

KasaySAYAn: Revisiting History among 21st Century Learners

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Abstract The study described and explored the perceptions of 21st-century History learners. The research is descriptive in design leaning toward a qualitative approach to data collection. Students taking History courses were selected to serve as the participants. The open-response survey instrument, utilized in the data collection, included questions that were initially asked during the preliminary class discussions and converted into text in a survey form. The survey questions focused on the observations and perceptions of learners of History. The data gathered from the survey was analyzed using thematic analysis method. The findings of the study revealed that History remains significant. Furthermore, learners' interest and happiness in History are in the exploration and investigation of the narratives. However, the learners somehow felt disinterested which is caused by their orientation on the typical approach to History. The study recommended the use of the thematic approach and integrative teaching to reinforce meaningful learning.

Keywords: *Active history, History education, 21st-century learners*

Introduction

History is vital in building the essence of social studies. It must be underscored that History includes social, political, cultural, and economic structures of the society as claimed by Fernand Braudel (1902-1985) cited in the book of Halili (2010). Furthermore, Braudel's auxiliary sciences of history support the significance of related sciences like archaeology, epigraphy, chronology, and others for a better understanding of history (Carr, 1961). These auxiliary sciences emphasize the significance of each aspect in the unfolding of historical events towards the development of society. In addition, learning history is an understanding of society and culture that involves revisiting the works of the past [College of Social Science and Philosophy (CSSP), 2013]. On the other hand, the struggles for independence make up history (Constantino, 1975).

In the K to 12 Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum (DepEd, 2013), Araling Panlipunan is expected to equip learners with the 21st century skills to become "functionally literate and developed Filipino." (p.7) The concepts of social studies as part of the curriculum (e.g., you and your community; you, your community and the country, and you, your community, the country and the world) primarily demand the understanding of *pagkakakilanlan* (identity). Schools through social studies develop the essence of national identity. According to Dewey (1938), progressive education is the one that socially engages learners in meaningful learning experiences. It is through social interactions that education becomes an effective social institution (Williams, 2017). Hence, learning history is not only confined inside the classroom, but learning also happens outside the four walls (Joseph, 2011). As CSSP (2013, p. 13) pointed out, "*Ang Araling Panlipunan ay pag-aaral ng mga tao at grupo, komunidad at lipunan, kung paano sila namuhay*

at namumuhay, ang kanilang ugnayan at interaksyon sa kapaligiran at sa isa't isa, ang kanilang mga paniniwala at kultura, upang makabuo ng pagkakakilanlan bilang Pilipino..." (Social Studies is the study of people, groups, communities and society on how they lived and are living, their relationship and interaction with each other and their environment, their beliefs, and the culture that make up the Filipino national identity).

For Levstik and Barton (2015), the use of inquiry-oriented instruction and the inductive method is expected to improve students' ability in critical historical understanding. Furthermore, in the words of Dilthey as cited in Halili (2010), teachers should be open to the possibility that information and interpretations may vary depending on the gathered data or studies conducted in the future. It is always an open-ended study of historical information (Halili, 2010). It is important to "historicize our own actions and treat the classroom as a subject of historical inquiry through learners to get to see history as a process of analysis and reflect on the content of history. The historical inquiry will set them apart from the traditional and mere objective learning of history, rather will develop historical thinking" (Pluymers, 2021, p. 34).

History as an Araling Panlipunan becomes effective if learners connect the past to the present (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2015). For Thorndike, laws of learning such as the Law of Readiness, Law of Exercise, and Law of Effect take place by creating a connection between the learners and the subjects to learn (Lucas & Corpuz, 2011). For Ocampo (2011), history is the meaning of the narratives, true history is unimaginable without the meaning and values (*saysay*) of the narratives (*salaysay*). History is not "a question of accuracy and verisimilitude, it is an exploration of the political, cultural, and moral life" (Reid, 2021, p. 9). In contrast, Carr (1961) pointed out that historians must never get wrong with the historical information. Carr (1961) even stressed

Housman's view that it is a duty more than a virtue for the historians to become accurate in explaining the history. In addition, making the process of learning and researching history in a more transparent manner, channels connection between history and learners (Levstik & Barton, 2016).

