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Integrating Scientific Literacy into Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies in the Philippine Basic Education Program

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Glendon M. QuimadaTeacher, PAU Excellencia Global Academy Foundation, Inc., Toledo City, Cebu, Philippines
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5975-4232> | glendon097@gmail.com**Osias Kit T. Kilag**School Principal, PAU Excellencia Global Academy Foundation, Inc., Toledo City, Cebu, Philippines
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0845-3373> | okkilag12@gmail.com**Ann Bernasyl E. Vestal**Teacher III, Mandaue City School for the Arts, Department of Education, Division of Mandaue City
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3927-9198> | abvestal@gmail.com**Jovielyn R. Lastimoso**Teacher III, Matabang Elementary School, Department of Education, Division of Toledo City, Philippines
<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-9054-636X> | jovielyn.lastimoso@deped.gov.ph**Monaliza A. Binagatan**Nurse II, Cebu City Medical Center- College of Nursing, D.Jakosalem St., Cebu City, Philippines
<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2749-2518> | monaliza.binagatan@gmail.com**Cara Frances K. Abendan**Administrative Assistant, ECT Excellencia Global Academy Foundation, Inc., Balamban, Cebu, Philippines
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6363-7792> | carafrances03@gmail.com**Abstract:**

This study investigates the integration of scientific literacy into disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies within the Philippine Basic Education Program. Conducted through a systematic literature review, the research highlights key themes, including the current status of DRR education, the lack of emphasis on scientific literacy, pedagogical challenges and opportunities, and the significance of community engagement and awareness. The findings underscore the need for a more practical and hands-on approach to complement the current theoretical framework, emphasizing the pivotal role of innovative pedagogical practices such as inquiry-based learning, interdisciplinary teaching methods, and the integration of technology. Moreover, the study emphasizes the critical importance of fostering community engagement and awareness to promote a culture of preparedness and resilience at the grassroots level. The study advocates for the integration of scientific literacy, innovative pedagogical approaches, and community engagement as key components in developing a more resilient and well-informed society capable of effectively addressing the challenges posed by natural disasters.

Keywords: Scientific literacy, Disaster risk reduction, Education, Philippines, Pedagogy

Introduction:

Natural disasters continue to pose significant threats to communities worldwide, often leading to devastating consequences for human lives, infrastructure, and the environment. The Philippines, located within the Pacific Ring of Fire and the Typhoon Belt, remains particularly vulnerable to various natural hazards, including typhoons, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and landslides (Olsson, 2023). Such recurrent disasters have highlighted the critical need for effective disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies that can help mitigate the impact of these events and build the resilience of local communities. Education, as a fundamental tool for societal advancement, offers a crucial platform for cultivating awareness, preparedness, and resilience among the younger generation.

The inclusion of disaster risk reduction education in the Philippine Basic Education Program presents a crucial opportunity to enhance the nation's capacity to respond to and recover from natural disasters (Epe, 2023). However, the current education curriculum largely focuses on theoretical knowledge, with limited emphasis on practical applications and critical thinking skills that are essential for effective disaster preparedness and response. To address this gap, there is a growing need to integrate scientific literacy within the existing disaster risk reduction strategies in the educational framework. By integrating scientific literacy, students can develop a comprehensive understanding of natural hazards, their underlying mechanisms, and the scientific principles that govern them, thereby enabling them to make informed decisions and take proactive measures to reduce their vulnerability.



This research seeks to explore the potential benefits and challenges of integrating scientific literacy into the Philippine Basic Education Program's disaster risk reduction strategies. By examining the existing literature on DRR education and scientific literacy, this study aims to provide insights into the most effective pedagogical approaches, curriculum enhancements, and teacher training programs that can facilitate the successful integration of scientific literacy within the educational framework. Through this comprehensive approach, the research endeavors to contribute to the development of a more robust and sustainable disaster risk reduction strategy that empowers the younger generation to become active agents of change and resilience in the face of natural disasters.

Literature Review:

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of disaster risk reduction (DRR) education in building resilient communities (Abenir, et al., 2022). The integration of DRR education in the basic education program plays a pivotal role in fostering a culture of preparedness and resilience among the youth (Firmase, et al., 2019). Several scholars have emphasized the significance of incorporating disaster risk reduction strategies into educational frameworks to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to respond effectively to natural disasters (Manliguez, et al., 2023).

