were grouped according to grade level taught, education, position while significant differences are noted when they are grouped by years in teaching; and LS impacts the respondents' professional development (very high extent). High School teacher-respondents, holders of advanced studies, and the newer batch of teachers viewed LS study to impact their professional development better when compared to their counterparts. It was concluded that LS was conducted comparably in the elementary and secondary schools underscoring a very high extent of impact on the respondents' professional development. Hence, a developmental plan was proposed to better the institutionalization and adoption of LS in the locale of the study.

Keywords: Classroom Practice, Lesson Study, Professional Development, Student development, Teacher development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Professional development, in view of the emerging national and global education frameworks, imbues the assurance on the abilities of teachers to adopt with the facets of the dynamic curriculum. Curricular innovation is one of the stimuli to further the understanding, capability, and know-how of teachers which calls for professional development programs like training roll-outs (Oracion et al., 2020; Du Plessis, 2013;

Groves, 2011). Such professional development programs are aimed at extending and renewing teachers' beliefs, skills, and practices (Groves, 2011).

Lesson Study (LS), a very good practice in the educative processes of Japan, is becoming an evolving practice that stems throughout the world even in the locale of the study. This practice is aimed at improving learning outcomes while introducing a collaborative approach in maintaining professional development circles among teachers (Rock & Wilson, 2005). Aptly, LS was introduced in the locale of this study in 2017 through a tripartite initiative of the Quirino Provincial Government, the Department of Education (DepEd), Schools Division of Quirino (SDO-Quirino), and the Quirino State University-system (QSU). This educational initiative is centered on the introduction of lesson study in the province as a form of professional development program among Elementary and Secondary teachers and teacher educators in Mathematics and Science.

Furthermore, LS in the locale of the study became a part of the professional development practices of teachers allowing collaboration forming school-based and district-based LS groups. The study of Bautista and Baniqued (2021) suggested that lesson study may be implemented by all teachers across all subject-areas in the division and be introduced among pre-service teachers to explore the effectiveness of the practice in teachers' professional development and leveraging students' learning outcomes. The revitalized instructional planning procedures as well as the enriched teachers' content knowledge are believed to reciprocate teachers' development vis-à-vis students' outcome (Wahman et al., 2020; Coenders & Verhoef, 2019; Butun, 2019; Can, 2019; Fujii, 2014; Iksan et al., 2014). Aptly, LS as a professional development program impacts teachers' beliefs and practices that supports the shift from traditional instruction to learner-centered learning (Muianga, Barbutiu, & Hansson, 2019). Tall and Verhoef (2011) identifies that the lesson study approach involves the design of the research lesson as part of an extended sequence of lessons to teach a particular topic, the implementation of the research lesson followed by evaluation and analysis, and the refining of the lesson. These various activities provide teachers relevant opportunities to examine the different facets of their teaching such as the curriculum, lesson plans, instructional materials, and content (Watanabe, 2002).

As a form of professional development that also focuses on learning outcomes, LS is a powerful tool for effecting teacher growth through understanding of student thinking (Ebaegu, 2015). It was identified that a fidelity approach to implementation means bringing LS to another context by demonstrating how it is done in Japanese schools and faithfully executing the same procedures with the local teachers (Ebaegu & Stephens, 2014). In the context of the study, the practice of lesson study as a form of professional development is in a phase where its implementation would require a

long-term gradual progression to transform. With time, a culture of lesson study could be established to benefit newly qualified teachers who enter the profession (Ono & Ferreira, 2010).

Apropos of, certain forms of professional development – like coaching and mentoring, study groups, lesson study, action research, and observation and assessment – are found to be more effective than workshops or training (Burns, 2011). However, such concordances depend mostly on how the teachers look at the provisions of LS under the transformational learning modality (Taylor, 2009). The concordances of the respondents are influenced by their personal relevant experiences, which emerge through social interactions, peer dialogue, and self-reflection. Experiencing transformational learning involves acknowledging one's values, beliefs, and worldviews and critically assessing whether those fixed opinions are functional and true in all contexts (Camayang & Bautista, 2021; Taylor, 2009).

