ASSESSING THE EXTENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHOOL-BASED LEARNING ACTION CELL (LAC) FRAMEWORK

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***ABSTRACT*:** *This research paper aims to assess the extent of implementation of the Learning Action Cell (LAC) program in the Zamboanga City Division in the southern part of the Philippines. The study employed a Likert-type survey questionnaire to gather data from a total of 554 respondents, comprising 187 school principals and 367 public elementary school teachers. The study also used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 26 to analyze the responses. The study found that the extent of LAC implementation was very high in the planning stage, implementation stage (Before and During), and monitoring and evaluation stage. The LAC technical working group played a crucial role in the successful implementation of LAC, despite the limitations imposed by the pandemic. Public elementary schools in Zamboanga City Division conform to DepEd guidelines on LAC implementation. However, the monitoring and evaluation stage obtained the lowest mean score, indicating the need for further improvement. There was no significant difference in the extent of implementation across all quadrants, suggesting that all quadrants implement LAC to a very high extent. The findings of this study have implications for educational policymakers and practitioners in the Philippines and other countries. It is recommended that the monitoring and evaluation stage of LAC implementation should be given more attention to ensure that its effectiveness is sustained. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the implementation of the LAC framework and its impact on public elementary schools in the Zamboanga City Division.*

INTRODUCTION

The importance of professional development programs for teachers to improve their instructional practices and increase learner achievement has been recognized by the Department of Education (DepEd) [1]. To ensure the accessibility and availability of professional development programs for teachers, DepEd has emphasized that they should not be selective and should be readily available [1]. This opportunity for professional development should be integrated into the School-Based Management System (SBMS) framework and embodied in the School Improvement Plans (SIPs) of the respective schools [2].

According to DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, the SBMS is a framework for decentralizing the decision-making process in schools and empowering school heads to lead the school community in achieving the school's goals and objectives [2]. The SBMS framework emphasizes the importance of involving teachers in decision-making and planning processes [2]. Thus, the integration of professional development programs within the SBMS framework and SIPs of the respective schools ensures that teachers are involved in the planning and implementation of professional development programs that are relevant to the school's goals and objectives.

The LAC policy also promotes social cohesion and positive school culture among teachers. The LAC encourages teachers to collaborate and share best practices, which fosters a positive learning environment. The LAC also provides opportunities for teachers to strengthen their leadership skills by allowing them to take charge of their own professional development. It empowers them to identify their needs and priorities for their LAC, and together with their school head who will serve as their LAC Leader, they can design and implement their professional development plan.

The initial stage in the conduct of the LAC is to identify the needs of the teachers. This is done by conducting a Needs Assessment among the teachers. From here, the teachers will decide their priority topics for their LAC together with their school head who stands as their LAC Leader. This collaborative effort will create a sense of ownership and accountability among the teachers in designing and implementing their professional development plan.

DepEd crafted the policy of creating a professional development program called "The Learning Action Cell" (LAC) for every school in the department. This program provides a collaborative platform for teachers to enrich their content knowledge, pedagogy, and lesson planning. Through the LAC, teachers can work together in crafting action research on whatever issues they have discovered in their own classrooms or schools in general. The LAC is a school-based professional learning community that facilitates all teachers in improving their instructional practices, thereby increasing learners' achievements by advancing their content knowledge, pedagogy, and instruction as well as assessment.

The present research study aims to investigate the degree to which the Learning Action Cell (LAC) has been implemented in primary schools within the Zamboanga City Division in the COVID-19 pandemic. The research study seeks to identify the level or extent made by primary school administrative heads and educators in implementing the LAC during the pandemic and whether there is a significant difference within each of the four (4) quadrants of the Division.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Professional Development of Teachers

Limited studies have shown positive effects on teachers' development of content knowledge, pedagogy, learning environment, learner diversity, curriculum planning, assessment, and reporting through the implementation of school-based Learning Action Cell (LAC) programs. However, there have been challenges in its implementation, with school heads having a better understanding of LAC's potential benefits compared to teachers. This research topic is currently underexplored, and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to capacitate faculty in delivering instruction and assessment while searching for innovative approaches to ensure students can learn away from school. Furthermore, the pandemic has also revealed issues in school management, with schools needing to adapt to remain relevant to the current demands of the times. This study aims

to address these challenges and identify best practices in managing schools during the pandemic. The succeeding sections shall discuss related studies relevant to the present study, the Framework, to be followed the methodology employed. Lastly, results along with some discussions are delineated in the extent of LAC implementation in terms of: (a) planning; (b) implementation/execution; and (c) monitoring and evaluation along with a possible significant difference should the data be grouped according to quadrants are in accordance with the research objectives set in this study.

