

Toward Curricular Reform: Warranting the Need for an Advanced Philippine History Course in Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) Major in Social Studies Programs in the Philippines

Paulo Jan F. Samson

Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University, Bacnotan, La Union, Philippines

Abstract

The research explored the integration of Philippine history content in the training of Social Studies professionals and how advanced instruction on Philippine History could be included in the Bachelor's course for Secondary Education (BSEd) majoring in Social Studies. The study used semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis to capture the impression of fourteen (14) purposively selected secondary school teachers with at most two years of teaching experience concerning their preparation for history education in La Union, as well as their proposal to beef up the teacher education program. The results showed that teachers knew basic facts about Philippine history, but felt their college education left them wanting – especially in terms of explaining historical events and processes; putting developments into context; and engaging students in historical questions. While the study clearly outlines these issues, the data suggests that participants highly value strong pedagogical preparation for future teachers and advocate strongly for both an advanced Philippine History course as well as a wider range of instructional strategies to enrich content knowledge in Araling Panlipunan. Although the existing Readings in Philippine History course helps students develop historical thinking skills, teachers felt that a more thorough disciplinary grounding was necessary to prepare future educators. In conclusion, the result of the study revealed that those amendments to have an enhanced Philippine History course are an essential part in strengthening teacher preparation and improving the instruction of Philippine history at the secondary level.

Keywords: Philippine history education, Social Studies teacher preparation, Araling Panlipunan, curriculum reform, teacher education

Introduction

In the Philippine basic education curriculum, a hierarchy can be observed in the sequencing of Social Studies (Araling Panlipunan) subjects, where concepts and skills are built upon as learners advance from local to regional and global contexts. As per Department of Education, the purpose of Araling Panlipunan learning competencies is to prepare the learners in gaining understanding from concepts related to history, physical and human geography, political systems and governmental structures, economics, and culture, which they can use to participate as information citizens (Department of Education 2019). The subject thus is integral in developing civic competence, historical consciousness, and national identity among Filipino learners.

Araling Panlipunan, within the K–12 curriculum is structured by grade level. At the secondary level, students generally take Asian History for Grade 7; World History for Grade 8; Economics for Grade 9; and Contemporary Issues for Grade 10 (Department of Education, 2019). This sequence is a pedagogical design that changes from local circumstances to global structures and socioeconomic conditions. So, it asks learners to place their intention in the context of larger processes of geography and history that are taking place all around them.

This pathway is in line with the broader theory of how knowledge develops and grows over time. Constructivist learning theory (Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978) asserts that new knowledge is built upon prior experiences and cognitive frames of reference. That is, students work within and make sense of history in the frames that are familiar to them before engaging dynamic global histories. The inventiveness part of heading towards and the counterproductive things about impact and progression of lesson learning appeared to be substantial with models such as the spiral educational program model (Bruner, 1960), who would go ahead propose that this would result in revisiting an idea at elevating profundity. This, however, allows students to better contextualize historical or social concepts by linking together things they already understand.

The Philippine context emphasizes this early focus on national history and local contexts in a way that may help learners understand macro-regional and global developments. Philippine experience-based learning enables students to make significant connections between national history and the puzzles of world history. As students move on to studying Asian and world history, they begin to put the Philippines in a larger context of geopolitical, cultural and economic interactions between different societies.

Then, from the later years in secondary school and above, Araling Panlipunan becomes more applied social-science based with an emphasis on economics and current events. These subjects require students to grapple with real world societal challenges and economic systems, as well as further develop the historical and analytical skills they learned through earlier social studies education. Through this way, the curriculum attempts to produce informed decision-makers and active citizens.

However, the efficacy of social studies education is extremely dependent on teachers' disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical preparedness. Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is a construct that acknowledges the importance for teachers to not only have a strong grasp of their subject matter but also be able to transform that into student learning opportunities. Good teaching requires teachers to understand how to organize and present the information they know for multiple learners (Lee Shulman, 1986). For example, the idea of pedagogical content knowledge highlights how what teachers know about their discipline matters for how they are able to teach it—in our case history.

