

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Social Environments + Social Studies: An article review on the factors contributing the Learning of Geography as a Social Studies Discipline

Yosef Eric C. Hipolito^{1*}

¹Bulacan Agricultural State College- Institute of Arts and Sciences, Philippines

Corresponding Author: Yosef Eric C. Hipolito, yosefhipolito19@gmail.com

Received: 13 February, 2022, Accepted: 28 March, 2022, Published: 02 April, 2022

Abstract

This article review contains critical and constructive analysis on different literatures that determined the contribution of Social Environments on students' learning of Geography as a Social Studies Discipline in rely with the Functionalist Theory of Emile Durkheim and Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura. With a qualitative approach as article review design, the proponent utilized the documentary analysis (involves repeated review, examination, and interpretation of the data in order to gain meaning and empirical knowledge) of the construct being studied on the deciphered research journal articles from different peer-reviewed journals from the Google Scholar. The review disclosed that there is a significant relationship between Social Environments (family, school, peers and community) and students' academic performance in Geography as part of the Social Studies curriculum was drawn. In accordance to, the Functionalist Theory and Social Learning Theory are reliable assumptions in regards to the contribution of Social Environments on students' learning of Geographical knowledge and skills.

Keywords: Social Environments; Geography learning; Social Studies Discipline; academic performance; Documentary analysis

Introduction

Department of Education (DepEd) emphasized that the education sector should consider their stakeholders in preparation of their institutional planning for better academe; to contribute time effort and resources (DepEd Order No. 43, s. 2017). Likewise, "Social Environments" present in our society are the stakeholders of the educational landscape in the Philippines that can be considered. Moreover, in the aspect of teaching-learning process, these entities should be appraised on how they can contribute to the academic success or failure of the students.

In consonance with the idea above, Social Studies (Araling Panlipunan) is one of the curricular disciplines in K-12 Basic Education Curriculum in the country that tends to develop 21st Century "functionally literate Filipino" with the help of society. However, as this subject is very broad, multidisciplinary and integrative, this paper wanted to focus only on one of its sub-fields which is Geography. This incorporated discipline in Social Studies curriculum provide students extensive knowledge and critical understanding on the dynamics of human-environment relations that is why Dizon (2021) pondered that there should be a separate subject intended for this area of discipline. Gil and Gestura (2021) added that Geography education has an anticipated space in the Social Studies curriculum that the skills and knowledge to be developed on students' academic performance may be used to interpret and analyze future.

Regardless of how, various contributions from Social Environments in learning Geography as an embedded discipline for Social Studies shall continuously be assessed by curricularists and educational researchers for the improvement of its educational sphere.

This article review wanted to scan several research journals that depict the contributions of Social Environments on learning Geography as a Social Studies discipline. The theoretical basis of this article was derived from the major learning theories and these were examined in terms of their appropriateness for the essence of this review. As to go deeper, the proponent wanted to see the reliability of these theories on the concern of identifying Social Environments as catalysts on learning Geography.

Pursuant to the "Functionalist Theory" (otherwise known as "Structural Functionalist Theory") of Emile Durkheim that holds the view that human society is a social system composed of set of elements (e.g., Social Environments such as family, school, peers and community) that are interrelated with each other in different more or less stable manner as the time goes by (cited by Saquilayan, Aguirre, Garcia, Javines, Monce, Rodriguez, Espiritu, Hobrero, Lopez, Pa-at and Santiago, 2011). In order to understand the functions of these Social Environments, this theory also emphasizes consensus, integration and stability in the social system because it declares that society is a whole unit which includes many parts (e.g., Social Environments) that are connected and work together to function.

Conversely, as the preferred theory premised "many" Social Environments present in our society, the proponent of this article reviews only focused on the basic Social Environments given by Saquilayan, et al. (2011) namely:

family, school, peers, and community. The mentioned authors reported that it is not only four Social Environments we have in our society, instead, these four are the only relevant entities that can affect students on their academic performance as learners.

Furthermore, the above presumption of the theory was agreed by Lanuza and Raymundo (2019) who indicated that until the present time, society is like a living organ wherein the Social Environments are pondered to be its “parts” that contribute to the overall maintenance of the organism. This explanation can be deciphered that Social Environments are like different organs of the body that have structural features and designed in order to perform their respective functions.

Being the concentration of the above theory are the Social Environments present in our society that contributes to people as an interactive entity, the proponent also aligned this paper to the “Social Learning Theory” of Albert Bandura. This behaviorist learning theory proposes that learning can be influenced by environmental factors especially with the persons or entities (Social Environments) that are present in our society (McLeod, 2016).

