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UPLIFTING THE PERFORMANCE IN MAPEH OF SELECTED GRADE 4 LEARNERS IN WAWA ELEMENTARY THROUGH ONLINE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to uplift the performance in MAPEH of selected grade 4 learners in Wawa Elementary School through the use of Online Focus Group Discussions. Twenty learners were randomly chosen as participants in this study. Diagnostic test and modules were used as pre-assessment tools to gather data and a separate test were used to conduct the post test. The data gathered were analyzed using mean, mastery level and standard deviation to compare if there are any changes in the outcome when the online focus group discussions were introduced to the learners. The learners were then engaged in online focus group discussion after class to help them uplift their performance. Results of the diagnostic test and their submitted outputs showed that there is a very low mastery in the subject matter. The moderator of the OFGD pointed out some problems during the conduct of the study like slow internet connection and their own personal surroundings. But after weeks of execution, interaction and motivation through the use of OFGD the learners felt comfortable engaging themselves in the subject thus steadily exhibit a more favorable response in the appreciation of the subject at hand. Based on the results of the post test, students' performance has taken a leap. They are now able to study more happily and with more confidence. Consequently, the use of Online Focus Group Discussions was proven useful in the uplifting learners' performance in MAPEH.

Key Concepts: Uplifting the Performance, Online Focus Group Discussion

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced teachers to think creatively about how to uplift the performance of learners in MAPEH subject because standard approaches, such as conducting in-person remediation are not currently feasible due to social-distancing guidelines. As a result, there is an increasing need to share best practices for conducting online focus group discussions and to expand our understanding of how to maximize the potential benefits of this medium to help our students. Upward trends in internet use and smartphone access lay a promising groundwork for incorporating online focus group discussions.

Online focus group discussions have emerged as a leading research option for the collection of primary qualitative data during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has required strict physical distancing protocols to protect public health and comply with local regulations. Fortunately, use of online focus group discussions predate the pandemic. This approach has previously been used to reach participants in remote locations or to research sensitive topics, and these experiences offer important insights on the benefits, challenges and limitations of this approach.

A mastery level of 57.9 percent was the result of the pre-assessment test which was given at the start of the school year and provided by the division office. It is relatively distant to the required 75% required mastery level. Some of the problems that can be linked in these results come in the form of internet connectivity and poor educational environment which is not conducive to learning. The researchers aimed to conduct an online focus group discussion to help students adopt more to the new normal settings and uplift their performance in the MAPEH subject.

In a study conducted by Biedermann, N. (2018), Boateng, B. on "the use of Online Focus Group Discussion in Education" participants exhibited an uplift in their performance after the implementation of the OFGD.

The current pandemic cannot stop teachers in finding ways to help learners improve not only their academic performances but also their attitude towards studying which is really hard in this trying times.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research aimed to uplift the performance in MAPEH of selected grade 4 learners in Wawa Elementary School through online focus group discussions.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following:

1. How can the use of online focus group discussion help in uplifting the performance in MAPEH of selected grade 4 learners in Wawa Elementary School?

METHODOLOGY

Purposive sampling was utilized in this study because the researchers made use of 20 selected learners as participants. Pre-test, OFGD monitoring tool and a post-test was utilized in this study as well. The results were analyzed and compared using mean scores.

R A. TEST RESULT

No. of Test Takers	No. of Item	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Mean	Mastery Level	Standard Deviation
Plot Area	50	46	33	41.6	83.2	6.44

No. of Test Takers	No. of Item	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Mean	Mastery Level	Standard Deviation
20	50	39	20	28.95	57.9	5.38

The table shows both the results of the pre-test and post-test. It shows that there is a significant increase in the mean and mastery level which is a crucial factor in the conduct of this study. This indicates the effectiveness of the OFGD in every remediation sessions to uplift the performance of the selected learners in the MAPEH subject. This also implies that there is a boost in their confidence in engaging themselves in studying throughout this pandemic.

CONCLUSION

The use of online focus group discussion proved useful in helping selected learners to uplift their performance in the teaching and learning process and in promoting students' engagement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The school should consider implementing the online focus group discussions in remediation classes.
- Teachers can apply this method to help learners having trouble in engaging themselves in study. By doing so, learners and teachers can mutually understand the problem and can adjust to whatever the needs of the learners thus enhancing their academic performance.
- The local government unit should also provide a 1:1 ratio of smartphones to learners. During this pandemic, many learners have no access to gadgets which is necessary in conducting online classes. They should allot budget in this endeavor to help learners which will also help the nation someday.

REFLECTION

The researchers came to a realization that the use of online focus group discussions requires an ample amount of time and a massive patience in dealing with the problems of the learners in handling MAPEH subject. Preparations for the OFGD session after classes proved challenging on the part of the teacher and the learners as it took additional time in both parties. However, time spent in OFGD for remediation is beneficial for the learners to enhance their academic performance.

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