Modern historical education places importance upon the development of historic thought as opposed to rote learning of facts. Historians argue that learning history involves examining evidence to draw conclusions and often engaging with contradictory viewpoints, as stated by scholars like Peter Seixas and Tom Morton (Seixas & Morton 2013). These competencies call for teachers who have deep blueprints of the disciplines and can lead students in historical inquiry and interpretation.

The study of history helps not only develop analytical skills but also builds a sense of history, in other words the ways in which people use the past to make sense of present circumstances and to plan for future action. Historical learning, as Jörn Rüsen maintains, allows people to create significant accounts of their common history and produce an identity in society (Rüsen, 2004). In this article, I argue that the analysis of national history is an essential component of a Healthy Citizen's approach to civic education in a Philippines context.

The role of social studies education supports a foundation for civic competence and democratic participation. Scholars like Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne argue, however, that education should prepare students to be active and responsible citizens with the skills to participate fully in democratic societies (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Education about history plays a role in this endeavor by helping learners gauge the origins of governance, social movements, and civic engagement.

Philippine basic education provides a clear curricular focus on historical and civic learning but the same does not hold true for tertiary level of education. Most BEd major in Social Studies programs include courses in social sciences like world history, Asian studies, economics, geography, political science and sociology. But Philippine history is usually not taught the same way it would with an advanced concentrated major subject, as in the General Education course "Readings in Philippine History" (RPH).

This movement to change the arrangement of Philippine History in higher education curriculum started with the implementation of New General Education Curriculum (NGEC) through Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order No. 20, s. 2013 that had took out the traditional Philippine History general education course being replaced with Readings in Philippine History. The policy, which was part of the alignment of higher education with the K-12 reform, and implemented in full starting Academic Year 2018-2019, the same year that K-12 senior high school graduates entered tertiary education. 6 In this education framework Readings in Philippine History is a three-unit core course on the study of Philippine history through selected primary sources (Commission on Higher Education, 2013). The course aims to cultivate the skills of historical document analysis, historical evidence evaluation and critical interpretation of historical narratives.

While this course contributes to the promotion of historical consciousness, its limited disciplinary range and time may not feasibly equip students preparing to teach Philippine history at the secondary level with enough depth. Aside from the fact that other degree program graduates who enroll in the same General Education course, it is believed that if there are no advanced major courses offered for Philippine history then this will also limit students of BEd Social Studies further specialization into discipline which these schools required since they expect their teachers to act as subject specialist in Araling Panlipunan.

Given the importance of Philippine history in nurturing civic identity, democratic participation, and historical consciousness among learners, institutionalizing a stronger preparatory framework for this discipline should be taken into account by teacher education programs. Having a separate advanced Philippine History course under the BSEd Social Studies major may thus benefit future social studies teachers and their knowledge of pedagogical content regarding the teaching of Philippine history at the secondary education level.

This study thus aims to provide empirical data as major input in a curricular development proposal: that the inclusion of an advanced and focused Philippine History course be proposed as a core subject in BSEd Social Studies programs for the purpose of enhancing disciplinary expertise, pedagogy content knowledge and teaching history in basic education in the Philippines.

This study aims to offer empirical evidence on the sufficiency of Philippine History training in Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Social Studies program. To identify potential gaps in disciplinary preparation towards the teaching of Philippine history, the study seeks to explore perceptions and experiences from Social Studies educators as well as curriculum stakeholders. These findings may assist curriculum developers by providing empirical justifications for ways to bolster teacher preparation in history subjects. The addition of an advanced Philippine History course, therefore, may serve to provide meaningful facilitation of the pedagogical content knowledge necessary for future Social Studies teachers and quality instruction of history in Araling Panlipunan which may further enhance the common goals towards civic education and historical consciousness among Filipino students.