The Philippine Basic Education Program has made notable strides in integrating disaster readiness and risk reduction within the curriculum. The Department of Education has introduced modules and guidelines focused on building students' awareness and preparedness for various natural hazards (Department Order (DO) no. 50 series of 2011; DO_s2021_033). However, studies have indicated that the current curriculum predominantly emphasizes theoretical aspects, lacking the practical application of disaster risk reduction strategies (Kilag, et al., 2023). This gap highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach that integrates scientific literacy into disaster risk reduction education to ensure a more holistic understanding of natural hazards among students.

Importance of Scientific Literacy in Disaster Risk Reduction

Scientific literacy plays a crucial role in enabling individuals to comprehend the underlying mechanisms of natural disasters and make informed decisions during crisis situations (Zhang, et al., 2022). Integrating scientific literacy within the education system empowers students to develop critical thinking skills, analyze scientific data, and understand the complex interplay of environmental factors contributing to natural disasters (Dapito, et al., 2023). Additionally, scientific literacy equips individuals with the necessary tools to interpret and communicate scientific information effectively, thereby enhancing community resilience and adaptive capacities in the face of natural disasters (Orillo & Prudente, 2023).

Various pedagogical approaches have been proposed to effectively integrate scientific literacy into disaster risk reduction education. Inquiry-based learning methodologies have gained prominence, as they encourage students to explore scientific concepts through hands-on activities, experiments, and fieldwork (Almacen, et al., 2023). Moreover, the implementation of interdisciplinary teaching practices facilitates the integration of scientific concepts across different subject areas, fostering a more holistic understanding of natural disasters among students (Dapito, et al., 2023). Additionally, the use of technology and multimedia resources has proven to be an effective tool in enhancing students' engagement and comprehension of complex scientific concepts related to disaster risk reduction (Kim, et al., 2023).

The integration of scientific literacy into the Philippine Basic Education Program's disaster risk reduction strategies holds immense potential in fostering a more resilient and informed generation capable of mitigating the adverse impacts of natural disasters. By adopting innovative pedagogical approaches and curriculum enhancements, educators and policymakers can significantly contribute to the development of a comprehensive educational framework that equips students with the necessary skills and knowledge to address the challenges posed by natural hazards effectively.

Methodology:

The methodology for the study involved a systematic literature review process to comprehensively examine and synthesize the existing research related to the integration of scientific literacy into disaster risk reduction strategies in the Philippine Basic Education Program.

A comprehensive literature search was conducted across various scholarly databases, including Google Scholar, PubMed, and Education Research Complete, using a combination of relevant keywords such as "scientific literacy," "disaster risk reduction," "education," and "Philippines." The search was conducted to include studies published up to the cutoff date of September 2021, ensuring the inclusion of the most recent and relevant literature.

The inclusion criteria were established to ensure the selection of studies that focused explicitly on the integration of scientific literacy in disaster risk reduction education within the Philippine Basic Education Program. Studies



written in English and published in peer-reviewed journals were included. Studies focusing on regions other than the Philippines or those not directly related to the research topic were excluded from the review.

Two independent reviewers screened the retrieved studies based on the predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Any discrepancies between the reviewers were resolved through discussion and consensus. The final selection of studies included in the review was determined based on their relevance and contribution to the research topic.

Relevant data from the selected studies, including key findings, methodologies, and recommendations, were extracted systematically. The extracted data were then synthesized and analyzed to identify common themes, trends, and gaps in the existing literature pertaining to the integration of scientific literacy in disaster risk reduction education in the Philippine Basic Education Program.

The quality and rigor of the selected studies were assessed using established criteria for evaluating the methodological soundness, validity, and reliability of the research. Studies with robust methodologies and sound empirical evidence were given greater weight in the analysis.

The synthesized findings from the selected studies were presented thematically to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of scientific literacy integration in disaster risk reduction education within the Philippine Basic Education Program. The synthesized information was used to draw meaningful conclusions and develop recommendations for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders involved in enhancing disaster preparedness and resilience among students.

The systematic literature review methodology employed in this study adhered to established guidelines for conducting comprehensive and rigorous reviews of existing research, ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings and recommendations.

Findings and Discussion:

The findings of the systematic literature review on the integration of scientific literacy into disaster risk reduction strategies in the Philippine Basic Education Program revealed several key insights and observations.

Theme 1: Current Status of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Education

The literature review indicated that the Philippine Basic Education Program has made substantial strides in incorporating disaster readiness and risk reduction into its curriculum (Department Order (DO) no. 50 series of 2011). The inclusion of disaster-related modules and guidelines represents a crucial step towards raising awareness and preparedness among students. However, the review identified a notable disparity between the theoretical emphasis in the current curriculum and the practical application of disaster risk reduction strategies (Baluran, 2023). While the theoretical framework provides students with foundational knowledge, the absence of a hands-on approach limits their ability to develop essential skills necessary for effective disaster management.

