

Perceived Effect of the National Learning Camp (NLC) to Grade 7 and 8 Learners

FREDERICK AMPER ESPINOSA

Urdaneta City University
xiaoamper@gmail.com

NOEL L. GUEVARA, Ph.D.

Urdaneta City University

Abstract — This study investigates the perceived effect of the National Learning Camp (NLC) on Grade 7 and 8 learners in Tarlac City Schools Division West District. A quantitative research design employs a descriptive survey method to collect data. The study aims to determine the profile of the respondents and the perceived effect of the NLC in terms of interest, socio-emotional skills, personal growth, and character development. The sample comprises 50 junior high school learners participating in the NLC during the Academic Year 2022-2023.

The study demonstrated that the NLC has positive effects on learners. It sparks curiosity, enhances the desire to learn, and makes the learning experience enjoyable. It also fosters socio-emotional skills, including resilience, adaptability, interpersonal skills, self-confidence, and self-esteem. Moreover, the NLC contributes to personal growth by enhancing self-confidence, promoting a growth mindset, and increasing self-awareness. It also positively influences character development, promoting honesty, integrity, responsibility, resilience, and accountability.

Significant differences were observed in learners' interest and character development based on grade level and participation in a learning camp. However, age, sex, and socio-emotional skills do not differ significantly. These findings provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, organizers of learning camps, parents, and learners.

The study recommends active involvement of teachers, school administrators, government officials, policymakers, organizers, parents, and learners in implementing and improving the NLC. It also emphasizes the importance of ongoing research and evaluation to refine educational programs and inform future policies and practices.

Keywords — *National Learning Camp, Perceived, Effect, Learners*

I. Introduction

The National Learning Camp (NLC) in the Philippines is a significant initiative by the Department of Education (DepEd) that aligns with global educational agendas, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations. Specifically, the NLC supports SDG 4, Quality Education, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all, and SDG 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities, which focuses on building inclusive, sustainable communities. By providing targeted educational support, the NLC helps enhance the quality of education and foster sustainable learning communities, particularly in urban settings where many Grade 7 and 8 learners are located.

They play a vital role in shaping individuals' knowledge, skills, and attitudes, contributing to personal growth, workforce readiness, and social and economic progress. For the study, quantitative research approaches and surveys were used to collect data from grade 7 and 8 learners from Tarlac City's Schools Division who attended the NLC. These methodologies allowed for a more thorough assessment of the experiences and perspectives of the teachers by documenting the intricacies and subtleties of their interactions with the camp. The researcher analyzed the data collected to identify new and relevant subjects, as well as significant findings on the impacts of the NLC.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will add to the body of information already available on Grade 7 and 8 Learners' educational growth. The knowledge acquired helped stakeholders, camp planners, and educational policymakers create and carry out future programs that successfully assisted volunteer grade 7 and 8 learners, and improved learning. To put it briefly, the purpose of this study is to close the knowledge gap about the effects of the National Learning Camp (NLC) on grade 7 and 8 learners who volunteer. The study aims to offer important insights into the efficacy of the NLC and its potential to improve scientific education and contribute to the larger goals of high-quality education and sustainable communities

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the Perceived effects of the National Learning Camp (NLC) on Grade 7 and 8 Learners. The study sought the answer to the following specific problems:

1. How is the profile of the respondents described in terms of:
 - a. age;
 - b. sex;
 - c. grade level; and
 - d. learning camp?
2. What are the Perceived effects of the NLC on learners in terms of:
 - a. interest;
 - b. socio-emotional skills;
 - c. personal growth; and
 - d. character development?
3. What are the significant differences in the Perceived effects to learners across their profile variables?

II. Methodology

Research Design and Strategy

The research design for this study is correlational which aims to examine the relationships between the independent variables (respondent's profile: age, sex, years of teaching, highest educational attainment and number of seminars attended for the last three (3) years, teaching performance of the respondents, and extent of participation of respondents in the activities for professional development) and the dependent variables (Survey questionnaire, analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) or Statistics Data (STATA) and Data visualization techniques).