Objectives

This study aims to illustrate the idea that the present research explores the teaching and learning experiences of Social Studies teachers from Secondary Education, focusing on their methods in making these history subjects engaging and the challenges they face. It aims to identify those elements that are missing, in terms of depth, adequacy, and contemporary relevance, which may be seen in the existing BSEd Social Studies curriculum when it comes to the preparation and packaging of Philippine history content. Additionally, concerning stakeholders such as teachers and curriculum planners, they understand the need as well as the ability of a new course to be implemented in their institution, especially the implications that relate to teacher preparation. The general objectives of this study would be output beneficial towards informing curriculum drafting and policy decisions that are very much relevant in enhancing future Social Studies teachers' preparation about studying Philippine History; while at the same time contributing to a wider discourse on teacher education reform, national identity formation, and innovation in teaching.

Methodology

Research Design

Qualitative research design used in this study aimed to investigate the perceptions and experiences of Social Studies teachers regarding the integration of an advanced Philippine History course into the BSEd major in Social Studies program. An exploratory qualitative design was utilized in this study to uncover forms of adequacy and inadequacy in Philippine history preparation experienced by teacher education graduates, as well as curricular gaps and pedagogical challenges encountered by educators during initial engagement with the teaching practice.

Participants

The research participants were purposively sampled based on their relevant experience of being educators that teach the Araling Panlipunan or other Social Studies subjects. Participants of the study were teachers from public and private secondary schools in the Province of La Union, Philippines, where K-12 Araling Panlipunan is implemented. Inclusion criteria required participants to:

1. Must be currently employed as a Social Studies or Araling Panlipunan teacher or as a faculty member teaching Social Studies-related courses in teacher education programs.
2. Must have at least one (1) year of teaching experience in Social Studies or Araling Panlipunan. This minimum requirement was considered appropriate because the New General Education Curriculum (NGEC) under Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 20, s. 2013, which introduced the course Readings in Philippine History in place of the traditional Philippine History course, was fully implemented in Academic Year 2018-2019. As a result, the earliest graduates who completed their college education under this curriculum would have graduated around 2022-2023. Those who

immediately entered the teaching profession would therefore have only a limited number of years of teaching experience.

3. Must have experience teaching subjects within the Araling Panlipunan or Social Studies curriculum, including but not limited to Philippine history, Asian history, world history, economics, or contemporary issues.
4. Must be currently affiliated with a secondary school or higher education institution where Social Studies or Araling Panlipunan is taught.
5. Must be willing to voluntarily participate in the study and provide informed consent.

These criteria ensured that the participants possess sufficient professional exposure to provide informed perspectives regarding the preparation of Social Studies teachers in Philippine history.

These criteria ensured that participants possessed sufficient professional background to provide meaningful insights into the preparation of Social Studies teachers in Philippine history.

Data Collection

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews that allowed for participants to share their experiences and perspectives, while also allowing the researcher to prompt discussions on key topics. All interviews were done in a proper and professional manner, with the participants' permission that we recorded these interviews lasted around 30–45 minutes each. In addition, field notes were written to note details of the context. All ethical protocols were followed, including institutional response, voluntary participation and the confidentiality of responses.

Data Analysis

To analyze the interview data, thematic analysis was employed. The process involved several stages:

1. **Data Familiarization** – Reviewing and transcribing interviews, followed by repeated reading to gain familiarity with responses.
2. **Initial Coding** – Identifying meaningful segments and assigning codes to represent key ideas.
3. **Theme Development** – Grouping related codes into broader categories and emerging themes.
4. **Theme Review and Refinement** – Ensuring themes accurately represented participants' perspectives and were supported by data.
5. **Interpretation of Findings** – Relating final themes to research objectives and existing literature on Social Studies education, history teaching, and teacher preparation.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Teaching Experience of Participants

Years of Teaching Experience	<i>f</i>	%
Less than 1 year	3	21%
1 – 2 years	11	79%
Total	14	100%

The result indicates that among the participants, 79% were at the early-career stage with one to two years of teaching experience and only 21% had less than one year of teaching experience. The reason for this distribution is because graduates have only recently started joining the profession after the introduction of new general education in CHED Memorandum Order No. 20, s. 2013, which replaced traditional Philippine History with

Readings in Philippine History and other non-History PST subjects. As a result, many of the participants are part of the first cohorts trained under this updated syllabus.