Professional development is the continuous education and training of an individual to improve their skills and meet the demands of their profession [3]. It aims to keep individuals up to date with current trends and develop new skills for career advancement, especially in fields with increasing competition and constant changes. The Department of Education (DepEd) recognizes the importance of professional development in improving the quality of instruction and has organized professional learning communities to help teachers acquire new trends in instruction. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted educational activities and affected teacher professional development opportunities [4]. Most educational institutions are unprepared for the sudden changes, and teachers need professional development to address the challenges of distance learning, especially for vulnerable students [5].

The Learning Action Cell (LAC) Program

The Learning Action Cell (LAC) is a professional development program adopted by the Department of Education (DepEd) to improve and advance the capabilities of teachers through a collaborative approach. LAC is based on the Lesson Study model, where teachers interact in planning, presenting, observing, evaluating, and reflecting on classroom lessons and issues. LAC is a school-based community of practice that provides an avenue for teachers to work collectively in improving their knowledge, skills, and attitude by joining together in planning, problem-solving, and action implementation. DepEd Order no.35, s. 2016 provides the framework and the implementing guidelines for the conduct of LAC, with objectives that include improving student learning, producing successful teachers, creating an avenue for teachers to improve their content and pedagogical knowledge, practice, skills, and attitudes, and boosting professional collaborative spirit among school heads, teachers, and the whole school community.

Professional development is crucial in keeping individuals up to date with current trends and improving their skills to meet the demands of their profession. The Department of Education (DepEd) recognizes this and has organized professional learning communities such as the Learning Action Cell (LAC), a school-based community of practice that adopts a collaborative approach to improve the capabilities of teachers. LAC is based on the Lesson Study model where teachers interact in planning, presenting, observing, evaluating, and reflecting the classroom lessons and issues. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted educational activities and affected teacher professional development opportunities, making it more important for teachers to acquire new skills to address the challenges of distance learning, especially for vulnerable students. DepEd Order no.35, s. 2016 provides the framework and guidelines for the conduct of LAC, with objectives that aim to improve student learning, produce successful teachers, improve teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge, practice, skills, and attitudes, and boost professional collaborative spirit among school heads, teachers, and the whole school community.

Framework

The current study examined the implementation of the Learning Action Cell (LAC) program, specifically from the planning stage up to the monitoring and evaluation stage. This study was based on the Systems Theory, which views an organization as a "totally interrelated entity with various parts that fit together mutually reinforcing each other as a system to produce the observed outcome" [6]. According to the Systems Theory, all organizations are open systems, and their survival depends on their interaction with the surrounding environment. In the case of the LAC implementation, everyone involved in the program, from the school administrator to the teachers, must know the implementation process [7].

The Structural-Functional theory, a social theory traced in the works of [8], supports the Systems Theory. According to this theory, society is held together by a common set of values and morals, and these values and morals are at the heart of structural functionalism because it emphasize how the various parts of a social system work together. Education is a key institution that plays a role in socializing individuals and creating a sense of trust that leads to general social cohesion [8]. Senge believes that organizations can be a place where people can develop and maximize their true potential through collaboration and transformation [5]. This feature of the social theory relates to the LAC program, where teachers study content and pedagogies together, plan lessons collaboratively, and conduct action research as a group.

Research Objectives

The following research objectives were constructed to identify the extent of a school's LAC implementation.

1. What is the extent of the implementation of the school LAC in terms of:
   a. Planning,
   b. Implementation/execution, and
   c. Monitoring and Evaluation
2. Is there a significant difference in the extent of implementation of LAC when data are grouped by Quadrant?

The Systems Theory and Structural-Functional Theory can be used to answer the research objectives. The Systems Theory provides a framework for understanding how the LAC implementation is an interrelated system with various parts that work together to produce the observed outcome. This theory highlights the importance of knowing the process of implementation for all individuals involved in the program, from the school administrator down to the teachers. [9] and [4] emphasize the importance of the Systems Theory with input-output analysis in achieving desired results in education.

On the other hand, the Structural-Functional Theory can explain the social aspects of the LAC implementation. The theory emphasizes the importance of shared norms and

morals in creating social cohesion, which is essential for society's functioning. Through education, individuals learn the knowledge, attitudes, and values they need to become productive citizens. Senge asserts that organizations are where people can develop and maximize their potential through collaboration and transformation, which relates to the LAC's feature of studying content and pedagogies together, planning lessons collaboratively, and conducting action research as a group [5].

