A SURVEY OF PRACTICES IN ELEMENTARY SCIENCE COMPETITIONS: BASIS FOR A PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM FOR SCIENCE COMPETITIONS

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ABSTRACT

Title of the Research: A SURVEY OF PRACTICES IN ELEMENTARY SCIENCE COMPETITIONS: BASIS FOR A PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM FOR SCIENCE COMPETITIONS

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This study used the descriptive method of research through survey techniques to determine the practices of the school heads, teacher-coaches, pupil-contestants, and parents as basis for a proposed enhancement program for science competitions. The descriptive survey aspect of this research is the reflection and illustration of the present condition of the science education program as practiced by the respondents, gathered through a validated self-made questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two parts, the demographic profile of the respondents and their practices related to competition of the pupils. The practices of the school heads were focused on budgetary support, motivations and incentives, and time scheduling and workload assignment; while those of teacher-coaches were on readiness, coaching, stress-management, and motivations and incentives. On the other hand, parents’ practices were on attitudes and provisions of learning opportunities and the pupil-contestants’ attitudes were on emotional readiness, attitudes towards science and coaching, and study habits. Using stratified random sampling, the researcher included 39 schools with 1092 respondents (39 school heads, 351 teacher-coaches, 351 pupil-contestants, and 351 parents of the pupil-contestants).
The study found out that the practices in science competitions of the teacher-coaches, school heads and parents of the pupil-contestants, were **mostly practiced** while those of the pupil-contestants attitudes, was **highly positive attitude**.

Practices of teacher-coaches are significantly associated (p<0.05) with their educational attainment and area of specialization. Hence, the higher the educational attainment and those who finished general education and science major had greater association with their practices in science competitions. However, practices of teacher-coaches are negatively associated (p<0.05) with their performance rating, level of in-service training attended, and rank in science competitions. Consequently, very satisfactory performance rating and those who attended district and division levels had higher association (p<0.05) in terms of their coaching practices than the others. Likewise, the lower the rank in science competitions, the higher the association with their practices in science competitions.

Attitudes of the pupil contestants are negatively associated (p<0.05) with their science academic performance and their ranking in the competition. The lower the science academic performance of the pupil-contestants and rank in science competitions, the higher the positive association with their attitudes in science competitions.

The study concludes that the school heads, mostly provided rewards and incentives to the teacher-coaches and the least is provision of budgeting. Moreover, the teacher-coaches have strong practices in terms of coaching and motivations and incentives for their pupils, while stress management needs enhancement. Furthermore, pupil-contestants are emotionally ready during
science competitions. However, better study habits need enhancement. On the other hand, parents are very supportive to their children in science competitions. However, provision of information technology and other materials and equipment is scarce.

Practices of teacher-coaches are highly associated with their educational attainment, very satisfactory performance rating, general education and science majors, low level of in-service training (District and Division) attended, and school ranks in science competitions (top 10). In addition, attitudes and practices of pupil-contestants are negatively associated with their science academic performance rating and rank (top 10) in science competitions.

Over-all, the practices of teacher-coaches and attitudes of pupil-contestants are well-defined hence, there is a need for enhancement and proper coordination with school heads and parents to develop more pupil-contestants that compete in higher level competitions.

This present study thereby recommends a proposed enhancement training program for science competitions to Public Elementary Schools who pursue to attain if not maintain high level of performance in science competitions locally and internationally. The proposed enhancement undertakings for teacher-coaches, pupil contestants, school heads, and parents should be piloted tested for 3 years and should be evaluated for their effectiveness.
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The Paradigm of the Study