Their little teaching experience underscores the promises and pitfalls of early-career educators. On the one hand, they expose educators axiomatically to new curricular frameworks as they apply them; on the other, they can struggle with both content mastery and instructional confidence. This has particular genre significance in Social Studies education as successful teaching requires strong preparation of the discipline and then pedagogical content knowledge. The inclusion of these early-career teachers in La Union schools also mirrors general patterns of staffing in Philippine basic education, with the growth of the K-12 system increasing the demand for subject specialists around Araling Panlipunan.

In short, it is the low-level nature of so many participants in our sample that acts as a crucial context for interpreting their perspectives. Their experiences provide important insights about the impacts of recent teacher education reforms in classroom practice and renderings of the Philippine historical narrative, revealing both the gains and limits of current BSED Social Studies preparation.

Perceptions on the Adequacy of Preparation in Teaching Philippine History

Respondents were asked if they were prepared to teach Philippine history and/or related subject matters under Social Studies.

Table 2. Perceived Adequacy of Preparation in Teaching Philippine History

Theme	<i>f</i>	%
Adequate basic knowledge but limited depth	6	43%
Insufficient exposure to Philippine history content	5	36%
Adequate preparation through independent learning	2	14%
Confident in preparation	1	7%
Total	14	100%

In Table 2, the perceptions of the participants regarding their preparation in teaching Philippine history are shown. Results indicated that most participants felt their preparation was insufficient and/or superficial, while some had little or no exposure to Philippine history content during their teacher education program. Very few said they felt well prepared to teach Philippine history.

Six of the fourteen participants of the study claimed that preparation was mostly background knowledge, and lacked in-depth coverage on Philippine historical milestones, while five said their exposure to the Philippine history subject at their undergraduate program was minimal. These perceptions can be elucidated by the curricular reforms introduced in higher education by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) via CHED Memorandum Order No. 20, s. 2013 that institutionalized the New General Education Curriculum (NGEC) Data was collected around the backdrop of this framework, where Readings in Philippine History, a three-unit course with an emphasis on reading and analyzing primary historical sources, constitutes the general education offering for Philippine History as a subject according to (Commission on Higher Education, 2013).

The Readings in Philippine History course is designed to help students practice their skills in historical thinking; however, due to the limited time allotted for this subject, the scope of history that student-teachers would be exposed to within their teacher education may be inadequate. The responses of multiple participants echoed this observation. One participant explained:

“In college we studied primary sources and how to analyze them, but we did not go deeply into the chronological events of Philippine history. When I started teaching Araling Panlipunan, I sometimes had to review historical topics on my own.”

Another participant shared a similar experience:

"We learned how to interpret documents in our RPH class, which was helpful, but when teaching topics

like the Philippine Revolution or American colonial policies, I realized I needed more detailed background knowledge.”

This problem is significant in the context of secondary schools in La Union as Social Studies teachers need an interpretive ability as well as substantive knowledge of history to effectively teach historical topics. The Official Araling Panlipunan Curriculum from the Department of Education includes subjects like colonial governance, nationalist movements, transformations in economy and industries and current social issues flowing from historical processes (Department of Education, 2019). Teaching these topics well means teachers will often need to provide explanations that put historical documents in a larger context; the complete of those explanations, so as to relate them back to the documents, will usually not fit within an interpretation of a single part.

The participants’ perceptions also mirror broader research on the study of history. The field of the discipline is viewed as complementing historical method (which focuses on the sorts of questions to ask when analyzing historical evidence) in that it encompasses knowledge relevant to a given historical subject matter; both, according to Peter Seixas and Tom Morton, are required for understanding history⁷⁸. So teachers themselves need to have a substantive grasp of historical contexts if they are to assist students interpret those historical sources and weave together meaningful (historical) stories (Seixas & Morton, 2013).

Moreover, the current study findings are in accordance with Lee Shulman's pedagogical content knowledge. According to Shulman (1986), effective teaching relies upon a teacher's capacity to synthesize content knowledge with the appropriate pedagogical procedures. Teachers who do not have a firm grasp of the disciplinary content may experience greater difficulty explaining complex historical concepts to students or answering their questions during class discussion.