By using these theories, the research objectives can be addressed. The Systems Theory can provide a framework for analyzing the implementation of the LAC from the planning stage up to the Monitoring and Evaluation stage, while the Structural-Functional Theory can provide insights into the social aspects of the LAC implementation. The theories can also help in identifying the similarities and differences in the extent of LAC implementation when data are grouped by Quadrant.

METHODOLOGY

Data Source

The study was conducted in the Zamboanga City Division, located in Western Mindanao in the southern part of the Philippines. The division has twelve districts, grouped into four quadrants: Quadrant 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, and 2.2. The study included a total of 554 respondents, comprising of 187 school principals who were enumerated and 367 public elementary school teachers who were sampled using Slovin's formula with a 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error. The sample size was determined using the snowball technique of convenience sampling from the four quadrants based on the classifications of the Department of Education.

The study utilized Likert-type survey questionnaires as research instruments. The preparation of the questionnaires was guided by a review of related literature and studies, though the instruments used were not entirely patterned from them. The instruments used to address research objectives 1 and 2 are comprised of items adapted from the LAC Monitoring tool of the Department of Education. The analysis of the responses garnered from the respondents was done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 26.

The table presents the number and percentage of participants in the study, which includes 187 school heads/principals and 367 teachers, divided into four quadrants. Each quadrant is composed of different districts, and the number of school heads/principals and teachers who participated in the study varied across them.

Procedure

The data for this study were acquired with the explicit consent of the Schools Division Superintendent of Zamboanga City Division. In compliance with health and safety protocols during the study, data were collected using an online platform, specifically Google Forms. The researcher liaised with district offices to obtain the list of schools within their jurisdiction. Prior to participation, the respondents were sent an informed consent form, which they were required to complete before being provided access to the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The responses obtained from the research instruments were coded for subsequent analysis. Quadrants were assigned numerical values ranging from 1 to 4, while the Extent of Implementation was assessed using a 4-point scale.

Table 1: Distribution of Samples of the Research Respondents

Respondents	School Heads/ Principals	Teachers			Total
	N	N	%	**n**	
QUADRANT 1.1					**135**
District 1.1A	**20**	316	7.0	**26**	**46**
District 1.1B	**12**	470	10.4	**38**	**50**
District 1.1C	**8**	377	8.4	**31**	**39**
QUADRANT 1.2					**82**
District 1.2A	**13**	516	11.4	**42**	**55**
District 1.2B	**6**	260	5.8	**21**	**27**
QUADRANT 2.1					**153**
District 2.1A	**23**	248	5.5	**20**	**43**
District 2.1B	**31**	320	7.1	**26**	**57**
District 2.1C	**23**	364	8.1	**30**	**53**
QUADRANT 2.2					**184**
District 2.2A	**23**	351	7.8	**29**	**52**

Descriptive statistical methods were employed, including the computation of the Weighted Arithmetic Mean and Median, to analyze and interpret the data. The Weighted Arithmetic Mean was calculated to determine the overall level of LAC implementation, while the Median was computed to ascertain the degree of occurrence of challenges. Additionally, the Frequency and Percentage were computed to determine the most frequently occurring values in the checklist for Mitigating Measures during the LAC Sessions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Extent of LAC Implementation in terms of Planning Stage, Implementation Stage (Before and During), and Monitoring and Evaluation Stage.

A rating system utilizing a weighted mean score has been devised to gauge the extent of LAC implementation. The system is based on assigning a quantitative score ranging from 1.00 to 4.00, with four categories - Very High Extent of Implementation (VHEI) for scores ranging from 3.25 to 4.00, High Extent of Implementation (HEI) for scores between 2.50 and 3.24, Low Extent of Implementation (LEI) for scores between 1.75 and 2.49, and Very Low Extent of Implementation (VLEI) for scores between 1.00 and 1.74 - to evaluate the extent of implementation. The weighted mean score is utilized to determine the success of a project or initiative, and the rating categories provide an interpretation of the extent of implementation achieved, with higher scores indicating greater implementation.

Table 2 presents a descriptive analysis of the LAC monitoring tool for the Planning Stage, indicating a high extent of implementation of the items by the schools. The result shows a Very High Extent of Implementation interpretation in all statements, with an overall Mean of 3.76 and SD of 0.33. Among the items, the statement "The school has identified the LAC Technical Working Group such as the LAC Leader, LAC Facilitator, and LAC Documenter" had the highest mean

score (M – 3.89), followed by "The school develops a LAC Plan identifying the topics, schedule, facilitators, LAC groupings" (M -3.81).