But it seems that at this age history seems to be repeating itself, because as the education system continues to advance through technology and media use, the perennial problem such as low interest and passivity of the learners were again generally observed in some history classes. In the study of Laufenberg (2011) cited by Tew (2014), the contents in history were adjusted to accommodate learners, disinterest remains a challenge in teaching, which possibly reflects the way the learners respond to teaching. As this kind of instruction exists, the more the learners are detached from subject/course (Tew, 2014).

Nevertheless, history could best be enjoyed more than pure academics through a non-traditional way of studying the subject/course. The learners could read history for pleasure and make it a hobby. It must not be limited to just reading books but include "collecting stamps or antiques, telling stories of the past, or traveling and visiting museums and historical sites" (Fielding, 2005, p.2). Hence, the teachers of history have to keep learners curious and excited. In the study of Akengin and Cendek (2017), students liked history in general because it provoked their curiosity. The only reason for the students to get bored was when the same methods and strategies in teaching were used by the teachers.

In this regard, there is a need to revisit history education to further develop the interest of the diverse and dynamic community of 21st century learners, an interest to become strongly rooted in their history, and to think and act historically.

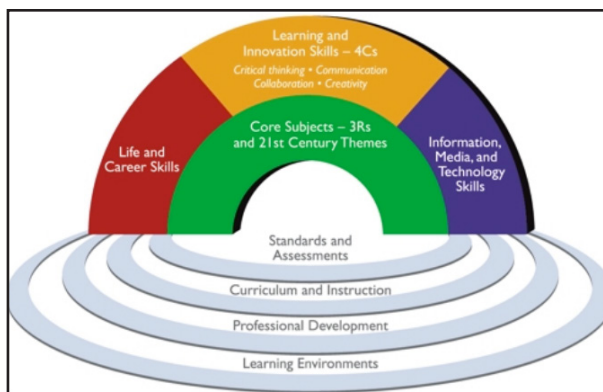
Theoretical Framework

The constructivist approach in education allows learners to construct their own meaning of their experiences (Salandanan, 2012). It underscores the presence of a schema, or prior knowledge that are developed from what the learners learned at school (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2015). Vygotsky, as cited by Chaiklin (2003), pointed out that through cultural and social context, knowledge and understanding are developed. Thus, “historical thinking is demonstrated as a notion of socio-constructivism” (Muhammad, 2021, p. 1424). Active learning in Araling Panlipunan occurs when learners are exposed to activities that require them to employ their higher order thinking skills (HOTS) (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2015). Competencies such as constructing meanings, probing, communicating, initiating, reflecting, higher-order thinking, and social learning are developed among learners through a constructivist approach (Salandanan, 2012).

Furthermore, social studies continue to evolve as society changes and adapts to system innovations. Through educational leaders, curricular experts, and teachers along with the community stakeholders, the competencies in social studies are reformed and contextualized based on the 21st-century global needs.

Figure 1

21st-Century Student Outcomes and Support System (Imam Farisi, 2016).



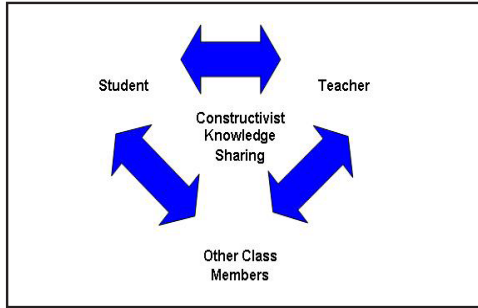
The 21st-century student outcomes and support system (Fig. 1) may best realize the acquisition of appropriate 21st century Social Studies skills that will cover the following skills: critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, communication, and collaboration. Such skills form part of the ‘learning and innovation skills.’ Other skill sets include the information literacy, media literacy, and ICT literacy known as ‘information, media, and technology skills,’ and the ‘life and career skills’ that include flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility (Imam Farisi, 2016).

In a constructivist-oriented class, the teacher acts as a guide while students experiment and explore their knowledge. The teacher encourages interaction, sharing, and problem-solving among the learning group members (Bond, 2016). The learning objectives reflect the students’ interest to learn.