Participants experiences also mirror broader challenges faced by early-career teachers in their first couple years of teaching. Research has shown that beginning teachers tend to draw on knowledge gained during their teacher education program when constructing lessons and conceptualizing how to explain subject matter (Darling-Hammond, 2006). If the preparation shoes are seen to be small, teachers often turn to self-teaching or continuing education endeavors to fill in any gaps.

Introduction Within the area of La Union and other secondary schools, Social Studies teachers are essential in nurturing history consciousness and civic concern among secondary school students as well. Teachers with more extensive disciplinary knowledge can support students in recognizing the historical legacies of Philippine society and navigate discussions on current social and political issues.

In general, the results in Table 2 shows that while the Readings in Philippine History course may help develop analytical skills in interpreting historical sources on the part of teachers, many of these teachers feel their teacher education programs can provide more rigorous training for historical content. These findings underscore that the inclusion of an advanced Philippine History course leading to deeper coverage of the development trajectory of the nation may present a valueadding to the preparation in Philippine history within BSEd Social Studies.

Challenges Encountered in Teaching Philippine History

Participants were also asked to describe the challenges they encountered in teaching Philippine history topics in Araling Panlipunan.

Table 3. Challenges Encountered in Teaching Philippine History

Theme	<i>f</i>	%
Limited depth of historical content knowledge	6	43%
Difficulty explaining complex historical events	4	29%
Lack of instructional resources	2	14%
Difficulty engaging students in historical discussions	2	14%
Total	14	100%

The challenges experienced by the participants in teaching Philippine history as part of the Araling Panlipunan curriculum are presented in Table 3. The results showed that limited depth of historical content knowledge was the most cited difficulty, which was followed by trouble with explaining complex historical events. Relatively fewer participants named issues such as lack of instructional resources and challenges in engaging students in historical inquiry debates.

Out of the fourteen respondents, six stated that they had a hard time due to shallow depth of knowledge regarding developments in Philippine history. This was often associated with their level exposure towards the Philippine history when they took up their teacher education program. One participant shared:

“When I teach topics like the Philippine Revolution or the transition from Spanish to American rule, I sometimes feel that I need to review the historical details first before explaining them clearly to my students.”

Another participant explained:

“Our RPH class focused more on analyzing historical documents. That helped with interpretation, but when teaching the full story behind historical events, I realized that I needed a deeper background in Philippine history.”

These responses reveal that, although the students were accustomed to explicating historical sources, they occasionally struggled before explaining events within their larger historical context. In Araling Panlipunan (Social Studies), this is especially important since when discussing historical events, they are not just mere facts in isolation but rather, intertwined in a bigger social, political and cultural process.

Along with that fact, these issues are relevant since Social Studies teachers are the ones who need to let students know how Philippine society was formed over time, which is a subject taught in secondary schools of La Union. The Araling Panlipunan curriculum aspires to create learners that can assess developments in history, appreciate national identity, and reflect on current issues with lenses from the past (Department of Education 2019). Realising these aims requires teachers with both strong disciplinary knowledge and the capacity to situate historical events within wider narratives of social change.

The experiences of the participants are in line with research about history education that highlights the role of teachers' subject matter expertise. Writing about effective history instruction, Peter Seixas and Tom Morton state that “to understand the past is to recognize its contexts, and this does not happen in isolation from evidence — students will need help learning how to analyze it; nor does it exist outside an understanding of cause-and-effect relationships; nor can they make valid claims about historical continuity and change if they do not know what we want them to understand when we talk about transformation over time” (Seixas & Morton, 2013). Without having adequate disciplinary knowledge, teachers might struggle to teach historical inquiry and the complexities of historical development.

The findings also demonstrate principles of pedagogical content knowledge, a term coined by Lee Shulman. According to Shulman (1986), knowledge of a subject is necessary, but alone not adequate for teaching it; rather than needing only savoir, one needs savoir faire as well—converting subject-matter knowledge into pedagogical content knowledge. Teachers who have little knowledge of their subject, may find it difficult to scaffold abstract historical generalizations or to adequately address students' questions.