The crux is: the overall view of teacher-implementers on the conduct of LS in the province provides a basis for the education leaders and stakeholders on the measures to be taken to effectively establish and institutionalize lesson study practice in Quirino. Furthermore, understanding the impact of the practice to the professional development of teachers helps design a development plan that will cater the professional development needs of teachers implementing the facets of LS.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

This study is designed to determine the general provisions of conducting LS along the professional development of the teacher-respondents in the locale of the study.

Specifically, it aimed to (1) determine the over-all view of the respondents on the activities and procedures of a conducting LS; (2) determine the known impact of LS on the professional development of the teacher-respondents; and (3) propose developmental activities to bolster the adoption of LS in the locale of the study.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed the Descriptive Research design particularly survey. Descriptive research focuses on the descriptions and characteristics of the respondents without manipulating any variable. In the case of the current study, the researches wanted to determine the views and position of the respondents on the activities and procedures of conducting LS and its known impact on their professional development. The respondents of this study were the recipients of the conducted professional

development program in LS sponsored by the Quirino Provincial Government, Department of Education-Quirino, and Quirino State University – a tripartite initiative on institutionalizing LS in the locale of the study. This program was implemented since 2017 with University of the Philippines-National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education Development (UP-NISMED) as the training provider.

A total of 223 LS recipient-respondents answered the survey. They are the teacher-recipients who had their training on LS since 2017 to present. The respondents were grouped in four profiles: educational attainment, grade level taught, position, and length of teaching experience. As to educational attainment: 103 (46.20%) hold a bachelor's degree, 93 (41.70%) hold a master's degree in education or in teaching, and 27 (12.10%) hold a doctorate degree, either in Philosophy or in Education. As to grade level taught: 133 (59.60%) are teaching in the elementary while 90 (40.40%) are teaching in the secondary, either junior high school or senior high school. As to position: 168 (75.30%) are classroom teachers, 30 (13.50%) are master teachers, and 25 (11.20%) are school heads. As to length of teaching experience: 93 (41.70%) are in the service from 1 to 10 years; 75 (33.60%) from 11 to 20 years; 43 (19.30%) from 21 to 30 years; and 12 (5.40%) from at least 31 years. Results show that there is diversity among the respondents in terms of the grouping variables set forth in this study.

The instrument used is a revised questionnaire from the study of Alamri (2020). It underwent expert pooling from both agencies and pilot testing. Pilot testing was conducted prior to the conduct of this study. It was conducted to a group of 30 teachers outside the research parameters. There are two parameters of the questionnaire and earned the following alphas: .972 and .988, respectively, for the activities and procedures in conducting LS and the known impact of LS on teachers' professional development. According to Taber (2018), an alpha of at least .70 suggests reliability. Hence, the instrument is said to be valid and reliable.

After the validation process, the questionnaire was posted via google form among the intended respondents of this study. Contained in the questionnaire is the consent form of the respondents on their voluntary participation in the study.

Data were processed by frequency, mean, percent, t-test, ANOVA, and LSD for the post hoc test: all are treated via SPSS.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Lesson Study Activities and Procedures