Table 2: Extent of Implementation of LAC - Planning Stage

#	Statements	Responses								M	Interp.
		NA		VL		S		TGE			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1.	The school conducts Needs Assessment to identify professional development needs and prioritize issues to be discussed or addressed in the LAC session.	3	0.5	7	1.3	124	22.4	420	75.8	3.73	VHEI
2.	The school develops a LAC Plan identifying the topics, schedule, facilitators, LAC groupings.	1	0.2	2	0.4	99	17.9	452	81.6	3.81	VHEI
3.	The school principal includes LAC activities in the monthly supervisory Plan.	1	0.2	12	2.2	131	23.6	410	74	3.71	VHEI
4.	The school has crafted a systematic monitoring schedule for LAC Conduct.	1	0.2	9	1.6	144	26	400	72.2	3.70	VHEI
5.	The school principal conducts LAC Orientation per DepEd Order 35, s. 2016.	0	0	9	1.6	103	18.6	442	79.8	3.78	VHEI
6.	The school has identified the LAC Technical Working Group such as the LAC Leader, LAC Facilitator, and LAC Documenter.	1	0.2	2	0.4	54	9.7	497	89.7	3.89	VHEI
7.	The school has identified resources for the LAC implementation.	1	0.2	6	1.1	142	25.6	405	73.1	3.72	VHEI
	Overall Extent of Implementation in Terms of Planning									**3.76**	**VHEI**

Other statements such as conducting LAC Orientation (M-3.78), Needs Assessment to identify professional development needs (M- 3.73), identifying resources for LAC implementation (M- 3.73), inclusion of LAC Activities in the school principal's monthly supervisory plan (M- 3.71), and crafting a monitoring schedule for LAC conduct (M-3.70) were also highly implemented by the schools. These activities are following DepEd Order No. 36 s, 2016, which outlines the planning process for LAC implementation and forms the basis for schools' LAC activities as determined in their LAC Plan.

The results indicate that the planning process for LAC implementation is in place, as the identified LAC Technical Working Group and the developed LAC Plan had the highest mean scores. These two activities are considered key elements for successful planning and implementation. The findings align with previous studies emphasizing the importance of group participation, the creation of school working groups, and the development of a LAC Plan by school principals and teachers for systematic implementation. This supports the notion that having a well-planned and structured approach is essential for the successful implementation of LAC.

Table 3 displays the results of the Extent of Implementation of the LAC in the Implementation Stage, specifically before the session, with an overall Mean of 3.77 and SD of .37, which indicates a Very High Extent of Implementation. The survey questionnaire items reflect the duties and responsibilities of the LAC technical working group before the LAC session. The LAC Leader is represented by the School Principal, while the LAC Facilitators are the Mentors or the Master Teachers, and the LAC Members and LAC Documenter are the teachers. The respondents confirmed that all involved in the LAC are performing their duties and responsibilities well, as all items are characterized by a Very High Extent of Implementation.

Table 3 Extent of Implementation of LAC - Implementation Stage (Before the Session)

#	Statements	Responses								M	Interp.
		NA		VL		S		TGE			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1.	The LAC Leader secures resources for the LAC sessions	2	0.4	6	1.1	123	22.2	423	76.4	3.75	VHEI
2.	The LAC Leader prepares the venue for the LAC sessions.	2	0.4	0	0	96	17.3	456	82.3	3.82	VHEI
#	Statements	Responses								M	Interp.
		NA		VL		S		TGE			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
3.	The LAC Facilitator prepares a session guide and announces the schedule and venue of the session.	1	0.2	2	.04	88	15.9	463	83.6	3.83	VHEI
4.	The LAC Members have obtained the information about the LAC session and prepares relevant materials for the LAC session, where applicable.	1	0.2	7	1.3	130	23.5	416	75.1	3.73	VHEI
5.	The LAC Documenter prepares the materials necessary for documentation and discusses with the facilitator and LAC leader the manner of documentation.	1	0.2	10	1.8	132	23.8	411	74.2	3.72	VHEI
	Overall Extent of Implementation in Terms of Implementation (Before the Session)									**3.77**	**VHEI**

It is worth noting that Item 3 garnered the highest Mean score of 3.83, which signifies the clear manifestation of the role of the LAC Facilitator in preparing a session guide and announcing the schedule and venue of the session prior to its conduct. This ensures that everyone is aware of the LAC Session and can attend without any reason for not being able to participate. This result is consistent with the findings of [5], which claimed that teachers and implementers performed their tasks well in the Learning Action Cell implementation, whether as LAC leaders, facilitators, documenters, resource persons, or members.