Constructivist-teaching strategies foster flexible and customized lessons that encourage collaboration and sharing

Figure 2

Constructivist Knowledge Sharing (Bond, 2016).



of knowledge. Through these strategies, learning becomes more meaningful as learners get to reflect on their lessons.

Through constructivism, learners get to learn meaningfully. The process of learning becomes personal to the extent that learners get to describe their learning behavior, experiences, observations, challenges, and perceptions (Figure 2).

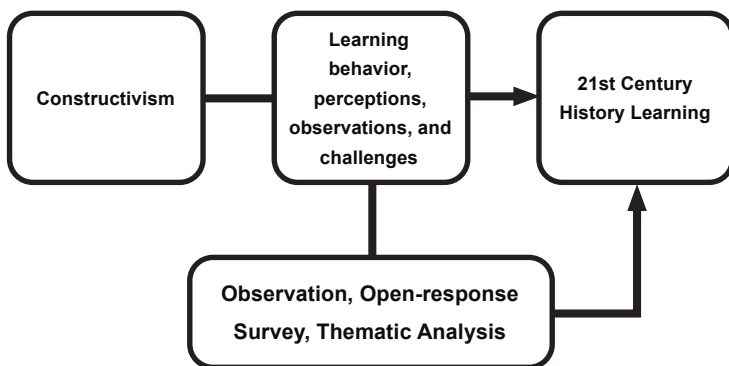
In the study, it is assumed that learners of history could learn the 21st century social studies skills through the contextualized study of history. In learning history, learners will be guided to develop their critical and analytical thinking in making decisions, improve their creativity in appreciating values and social relevance, and will to present their perceptions and ideas through sensible communication.

Figure 3 presents the research paradigm of the study leading to 21st-century history learning. Hence, this study aimed to discover the happiness of learning history. Specifically, it sought to describe and explore the perceptions and expectations of learners and examine challenges experienced by learners in learning history.

The data were gathered through observation and an open-response survey. These collected data were initially

Figure 3

Research Paradigm.



analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution and thoroughly analyzed using thematic analysis.

After the analysis, the themes presented the state of 21st-century history learning, that centers on the implications of learning history, their interest, expressions attributed to history, the challenges they encountered, the ways they want to study history, and their commitment to developing an appreciation of learning history.

Research Methods

Research Design

The study utilized descriptive design using approaches to qualitative data collection, specifically open-response survey. This design is deemed appropriate for an in-depth understanding of the behaviors of the participant by deducing realistic data from opinions, perspectives, and attitudes. The design primarily involved gathering and analysis of qualitative data. The study also explored the data to identify the themes, patterns, and interpretation of

categories, then converted these data into numerical data for evaluation (Nassaji, 2015).

Participants

In the study, the group of history learners were selected as participants. Convenience sampling was used to identify the 25 Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) Social Studies major students (Stratton, 2021).

Twenty (80%) of the participants are females and only five (20%) are males. They are all sophomore students who already took up their General Education History course and are currently enrolled in their major History courses. Furthermore, these students have the experience to observe History classes in high school as they were also enrolled in their Field Study courses.

Context of the Study

There were 25 students in a class and these students were enquired about their perceptions and views of learning history through an open-response survey. These students made up almost a quarter of the total population of junior BSEd students. They were accommodated in one of the typical classrooms located on the right-wing of the college's complex building.

Instrument

The open-response survey includes one central question, Why it is significant to study History? and five sub-questions that focus on the learners' perceived significance of learning history and their perceptions which include their observations, interests, their expressions on learning history, and challenges they encountered. Part of the survey explored the ways learners want to learn history and their

commitment to developing more appreciation of learning history.

The what questions make up the survey. These questions were simply constructed using words that could be straightforwardly understood. These questions aimed to get specific information and require detailed answers. There was enough space provided to write the answer after the question. The open-response survey instrument was assessed using face validity.