The research strategy for this study is survey research, which involves collecting data through self-administered questionnaires from a sample of respondents. The survey questionnaire is designed to gather data on the independent variables (respondent's profile: age, sex, years of teaching, highest educational attainment, number of seminars attended for the last three (3) years, teaching performance of the respondents, and extent of participation of respondents in the activities for professional development) and the dependent variables (survey questionnaire, analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) or Statistics Data (STATA), and Data visualization techniques). The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of elementary school teachers in Cuyapo East District, Nueva Ecija.

Data Gathering Tools

This study aims to investigate the Perceived effects of the National Learning Camp (NLC) on Grade 7 and 8 Learners using a quantitative research design. The research design involved the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to address the specific problems identified. Hence, a cross-section interview with teachers was conducted for this study.

Specifically, to find out the Perceived effects of the National Learning Camp (NLC) on Grade 7 and 8 Learners in Tarlac City Schools Division West District, this research utilized a descriptive survey method with the primary purpose of determining the effect of the new end-of-the-school year program which is the NLC among the population of the study. According to McCombes (2022), descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation, or phenomenon. It can answer what, where, when, and how questions, but not why questions. The principal aim of employing this method is to describe the nature of the situation as it exists at the time of the study and to explore the cases of the particular phenomena. It involves collecting data to determine what exists among the given quantifiable variables.

III. Results and Discussion

Respondents' Profile

This study aimed to assess the perceived effect of the National Learning Camp on students in the 7th and 8th grades. Data was gathered on several demographic and background variables to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the participants. The table provided below presents the profile of the respondents, with a particular focus on factors such as age, sex, grade level, and learning camp.

Table 1: Profile of The Respondents

Profile		Frequency	Percent
Age	11	7	14
	12	23	46
	13	13	26
	14	4	8
	15	1	2
	16 And Above	2	4
Sex	Male	26	52
	Female	24	48
Grade Level	7	26	52
	8	24	48
Learning Camp	Enhancement Camp	15	30
	Consolidation Camp	20	40
	Intervention Camp	15	30
Total		50	100

The profile of the respondents to the study on the effects of the National Learning Camp (NLC) on students in grades 7 and 8 is shown in Table 1.

The age group of 12 to 13 years old comprised 46% and 26% of the sample, respectively, making up the majority of responders. It appears from the distribution that early adolescent learners were the study's primary emphasis. A balanced representation of both sexes was shown by the sample's nearly equal both sexes breakdown of 52% male and 48% female.

Grades 7 (52%) and 8 (48%), in terms of grade level, accounted for the majority of responders. As a result, the effects of the NLC on this particular student demographic may be examined with greater focus because the study was designed with students in these two grade levels in mind.

Finally, the table gives details about the kind of learning camp that the participants attended. Enhancement Camp, Consolidation Camp, and Intervention Camp were among the camps. Thirty percent of the respondents attended each of these camps, according to the distribution, indicating a fair representation of the various learning camp kinds.

In summary, the study's respondent profile offers insightful details on the traits of the participants and lays the groundwork for investigating and comprehending the effects of the NLC on students in Grades 7 and 8. The results of the study of Nunez et al., (2022) showed that students who participated in the SSA program demonstrated significant improvements in their academic performance compared to the control group. They achieved higher scores on standardized tests and showed increased motivation and engagement in learning. Furthermore, the program had a positive impact on students' social-emotional development, as indicated by improvements in self-confidence, teamwork skills, and positive relationships with peers and teachers.

The findings of the Johnson et al. study suggest that targeted educational interventions, such as the NLC and the SSA, can effectively enhance academic outcomes and promote social-emotional well-being among middle school students. These results align with the goals of the NLC study, which aims to explore the effects of the learning camp on students in grades 7 and 8.