The present analysis pertains to the results displayed in Table 4, which depict the implementation of the Learning Action Cell (LAC) during its session. Table 4, similar to Table 3, outlines the roles and responsibilities of the LAC technical working group during the LAC session. The results indicate a Very High Extent of Implementation with an overall Mean of 3.76 and SD of .35. A detailed analysis of the data reveals that the majority of the respondents highly rated the performance of the LAC Facilitator, LAC Members, LAC Documenter, and LAC Leader during the LAC session. Specifically, 80.5% of the respondents (M-3.80) reported that the LAC Facilitator demonstrated effective facilitation skills, 80.3% of the respondents (M-3.79) noted that the LAC Members actively participated in the discussion and maintained proper behavior, 79.2% of the respondents (M-3.78) reported that the LAC Facilitator successfully managed the members' participation and arrived at agreements, 78.9%

of the respondents (M-3.77) reported that the LAC Documenter gathered and recorded all necessary documents and minutes of the meeting, and 77.1% of the respondents (M-3.76) noted that the LAC session achieved agreements. In addition, 72.9% of the respondents (M-3.71) reported that the LAC Leader observed the LAC session, identified its strengths and weaknesses, and evaluated the facilitator's performance.

Table 4: Extent of Implementation of LAC - Implementation Stage (During the Session)

#	Statements	Responses								M	Interp.
		NA		VL		S		TGE			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1.	The LAC Leader observes the LAC sessions and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the session and the facilitator.	2	0.4	7	1.3	141	25.5	404	72.9	3.71	VHEI
2.	The LAC Facilitator exhibits skills in facilitating the session.	1	0.2	2	0.4	105	19	446	80.5	3.80	VHEI
3.	The LAC Facilitator manage the members' participation and can successfully bring out agreements.	2	0.4	4	0.7	109	19.7	439	79.2	3.78	VHEI
4.	The LAC Facilitator uses the materials appropriately	1	0.2	8	1.4	120	21.7	425	76.7	3.75	VHEI
5.	The LAC Members are all present in the session	0	0	6	1.1	129	23.3	419	75.6	3.75	VHEI
6.	The LAC Members actively participate in the discussion and Observe norms of behavior.	1	0.2	4	0.7	104	18.8	445	80.3	3.79	VHEI
7.	The LAC Documenter takes down the minutes of the meeting, as well as the agreements.	0	0	8	1.4	119	21.5	427	77.1	3.76	VHEI
8.	The LAC Documenter gathers all documents.	0	0	8	1.4	109	19.7	437	78.9	3.77	VHEI
Overall Extent of Implementation in Terms of Implementation (During the Session)										**3.76**	**VHEI**

The findings from both Tables 3 and 4 highlight a consistent pattern whereby the LAC Facilitator is reported to have the highest mean score (M-3.83) and (M-3.80) among the LAC technical working group. This suggests that the LAC Facilitator is effectively performing his/her duties and responsibilities and is a crucial presence in the successful implementation of the LAC.

The results of the study suggest that DepEd Order No. 35 s. 2016, also known as LAC as a K to 12 School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy, is highly implemented in schools based on the responses of the participants, as evidenced by the Very High Extent of Implementation in both the Before and During stages of the Implementation Stage. Notably, the study was conducted during the pandemic, which presented challenges for group activities, yet the high extent of implementation was still observed.

In their study, [6] investigated the extent of implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the school-based professional development strategy called Learning Action Cell (LAC) four years after the issuance of DepEd Order No. 35 s. 2016. The results showed that teachers had a limited understanding of the implementation of LAC, particularly on how school heads focused on monitoring and evaluation of LAC in schools. However, this finding contradicts the present study's results, which indicate a very high extent of LAC implementation in schools. It can be inferred that mechanisms have been established in the seven years since the issuance of the order to effectively implement it. Table 4.1 demonstrates that the Planning Stage is very highly implemented, suggesting that the first step towards implementation has been given importance. Additionally, linking the LAC plan to the School Improvement Plan (SIP) serves as another mechanism to ensure the implementation of LAC activities. As the SIP is evaluated at the end of the school year, it is crucial to carry out all the items in the plan, including LAC sessions. These mechanisms might have contributed to the extent of the implementation of DepEd Order No. 35 s. 2016 [11].