Supporting the previous paragraph, Nabavi (2012) mentioned that the theory is based on the idea that students learn from interactions with others in a social context. Just by simply observing the behaviors of others and ingesting others’ capabilities, students may learn better. This theory also added that through observing others, people may develop similar behaviors (Nabavi, 2012).

In connection to this article review, as this theory viewed that these Social Environments affect humans in the society, the proponent wanted to see the contribution of these Social Environments on students’ learning Geography by scanning several research journals/articles in order to prove the assumption of the mentioned theory. Specifically, this paper aimed to:

determine if there a significant relationship between Social Environments and students’ academic performance in Geography (Social Studies); and determine the reliability of the Functionalist Theory and Social Learning Theory.

Materials and Methods

The articles deciphered were research journal articles published in different peer-reviewed journals uploaded in the Google Scholar with a year bracket from 2011 to 2021. The nature of these articles was based on the idea on how family, school, peers and community affect students’ learning of Social Studies. In such that it is an article review, summarizes critical and constructive analysis of literatures in the topic through classification and comparison.

In terms of the method of analysis utilized to analyze the gathered idea of researches collected, the proponent generated a documentary analysis technique where that requires repeated review, examination, and interpretation of the data in order to gain meaning and empirical knowledge of the construct being studied (Frey, 2018).

This method was used by the proponent in fact that this article review is a qualitative form of scholarly-driven paper, so that the analytical technique should be conducted as a stand-alone component to draws findings and to formulate conclusions across data sources which helps to guard against bias.

Results

Articles on Family

Amponsah, Milledzi, Ampofo and Gyambrab (2018) and Cadosales, Mastofske, Razonable, Sabroso and Trinidad (2017) affirmed the at-home parental involvement’s significant relationship in monitoring the students’ performance in school including academic achievement, school engagement and socio-emotional adjustment. Their study added that that parents’ involvement through home works, creation of conducive home environment for studying, motivation and setting realistic and high expectations for children enhance academic performance of students. Similarly, it was expounded by Alfiansyah (2019) that parental involvement has positive effect and an important role towards students’ learning motivation that may reflect on their academic performance.

In regard to the mentioned claims, Cadosales, Mastofske, Razonable, Sabroso and Trinidad (2017) considered also on their studies that the following parents’ traits as very important elements as the student strives to perform in school. These traits include spending time when their children need to buy materials needed in the performance tasks, providing motivation for their children to pursue their studies and lastly giving advices constructively.

The previously introduced studies were looked by the researcher and presumed that family has great influential factor on students’ academic endeavors as the two mentioned theories implied. Diversely, the nature of the said study was done generally, not in particular subject area not focusing merely in Geography.

Articles on School

Giving support to the mentioned assumption, the school also has strong influence in terms of students’ learning as Newchurch (2017) founded that parent and teachers’ collaborative strategies may represent best practices for developing the whole learner. The study also revealed that schools could use the communication strategies to increase parental support which could increase involvement. In order to achieve these ideal school responsibilities in a highly efficient manner, each school must be ready and well-prepared first their curricular standards to meet for the desired learning outcomes (Lapada, 2020).

Seconded from the above paragraph, curriculum is one of the big ideas that play out the success of students. Specifically in teaching Geography, several models should be articulated and enacted to link with the educational aims and purposes of Geography as an ideological position on developing students’ abilities (Biddulph, 2014).

In the aspect of school as a support to the two theories of this article review, Lapada (2020) concluded that school had a strong impact in terms of students' learning as it stated that Philippine schools were ready to conduct technology-driven instruction in Geography that is why it is a need for teachers to enhance their Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capability as knowledge providers.

Similarly, it can be analyzed that as the school contributes students' learning, the school must be well-prepared to implement technological setting in education. However, the mentioned studies, the same with the articles on family were limited as these were made not in particular subject area.

Articles on Peers

Odoy (2018) expanded the explanation on the assumption that Social Environments must be assessed in order to see their contribution to learning Social Studies as he insisted that peers may have positive correlation on students' learning after his study concluded that peer academic support is the best predictor of students' learning. Further, peer influence had been proven to have an impact on student performance and shown that it has more powerful effects than the immediate family (Ali, Jusof, Ali, Mokhtar and Salamat, 2010).