Data Gathering

The researcher gathered initial data through observation during the course orientation from August 03- 04, 2016. The responses of participants from a series of questions asked from them as review and motivation questions were considered in the development of the survey questionnaire. The questions included in the survey were cross-validated with the literature review. The next day, the survey questionnaire was distributed to the participants during the preliminaries in their history major class, and were instructed to independently accomplish the survey. While answering the survey, the researcher roamed around to attend to the participants' clarifications regarding the survey. The participants were asked to submit the survey at a common time. The retrieved survey forms were coded and secured in an envelope.

Data Analysis

Other than frequency and percentages, the thematic analysis was primarily used to analyze the data gathered. The cool analysis served as the first stage of data analysis, in which the direct responses of the participants were reviewed and the data were categorized (Ragma, 2018). It was followed by a warm analysis, where the essence and meaning were

extracted from the culled-out direct statements and were cluster based on their prevalent perceptions (Stage 2). Finally, to simplify the presentation the frequency and percentage distributions of the identified themes were presented in tables (Stage 3).

The Repertory Grid was used as a tool of thematic analysis to categorize the gathered qualitative data using a tabular presentation that includes significant statements, data categories, and themes. The repertory grid has constructs and elements as its components. The "constructs help the people organize their perceptions of the world" (Zuber-Skerritt & Roche, 2004, p. 85).

Ethical Considerations

Initially, in the course orientation, the researcher informed the class of the intention and the purpose of the study. The researcher sought the informed consent of the participants through a written notice to answer the open-response survey. The researcher did not force anyone from the class to serve as a participant. In the study, the names of the participants were not revealed, further, during the thematic analysis of the data gathered, the scheme of coding was used to keep the identities of participants confidential.

Findings

In the study, when the participants were asked about the importance of learning history, the participants variedly answered the question as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Research Themes

Sample Verbatim Response	Code	Theme	Description of Themes
<p>“The significance of studying (local) history is we can get to know our heritage, our identity, the roots of our culture, and what have been our contribution to our national history. We get to know what has been the role of our ancestors in the events that have been recorded and became famous to all.” [8A]</p>	Know history	Implications of learning history	<p>The implications of learning History present the views of the participants studying history. This theme covers sub-themes such as understanding the significant events, preparation for the future, and part of life that honors the heritage.</p> <p>History is always a significant part of their lives. As the learners associate themselves with the phenomena of the past, learners enjoy History. It is interesting because it boosts their curiosity to explore the persons, places, dates, chronology, and most especially the values of the past.</p>
<p>“For me, learning history makes people interested in studying it because it boosts their curiosity to know something, to understand something, and to learn from something that has a connection to the past. It is interesting because when you studying history, it feels like you are also part of the particular event of the past you are studying. It feels like you lived in history.” [23B]</p>	Boosts curiosity	Interests in history	<p>The participants are interested in history because they want to experience the life that the early Filipinos had before. Part of this is to explore the culture and values of the past. This theme covers the sub-themes such as boosting curiosity to explore, relive the past life, and discover culture and values.</p>

<p>“For me, the word that best describes (local) history is limitless because it’s just like the path that never ends and where to go, what is at the end of the path is always a puzzle just like history never ends.”[10C]</p>	<p>Limitless</p>	<p>Articulations in learning history</p>	<p>None of the participants indicated that history is boring. History is “limitless” because everyday event adds up to history. Throughout history, learners are taught the best values of Filipinos such as nationalism and patriotism.</p> <p>This theme is particularized into sub-themes such as interesting, Amazing, limitless, value-laden, meaningful, and locally manifested</p>
<p>“The most common challenge in learning (local) history is memorizing the name and date of the event or the person.” [13E]</p>	<p>Memorizing history</p>	<p>Challenges in learning history</p>	<p>The lack of interest and passion among students is the greatest challenge in history. In addition, the unavailability of learning resources is also a recurrent problem. These challenges in learning history could be specified in the following sub-themes difficult to memorize, lack of interest, and lack of information.</p>
<p>“Showing their culture and tradition, we know that some of their culture and tradition remain at present time, so by learning it we can get ideas about them....”[1D]</p>	<p>Reliving culture</p>	<p>Happiness in history</p>	<p>History can be appreciated once learners study history with fervor. It could also be appreciated once values and culture are shared, relived, and celebrated. In addition, tracing history in search of its connection to the present through school and community linkages also contributes to the search for happiness in history.</p>
			<p>Happiness in history is specifically manifested with the following sub-themes; study with passion, share, relive and celebrate history and culture, connect the present to the past, respect heritage and reorient values, and expedition.</p>