The other challenge brought up by the participants is a lack of teaching resources, the kind that would help in teaching Philippine history. Some teachers mentioned having limited access to certain historical materials (e.g., primary sources, multimedia resources or other readings) within their schools. One participant commented:

“Most of the time we rely on the textbook and online materials. Sometimes it is difficult to find additional sources that explain Philippine history in ways that are engaging for students.”

Access is another major shift in effective history teaching — to what extent do teachers have adequate access to instructional resources? Primary source materials, historical narratives, and multimedia sources can help students develop a more nuanced understanding of historical events while preparing to think about competing understandings as they engage critically with the made-up histories.

Participants also mentioned barriers to student engagement with history. Some educators said students sometimes viewed history as just something that they memorized rather than an unfolding process. One teacher said:

“Some students think history is just about remembering dates and names. It takes effort to help them

see how historical events are connected to present-day issues.”

This observation gets at a perennial challenge of history education. Academic research has shown that history teaching tends to be more significant if students can conduct historical investigation, source analysis and offering different viewpoints instead of rote-learning historical events.

Here in La Union, these issues serve to underline the significant contribution of teacher preparation to effective Social Studies teaching. Because the history of the Philippines is extremely sensitive, having teachers with adequate implementational knowledge and available instructional resources can help students connect issues that arise in discussion such as current socio-political events to historical concepts.

The data in Table 3 indicate that generally speaking, teachers are committed to teaching Philippine history effectively but they experience challenges with regard to content knowledge, instructional resources and student engagement. These challenges lend for the need to strengthening Social Studies teachers' historical preparation through curriculum enhancement with deeper exposure in teaching Philippine history and its historiographical contexts.

Perceived Benefits of Integrating an Advanced Philippine History Course

Participants were asked about their views regarding the integration of an advanced Philippine History course in the BSEd Social Studies curriculum. Table 4 presents the perceived benefits of integrating an advanced Philippine History course into the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) major in Social Studies curriculum.

Table 4. Perceived Benefits of Integrating an Advanced Philippine History Course

Theme	<i>f</i>	%
Stronger historical content knowledge	7	50%
Improved teaching confidence	4	29%
Better ability to explain historical events	2	14%
Stronger national identity formation	1	7%
Total	14	100%

Results show that half of the participants indicated that they think such a course would strengthen their historical content knowledge significantly and other opportunities identified include enhanced teaching confidence, explaining historical events more effectively, and promoting better national identity for learners.

The most commonly cited positive effect, shared by seven participants, was deeper historical content knowledge. Many teachers said a broader course in Philippine history during their undergraduate training would have supported them to better understand the historical contexts behind what they teach today in Araling Panlipunan. One participant shared:

“If we had a major course focused on Philippine history, it would have helped us understand the connections between different historical periods. Sometimes when teaching, I feel that I only know the basic outline of events.”

Another participant commented:

“An advanced Philippine history subject would give teachers more confidence when discussing historical issues, especially when students ask deeper questions about the causes and consequences of events.”

These responses indicate a strong association among teachers between their preparation with regard to discipline and confidence in the pedagogy. In the context of secondary schools in La Union, this relationship is crucial as teachers are significant in guiding students to frame historical developments that play a key role in forming contemporary Philippine society. According to the agreed upon Araling Panlipunan curriculum by the Department of Education, civic competence, historical consciousness, and a critical understanding of social issues are its key concepts (Department of Education, 2019). Teaching students to make sense of history requires educators who are themselves knowledgeable and effective communicators of complex historical ideas.

The participants’ perspectives are consistent with research noting the need for strong disciplinary preparation for history teachers. Peter Seixas and Tom Morton, for example, argue that history education allows students to make sense of historical significance and change and analyze evidence, primarily through reasoned discussions with informed teachers (Seixas & Morton, 2013). They have more robust knowledge of the historical context, enabling them to facilitate student analysis of history-making events and reading primary sources.