Table 5: Extent of Implementation of LAC - Monitoring and Evaluation Stage

#	Statements	Responses								M	Interp.
		NA		VL		S		TGE			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1.	The LAC Leader conducts debriefing.	4	0.7	12	2.2	180	32.5	358	64.6	3.61	VHEI
2.	The LAC Leader identifies plans for improvement for the next session and develops with members the next plan.	1	0.2	13	2.3	149	26.9	391	70.6	3.68	VHEI
3.	The LAC Leader gathers evidence of implementation of the plan.	1	0.2	10	1.8	139	25.1	404	72.9	3.71	VHEI
4.	The LAC Facilitator discusses with the LAC Leader the result of the session.	2	0.4	6	1.1	156	28.2	390	70.4	3.69	VHEI
5.	The LAC Facilitator identifies areas for improvement for the session and develops plan for improvement of the session.	2	0.4	9	1.6	141	25.5	402	72.6	3.70	VHEI
6.	The LAC Documenter arranges the documents and finalizes the reports to be submitted to the LAC Leader.	2	0.4	8	1.4	143	25.8	401	72.4	3.70	VHEI
Overall Extent of Implementation in Terms of Implementation (During the Session)										**3.68**	**VHEI**

The present study examined the Extent of Implementation of the Learning Action Cell (LAC) in the Monitoring and Evaluation Stage, as presented in Table 5. The analysis reveals an overall Mean of 3.68 with a Standard Deviation (SD) of 0.44, which is interpreted as a Very High Extent of Implementation. The LAC technical working group plays a significant role in the execution of this stage, as indicated by the survey items. Among these items, Item 3, "The LAC Leader gathers evidence of implementation of the plan," registered the highest mean (M-3.71). This finding suggests that collecting evidence during LAC sessions is crucial as it serves as a means of verification during the monitoring and evaluation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) at the end of the academic year.

Continuous observation and evaluation are critical components of successful project management, as they allow managers to track progress, identify problems, and make informed decisions about resource allocation [9, 8, 6]. The Learning Action Cell (LAC) program, as outlined in DepEd Order 23, s. 2016, emphasizes the importance of ongoing monitoring and feedback during all phases of planning and implementation. According to the results reported by respondents, it appears that the monitoring and evaluation phase of LAC implementation is significantly present in their operations. However, while the Monitoring and Evaluation Stage received an overall Mean score of 3.68, interpreted as a "Very High Extent of Implementation," it had the lowest overall mean score among the three stages of LAC

implementation. In particular, Item 1, "The LAC Leader conducts debriefing," had the lowest mean score (M-3.61) of all the items. While this result still indicates a very high extent of implementation, it suggests that more attention should be given to the debriefing process to reinforce the importance of monitoring and evaluation during LAC implementation. By doing so, LAC members will have a greater awareness of the significance of this activity in ensuring the success of the LAC program.

Is There a Significant Difference in the Extent of LAC Implementation When Data are Grouped by Quadrant?

Table 6: The Kruskal-Wallis Test on the Difference in the Extent of Implementation: Planning vs Quadrant

STATEMENT	χ^2	df	p	ε^2
Plan1	3.752	3	0.290	0.00678
Plan2	3.059	3	0.383	0.00553
Plan3	8.358	3	**0.039***	0.01511
Plan4	1.033	3	0.793	0.00187
Plan5	0.640	3	0.887	0.00116
Plan6	0.371	3	0.946	6.71e-4
Plan7	3.909	3	0.271	0.00707
Overall Planning	**1.639**	**3**	**0.651**	**0.00296**

Table 6 presents the Kruskal-Wallis Test outcome on the dissimilarity of the extent of implementation of LAC in the Planning stage among the four quadrants. The test, which adjusted for tied ranks, revealed that there is no significant difference in the degree of implementation across the quadrants concerning the Planning stage. The test statistic value of 1.64 is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance, thus supporting the null hypothesis. This implies that all quadrants execute a high degree of implementation in the Planning stage.

Regarding planning statement number 3, "The school principal has a supervisory Plan for LAC," the corresponding p-value is 0.039, indicating a statistically significant difference in response distribution among quadrants. Nonetheless, using eta squared as the effect size measure, the degree of association between the response distributions is small (ε^2 = 0.015 or 1.5%). This implies that the variance in respondents' responses is of minor consequence with regard to the Planning stage. Thus, it can be deduced that all quadrants comply with the provisions stipulated in DepEd Order No. 35, s.2016 concerning LAC planning [11].

Table 7: The Kruskal-Wallis Test on the Difference in the Extent of Implementation: Implementation/Execution (Before the Session) vs *Quadrant*

STATEMENT	χ^2	df	p	ε^2
PreIMP1	8.31	3	**0.040***	0.01503
PreIMP2	8.86	3	**0.031***	0.01602
PreIMP3	5.58	3	0.134	0.01010
PreIMP4	6.89	3	0.075	0.01246
PreIMP5	4.38	3	0.224	0.00791
Total Before Implementation	**7.56**	**3**	**0.056**	**0.01366**

A Kruskal-Wallis test was utilized to examine whether there were significant differences in the responses of the quadrants regarding the extent of implementation during the implementation stage (before the session). The results, which were adjusted for tied ranks, indicated no statistically significant differences in the extent of implementation as regards the implementation stage (before the session), with a test statistic value of 7.56 that was not statistically significant at p = 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis was retained, signifying that all quadrants had a very high extent of implementation in the implementation stage (before the session).