<p>“...not just by knowing only the local history but it just about how can I influence and inspire other students to learn and understand history.”[1F]</p>	<p>Inspire others</p>	<p>Commitment to learning history</p>	<p>The commitment to learning history is particularized into sub-themes such as knowing and sharing history with the community, inspiring learners of the values of history, developing class activities, and practicing culture.</p>
			<p>To inspire the learners to learn history, they first need to be motivated and be engaged by creating a happy learning environment. The practice of culture is another way of appreciating the learning of history. Part of this is to serve as an example of living the culture (values) of history. Boosting the interest of the learners is possible by using various teaching strategies and techniques.</p>

Discussions

The research findings revolve around the seven themes, which were associated and discussed in the context of related literature. Their implications for the teaching were also established

Implications of Learning History

Teaching history is showing learners how “to think and act like historians” and to establish a connection “between the past, present, and future” (Dunn, 2021, p. 25). According to Taylor and Guyver (2012) as cited by Berg (2019), history matters as this study meticulously investigates the details of both the public and the private lives of the people. Thus, it is teachers’ “duty and obligation to make the merits and virtues of historical study accessible to students today” (Berg, 2019, p. 55).

The knowledge retention of history may be more possible as the learners construct the essences of what they are dealing with in history classes. Allowing learners to connect to the bigger world through practical examples (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2015), makes the learning meaningful. In history, the application of values learned in practical situations makes learning worthy.

Interests in History

Allowing the learners to see, feel, and encounter phenomenon is learning. Affective-based teaching refrains learning to become cold and lifeless (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2015). In history classes, as observed, reading is not enough to learn, rather, allowing learners to sense history makes them learn. Authentic learning makes Araling Panlipunan meaningful, learning that engages learners to innovate from what they created as value or meaning (Corpuz & Salandanan 2015).

Ironically, learners cannot re-live the past events. But through active and meaningful commemoration of history, they may have real history learning. This finding confirms the words of Llanes (2013, p. 7), “Ang paggunitang pangkasaysayan ay mahalaga sa direksyon ng lipunan: Ang nilalaman ng paggunita ay pamantayan o *template* ng mga pagpapahalaga at tunguhin ng paggalaw o pagkilos” (The historical commemoration is important in giving direction: The content of the commemoration serves as the standard in valuing and setting the most acceptable ways of doing things). Generally, learning history is more than a requirement. It is essential to know oneself through commemorating people’s movements towards becoming a society. Hertzberg (1981) pointed out that history is the study that speaks of the present. Thus, culture of the youth today merely centers on the present.

This finding is also evident as one of the participants said, “Learning history is interesting because by studying history we get to know our past. We become familiar with our culture, we get to know where we came from and how we evolved and become modern Filipinos. But learning history becomes more interesting when you get to know its value. Learning our history instills in our hearts and minds the value of being a Filipino.” [8B] For Hertzberg (1981), social studies serve as a guide for the learners to examine the changes in their values and attitudes brought by the transformations in the society.

Articulations in Learning History

Learners of the 21st century offer varied attributes for history, which is relative to the way they learned the subject. History topics must underscore all the values of every historic event that had happened more than just memorization of facts. The inquiry, analysis, research, communication, and ethics should be highlighted as the competency standards in Social Studies (History) (CSSP, 2013). Meanwhile, Zeus Salazar attributed

history as narratives with meaning (Chua, 2021; Ocampo, 2011). For Ocampo (2011), the meaning of history makes up real history.