Summary of Perceived Effects of the NLC on Learners in Terms of Interest, Socio-Emotional Skills, Personal Growth, and Character Development

Table 2 provides a comprehensive summary of the perceived effects of the National Learning Camp (NLC) on learners' development across four key domains: Interest, Socio-Emotional Skills, Personal Growth, and Character Development. Through a detailed analysis of indicators within each domain across Enhancement, Consolidation, and Remediation camps, this table offers valuable insights into the holistic impact of the NLC on learners' educational experiences. By examining learners' responses in terms of descriptive equivalents and mean scores, this summary highlights the varied ways in which the NLC contributes to fostering a positive learning environment, enhancing socio-emotional well-being, promoting personal growth, and nurturing character development among participants.

Table 2: Summary of Perceived Effects of the NLC on Learners in Terms of Interest, Socio-Emotional Skills, Personal Growth, and Character Development

Indicators	Enhancement Camp		Consolidation Camp		Remediation Camp	
	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Interest	3.58	Often	3.58	Often	3.53	Often
Socio-Emotional Skills	3.58	Often	3.86	Often	3.88	Often
Personal Growth	3.36	Often	3.58	Often	3.53	Often
Character Development	3.35	Often	3.52	Often	3.69	Often

Legend:

Mean Score Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmitted Rating
4.50-5.00	Always	Very High
3.50-4.49	Often	High
2.50-3.49	Sometimes	Moderately High
1.50-2.49	Seldom	Slightly High
1.00-1.49	Never	Not High

The data presented in Table 6 provides a deeper analysis of the perceived effects of the National Learners' Camp (NLC) on learners' development across four crucial domains: Interest, Socio-Emotional Skills, Personal Growth, and Character Development.

Examining the mean scores and descriptive equivalents across the different camp types (Enrichment, Consolidation, and Remediation) reveals some interesting insights. The consistently high mean scores in the Socio-Emotional Skills domain suggest that the NLC is particularly effective in nurturing learners' interpersonal abilities, emotional intelligence, and their capacity for empathy and self-awareness. This is a significant finding, as the development of socio-emotional skills is increasingly recognized as a critical component of holistic education, preparing learners for success in both academic and real-world settings.

On the other hand, the relatively lower mean scores in the Personal Growth domain indicate that there may be room for improvement in the NLC's impact on learners' self-reflection, resilience, and overall capacity for personal development. This is an important area to address, as personal growth and the ability to navigate challenges are vital for learners to reach their full potential and become adaptable, self-directed individuals.

Interestingly, the mean scores in the Interest and Character Development domains fall in the middle, suggesting a balanced impact across the camp types. The NLC's ability to stimulate learners' intellectual curiosity and reinforce positive character traits, such as responsibility, integrity, and respect, is a testament to the program's holistic approach to learning and development.

Significant Differences in the Perceived effects on Learners across their Profile Variables

The table explores the impact of various profile variables on learners' outcomes, such as interest, socio-emotional skills, personal growth, and character development. It provides p-values for each variable, indicating the statistical significance of their influence. The variables analyzed include age, sex, grade level, and participation in a learning camp. This table offers valuable insights into how learners' profiles shape their educational experiences and developmental outcomes, benefiting educators, researchers, and policymakers in pursuing inclusive and tailored educational approaches.

Table 3: Significant Differences in the Perceived Effects on Learners across Their Profile Variables

Comparison	Interest (p-value)	Socio-Emotional Skills (p-value)	Personal Growth (p-value)	Character Development (p-value)
Age	0.362	0.723	0.726	0.762
Sex	0.402	0.306	0.229	0.581
Grade Level	0.041*	0.312	0.086	0.024*
Learning Camp	0.046*	0.117	0.102	0.062

**Significant at the 0.05 level.*

Table 3 examines the significant differences in the Perceived effects on learners across various profile variables, including age, sex, grade level, and participation in a learning camp. By analyzing the p-values associated with each variable, the researcher gained insights into the statistical significance of these differences.

Regarding interest, the results indicate that grade level ($p = 0.041^*$) and participation in a learning camp ($p = 0.046^*$) have a significant influence. Learners at different grade levels and those who participated in a learning camp exhibited notable variations in their levels of interest. This suggests that the educational context and enrichment opportunities provided to learners play a crucial role in shaping their interest in learning.

