

FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF THE SPUP EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

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Abstract

Educational innovation is central to St. Paul University Philippines' five year strategic directions. This study was conducted to evaluate the extent of implementation of the various innovations done in the University along curriculum engineering, administrative support, and instruction. It involved randomly selected students, teachers, and administrators of the University as study participants and evaluators. The study utilized a descriptive survey research design using the questionnaire and the interview guide as data gathering instruments.

Results of the study revealed that the 3 groups of participants have the same favorable perception on SPUP educational innovations. The participants highly commended the different innovations implemented as the innovations further trained students to be independent thinkers, fostered the development of higher order thinking skills, communication skills, sense of responsibility, confidence, social skills, resourcefulness, creativity and problem solving skills. The teacher participants were intellectually stimulated in the process of the preparation and implementation of the Dynamic Instructional Plan (DIP) as they assessed it as appropriate to address students' wide-ranging talents, learning styles and multiple intelligences. The perceived successful implementation of the different innovations is attributed to the all-out collaboration among faculty members, the proactive engagement of the students and teachers, the strict compliance and complementation of the faculty and administrators of their responsibilities and obligations, the willingness and dedication of the faculty to embrace innovations, the teachers' open-mindedness, the administrations' innovative attitude, strong support and close supervision in the implementation of the educational innovations.

Keywords: *Educational Innovation, Formative Evaluation, Strategic Directions*

Introduction

The future scenarios of the political, social, cultural and economic sectors will depend on the contributions of the students of our schools today. More than ever before, education must be visionary and future-oriented, in the face of dramatic scientific and technological innovations and changes, unprecedented socio-economic challenges and opportunities, surprising socio-political reforms, and amazing cultural reawakening. Failure to innovate means repeating yesterday's educational programs and strategies tomorrow, which will only further jeopardize education's reputation as contributor to development efforts.

To ensure that learners be equipped with the skills needed for 21st century survival, school must be placed with a project-based curriculum for life which are aimed at engaging students in addressing real-world problems and issues important to humanity. This is a dramatic departure from the factory-model education of the past. It is abandonment, finally, of textbook-driven, teacher-centered, paper and pencil schooling.

St. Paul University Philippines, in its aspiration of providing quality Catholic education has been aggressively introducing innovative moves to better prepare students to meet the unprecedented challenges in the digital era. The University launched its new instructional approach in the tertiary level, this is dubbed as Dynamic Instructional Approach. This is based from the constructivist philosophy that learning is a process of construction and reconstruction of ideas on the basis of the realities in life. This calls for instruction that allows students to generate new knowledge derived from shared experiences and researches. The Dynamic Instructional Approach has the following features:

1. Project-based, problem-based and research-based
2. Student-centered, high student-engagement
3. Promotes independent learning
4. Integrates the 21st century life skills
 - Agility and adaptability
 - accessing and analyzing information
 - collaboration
 - curiosity and imagination
 - critical thinking and problem solving
 - entrepreneurialism

- effective communication
 - moral, spiritual and ethical decency
5. Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary

Through this teaching approach, the school hopes to produce students who can confidently meet the challenges and adapt to changes brought about by the rapid technological innovations. For the successful implementation of the SPUP educational innovation, series of trainings and enhancement of teaching guides were undertaken.

The SPUP educational innovation is on its 2nd year of implementation. A need to conduct an evaluation of the instructional innovation is imperative as this may point out elements that curb the implementation process.

Statement of the Problem

The study generally aims to conduct an initial evaluation of the SPUP educational innovation with the end of improving its implementation for the successive years.

Specifically, the study aims to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What is the students' experience on the SPUP Educational innovation?
2. What is the teachers and administrators' assessment on the extent of implementation of the SPUP Educational Innovation along the following areas?
 - 2.1 curriculum re-engineering,
 - 2.2 administrative support, and
 - 2.3 instruction?
3. What is the perception of the students, teachers, and administrators on the SPUP Educational Innovation?
4. Is there a significant difference on the students and teachers/administrators' perception on the SPUP Educational Innovation?
5. What do the students, teachers and administrators like most or like least about the SPUP Educational Innovation?

6. What are the facilitating or the hindering factors in the implementation of the SPUP educational Innovation as perceived by the teachers and administrators?
7. What are the perceived effects of the SPUP educational Innovation on students' learning outcomes as perceived by the teachers and administrators?
8. What do the students and teachers/administrators suggest to improve the implementation of the SPUP Educational Innovation?

Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive survey research design. Randomly selected students, administrators and teachers were the participants of the study. The "SPUP Educational Innovation" Questionnaire was used to obtain pertinent information needed in the evaluation process. The instrument was subjected to content validation from administrators and research experts. Interview was conducted to obtain in-depth information on the educational innovation. Weighted means and scales were used to interpret the students' experience, extent of implementation and the perceptions on the SPUP Educational Innovation.

Results and Discussions

1. The students were exposed to the learning experiences expected in a Dynamic Instructional Environment to a "high extent".
2. The participants experienced Curriculum Re-engineering to a "high extent". However, in terms of the upgrading of internet connectivity from copper to fiber optic, increasing bandwidth, and the provision of adequate time for faculty to prepare their DIPs, these were experienced by the students to a "moderate extent".
3. Along the area of instruction, students' engagement, maximization of the Wednesday sessions, conduct of group dynamic activities or research endeavor, utilization of the learning spaces provided for group learning, teachers' support and implementation of the Dynamic Instructional Approach and utilization of varied/alternative assessment tools for measuring learning outcomes were experienced to a "high extent".

4. The participants have equally favorable perceptions on the SPUP Educational Innovation.
5. The perception of the two groups of respondents on the SPUP Educational Innovation does not differ significantly.
6. The SPUP Educational Innovation is highly commended as this trains students to be independent thinkers, fosters the development of higher order thinking skills, communication skills, sense of responsibility, confidence, social skills, resourcefulness, creativity and problem solving skills. Further, this is considered to be very relevant to the 21st century learning as this is dynamic, interactive, enjoyable, experiential, learner-centered, systematic, flexible, collaborative and holistic. The preparation of the DIP is also intellectually stimulating for teachers are appropriate to students' varied talents, learning styles and multiple intelligences.
7. The SPUP Educational Innovation is seen to be time consuming, laborious, and tiresome for both teachers and students. Further, this approach is not appropriate to all subjects.
8. The successful implementation of the SPUP instructional innovation is facilitated by the full cooperation among faculty members, the active participation of the students and teachers, the full compliance and collaboration of faculty and administration of their responsibilities and obligations, the willingness and dedication of the faculty to embrace innovations, the teachers' open-mindedness, the administrations' innovative attitude, strong support and close supervision in the implementation of the SPUP Education.
9. Time constraints, limited source of information or internet, limited multimedia resources, library and laboratory limited spaces are the hindering factors in the implementation of the instructional approach.
10. The SPUP instructional innovation has some positive effects to students as this trains them to become more independent, responsible, active, creative, holistic, and confident to express their ideas, to be more critical and innovative, to develop their social skills, their learning styles and multiple intelligences are better addressed.
11. The participants recommended that teachers must develop more relevant activities that will make the students learn more and

enjoy, that a balance of traditional and modern methods must be used since there are appropriate methods for every specific lesson, that a series of consultation and discussion, more orientations and trainings for faculty must be undertaken before any innovations be introduced in the University and that the University should improve on its internet connectivity so to allow students and teachers to search for adequate and updated information related to their lessons.

Conclusions

The students' degree of exposure to the Dynamic Instructional environment is adequate.

The basic step needed in the implementation of the SPUP Educational Innovation such as curriculum re-engineering, presence of instructional plans that sub-summed all the activities in a dynamic learning environment, the adequacy of facilities and equipment needed and the readiness of teachers to the instructional framework were experienced to a "high extent".

The equally favorable perception on the SPUP Educational Innovation is an indicator of the appreciation and the optimistic attitude of the participants to the new instructional approach.

The SPUP Educational Innovation was highly commended as this is perceived to have a positive impact on the students' holistic development, although it has some drawbacks in terms of time constraints.

The successful implementation of the SPUP instructional innovation is facilitated by the faculty and administrations' full and active cooperation, collaboration, dedication, and open-mindedness, and the administrators' innovative attitude, strong support and close supervision in the implementation of the SPUP Education.

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Recommendations

In the light of the findings and conclusions reached, the researcher hereby recommends the following:

1. The students must be given orientation on the details of the SPUP Educational Innovation to help them understand the entire learning and teaching processes involved.
2. The faculty must improve the implementation of the SPUP Educational Innovation especially on the planning of appropriate activities to maximize students' potentials and opportunities to learn.
3. The administration may consider the enhancement of the laboratories, technological equipment and internet connectivity to help students access information related to their course work.
4. The administration may consider the number of subject preparations and the nature of the courses taught by the teachers in the teachers' preparation of DIPs.
5. The administrators may consider the recommendations offered by the students and teachers for the improvement of the implementation of the SPUP dynamic instructional approach.

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