Odoy (2018) also supported the essence of the mentioned theory as he concluded that aside from the learning from school, the support experienced by the students from their peers would affect their behavior towards learning peer support and learning of students go-together. The study further concluded that peer academic support is the best predictor of students' learning behavior based on the overall mean score of 3.54 with a 0.43 standard deviation, considered to be in the high level of learning behavior. In addition, study of Wilkinson and Fung (2002 cited by Ali, Jusof, Ali, Mokhtar and Salamat, 2010) supported the above claim that by grouping students in heterogeneous set-up (low ability students were grouped with high ability students), it will show improvement in learning process and outcomes. These researchers added that highly performing students can positively affect less able students. Withal, peers have a positive correlation on students' learning, although the presented related study was conducted only for high school students and the subject area is not specifically about Geography but Social Studies in broad context instead.

Articles on Community

As an aid to explicate the above premises, the conclusion of Luo, Zhang and Qi (2017) proposed that there is a strong relationship between students' academic performance and community engagement because it can significantly strengthen students' sense of membership and can drive students' eagerness for learning and exploring wider areas. This study was succored by Taufiqurrochman, Muslimin, Rofiki and Abah (2020) that indicated the

environment where a student belongs has significant potential ability to enhance students' skills and that it has a variety of features that represents blended style of learning. A back-up study to the presented theory that is relied on the aspect of community resulted to majority of students who strongly agreed (10.8%) and agreed (54.2%) that they did not experience difficulties in understanding online learning community like Learning Management Systems even without the acquaintance and appropriate guidance from others. It also revealed that 41% of the respondents agreed and 25.3% strongly agreed that online learning community do not promote social isolation (Ullah, 2018). It was manifested that community in line with the use of Learning Management Systems and social media as community platform for online learning have an impact on students' learning Geography.

Discussion

After surveying the mentioned studies and literatures, the researcher identified that majority of these were implied in general scope of the education and not focused on a single subject area or course to be more specific just like Geography. Through these gaps, the proponent formulated the general discussions for this article review.

It is in these premises; this article review investigated the Social Environments present among those citations in a single scholarly written paper in order to assess the extent of their contributions as educational influencer among students on Geography learning as part of their Social Studies curriculum.

Through these premises, the researcher connected the essence of Functionalist Theory (the society contains Social Environments) to the main idea of Social Learning Theory (students can be influenced by different entities in the society through imitation and modeling). This connection became the conceptual ground for this review wherein the Social Environments by the first theory can be relied upon by the second theory that these Social Environments may influence humans. Over and above, this study conceptualized the idea that a study must be conducted in order to determine the contribution of family, school, peers and community on learning Geography to check its correlation with students' academic performance. The principles of the two above theories were bind together as one because their essences are appropriate to the flow of this study. Generally, the Functionalist Theory that postulated the of elements present in our society that may help humans in every sphere of life can be connected to the idea of Social Learning Theory that surmised that students can learn through the Social Environments present in our environment through imitation/observational learning.

Dealing with the current review, the proponent utilized the idea of the first theory that family, school, peers and community are present in our society in order to determine its extent to be correlation with the academic performance of the students in Geography classes to see their relationship as the second theory claims. Analyzing the

importance of those Social Environments and along with the results of these concerns, the proponent conceptualized and generated several conclusions in regard to the problem that was addressed in this review.

Through the presented findings, the Geography teaching in the Philippines has been anchored to the ideals of "Education For All 2015" Framework that initiates Social Studies subject to align the learning competencies and learning standards for the lifelong learning principle with the help of Social Environments as educational stakeholders. It can be viewed also that as the family, school, peers and community contributes to the academic performance of students, it also reflecting the curricular alignment of Philippine Social Studies education to the constructivist, collaborative and contextual idea of learning the subject.

Contrary to the above discussions, Varilla and Mayola (2014) indicated that these Social Environments have different extent of effectiveness as influencer on students' learning of several subject areas. In keeping with their results, family resulted to be in the lower level of effectiveness, while peers were in the high level of effectiveness while average level of effectiveness has emerged for community and school.

Conclusion

Based on the findings after the proponent scan and analyze these articles, the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between Social Environments (family, school, peers and community) and students' academic performance in Geography was drawn. Correspondingly, the Functionalist Theory and Social Learning Theory are reliable assumptions in regards to the extent of contribution of these Social Environments on learning Geography as a Social Studies Discipline.