Table 1. Respondents' Views on the Activities and Procedures of Lesson Study

LS Activities and procedures		Frequency				Mean
		N	S	O	VO	
1	Participating in a discussion session and drawing up a general plan to discuss the lesson	1	10	82	130	3.529
2	Defining the long-term goals of the LS cycle, such as developing students' critical thinking, providing students with problem-solving skills, increasing their achievement level, improving students' attitudes and motivation in learning, and preparing students for national and international tests.	2	9	79	133	3.538
3	Carefully selecting the target lesson (research lesson) by participating teachers	2	11	65	145	3.538
4	Identifying the lesson objectives considering the objectives of the unit and the goal of the distant cycle of the lesson	2	9	48	164	3.677
5	Each teacher proposing effective methods to teach the lesson	2	10	66	145	3.587
6	Collaboratively preparing a preliminary lesson plan considering the initial discussion session	2	10	68	143	3.578
7	Preparing the final lesson plan by one of the teachers	3	17	73	130	3.480
8	Collectively observing one team member while he conducts the lesson	5	10	73	135	3.516
9	Holding a deliberative discussion session after implementing the lesson	4	11	68	140	3.543
10	Giving the teacher an opportunity to comment on the lesson	4	12	73	134	3.511
11	Giving the observers an opportunity to comment constructively and purposefully on the lesson and to ask questions to the implementing teacher	4	7	72	140	3.561
12	Reteaching the same lesson by another teacher in a new classroom after modifying and further developing the lesson plan based on the observations and the deliberative discussion session.	4	14	73	132	3.493
13	A teacher assuming the role of a leader in conducting LS activities.	4	13	78	128	3.480
14	Participation of experts from universities, researchers, and education leaders in LS activities, such as in the identification of the distant goal of the LS cycle, observation, or discussion sessions	3	22	73	125	3.435
15	Writing the LS report after fully completing the LS course	5	20	85	113	3.372
Grand Mean						3.523

Legend: VO-Very often; O-Often; S-Sometimes; N-Never

Presented in Table 1 are the respondents' views on the activities and procedures of LS. It shows that responses are skewed to the right towards positive affordances and concordances of LS practitioners. Moreover, all indicators set forth in this study are vouched with a response of *very often*, ranging from 3.25 to 4.00. The grand mean, 3.523, with adjectival interpretation of *very often*, denotes that the teacher-respondents viewed the conducted LS in the locale of the study to construe with the customary LS practices abroad as quality benchmarks.

The foregoing results construe with the findings of Aimah and Purwanto (2018) in their LS implementation in Indonesia. It was concluded that teacher-implementers do not necessarily show full understanding on the activities and procedures of LS although they ascertain their clear understanding on the model of LS as a professional development in teacher education: advancing their pedagogical knowledge. Moreover, the results of this study elucidate the findings of Kotelawa (2012), Aimah et al., (2017), Aimah and Purwanto (2018), Bayram and Bikmaz (2021) when they underscored that pedagogical knowledge is a description of the teachers' preparation to teaching particularly on the creation of meaningful learning with appropriate strategies. However, results of studies conducted by Ebaegu and Stephens (2013), and Duez (2018) suggested that LS implementers copied directly the LS-Japan. It was concluded that the transference is made without its adaptation to neither the Filipino culture nor the preparation of teachers to adapt such kind of teaching practice.

Apparently, indicators 4, 5, and 6 are seen to be the most observed indicators belong to the four dimensions of LS (Pjanic, 2014): (1) the collaborative activity; (2) the form of research related to lesson; (3) importance that the pupils are kept at the heart of the process; and (4) the understanding of the process that is primarily focused on content and pupils rather than on technology and tools. Furthermore, the three stages suggested by Kuramoto & Shi (2012) may explain the concordances of the teacher-respondents along the three indicators: (1) Perception of teaching issues: establishment of goals of conducting LS; (2) recognition of teaching issues: the recognition of educational directions to improve own practices; and (3) Understanding the teaching issues: redesigning instructional plan through practical perception and recognition.

Aptly, the foregoing results denote that the teacher-respondents own a weighty knowledge and understanding on the processes of LS particularly the activities and procedures. This concordance is necessary in furthering the implementation of LS in the locale of the study.

