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STUDY ON TEACHERS' BARRIERS IN CONDUCTING ACTION RESEARCH

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Abstract

This study determines the barriers experienced by teachers in conducting action research in all schools of M'lang South District, Division of Cotabato for the School Year 2020-2021. The descriptive- correlation research design was used in the study. By utilizing complete enumeration sampling technique, 125 respondents were selected to participate in the survey. The survey questionnaire's reliability was established prior to conduct having a Cronbach's Alpha of .867. Results obtained from the descriptive analysis revealed that among the indicators only workload (M= 4.13) is the determinant that received the highest mean pertaining to teachers' barriers in conducting action research. It was also revealed that developing collegial interaction (M=4.35) received the highest mean score in pertaining to the level of teachers' conducting action research. Furthermore, there was significant relationship between teachers' barriers and conducting action research. It was revealed that workload was found out to be the teacher's barrier in conducting action research that affects their professional development, instructional planning, addressing students' problem, and develop collegial interaction. On the other hand, funds and support, time, and knowledge have no significant relationship between professional development, instructional planning, addressing students' problem, and develop collegial interaction. Finally, results from the regression analysis revealed that there was significant influence between teachers' barriers and conducting action research in terms of professional development, addressing student's problem, and develop collegial interaction. However, there was no significant influence of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of instructional planning.

Keywords: Action Research, Research Barriers, Collegial Interaction, Philippines.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the teaching-learning process, teacher action research plays a significant role. Action research is a powerful technique for deepening pedagogical and instructional expertise and improving student learning outcomes. In Indonesia's context, particularly East Java, around 84 % of teachers attempted action research. However, there were issues arise during implementation like determining the problem, suggesting a literature review, and analyzing the results (Wulandari, Narmatdiga, Utomo, & Prayitno, 2009). The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines issued a directive requiring all principals, supervisors, and teachers to embrace "The Enclosed Basic Education Research Agenda" which encourages the conduct of action research. However, in the public elementary and secondary schools the conduct of action research seems insignificant since teachers are insufficiently educated on the content and process in conducting it. (Department of Education Order No. 16, s. 2017). The Division of Cotabato had already initiated training to vitalize instructors' research culture. The division had issued Division Memorandum under Region Memorandum PPRD 24 s. 2019 to call for the attention of teachers to submit an action research proposal. However, despite the Division Office's efforts only few teachers conduct action research. In fact, in our district, out of 125 teachers, only 4 action research proposals were submitted and none of it had been approved and conducted (Maguad, 2021). Thus, there is a need to conduct this study to determine teachers' barriers in conducting action research. As a result, the findings of this study will acquaint principals and school officials to cope with the barriers encountered to motivate teachers to conduct action research.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to determine the teachers' barriers in conducting action research in all schools of the M'lang South District, Cotabato Division for the school year 2020-2021. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of teachers' barriers in terms of workload, time, funds and support, and knowledge?
2. What is the level of teachers in conducting action research in terms of professional development,

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instructional planning, addressing student problem, and developing collegial interaction?

3. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' barriers and conducting action research?
4. Is there a significant influence of the teachers' barriers in conducting action research?

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The illustration shows the relationship and influence between the teachers' barriers and conducting action research. The teachers' barriers that include workload, funds and support, time, and knowledge was the dependent variable in this study. Tindonwen, Guzman and Macanang (2019) identified workload and knowledge as teachers' problems and difficulties in undertaking action research. Also, lack of funds and support and time was identified by (Gomez & Catan, 2021).

Also, action research includes professional development, instructional planning, addressing student problem, and developing collegial interaction were the independent variable in this study. Ferrance (2000) identified professional development, addressing student problem, and developing collegial interaction as teachers' perception of action research. Also, Tindonwen, Guzman, and Macanang (2019) identified instructional planning.

Morales, Abulon, Soriano, David, Hermosisima and Gerundio (2016) mentioned that administrators continue to hope that action research procedures will turn into more commonly used in schools. They hoped that teachers would seek out methods to engage in research-based collaborative work and push for school policies that incorporate action research concepts and procedures in the purpose of improving required learners' accomplishment. Teachers' commitment in undertaking action research procedures that is of high quality and incorporates adversity is the key for complete and successful research projects. Teachers also need time and attention for the class and students.

School administrators around the country plan and design activities to improve teaching and learning inside the classroom. One of them is conducting action research Thus, it is essential to regard teachers' barriers towards researching to encourage and develop their skills to undertake research for professional development (Ulla, Barrera, & Acompanado, 2017).