However, a closer look at the individual results revealed that implementation statements 1 and 2 [The LAC Leader secures resources for the LAC sessions; The LAC Leader prepares the venue for the LAC sessions] obtained p-values of .04 and .03, respectively, which were statistically significant at p=0.05. This suggests that the distribution of responses varied across the quadrants for these particular statements. To determine which specific quadrants differed in their responses, pairwise comparisons were conducted as shown in Table 8. It was discovered that only in statement number 2 [The LAC Leader prepares the venue for the LAC sessions] was there a disparity in median values between Quadrant 1.1 and 2.1.

Table 8: Pairwise Comparisons – PreIMP2 Pairwise comparisons - PreIMP2

		W	p
1.1	1.2	1.053	0.879
1.1	**2.1**	**3.694**	**0.045**
1.1	2.2	3.238	0.100
1.2	2.1	2.169	0.417
1.2	2.2	1.673	0.638
2.1	2.2	-0.652	0.968

A measure of effect size, namely eta squared, was employed to determine the strength of association of the distribution of responses on the implementation/execution stage before the session. The results showed that the effect size was small (ε^2 .015 and .016), indicating that the difference in responses among the quadrants was only very slight. Consequently, it can be concluded that most of the quadrants are adhering to the guidelines stipulated in DepEd Order No. 35, s.2016 concerning the implementation/execution stage before the session [11].

A Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to assess whether the quadrants had varying responses to the extent of implementation during the implementation stage (During the session). The results, which were adjusted for tied ranks, reveal no significant difference in the extent of implementation as regards the Implementation stage (During the session) with a test statistic value of 3.94 being insignificant at p= 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is upheld, indicating that all quadrants implement a high extent of implementation during the implementation stage (During the session).

However, on analyzing the individual results, it was observed that implementation statements 1, 3, 6, and 8 [The LAC Leader observes the LAC sessions and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the session and the facilitator; The LAC Facilitator manages the members' participation and can successfully bring out agreements; The LAC Members actively participate in the discussion and observe norms of behavior; The LAC Documenter gathers all documents]

obtained a p-value of .011, .033, .034, and .036, respectively, which are statistically significant at p=0.05. This indicates that the distribution of responses differs across quadrants on these statements. A pairwise comparison was conducted to determine the specific quadrants that differ in their responses, and the results are presented in the following tables.

Table 9: The Kruskal-Wallis Test on the Difference in the Extent of Implementation: Implementation/Execution (During the Session) vs Quadrant.

	χ^2	df	p	ε^2
OnIMP1	11.14	3	**0.011***	0.02015
OnIMP2	2.77	3	0.428	0.00501
OnIMP3	8.72	3	**0.033***	0.01576
OnIMP4	1.84	3	0.607	0.00332
OnIMP5	5.73	3	0.126	0.01036
OnIMP6	8.70	3	**0.034***	0.01573
OnIMP7	7.34	3	0.062	0.01327
OnIMP8	8.52	3	**0.036***	0.01540
Total During Implementation	**3.94**	**3**	**0.268**	**0.00712**

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OnIMP1	11.14	3	**0.011***	0.02015
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OnIMP3	8.72	3	**0.033***	0.01576
OnIMP4	1.84	3	0.607	0.00332
OnIMP5	5.73	3	0.126	0.01036
OnIMP6	8.70	3	**0.034***	0.01573
OnIMP7	7.34	3	0.062	0.01327
OnIMP8	8.52	3	**0.036***	0.01540
Total During Implementation	**3.94**	**3**	**0.268**	**0.00712**

