



The Project STARS (Strategic Action Towards Radiant Students): Empowering ABM Students Amidst Pandemic

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Abstract

This study sought to empower ABM students of Canda NHS which covered from January - June 2021 with the use of different platforms such as messenger, google and limited face to face. This qualitative study utilized a descriptive-evaluative design. A research population of thirteen (13) and twenty-eight (28) with the total of forty-one (41) served as the respondents. Findings of the study revealed that the Project STARS (Strategic Action towards Radiant Students) is a great help project to empower students amidst pandemic. The ten (10) activities strategic action plan of the project must be consistently conducted yearly because it increases awareness, leadership as well as empowering students. With different programs and activities of the project, ABM students are able to lead, make decisions, preparation of assigned functions and organize activities. No signal or internet connection and lack of budget are some of the major problems why only 80% attained participation of ABM students and all activities of the project via different online platforms are very important and need to add Bookkeeping webinar. Further, the researcher recommended that Project STARS (Strategic Action towards Radiant Students) must be consistently done yearly, enhance activities, and strengthening partnership and make school wide with the different programs such as capacity development program, barkada kontra droga program and solid waste management program since it had a great impact to ABM students.

Introduction

The success of education may be measured not just in terms of academic achievement, but should also be measured in terms of non-academic achievement. Because students' well-being serves as an effective foundation in the learning process as well as in achieving good learning outcomes, student wellbeing is an essential method in establishing social, emotional, and intellectual competence in students. The close association between well-being and physical health and long life means that well-being is something that is both desired and beneficial to have. It also has a bearing on how a person sees himself, including life satisfaction, good feelings such as joy and tenderness, and a lack of negative emotions such as grief and rage, among other things. An person who is prepared to accept oneself in a more positive manner will present themselves in front of others with a certain amount of confidence and optimism, which will allow them to elicit a good response from others and to raise their self-esteem as a result (Indriant et al., 2017).

Students now demand instructors who will educate them to think critically, develop their character, and place a high importance on interpersonal interactions. These kids gain the ability to make a difference in their society and to overcome social, racial, and other forms of marginalization. Students who are empowered are individuals who, in collaboration with their

professors, acquire skills and information, and who are prepared and motivated to examine the dynamics of the world around them in order to reform and better society. A problem - solving and dialogue-based approach to education also allows students to explore information and teach them to have a voice that is heard and a viewpoint that is shared with others (Schroeder, 2014).

There are several groups and clubs at Canda NHS, which are run in collaboration with parents, students, and other stakeholders to achieve a common goal. ABM Students Society (ABMSS) is one of the organizations at SHS that aims to achieve the objectives set forth by the Department of Education, which include: 1) uniting ABM students and motivating them to work together in order to achieve common goals; 2) improving learning instruction by providing learning experiences and an environment conducive to developing learners' acumen in business, management, and accounting; and 3) developing creativity among students in the ABM program. Further, the said organization has different positions of all the members exclusively for ABM students only. They are really active and earnestly doing the assigned activities. This is the reason why the project called. "The Project STARS (Strategic Action towards Radiant Students). This project had many programs and activities successfully conducted this SY 20202021. By means of this, students became radiant to the different advocacy such as Capacity Development Program, Barkada Kontra Droga Program and Solid Waste Management Program. Hence, this research will give a broader understanding on how the said programs with corresponding activities became successful amidst pandemic.

Literature Review

Empowerment in the academic setting is the approach and practice of supporting learners for a sustainable future. It gives more autonomy and ownership in the instructional process and ultimately produces an intrinsic desire to learn. Learners become effective and empowered for every activity in the instructional process. They become also motivated, work harder, and strive for a better performance. For this to happen, the role of the instructors involves guiding and facilitating rather than transmitting information. This means the instructor has to make the teaching-learning process more active to empower the learners (Sewagegn & Diale, 2019).

However, the education sector is one of the highly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Philippines, there are still growing infections. There were some posed challenges and issues while recommending several approaches on the new normal. Schools at all levels need to address concerns and carefully evaluate plans and procedures on the implementation of the new normal. Collaboration is important at these difficult times and stepping to the new normal (Tria, 2020). With this current situation, unity, empathy and awareness are also some factors in order to empower students particularly in these time of pandemic.