b. Impact of LS in Professional Development

Table 2. Views on the Impact of Lesson Study along Professional Development

Impact of Lesson Study		Frequency				Mean
		LE	ME	HE	VHE	
1	LS contributed to my understanding of better ways to teach content knowledge.		11	71	141	3.583
2	LS contributed to the development of my pedagogical knowledge.		12	69	142	3.583
3	LS contributed to a better understanding of students' thinking patterns.		14	67	142	3.605
4	LS helped me to identify and implement appropriate actions and strategies to teach concepts and generalisations.		12	67	144	3.592
5	Observing and analysing the performance of other teachers allowed me to reflect on my teaching practices.		13	64	146	3.596
6	LS contributed to my classroom management skills.		13	63	147	3.601
7	LS contributed to the development inference skills and problem-solving.		15	58	150	3.605
8	LS allowed me to understand other teachers' actions in planning, implementing, and evaluating lessons.		12	61	150	3.619
9	LS contributed to increase my self-esteem and self-efficacy.		13	59	151	3.619
10	Through LS, I gained valuable knowledge and experience, which made me feel that I am a better teacher than before.		12	60	151	3.623
11	LS contributed to a deeper understanding of how students learn.		11	62	150	3.623
12	LS made me more aware of students' needs.		16	56	151	3.605
13	LS contributed to my ability to identify the difficulties that students face in classes.		11	61	151	3.628
14	LS made me capable of effectively connecting theory and practice through planning, implementation, and reflection		14	62	147	3.596
15	The feedback I received from the team contributed to my knowledge of my strengths and shortcomings.		13	61	149	3.610
16	LS made me appreciate the role of observation, discussion, and reflection in the development of teaching practices.		14	59	150	3.610
17	The LS strategy contributed to changing my convictions about the importance of sharing experiences among teachers.		15	65	143	3.574
Grand Mean						3.604

Legend: VHE-Very high extent; HE-High extent; ME-Moderate extent; LE-Least extent

Presented in Table 2 is the known impact of conducting LS along the professional development of teachers particularly in the locale of the study. It shows that responses are skewed to the right towards positive reflection on its known impact in their professional development as LS practitioners. Moreover, all indicators set forth in this study are vouched with a response of *very high extent*, ranging from 3.25 to 4.00. The grand mean, 3.604, with adjectival interpretation of *very high extent*, denotes that the teacher-respondents viewed that the implemented LS bring forth impactful outcomes in their professional state in the locale of the study.

The foregoing results construe with the initial claims of LS practitioners that it brings long-term, cyclical activities which bear effectual impact on their professional states in the academe (Bayram & Bikmaz, 2021; Hervas & Medina, 2020; Coenders & Verhoef, 2019; Ozdemir, 2019; Vermunt et al., 2019; Ebaegu & Stephens, 2013). The following attributes of LS show that it impacts the teachers' professional development, to wit:

1. LS as a professional development is transferable and replicable as long as the procedures are correctly done since it is a systematic teaching process;
2. The teacher-respondents (teacher-teacher and teacher-officials) are required to be dedicated to the iterative cycles of LS which further their beliefs, understanding, and practice;
3. The research and planning phase of conducting LS is exhaustive which requires profound and absolute participation of every member. The learnings preceding growth and development of teacher-implementers come from the details of their keen observations, discussions, immersions, among other substantial activities and engagements;
4. LS is done collaboratively with the active involvement and engagement of each member along self-reflection and evaluation of their own work. Each member performs distinct roles to play which forms integral part in the success of the LS group. The synergy of collaboration draws learning development of forming cognizable learning outcomes which may broaden the understanding of LS implementers in refining their formulated activities and strategies;
5. LS involves Knowledgeable Others (KOs) from the academic community like academic planners and administrators, as well as professors from institutions of higher learning. This ensures that they profess a wide range of experiences and expertise in the subject matter.

Aptly, LS is seen to effectually impact across all classes of teachers from novice to expert, from classroom teacher to school administrators and planners, and professors alike. The study of Hervas and Medina (2020) described the impact of LS along the immersion of the teacher-implementers in its key components with the

evaluative perspectives of epistemology of complexity, as well as the ecology of action, and joint reflection of every member. Moreover, the study of Schipper et al., (2020) surfaced on the idea that teachers' role is changing which reciprocates adaptive teaching and LS plays a pivotal role in this occurrence. For this to happen, implementers need to own a profound understanding and background knowledge on their act of adapting such together with their intentions and attitude in undergoing the iterative cycles. On the other hand, Bayram and Bikmaz (2021), Rozimela (2020), and Bautista and Baniqued (2021) claimed that LS affects the design thinking of teachers over time through collaboration, scaffolding, and reflection.