References

- Alfiansyah, H. R. (2019). The role of parental involvement towards the students' learning motivation. *Letera Pendidikan*, 22 (2): 277-278. DOI: 10.24252/lp.2019v22n2i9.
- Ali, N., Jusof, K., Ali, S., Mokhtar, N. and Salamat, A. S. A. (2010). The factors influencing students' performance at Universiti Teknologi Mara Kedah, Malaysia. *Canadian Research and Development Center of Science and Cultures*, 3 (4): 84-86.
- Amponsah, M., Milledzi, E., Twum Ampofo, E., & Gyambrah, M. (2018). Relationship between Parental Involvement and Academic Performance of Senior High School Students: The Case of Ashanti Mampong Municipality of Ghana. *American Journal of Educational Research*. 6. 1-8. 10.12691/education-6-1-1.
- Biddulph, M. (2014). What kind of geography curriculum do we really want? *Teaching geography*, Vol. 39 (1), 6-9
- Cadosales, R.B.Q., Mastofske, M. M., Razonable, J. Y. C., Sabroso, B. O., Trinidad M.U. (2017). Students' relationship with parents: Basis for an action plan. *Scientific & Academic Publishing*, 7 (2): 22-27. doi:10.5923/j.edu.20170702.02.
- DepEd K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum Araling Panlipunan Baitang 1-10. Department of Education. deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/AP-CG.pdf
- Dizon, A. G. (2021). Content analysis of the K to 12 junior high school geography curriculum in the Philippines. *International research in geographical and environmental education* DOI: 10.1080/10382046.2021.1907057
- Frey, B. B. (2018). Document analysis. *SAGE research methods*. methods.sagepub.com/reference/the-sage-encyclopedia-of-educational-research-measurement-and-evaluation/i7603.xml
- Gil, T. O. & Gestura, R. G. (2021). Navigating the National Geographic Standards in Philippine social studies curriculum. *International journal pedagogy of social studies*, Vol 6 (2), 37-52. DOI: 10.7509
- Lanuza, G. M. & Raymundo, S. S. (2019). *Understanding culture, society, and politics*. (Second edition). Quezon City: REX Book Store.
- Lapada, A. A. (2020). Teachers' Covid-19 awareness, distance learning education experiences and perceptions towards institutional readiness and challenges. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19 (6): 127-144.
- Luo, N., Zhang, M. and Qi, D. (2017). Effects of different interactions on students' sense of community in e-learning environment. *Computers and Education*, 115: 153-160. DOI:10.1016/j.compedu.2017.08.006.
- McLeod, S. (2016). Albert Bandura - Social learning theory. *Simply Psychology*. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/bandura.html>.
- Nabavi, R. T. (2012). Bandura's Social learning theory & Social cognitive learning theory. *ResearchGate*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267750204_Bandura's_Social_Learning_Theory_Social_Cognitive_Learning_Theory.
- Newchurch, A. (2017). The impact of parental involvement on student success: School and family partnership from the perspective of parents and teachers. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Kennesaw State University, Georgia, USA.
- Odoy, J. (2018). Teacher-peer support and learning behavior of high school students. (Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Psychology, Counselling and Education). Manila, Philippines: New Era University.
- Saquilayan, V. Y., Aguirre, F. U., Garcia, M. I., Javines, R. R., Monce, M. R. E., Rodriguez, E. A., Espiritu, C. D., Hobrero, J. M., Lopez, M. C. D., Pa-at, B. F. & Santiago, B. B. (2011). *Introduction to Sociology & Anthropology with*

family planning. Malabonm Metro Manila: Mutya Publishing House, Inc.

- Taufiqurrochman, R., Muslimin, I., Rofiki, I. & Abah, J. A. (2020). Students' perceptions on learning management systems of arabic learning through blended learning model. *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 12 (1): 22-36.
- Ullah, O. (2018). Students' attitude towards online learning at tertiary level. *PUTAJ- Humanities and Social Sciences*, 25 (1-2): 68-69.
- Varilla, M. R. L. & Mayola, C. A. (2015). The roles of social environments on students' second language learning. Unpublished Research Journal Article. Baliuag University, Baliuag, Bulacan, Philippines.
- Wilkinson, I. & Fung, A.G. (2002). Introduction: Peer influences on learning: Where are they? *International Journal of Educational Research*, 37(5), 395-401.
- Wisdom, J. P., Cavaleri, M. A., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Green, C. A. (2012). Methodological reporting in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods health services research articles. *National Center for Biotechnology Information*, 47 (2): 721-745. DOI: 10.1111/j.1475-6773.2011.01344.x.