Commonly, history is described as interesting, amazing, and limitless adventures, values-laden, meaningful, and locally manifested. None of the participants indicated that it is boring. The same result was generated by Joseph (2011) where students generally disagreed with the notion that learning history is boring and irrelevant. Hertzberg (1981) stressed that Social Studies is after the holistic development of every individual. It is after producing multifaceted identities fitting for a functional democracy. These personalities possessed the knowledge, skills, attitude, and values necessary to become better citizens (Hertzberg, 1981). It is in history courses that learners are inspired to be great citizens, and are taught the best values of Filipinos such as nationalism and patriotism.

In the words of Corpuz and Salandanan (2015, p. 13) contextualized learning is “learning beyond the classroom,” it makes learning more relevant to the learners by making the real world the classroom. As Brelsford (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2015, p. 13) pointed out, it’s bringing the “outside realities” into the class discussion. Teaching history is more than the content, it is deepening the meaning. The development of critical history that lessens the use of the traditional method connects history (stimulus) to present (response).

Challenges in Learning History

According to Hertzberg (1981), the value and appreciation of history are feared to be lost suddenly among the youth as seen by historians. The same fear for the Social Studies teachers in the 21st century knowing that learners today are too exposed to media and technology. Ironically, for Joseph (2011) these

are “good sources of history instruction” (p. 9) that offer a wide range of information. Nevertheless, despite these varied sources of history instruction the “negative perceptions of history” (p. 9) seem to prevail as influenced by the outside classroom factors (Joseph, 2011).

On the other hand, learning history is not about memorization of literature (litanies of names, places, and dates) but an in-depth understanding of literature. However, this typical approach to history had become one of the greatest problems of boredom that led to the gap between learners and history as agreed by the 24% of the sample participants. One participant pointed out, “The most common challenge in learning history is memorization of dates, persons, places and events.” [12E] The task of memorization of facts which is common does not equate to meaningful learning. Araling Panlipunan should always be challenging, this means exposing learners to neither too easy nor too difficult tasks apart from the usual tasks (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2015).

The disinterest reflects the way the learners respond to teaching (Laufenberg, 2011, as cited in Tew, 2014). Such perhaps is the result of the classroom-based factor such as textbook-centered teaching of history that offers limited content to learn, in addition, the encyclopedic fashion of materials makes learners passive receivers (White, 1995, as cited in Tew, 2014). Furthermore, Joseph (2011) claimed that than classroom-based factors as a contributory factor to the lack of interest of the learners, and their perceptions of 21st-century learners on history perhaps are molded by the prior general perception that history is “dull and boring and of no significance at present-day existence” (p. 4). This factor is beyond the classroom teaching of history. “Students nowadays lack interest in studying history. Therefore, teachers should first get their attention before teaching it”[25E] as pointed out by one of the participants.

One of the participants said, “The most common challenge in learning history is the lack of materials and references. The books and other references just focused on the national history....”[8E] On the other hand, Hertzberg (1981) pointed out that there are available materials for learning history, but these are sources that are mere products of diversity. A written historical resource is what is needed over some just multiplied sources (Hertzberg, 1981). Hence, despite these challenges there is happiness in learning history driven by their curiosity in discovering more about the past.

Happiness in History

Appreciation of history begins from understanding the relationship between history and society. One of the participants said, “...we must willingly study it with passion... to be an effective teacher.”[4D] The other participant added, “We must read history books, engage in activities related to it and make it a guide for facing the future.”[7D] One of the participants stated, “...then spread it to all our friends and fellow students, they will appreciate it if they will know the beauty of the locality”[13D]

The formal education system has its role of preserving the values of the society as a tool of sound socialization (Hertzberg, 1981). Joseph (2011) pointed out that despite that studying history allows you to gain values and virtues more than knowledge of the past, the learners of history are blinded to the vital role of understanding their identity (Joseph, 2011). “In order to become effective history teachers and empower an educated citizenry to see the value of history in and outside of the classroom, we must understand the evolving needs of our audience” (Berg, 2019, p.5). Furthermore, one of the participants stressed that still the way the teacher teaches history matters, she indicated, “History is understood and appreciated through an exciting teacher that helps motivate students to learn history....”[10D]