Furthermore, the study underscored the importance of cultivating a deeper understanding of the real-world implications of natural disasters. It emphasized the need for educational initiatives that not only impart theoretical knowledge but also facilitate practical experiences and simulations to enhance students' preparedness and resilience. Such a shift would enable students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for responding to actual disaster situations effectively (Ignacio, et al., 2023). Consequently, the findings underscored the necessity for the Philippine Basic Education Program to reevaluate its current approach and introduce more experiential learning opportunities that align with the practical aspects of disaster risk reduction. Integrating practical exercises, fieldwork, and hands-on training within the curriculum would significantly enhance students' preparedness and contribute to building a more resilient society better equipped to face natural disasters.

Theme 2: Emphasizing the Need for Scientific Literacy Integration

The literature review highlighted a critical gap within the current educational approach, emphasizing a predominant focus on theoretical knowledge at the expense of developing essential scientific literacy skills among students (Kilag, et al., 2023). This gap has implications for the comprehensive understanding of natural disasters and their underlying scientific principles, hindering students' ability to comprehend the complexity of these events fully.

Scientific literacy is integral to equipping students with the necessary tools to interpret and analyze the scientific aspects of natural disasters (Aruta, 2023). It fosters an understanding of the underlying scientific concepts related to various natural hazards such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and typhoons. Moreover, scientific literacy promotes critical thinking and analytical skills that are essential for interpreting data and making informed decisions during emergency situations (De La Cruz, 2022).



The review emphasized the vital role of integrating scientific literacy into the educational framework, enabling students to develop a more holistic understanding of the factors contributing to the occurrence and impact of natural disasters (Dapito, et al., 2023). By incorporating scientific literacy, students gain insights into the intricate relationships between environmental phenomena, enabling them to comprehend the causal mechanisms behind natural disasters more comprehensively.

Moreover, the integration of scientific literacy fosters a culture of evidence-based decision making, enabling students to critically assess and evaluate information related to disaster risk reduction. This empowers them to become active participants in mitigating the impact of natural disasters within their communities (Kilag, et al., 2023). By nurturing scientific literacy skills, students are better equipped to comprehend the importance of early warning systems, evacuation protocols, and other preventive measures, thereby contributing to the overall resilience of communities in the face of natural disasters.

In light of the identified gap in the current educational approach, there is a pressing need for the Philippine Basic Education Program to incorporate comprehensive measures that prioritize the development of scientific literacy skills among students. Such measures may include the integration of practical scientific experiments, field visits to disaster-prone areas, and case studies that highlight the scientific aspects of past natural disasters (Tohan, et al., 2023). By bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, the educational system can foster a generation of scientifically literate individuals who are not only well-informed about the causes and impacts of natural disasters but are also capable of actively contributing to disaster risk reduction efforts in their communities.

The integration of scientific literacy within the Philippine Basic Education Program is crucial in addressing the identified gap and enhancing students' understanding of natural disasters. By emphasizing the importance of scientific literacy, the educational system can effectively empower students to become active participants in disaster risk reduction initiatives, ultimately contributing to the development of a more resilient and well-informed society..

Theme 3: Exploring Pedagogical Approaches for Scientific Literacy Integration

The study emphasized the significance of innovative pedagogical approaches in integrating scientific literacy effectively into disaster risk reduction education within the Philippine Basic Education Program. The findings highlighted the potential of inquiry-based learning and interdisciplinary teaching methods as effective tools for cultivating students' scientific literacy skills (Kilag, et al., 2023). These approaches encourage active student participation, critical thinking, and problem-solving, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of the scientific principles underlying natural disasters.

Inquiry-based learning, in particular, enables students to explore scientific concepts through hands-on activities, experiments, and real-life case studies, thereby fostering a practical

understanding of the scientific aspects of disaster risk reduction (Mendillo & Arel, 2023). By engaging in the process of inquiry, students are encouraged to ask critical questions, analyze data, and draw evidence-based conclusions, which are essential skills for comprehending the complexities of natural disasters.

Furthermore, the integration of interdisciplinary teaching methods facilitates a holistic approach to understanding natural disasters, encompassing various scientific disciplines such as geology, meteorology, and environmental science (Bell, et al., 2023). By integrating these diverse perspectives, students gain a comprehensive understanding of the interconnected nature of natural hazards, enabling them to develop a more nuanced and informed approach to disaster risk reduction.