Meanwhile, as cited by Broom (2015), empowerment is closely related to self-efficacy, a belief that one controls life and can make positive changes in surrounding environment, including in politics (Bandura, 1997; Beaumont, 2010; Fox & Rutter., 2010). A number of factors can influence self-efficacy such as feeling a sense of community mindedness or having a sense of civic duty (Levinson, 2010). It is also linked to one's identity, on how individuals understand or label themselves. Agency and motivation are not sufficient, though. Moreover, awareness is necessary for active civic behavior (Russell et al., 2010).

Empowered individuals can consider varied perspectives, negotiate with others, amend policies as needed as they can think independently, make their own decisions thoughtfully and with reference to relevant information, and act on that knowledge. These behaviors make our democracy richer, deeper, messier, and more complex. The ability of individuals to actively

engage with their worlds, to be empowered, is a civic right and a responsibility. It is the very essence of democracy. When carried out thoughtfully, it has a number of benefits for both individuals and their surrounding social environments.

Teachers believe in the ability of students to guide their own learning and the work that has to be done. He/she create trusting environments, build capabilities, and empower students to manage themselves. If the students experience lost of motivation, teachers give positive feedback, care and build relationships as a community based on care and respect of individuality.

Students' social and emotional needs are ensuring by the governments and schools particularly to the most vulnerable continue to receive extra services are challenges and various countries have attempted to respond to the well-being (OECD, 2020). Sense of belonging to the school community may be lost unless they can keep in touch for learning, but also social activities, such as virtual games, reading buddies, via online resources like Zoom. The lack of social contact has an impact to vulnerable students such as broken and abusive families, in foster care, suffering from food insecurity and lacking housing.

Many LGBTQI+ students experience exclusion as well as verbal or physical violence at home. Transgender lacking family and community support with struggle to access hormones while emotional or psychological aspect can have a worrying impact on their education and gender dimension. Girls also has additional risks compared to boys during school closures which increased burden in domestic duties, mental health disparities, lack of access to reproductive health care, greater risk of gender-based violence and sexual assault (OECD, 2020)

Methods

Research Design

This study utilized qualitative design with narrative method. Furthermore, with ten (10) activities during pandemic, observation, experiences and impact of the project were helped in order to accomplished and succeed the project with the different online platforms. Different strategies made in the said project in order to enhance and empowered students in the new normal with pursuing to attain the objectives and expected output of this project with the help of advisers.

Research Locale

This study conducted in Canda NHS with the use of different online platforms including one (1) time face to face which is planting with health protocols.

Population and Sample

Purposive sampling was used in this study where there were 13 Grade 12 ABM and 28 G11 ABM students actively participated on this project with ten (10) activities.

Data Gathering Instrument

A comprehensive and detailed project proposal of Project STARS (Strategic Action towards Radiant Student) and presented action plan were the main instrument with the approval of Senior High School Coordinator and Principal of the school. Students as well as parent had consent and became aware to all the activities of the project because before implementation, there was a careful planning of the participants.

Data Gathering Procedure

In data gathering procedure, every activity has corresponding report with observation on how they lead and participate as well as the number of functions in every activity in order to check how students can be empowered.

Data Analysis Procedure

Analysis of this study was making accomplishment report of Project STARS (Strategic Action towards Radiant Students). It also evaluated by the researcher including the impact, problems, and its effectiveness

Results and Discussion

The Project STARS (Strategic Action towards Radiant Students)

Project STARS stance for Strategic Action towards Radiant Students which means the following: Strategic means strategies through the use of different programs. Action is necessary action which needs to implement. Radiant means shining or glowing brightly, showing joy or health. Students are ABM students. This project was the very first time conducted during pandemic SY 2020-2021. It gave a significant effect to the whole personality to empower ABM students and make an impact to society. Since it has many programs with the corresponding activities, it was called project STARS with a strong determination to achieve its objects and expected output. This is also anchored to the Angat Dapat ang Canda Program, a comprehensive and complete package aligned to the mission and vision of the Department of Education. Hence, different strategies made in the said program in order to enhance and empowered students in the new normal with pursuing to attain the objectives and expected output of this project with the help of advisers such as attaining 100% participation of Grade 11 and 12 Leadership (28 G11 Creativity and 13 G12 Leadership) with the total of 41 ABM students; empowered students through different programs; actively participate the ABM students.