Research Paradigm

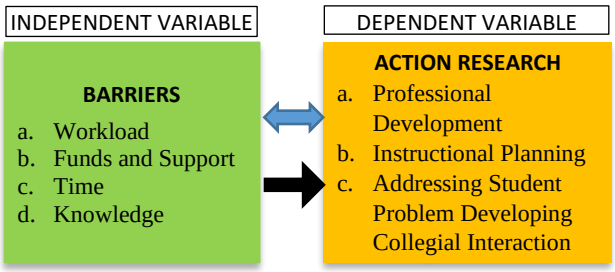


Figure 1 Schematic diagram Showing the Relationship and Influence of Teachers' Barriers and Conducting Action Research

4. METHODS

Research Design

The researcher used a descriptive-correlational research design for this study. It is descriptive because it determined the level of teachers' barriers and conducting action research. It was also correlational since it will determine whether level of teachers' barriers have significant relationship and influence in conducting action research. Tupou (2013) explains that the purpose of descriptive-correlational research is to collect some information about the trend found in the field and supports this view that in the design of correlation testing, researchers used statistical correlation tests to define and calculate the level of relationship between two or more variables or sets of scores.

Data Gathering Methods

In gathering data to complete this study, the researcher prepared a letter of permission to conduct the survey, which the Dean of the Graduate School first noted. The said letter was transmitted to the Schools District Supervisor of the study locale, for approval stating researcher's request to conduct the study.

As the public school's district supervisor approved the letter, the researcher transmits a copy of it to elementary schools' school heads. The researcher finally administered the questionnaire to the respondents and collected it for data tabulation and analysis.

Participants of the Study

The respondents in this study were the elementary school teachers of M'lang South District in the Municipality of M'lang, Division of Cotabato for School Year 2020-2021.

The respondents were 125 teachers in all schools. These comprises: Bagontapay CES with 32 teachers, headed by Dennison J. Tungala; Buayan ES with 24 teachers, headed by Lovella O. Maguad; Gaunan ES with 17 teachers, headed by Mary Ann Y. Magbanua; La Fortuna ES with 9 teachers, headed by Joemar O. Coronel; Lepaga ES with 14 teachers, headed by Babelyn V. Publico; New Barbaza ES with 8 teachers, headed by Norely V. Perez; New Janiuay ES with 13 teachers, headed by Merlie C. Catolico; and Pangcog ES with 8 teachers, headed by Romy A. Española. This number comprises the total population of teachers teaching at all grade levels.

Table 1a. Data on the Distribution of the Respondents (all grade level in M'lang South District)

Statistical Tools and Data Analysis

Mean. This was used in providing results on the level of teachers' barriers and level in conducting action research. Mean is a parameter that measures the center of a random variable's distribution. It a significant figure that appears frequently in scientific publication (Salkind, 2010).

Spearman Rho. This was used in providing results on the degree of relationship between teachers' barriers and conducting action research. The Spearman correlation coefficient according to Frey (2018), measures the strength of relationship between two variables. It analyzes the connection between variables of ordinal measurement levels by using rankings rather than assumptions about the distribution of the two variables.

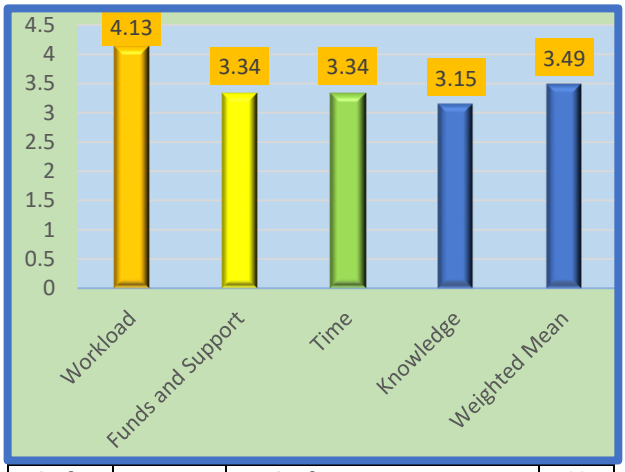
Linear Regression. This will be used in providing results on the degree of influence between teachers' barriers and conducting action research. Kumari and Yadav (2018) discussed that linear regression is a statistical process for estimating the value of a dependent variable from an independent variable. It is a modeling technique in which one or more independent variables are used to predict a dependent variable.

5. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Summary of Results and Discussions

Research Problem No. 1

Level of teachers' barriers in terms of workload, time, funds and support, and knowledge

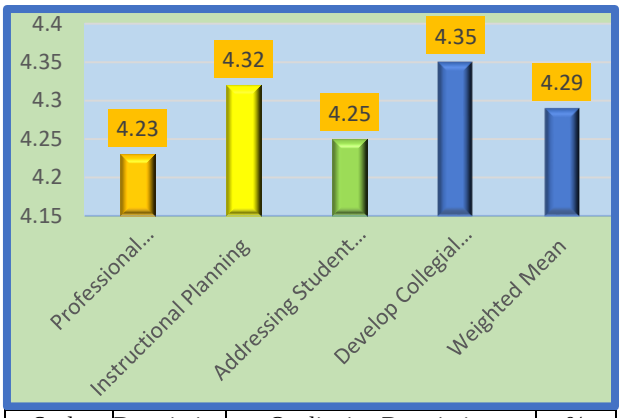


Scale	Description	Qualitative Description	%
4.21–5.00	Strongly Agree	This means that the statement is assessed to be at very high level	81–100
3.41–4.20	Agree	This means that the statement is assessed to be at high level	61–80
2.61–3.40	Moderately Agree	This means that the statement is assessed to be at moderate level	41–60
1.81–2.60	Disagree	This means that the statement is assessed to be at low level	21–40
1.00–1.80	Strongly Disagree	This means that the statement assessed to be at very low level	01–20

To sum up the level of teacher's barriers in conducting action research, workload obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.13 described as agree, followed by funds and support (3.34), time (3.34), and knowledge (3.15) which are described as moderately agree, respectively. The data reveals that the teacher's level barriers in conducting action research obtained a general weighted mean of 3.49 which is described as agree.

Research Problem No. 2

Level of teachers in conducting action research in terms of professional development, instructional planning, addressing student problem, and developing collegial interaction.



Scale	Description	Qualitative Description	%
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1.81–2.60	Disagree	This means that the statement is assessed to be at low level	21–40
1.00–1.80	Strongly Disagree	This means that the statement assessed to be at very low level	01–20

To summarize the teacher's level in the conduct of action research, develop collegial interaction obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.35 which is described as strongly agree, followed by instructional planning (4.32), addressing student problem (4.25), and professional development (4.23) which have the same description as strongly agree, respectively. The teacher's level in the conduct of action research obtained a general weighted mean of 4.29 which is described as strongly agree.

Research Problem No. 3

The data in Table 2 disclose the significant relationship between teachers' barriers and conducting action research. It was revealed that workload (R=.279, P=0.005) has significant relationship between professional development. This means that the workloads of teachers have a major impact on performing action research in teachers' professional development. These findings accord with Tindowen, Macanang, and Guzman (2019) claiming that one of the reasons why teachers are unable to grow professionally through action research is because of their workload. As a result, correctly controlling workloads can lead to teachers' mastery of specific tasks.

Table 1 . Significant Relationship Between the Teachers' Barriers and Conducting Action Research

			Professional Development	Instructional Planning	Addressing Student Problem	Develop Collegial Interaction
Spearman's rho	Workload	Correlation Coefficient	0.279**	0.273**	0.274**	0.295**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	0.006	0.006	0.003
		N Correlation	100	100	100	100
	Funds and Support	Correlation Coefficient	0.066	0.126	0.068	0.109
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.514	0.209	0.499	0.280
		N	101	101	101	101
	Time	Correlation Coefficient	0.036	-0.086	0.059	-0.046

		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.721	0.391	0.559	0.646
		N	101	101	101	101
	Knowledge	Correlation Coefficient	-0.064	0.000	0.095	0.112
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.524	0.996	0.345	0.265
		N	101	101	101	101

Moreover, there was significant relationship between workload and instructional planning (R= .273, P=0.006). This suggested that the increase of workloads would also likely increase the instructional planning of teachers. The results of the study imply that instructional planning has influenced by workload of teachers which was the same on the view of Morales, Abulon, Soriano, David, Hermosisima, & Gerundio (2016) that instructional planning can be systematic if workloads are manageable.

Furthermore, there was significant relationship between workload and addressing students' problem in conducting action research in terms of addressing students' problems (R= .274, P=0.006). It indicates that addressing students' problem has influenced by workload of teachers. It is further implied that the action research can assist them in identifying their student's problems which validates to the claims of Ado (2013) that teachers undertaking action research can give solutions on classrooms issues, including student concerns.