c. Proposed Developmental Plan on Adopting LS in the Locale of the Study

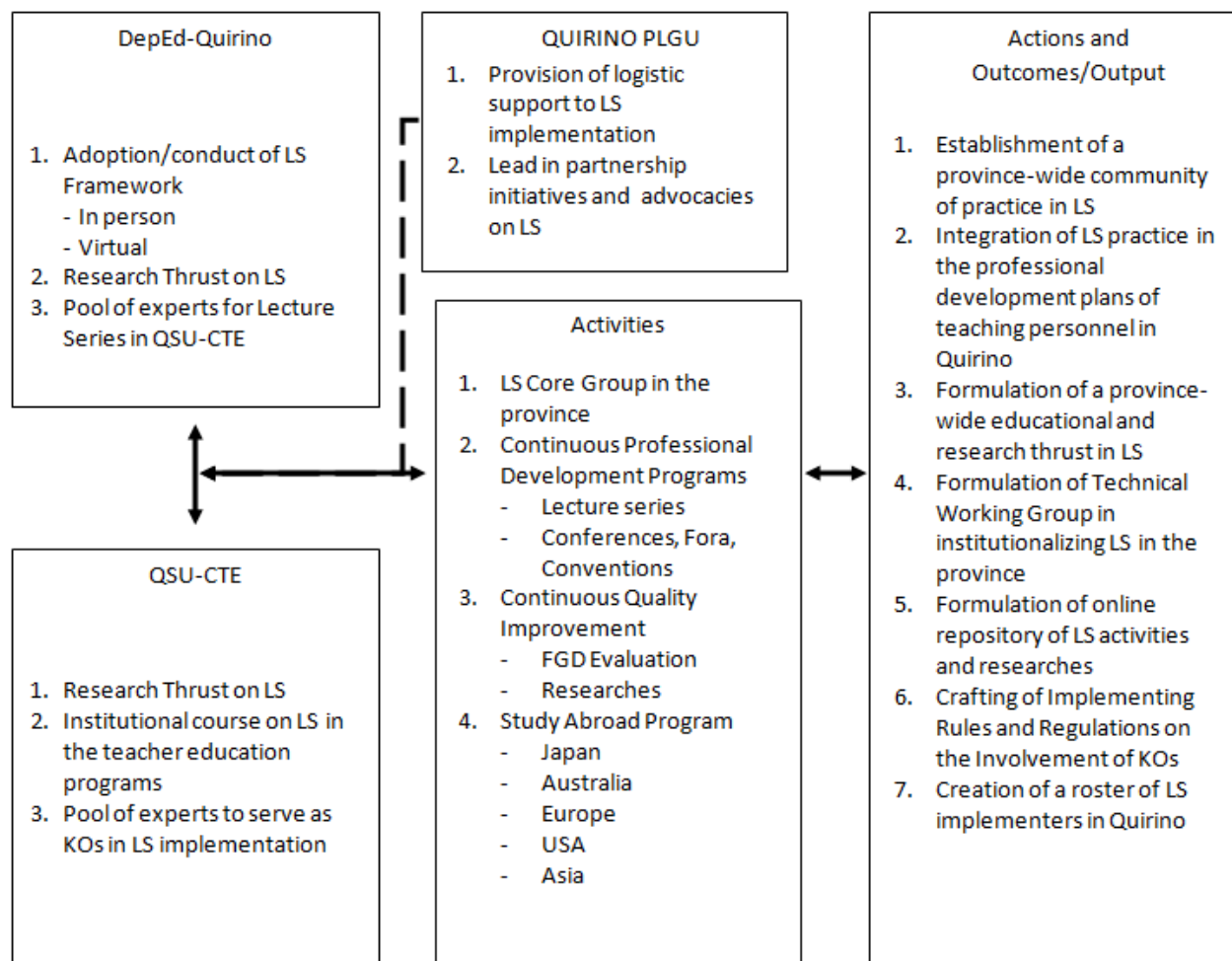


Figure 1. The Interplay of Quirino PLGU, DepEd, and QSU-system on the Institutionalization of LS in Quirino