The responses of participants mirror pedagogical content knowledge, a construct introduced by Lee Shulman. As Shulman (1986) long ago noted, teachers need rich specialized content knowledge if they are to convert disciplinary content into learnable forms for students. When educators draw upon their own knowledge and understanding of historical developments, they are better equipped to build historical narratives, correct misconceptions, and organize conversations that link past events with current social issues.

Several participants also expressed that an advanced Philippine History course could help to supplement and bolster teachers’ knowledge and confidence, making it much easier for them explain complex events in a clear manner. One participant explained:

“When teaching topics like the Philippine Revolution or martial law, students sometimes ask questions about why things happened the way they did. Having a deeper background in Philippine history would help teachers explain those events more clearly.”

This is a reminder of the historical context necessary for teaching. Longer processes such as colonial rule, nationalist movements and political reforms rooted the historical topics that are included in the Araling Panlipunan Curriculum. Teachers who have a deeper knowledge of the discipline are better able to link specific events with larger historical trends and processes.

A second perceived benefit that participants referenced was the potential for a stronger history course to contribute to national identity formation among students. One participant noted:

“Understanding Philippine history deeply helps students appreciate their identity as Filipinos. Teachers who know the history well can help students see how the past shapes our society today.”

This Long-Gone Past Is a Lesson in History as a Part of Civic Awareness and National Identity Scholars have written that studying national history allows learners to grasp the historical roots of democratic institutions, cultural traditions and social values.

As such, strengthening the historical preparation of teachers may further contribute to meaningful accounts of both national and regional historical experiences in the context of La Union as a province, which has its own local historical heritage and role in Philippine history. Meaning, teachers who know more about the aspect of Philippine

history itself are more likely to include examples in the course description and local contexts that will help students be able to learn with relevance given these historical facts.

In general, greater perception of benefits is seen among participants towards the inclusion of an advanced Philippine History course in a BSEd Social Studies degrees as indicated on Table 4. The respondents are convinced that this course will deepen their knowledge of the discipline, boost their confidence as teachers and help them in explaining historical events and assisting students to articulate the role of history in shaping Philippine society.

Recommendations from Participants

Participants were also asked to provide recommendations for improving teacher preparation in Philippine history.

Table 5. Participants' Recommendations for Curriculum Improvement

Theme	<i>f</i>	%
Add advanced Philippine History major course	8	57%
Increase Philippine history coverage in teacher education	3	21%
Provide more training for history teaching	2	14%
Strengthen use of primary historical sources	1	7%
Total	14	100%

The recommendations suggested by participants for addressing the preparation of teachers in Philippine history within the BSEd major in Social Studies program are presented in Table 5. Results show that most participants advocated for the offering of an advanced Philippine History course, while some recommended the expansion of Philippine history in existing subjects, offer more training in teaching history subjects and a greater emphasis on primary historical sources.

Out of the fourteen participants, eight directly suggested that an advance Philippine History course be embedded as part of Social Studies major. More in-depth coverage of Philippine history during undergraduate training, participants reiterated, would have fortified their content knowledge and better equipped them to teach Araling Panlipunan historical topics. One participant said: "If there was a separate major course in Philippine history, future teachers would be more aware of the historical background of the topics we teach in high school. Another respondent highlighted the need for more rigorous disciplinary training among Social Studies teachers:

"If there was a separate major course in Philippine history, future teachers would have a deeper understanding of the historical background of the topics we teach in high school."

Another participant emphasized the importance of stronger disciplinary preparation for Social Studies teachers:

"Philippine history is very important in Araling Panlipunan. Having a major course focused on it would help teachers explain historical events more clearly and confidently."

This may imply that teachers see a divergence between the theoretical preparation in teacher education programs and the practical challenges of teaching Araling Panlipunan subject content at the secondary level. This recommendation is especially clear in the case of the secondary schools in La Union as Social Studies teachers are tasked with ensuring an understanding of historical processes that define Philippine society and present day problems facing it.

This recommendation to further strengthen Philippine history preparation reflects the aspirations of the Department of Education Araling Panlipunan curriculum (Department of Education, 2019), such as civic competence, national identity and historical consciousness. Those with more robust disciplinary content knowledge of Philippine history may have a comparative advantage in leading the debates around historical events and how they impact current social and political realities.