Finally, findings indicate that there was significant relationship between workload and conducting action research in terms of develop collegial interaction (R= 0.295, P=0.003). It suggests that the increase of workloads would also likely increase of develop collegial interaction which was identified by Herlina, Kurnia, and Faridah, (2018) that workloads have a major impact on teachers' ability to conduct action research and, as a result, create relationships and improve their interaction with coworkers. Meanwhile, there was no significant relationship between funds and support and professional development (R= .066, P=0.514), instructional planning (R= 0.126, P= 0.209), addressing students' problem (R=0.68, P= 0.499), and develop collegial interaction (R= 0.109, P= 0.280). There was no significant relationship between time and professional development (R= 0.036, P=0.721), instructional planning (R= -0.086, P= 0.391), addressing students' problem (R=0.059, P= 0.559), and develop collegial interaction (R= -0.046, P= 0.646).

In addition, there was no significant relationship between knowledge and professional development (R= -0.064, P=0.524), instructional planning (R= 0.000, P= 0.996), addressing students' problem (R=0.095, P= 0.345), and develop collegial interaction (R= 0.112, P= 0.265). This implies that funds and support, time and knowledge have no significant effect on teachers' barriers in conducting action research. The combined effect of the variables of teachers' barriers in conducting action research has no significant effect on the professional development, instructional planning, students' addressing problem and develop collegial interaction of teachers.

This negate the findings of Aguilar de Borja (2018), that time, knowledge, and funds and support is very essential in conducting action research to develop teacher's professional growth and proficiency. Moreover, it allows teachers to reflect on what they want to change, investigate what others are doing in the field, and provides new learnings to refine their practices or give solutions to important issues in classrooms and schools. This practical course aids participants in improved teaching and learning through classroom-based research.

Research Problem No. 4

Table 2 Influence of Classroom Management on the Teaching Skills of Public Elementary teachers

Teacher's Barriers		Conduct of Action Research			
		Professional Development	Instructional Planning	Addressing Student's Problem	Collegial Interaction
Workload	t-value	2.156*	1.898	2.245*	2.519*
	probability	0.034	0.061	0.027	0.013
Funds and Support	t-value	0.366	1.094	-0.145	0.705
	probability	0.715	0.277	0.885	0.483
Time	t-value	0.774	-1.060	0.077	-0.954
	probability	0.441	0.292	0.939	0.342
Knowledge	t-value	-2.368*	-1.142	-0.770	-0.503
	probability	0.020	0.256	0.443	0.616

Table 3 indicates the influence of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of professional development. It was revealed in the table that the combined contribution of teachers' barriers has a significant influence on professional development. (F value = 2.238, P value = 0.041). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected because probability value is significantly lesser than 0.05 level of significance.

Moreover, it was revealed in the table that indicator workload (t-value = 2.156, p=.034) had a significant influence on teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of professional development. It is implied that workload has direct effect on the quality of instruction and professional development of teachers. If teachers have extra load, their overall efficiency decreases, and teachers who are given right number of loads acquire successful teaching performance. Furthermore, knowledge (t-value =-2.368, p =.020) had a high negative significant influence on the teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of professional development. It is implied that knowledge experience helps a large body of research demonstrates that individuals improve their ability to draw parallels as they acquire expertise in an area. Those with greater expertise concentrate on the underlying structure of an issue, while beginners focus on the surface elements of a problem.

Meanwhile the independent variables can recount for 8.6 % of the variation of the variables of teachers' barriers in conducting action research. The remaining 91.4% are accommodated to some other factors not included in the

analysis. Moreover, considering the variables included, only workload and knowledge came out to be the best predictors of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of professional development. This implies that workloads and knowledge greatly influence teachers in conducting action research as professional development. Moreover, the combined effect of the variables of teachers' barriers in conducting action research can significantly affect the professional development of teachers. The implication means that when the four variables are managed and met, they can most likely improve the teachers' professional development.

This conforms from the study of Tindowen, Guzman, and Macanang, (2019) that workloads and knowledge play a significant role in teachers' professional development. Teachers' action research is essential to educators in growing professionally. The findings would explain how improving teachers' pedagogical and instructional expertise contributes to their professional development. Previous study has emphasized the importance of action research in providing content lessons through research since it allows instructors to enhance their topic knowledge and even pedagogies.

Presented also in Table 3, is the influence of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of instructional planning. It was revealed in the table that the combined contribution of teachers' barriers has no significant influence on instructional planning (F value = 1.803, P value = 0.135). The probability value is significantly greater than 0.05 level of significance, thus the null hypothesis was accepted.

The independent variables can recount for 7.1 % of the variation of the variables of teachers' barriers in conducting action research. The remaining 92.9% are accommodated to some other factors not included in the analysis. Moreover, considering the variables included, there was no indicators that came out to be the best predictors of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of instructional planning.