This paper holds on the idea that education is a product and interplay of the government units and the educational sectors in a multipartite partnership and collaboration: the educational sector being the sectoral arm of integrating, adapting, and institutionalizing LS, and the Local Government Unit (LGU) as a support giving body on the betterment of educational state in their locality.

Within the framework in the Figure are the DepEd and QSU-system to exercise academic initiatives on their curricular plots. Specific to DepEd are the adoption and conduct of LS Framework in person and virtual modalities, crafting of research thrusts on LS, and providing a pool of experts for lecture series in QSU-CTE. On the other hand, QSU-system through its CTE will revisit its Research Thrusts to include LS as a dire area, create an institutional course on LS in the teacher education programs, and create a pool of experts to serve as KOs in LS implementation in DepEd. The complementation between DepEd and QSU will rationalize the act of making Quirino a premiere province in LS particularly in the Northern Philippines. ON the other hand, the Quirino PLGU will take the standpoint of providing logistic support to LS implementation and lead in partnership initiatives and advocacies on LS.

When realized, there shall be an LS Core Group in the province of Quirino which shall look into a systematic conduct of academic leaps like (1) Continuous Professional Development Programs like Lecture series including Conferences, Fora, and Conventions; (2) Continuous Quality Improvement through continuous planning, evaluation through FGDs, and conduct of researches; and Conduct of Study Abroad Program for continuous benchmarking activities in Japan, Australia, Europe, USA, and Asia.

This educational initiative in the locale of the study is expected to establish a province-wide community of practice in LS, integrate LS practice in the professional development plans of teaching personnel in Quirino, formulate of a province-wide educational and research thrust in LS, formulate a Technical Working Group in institutionalizing LS in the province, formulate an online repository of LS activities and researches, craft an Implementing Rules and Regulations on the Involvement of KOs, and create a roster of LS implementers in Quirino. This shall be attained in tune of the act of revolutionizing education in the province through international benchmarks and parlance: all at the helm of bringing quality education.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORKS

Based on the gathered data and parameters of this study, the following are concluded:

1. The teacher-implementers in the locale of the study hold clear understanding on the nature, activities, and procedures of LS. It is believed that this concordance among the teacher-implementers will rationalize the institutionalization of LS in the locale of the study;

2. An effectual impact along the professional development of the teacher-implementers is established along their pedagogical knowledge through evaluative perspectives of epistemology of LS complexity, as well as the ecology of action, and joint reflection of every member; and

3. The conglomeration of academic initiatives and leadership of LGU (Quirino Provincial Local Government Unit), basic education (DepEd), and higher and advanced education institutions (QSU-system) is necessary in institutionalizing an international good practice in education in the province of Quirino.

The adoption of an international good practice in education like Lesson Study impinges a great implication in the educational sector just like the case of Quirino province. While teacher-implementers are willing and adaptive, academic planners and administrators should consider the readiness of the teachers (cultural aspect), facilities, and continuous training to facilitate their development in this new practice. The transference involves a breadth pedagogical knowledge, dedication, engagement, and expertise of every teacher-implementer while a full support from and among school officials is highly wanting.

On the other hand, the inclusion of LS in the school curricula and research thrust of both DepEd and QSU-system in its College of Teacher Education requires a fortress benchmarks from and among the practitioners abroad. Immersions in the actual setting like school visits will add value to the preparation of the core group in doing this noble task. Likewise, a Memorandum of Agreement between and among Quirino Provincial Local Government Unit, DepEd-Schools Division of Quirino, and QSU-College of Teacher Education is necessary to assure a free-flow of talents under the concept of equality and reciprocity so as to assure the success of LS adoption.

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