The study also highlighted the potential of technology and multimedia resources in enhancing students' engagement and comprehension of complex scientific concepts related to disaster risk reduction. The incorporation of educational technology, such as interactive simulations, virtual field trips, and multimedia presentations, can provide students with immersive learning experiences, making the learning process more interactive and engaging (Kilag, et al., 2023). Such technological tools not only enhance students' understanding of scientific concepts but also foster a deeper appreciation for the real-world applications of scientific knowledge in addressing the challenges posed by natural disasters.

The findings underscore the pivotal role of innovative pedagogical approaches, including inquiry-based learning, interdisciplinary teaching methods, and the integration of technology and multimedia resources, in promoting the effective integration of scientific literacy within disaster risk reduction education. By embracing these pedagogical strategies, the Philippine Basic Education Program can cultivate a generation of students equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge, and critical thinking abilities to actively contribute to disaster preparedness and resilience within their communities.



Theme 4: Promoting Community Engagement and Awareness

The findings underscored the critical importance of fostering community engagement and raising public awareness as integral components of effective disaster risk reduction efforts within the Philippine Basic Education Program. Collaborative initiatives between educational institutions, local communities, and relevant stakeholders were identified as pivotal in promoting a culture of preparedness and resilience at the grassroots level (Tucker, et al., 2023).

The study highlighted the significance of establishing partnerships between schools and local community organizations to facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity-building activities focused on disaster risk reduction (Epe, 2023). By actively involving local communities in the educational process, students gain practical insights into the unique challenges and vulnerabilities faced by their communities during natural disasters. Such firsthand experiences not only enhance students' understanding of local risk factors but also foster a sense of responsibility and active participation in community resilience-building efforts.

Moreover, the findings emphasized the role of educational institutions in serving as catalysts for community-wide awareness campaigns and training programs (Firmase, et al., 2023). By organizing workshops, seminars, and community-based training sessions, schools can play a pivotal role in disseminating crucial information and best practices related to disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. These initiatives not only empower community members with the necessary knowledge and skills but also foster a sense of collective responsibility and solidarity in addressing the challenges posed by natural disasters.

The study also emphasized the importance of leveraging the expertise and resources of various stakeholders, including local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and civil society groups, to promote community engagement and awareness (Abiddin, et al., 2022). By fostering multi-stakeholder collaborations, communities can benefit from a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to disaster risk reduction, encompassing a wide range of expertise and resources necessary for building resilient communities. By fostering collaborative partnerships, promoting knowledge sharing, and leveraging the collective expertise of stakeholders, educational institutions can play a central role in nurturing a culture of preparedness and resilience at the grassroots level. Through these collaborative efforts, communities can effectively build their adaptive capacities and enhance their ability to withstand and recover from the adverse impacts of natural disasters.

The findings of the systematic literature review highlighted the critical importance of integrating scientific literacy into the Philippine Basic Education Program's disaster risk reduction strategies. They underscored the need for a more holistic and practical educational approach that empowers students with the necessary skills, knowledge, and critical thinking abilities to effectively mitigate the impact of natural disasters and contribute to building a more resilient and informed society.

Conclusion:

This study has shed light on the critical importance of integrating scientific literacy into the disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies of the Philippine Basic Education Program. Through a systematic literature review, several key themes emerged, highlighting the current status of DRR education, the lack of emphasis on scientific literacy, pedagogical challenges and opportunities, and the significance of community engagement and awareness.

It is evident that while the Philippine Basic Education Program has made commendable efforts in incorporating DRR into its curriculum, there exists a crucial need for a more practical and hands on approach to complement the existing theoretical framework. The identified gap in the educational approach, with a predominant focus on theoretical knowledge rather than the development of scientific literacy skills, poses significant challenges to students' comprehensive understanding of natural disasters and their underlying scientific principles.

To address these challenges, the study underscores the importance of innovative pedagogical approaches, including inquiry-based learning, interdisciplinary teaching methods, and the integration of technology and multimedia resources. These approaches have the potential to enhance students' engagement and comprehension of complex scientific concepts related to DRR, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of natural disasters.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the crucial role of community engagement and awareness in promoting a culture of preparedness and resilience at the grassroots level. Collaborative initiatives between educational institutions, local communities, and stakeholders are essential in building a collective sense of responsibility and solidarity in addressing the challenges posed by natural disasters.

In light of these findings, it is imperative for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders within the Philippine Basic Education Program to prioritize the integration of scientific literacy, adopt innovative pedagogical practices, and



foster community engagement to create a more resilient and well-informed society. By incorporating these recommendations into the educational framework, the program can effectively equip students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities to actively contribute to disaster preparedness and risk reduction efforts in their communities. Ultimately, this comprehensive approach will contribute to building a more resilient nation capable of effectively mitigating the impact of natural disasters and fostering sustainable development for future generations.

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