Strategic Action Plan of the Project STARS; (1) Election of ABMSS Officers - There were a successful election of ABM students via google meet on January 19, 2021 and Jan. 31, 2021 (special election); (2) Mental Health Awareness Webinar - This webinar can give a healthy mind, increase awareness on how to be positive, inspired and motivate students on their studying as well as on their life. It was successfully conducted on February 11, 2021 via google meet; (3) Basic Gender Sensitivity Training Webinar - This webinar aims to promote gender equality and women empowerment. It was successfully conducted on February 26, 2021 via google meet; (4) Financial Literacy Webinar - This webinar can give students on how to invest properly in the future and use of resources particularly the money on how to handle excellently everyday. It was successfully conducted on March 25, 2021 via google meet; (5) Cyber Safety Symposium - This webinar can give students safety on the use of social media and different only platforms. It gives comprehensive knowledge and techniques in order to protect our account and prevent the unfavorable activities. It was successfully conducted on April 20, 2021 via google meet; (6) Barkada Kontra Droga Progra (Slogan Contest) - This is one of the very important activity of the school in order to prevent the use of illegal drugs. Successfully conducted on May 17-21, 2021 via social platforms such as facebook and messenger; (7) Barkada Kontra Droga Progra (Webinar on Drug Prevention) -A webinar where it will give comprehensive and detailed study such as the cause and effect of the person who use drugs and ways on how to prevent illegal drugs. It was successfully conducted on June 5, 2021 via google meet; (8) Solid Waste Management Program - This is another vital program of the school with activities such as slogan and poster contest. It aims to reduce, reuse and

recycle solid waste, restore and cleanliness of environment. It was successfully conducted on June 12-17, 2021 via social platforms such as Facebook and Messenger; (9) Planting of Plants - A yearly activity of the school which was successfully conducted on June 28, 2021 via limited face-to-face with health protocols; (10) Awarding of the Most Radiant Students - It was given to the students who participated in this project and qualified to the criteria and will also receive prizes. It was successfully conducted on June 30, 2021 via limited face-to-face following health protocols.

How Project STARS empowered ABM students

Project STARS attained 85% participation of Grade 11 and 12 Leadership (28 G11 Creativity and 13 G12 Leadership) with the total of 41 ABM students; they were empowered through different programs and activities. Further, it had a great impact because it increased awareness, great leadership, and it looks like in a real-life situation of an organization where time will come, they become an excellent leader in their community.

Problems encountered during implementation of Project STARS

The Project STARS with implemented ten (10) activities had the problems in times of pandemic which are changing of dates and time because teachers and students became busy on their module, reports and other activities but despite these, it was solved because of an adjustment and depending on the availability of teachers and students to successfully conduct the different activities. Another was the lack of budget and slow internet connection. Further, 36 or 80% out of 41 students could only attend the different activities because of no signal or internet connection. '5. Activities that need to add or eliminate in the Project STARS applicable for ABM students particularly in these times of pandemic? According to ABM students, all conducted activities are very important and need to add one (1) activity which is about seminar on bookkeeping.

Conclusion

The Project STARS (Strategic Action towards Radiant Students) is a great help project to empower students amidst pandemic. The ten (10) activities as strategic action plan of the project must be consistently conducted yearly because it increases awareness, leadership as well as empowering students. With different programs and activities of the project, ABM students are able to lead, make decisions, preparation of assigned functions and organize activities. No signal or internet connection and lack of budget are some of the major problems why only 80% attained participation of ABM students. All activities of the project via different online platforms are very important and need to add Bookkeeping webinar. Project STARS (Strategic Action towards Radiant Students) must be consistently done yearly, enhance activities, and strengthening partnership and make school-wide the different programs since it had a great impact to ABM students. Sending of soft copy and information dissemination of activities to those students who did not attend the webinar or other activities in order to at least have awareness to the project with different programs and activities. Find additional budget to stakeholders to strengthen the project and participation in the school. Conduct Bookkeeping webinar and invite expert speakers for ABM students.

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