The result shows that instructional planning has no significant influence on teachers' barriers in conducting action research. The combined effect of the variables of teachers' barriers in conducting action research has no significant effect on the instructional planning of teachers.

This agrees to Hong and Lawrence, (2011), saying that the goal of instructional planning is to ensure that teachers are well-prepared to achieve the educational goals of all teachers and students, which includes using a variety of tools to create thorough lesson plans that satisfy the curricular objectives of institutions and communities.

The data in Table 3 presented the influence of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of addressing students' problem. It was revealed in the table that the combined contribution of teachers' barriers has a significant influence on addressing students' problem (F value = 1.306, P value = 0.024). The probability value is significantly lesser than 0.05 level of significance, therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

The independent variables can recount for 5.2 % of the variation of the variables of teachers' barriers in conducting action research. The remaining 94.8% are accommodated to some other factors not included in the analysis. Moreover, considering the variables included, only workload came out to be the best predictor of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of addressing students' problems.

This implies that educators' workload has an influence on the decision to address students' issues. Teachers can discover successful ways to give instruction that encourages meaningful connection and the acquisition of academic information and abilities to promote social functioning and academic engagement of students through action research.

The implication of the study is supported by Herlina, Kurnia, and Faridah (2018). She pointed out that action research can solve real-world classroom problems, contribute significantly to improving teachers' practice in research activities, significantly improve the teaching-learning process, and expand teachers' roles and overcome classroom problems by implementing new teaching techniques, strategies, or methods.

Table 3 details the influence of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of developing collegial interaction. It was revealed in the table that the combined contribution of teachers' barriers has a significant influence on develop collegial interaction (F value = 2.008, P value = 0.010). Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected because the probability value is significantly lesser than 0.05 level of significance.

The independent variables can recount for 7.8 % of the variation of the variables of teachers' barriers in conducting action research. The remaining 92.2% are accommodated to some other factors not included in the analysis. Moreover, considering the variables included, only workload came out to be the best predictor of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of collegial interaction.

This indicates that collegial connections are formed between teachers and their co-workers. By encouraging, supporting, and cooperating, it created a collaborative effort and fostered involvement in sharing knowledge about the study's results and learning outcomes. It's also claimed that action research fosters a healthy social life among co-workers, allowing them to improve their interpersonal skills.

This is validated by Hong and Lawrence, (2011), action research is a means for teachers to develop their social interaction. It also develops broader social structures and processes. Educators can improve their relationship with co-teachers through undertaking school and classroom action research on important issues refine their ways of teaching. Moreover, as action research becomes more embedded in school culture, we are seeing more group interaction and discussion across departments, grade levels, and schools.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Results revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that teachers' barriers in conducting action research were workload, funds and support, time, and knowledge. Moreover, teachers strongly agreed that conducting action research improve professional development, instructional planning, addressing students' problems, and develop collegial interaction.

Furthermore, there was significant relationship between teachers' barriers and conducting action research. It was revealed that workload was found out to be the teacher's barrier in conducting action research that affects their professional development, instructional planning, addressing students' problem, and develop collegial interaction. On the other hand, funds and support, time, and knowledge have no significant relationship between professional development, instructional planning, addressing students' problem, and develop collegial interaction.

Finally, results from the regression analysis revealed that there was significant influence between teachers' barriers and conducting action research in terms of professional development, addressing student's problem, and develop collegial interaction. However, there was no significant influence of teachers' barriers in conducting action research in terms of instructional planning.

This result was obtained because teachers are having workload issues because of the numerous tasks they must complete, numerous papers they must submit, and the numerous deadlines they must fulfill with. In result, workloads are unsystematically managed that make teachers cannot conduct action research. However, action research is an essential element of their professional growth as educators. The findings would explain how action research develop teachers' pedagogical and instructional skills that help them advance in their careers. By integrating innovative teaching approaches, tactics, or methodologies, action research may address real-world classroom difficulties, that greatly increase teachers' practice in research activities, considerably improve the teaching-learning process, and extend teachers' responsibilities and overcome classroom challenges.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the summary of findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. Department of Education should establish more effective system in upholding their communication in their research policies and programs to teachers;
2. Policymakers in the Department of Education may deem to allocate time for educators to conduct action research;
3. Public school administrators should intensify strategic plans or conduct higher studies to help teachers conduct action research to improve productivity for better performance;
4. Teachers should be encouraged to enroll in post graduate studies and universities should include action research as part of their basic education curriculum so that graduates will be knowledgeable about its processes;
5. Workload of teachers should be reduced to provide them time to undertake research; and
6. Future researchers should learn more about how other teacher barriers should affects at different institutions, outcomes for improving teaching and learning.

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