In the organization of the content of history, the conventional approach (chronological) remains the standard. But there is an introduced approach known thematic approach which adopts the technique known as “Reversed Chronology” (Tew, 2014) that indicates that history learning starts from the present to the past. This unique approach goes opposite the typical approach in history. It starts from the understanding of the present conditions and “working backward” (Tew, 2014, p. np). A reverse chronological approach is a unique approach that engages learners in history (Misco and Patterson 2009, as cited in Tew 2014). It is through this approach that learners’ interests, experiences, and imaginations are integrated while discovering the past. Further, in the words of Misco and Patterson (2009) as cited by Tew (2014) reverse chronology gives timeless relevance to history as this approach connects the “past, present and future in unimaginable ways (n.p).” This innovation adheres to the integrative approach that familiarizes the learners not just to collect and arrange facts but to analyze and later synthesize facts in a way that is best learned (Salandanan, 2012), through association.

Further, Thorndike’s (1910) connectionism describes learning as a process of connecting (Lucas & Corpuz, 2011), as the learners see the connection of history in their lives the more, they will be ready to learn, and the more they will exercise the process of learning because of the felt effects of learning history. In the process of learning history, learners must learn to think critically to transform the knowledge into functional knowledge that is relevant to the present times and feasibly significant in solving problems.

Commitment in Learning History

Learning history is knowing and acting as a member of the society to discover one’s social identity. History as one of the core pillars of Social Studies is not limited to the study of the past phenomena nor the people, the community nor

the society but to how through times they interact with the environment and with each other to create an identity (CSSP, 2013).

In the study, one of the participants pointed out, “My commitment as BSED Social Studies major student in the development and greater appreciation of history is to learn more about it and to share what I have learned to everyone...,” [15F]. This is one of the direct responses of nearly half of the participants indicating that sharing history, knowledge, and values of history is their commitment in the appreciation of learning history (Table 6). In addition, the other participants added that through researching national heroes and places history can be more appreciated.

Salandanan (2012) underscored that acquisition of knowledge becomes significant through actual observations of a phenomenon that provides firsthand experiences to learners. In teaching social studies (History) nothing is more interesting than organizing learning activities, that do not just keep students busy but keep them learning (Laanemets & Kalameer-Ruubel, 2013). As one of the participants added, “My commitment... make a way or a step-by-step process for me to know or to trace history and by this activity, I will show them or to other people how other community or people lived before...I will propose an activity to our locality that will introduce our history.” [18F]

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study is intended to reexamine History as a field of study in the 21st-century development and revolution in education. The integral part of the study described and explored the perceptions and observations of learners which will serve as a basis for the development of a more meaningful History curriculum.

The findings of the study revealed that learners get to learn and value history from constructing meanings, investigating, and reflecting on historical knowledge. Through constructivism, the learners get to examine their learning experiences of history and identify their interests, challenges, commitment, and reasons for happiness while learning. Furthermore, the findings of the study also support the need for the continuous development of the 21st century Social Studies skills like critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and collaboration. In addition, the findings reveal that learners of history must not only learn the historical facts and information, but they also have to be critically literate with the information, media, and technology skills.

These findings could be considered significant for curriculum developers and teachers in the course of the development and upgrading of teaching history. Making history closer to the learners through collaboration, reflection and contextualization remains essential for history teachers to fully make learning meaningful. Moreover, in this digital age, teaching history becomes more challenging for teachers especially in some cases where information technology is overused that leads the learners to become less critical and analytical.

Nevertheless, the findings of the study recognized the teachers as the most effective tool for bringing happiness (*saya*) in history. It is through the teachers that the historical narratives are brought into life. It is through the teachers and their teaching resources that values are reinforced and culture is conserved and preserved.

The study is limited to the perceptions and observations of the learners. The findings of the study could serve as base information for the conduct of the further study. A future study has to involve History students across

specializations to dig deeper into the learning encounters and challenges of 21st-century learners.

Moreover, the study foresees that with the inculcation of the strong values, engagement in collaborative activities using information technology, and the use of a thematic approach to learning, meaningful learning of history courses could be achieved. The findings of the study could be an input in the development of a history curriculum that responds more to the needs of a 21st-century learner. Further, given that the study is limited to the perceptions of tertiary learners, a similar study could be conducted among basic education learners with validation among teachers of History.



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