Table 10.: Pairwise Comparisons – Statements 1, 3 6, and 8

Statement 1			
		W	**p**
1.1	1.2	3.771	**0.038**
1.1	2.1	3.930	**0.028**
1.1	2.2	3.152	0.116
1.2	2.1	-0.566	0.978
1.2	2.2	-1.338	0.780
2.1	2.2	-0.942	0.910
Statement 3			
		W	**p**
1.1	1.2	1.629	0.657
1.1	2.1	1.577	0.680
1.1	2.2	4.158	**0.017**
1.2	2.1	-0.339	0.995
1.2	2.2	1.825	0.569
2.1	2.2	2.601	0.255
Statement 6			
		W	**p**
1.1	1.2	3.86	**0.032**
1.1	2.1	2.77	0.205
1.1	2.2	1.47	0.727
1.2	2.1	-1.74	0.606
1.2	2.2	-2.80	0.195
2.1	2.2	-1.39	0.760
Statement 8			
		W	**p**
1.1	1.2	2.868	0.178
1.1	2.1	1.947	0.514
1.1	2.2	3.798	**0.036**
1.2	2.1	-1.345	0.777
1.2	2.2	0.141	1.000
2.1	2.2	1.867	0.550

In general, the pairwise comparisons conducted between the four quadrants revealed differences in median values that are statistically significant at p=0.05, particularly between Quadrant 1.1 and Quadrants 1.2, 2.1, and 2.2. This indicates that the responses of the respective quadrants to the extent of implementation of the LAC during the session are not the same. These differences may be attributed to variations in the implementation practices of each school.

However, the effect size using eta squared (ε^2) was also computed to determine the strength of association between the distribution of responses and revealed a small effect (ε^2 .01 to .03), indicating a small effect size in the strength of the difference in the respondents' responses to these statements. Therefore, it can be inferred that the majority of the quadrants are implementing the directives as specified in the DepEd Order No. 35, s.2016 in terms of the Monitoring and Evaluation stage [11].

Table 11: The Kruskal-Wallis Test on the Difference in the Extent of Implementation: Monitoring and Evaluation vs Quadrant

	χ^2	df	p	ε^2
Monitor1	1.56	3	0.669	0.00282
Monitor2	11.74	3	**0.008***	0.02123
Monitor3	6.50	3	0.090	0.01176
Monitor4	3.57	3	0.312	0.00645
Monitor5	4.22	3	0.239	0.00763
Monitor6	4.79	3	0.188	0.00867
Total Monitoring	**4.36**	**3**	**0.225**	**0.00788**

A Kruskal-Wallis test was employed to assess whether there were any differences in the responses of the quadrants in terms of the extent of implementation during the Monitoring and Evaluation Stage. The findings, which were adjusted for tied ranks, revealed no statistically significant difference in the extent of implementation during the Monitoring and Evaluation Stage, as evidenced by a test statistic value of 4.36 that is not statistically significant at p= 0.05. This indicates that all quadrants implement the Monitoring and Evaluation Stage to a very high extent.

However, when examining the individual results, it was found that only monitoring and evaluation statement 2 [The LAC Leader identifies plans for improvement for the next session and develops with members the next plan] obtained a p-value of .008, which is statistically significant at p=0.05, indicating that there are differences in the distribution of responses across quadrants for this specific statement. To identify which specific quadrants have differing responses, a pairwise comparison was carried out and is presented in the subsequent Table 12.

Overall, in this pairwise comparison shown in Table 12, there are differences in the median values between Quadrant 1.1 to Quadrants 1.2 and 2.1 which are statistically significant at p=0.05. The responses between these quadrants are not the same when asked about the extent of implementation of the monitoring and evaluation of their LAC sessions. The varying responses from the respective quadrants on these statements

may be attributed to the individual practices of the LAC Leader in their implementation.

Table 12Pairwise comparisons – Monitoring Statement #2

		W	p
1.1	1.2	4.026	**0.023**
1.1	2.1	3.643	**0.049**
1.1	2.2	3.597	0.054
1.2	2.1	-1.060	0.877
1.2	2.2	-1.311	0.791
2.1	2.2	-0.263	0.998

However, effect size using eta squared was used to determine the strength of association of the distribution of responses and revealed there is a small effect between (ε^2 .02 and .04). This indicates a small effect size in the strength of the difference in the responses of the respondents with respect to these statements. Therefore, it can be noted that majority of the quadrants are implementing the directives as stated in the guidelines of DepEd Order No. 35, s.2016 in terms of the monitoring and evaluation stage during the session and it can be said that this stage is significantly present in their operation.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the extent of implementation of the LAC across different stages and quadrants. The findings indicate that the extent of implementation is very high in the planning stage, implementation stage (Before and During), and monitoring and evaluation stage. The LAC technical working group played a crucial role in the successful implementation of LAC, despite the limitations imposed by the pandemic. Public elementary schools in Zamboanga City Division also conform to DepEd guidelines on LAC implementation. However, the monitoring and evaluation stage obtained the lowest mean score, indicating the need for further improvement. There was no significant difference in the extent of implementation across all quadrants, suggesting that all quadrants implement LAC to a very high extent.

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