Specifically, grade level and participation in a learning camp were found to have a substantial influence on learners' interests. The entire setting in which learning occurs, comprising elements like instructional strategies, curriculum layout, available materials, and classroom culture, is referred to as the educational context. To give students a distinctive and interesting learning experience, enrichment activities are extracurricular educational events offered outside of the standard curriculum. Students' motivation to study can be positively impacted when they are placed in a supportive educational environment that provides enrichment opportunities, such as learning camps. These encounters could offer fresh and interesting tasks, practical learning chances, and connections with classmates and mentors who can encourage and inspire students (Zachary and Fain, 2022).

IV. Conclusion

The majority of respondents in the study were in the early adolescent stage of development, which aligns with Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development. This stage, typically occurring during Grades 7 and 8, is characterized by the exploration of personal identity and a growing sense of independence. The nearly equal distribution of male and female students ensures a balanced representation and allows for a comprehensive analysis of the NLC's effects on both sexes. Furthermore, the study's focus on students in Grades 7 and 8 enables a close

examination of the NLC's impact on this particular stage of development. The participants' involvement in different types of learning camps, such as Enhancement, Consolidation, and Intervention Camps, provides a diverse representation of camp experiences, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the effects of the NLC across various learning contexts. The National Learning Camp (NLC) has been successful in sparking curiosity, enhancing the desire to learn, and making the learning experience enjoyable. It has also effectively exposed learners to diverse perspectives and increased their motivation to explore beyond the classroom. The National Learning Camp (NLC) has a positive impact on learners' socio-emotional skills. The NLC cultivates the ability to work under pressure and develop resilience, and adaptability. It also enhances interpersonal skills, self-confidence, and self-esteem. These findings align with previous research highlighting the role of experiential learning in fostering socio-emotional competencies. However, there is room for improvement in problem-solving, teamwork, communication, and empathy skills. The National Learning Camp (NLC) has a positive impact on learners' personal growth. The NLC enhances self-confidence, provides insights into personal values, and promotes the development of a growth mindset. It also encourages self-reflection and increases self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses. However, there is room for improvement in goal-setting, curiosity, initiative, and broadening of perspectives within the NLC framework. The National Learning Camp (NLC) positively impacts students' character development. The NLC promotes honesty, integrity, responsibility, resilience, and accountability. However, there is room for improvement in cultivating humility, receptivity to learning, empathy, compassion, inclusivity, and respect for diversity within the NLC framework. The grade level and participation in a learning camp significantly impact learners' interests and character development. The educational context and enrichment opportunities provided by learning camps play a crucial role in shaping learners' interest in learning. Additionally, grade level and participation in a learning camp influence character development, highlighting the importance of experiential learning and activities that foster cooperation, critical thinking, and leadership. However, age, sex, and socio-emotional skills did not show significant differences in this analysis. These findings provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers to design targeted interventions and programs that cater to learners' diverse needs and promote their holistic development, thereby enhancing their educational experiences. Teachers and school administrators play a crucial role in implementing the National Learning Camp (NLC) and incorporating its principles into the classroom. They are responsible for designing and delivering instructional strategies, creating a supportive learning environment, and integrating character education into the curriculum. Government officials and policymakers are responsible for shaping education policies and allocating resources to support initiatives like the NLC. They must consider the recommendations when designing and implementing educational programs and interventions at the national or regional level. The organizers of the NLC and similar learning camps are essential stakeholders. They should consider the recommendations to enhance the camp experience, design appropriate activities, and ensure the inclusion of diverse learning opportunities. Parents and guardians play a crucial role in supporting their children's participation in the NLC and reinforcing the values and skills developed during the camp. They can advocate

for the expansion and improvement of such programs and provide feedback to educators and policymakers. The learners themselves are key stakeholders as they directly benefit from the NLC and other educational interventions. Their experiences, perspectives, and feedback should be considered when implementing and refining these programs. Researchers and evaluators in the field of education have a role in conducting further studies to assess the effectiveness of the NLC and similar interventions. Their findings can contribute to refining the program and informing future educational policies and practices.

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