The participants' recommendations also resonate with broader conversations in history education literature about the significance of solid subject matter preparation for teachers. As Lee Shulman states in his paper on

how teachers need content knowledge—as well as the application of that content to actual pedagogical scenarios—to facilitate substantive learning for their future students (Shulman, 1986). Underexposure to historical content may restrict the potential for teachers' planning of instruction and responding to questions posed by students.

Alongside a recommendation for adding an advanced Philippine History course, other participants called to include more by way of Philippine history within current teacher education courses.

“Even if a new course cannot be added immediately, teacher education programs could include more Philippine history topics in Social Studies courses.”

Other participants emphasized the need for professional development opportunities for teachers, particularly workshops or training programs focused on history teaching strategies. One teacher explained:

“Training programs on how to teach Philippine history effectively would help teachers make history lessons more engaging for students.”

These recommendations emphasize that ongoing professional learning will assist teachers in deepening their pedagogical and disciplinary knowledge.

A smaller number of participants called for greater use of primary historical sources when teaching history. The instruction of this recommendation reinforces the emphasis on historical thinking and source analysis in contemporary history teaching. SourcesSeixas, P., & Morton, T. (2013). *The big six historical thinking concepts*. In *A history of history education: From antiquity to the post-modern era* (pp. 201-211). New York: Pearson/Longman. Markedly different nature of teaching history today: professional development has not kept up with this demand for skill development as offered by studying primary source evidence out on your own or in a collaborative learning group. retrieved from Strickland et al., *Critical Media Age and Team Teaching Style History Source Seeker Educational Study Group Student Undertaking Presentation Slide Share Resource List Historical Time Period Personal Workshop Differentiation Teaching Styles.jpg* Yet, teachers need to have enough background in history to situate these sources and help students read them accurately.

In the context of La Union, participants' suggestions indicate that Strengthening on Philippine history deserves to be an area of focus for teachers in the field of Social Studies. A deeper understanding of historical knowledge may enhance teachers' ability to incorporate local historical contexts and cultural heritage into lessons, creating more relevant and significant historical learning for students.

To conclude, the results shown in Table 5 suggest that respondents demonstrate a high level of agreement for curriculum enhancements to better equip Social Studies teachers with knowledge on Philippine History. In conclusion, the implementation of a more in-depth Philippine History subject, coupled with adequate training and broader coverage may lead to an improvement in history teaching methods within secondary school settings.

Conclusions

The findings reveal that early-career Social Studies teachers in La Union have a basic understanding of Philippine history yet report several deficiencies from their undergraduate training. Because the General Education course Readings in Philippine History was their only top reference material in their study, many teachers find it hard to unpack events out of historical developments and lead impactful discussions to make sense, analyze or contextualize what had happened throughout time. Such gaps indicate how tertiary-level teacher education might be woefully ill-equipped to prepare teachers who could teach history of the Araling Panlipunan curriculum with sufficient pedagogical depth. One way of that being something that can help ease the teachers' feeling is to strengthen historical preparation — for one, provide a more robust course on Philippine History and make it available in higher education — which would lead to an increase of confidence in teaching, an improvement or at least a deepening of their content knowledge and ultimately more rigorous history instruction delivered within secondary schools.

Recommendations

To provide future teachers a more holistic exposure to the historiography, interpretation of Philippine history and key socio-political events, the study recommends the inclusion of an Advanced Philippine History course under the BSEd Social Studies curriculum. Universities that offer teacher education programs and developers of curricula are also urged to revisit the structure of their programs to include a more comprehensive coverage of Philippine history beyond general education courses. Histories are constructed through the exercise of choice, and schools and educational authorities have a role to play in supporting teachers by providing access to a wider

range of historical resources and ensuring that opportunities for continual professional development remain broad. Lastly, larger-province studies are recommended; with longitudinal data construction so that the relationship between teacher preparation and classroom practices can be further examined to both inform higher policy curricula reforms.

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