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Student's Achievement of Learning Competencies and Challenges in Learning World History in Public High Schools

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Abstract. World History is essential among students in understanding the past civilizations that shape the current generations. Thus, this study assessed the students' achievement of learning competencies in World History in geography, early civilization, and the world in the classical and transitional periods relative to sex, family monthly income, parent's highest educational attainment, and teacher's highest educational attainment. It also identified challenges encountered in World History and investigated achievement differences relative to demographics. Using quantitative design, 269 stratified randomly sampled students responded to the researcher-made multiple-choice questionnaire. A checklist identified the challenges. The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, frequency count, percentage distribution, Mann-Whitney, and Kruskal Wallis. Meanwhile, the researcher adhered to the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB). Generally, they have a proficient level of achievement. In challenges, the students lack interest in reading and have difficulty memorizing. Regarding teachers, most fail to connect the lessons to real-life situations and neglect to give student feedback. In a learning environment, the school has inadequate instructional resources, the library contains outdated materials, and the environment at home is not conducive to studying. In subject, topics are complex to understand, and contents are heavy. However, differences exist in their achievement relative to parents' educational attainment and sex. Hence, improvement in world History focuses on the challenges identified and continuous improvement of teaching strategies to elevate the achievement of learning competencies in World History. Also, the results partially validated the theory. With these, further studies are recommended to validate the claims. Also, the results partially validate the theory. With these, further studies are recommended to validate the claims.

Keywords. World History, Achievement of Learning Competencies, Challenges, Quantitative, Public High Schools, Northern Negros Occidental

1.0 Introduction

World history is a distinctive subject in K-12 and collegiate institutions, and it deals with the investigation that describes and interprets the histories of nation-states and national communities [1]. It is a field of historical study that developed as a distinct academic field in the 1980s that examines the history of the world from a global perspective, highlighting common patterns that emerged across all cultures to integrate people of the world and investigate differences that reveal a diversity of human experiences [2]. It is a subfield of history that speaks not simply of nation-states or different civilizations but of the global history of

human existence [3]. It is known for delving into historical events, people, and places to re-evaluate them for greater knowledge, decision-making, and critical thinking [4]. Hence, learning world history is essential because students enhance and develop their thinking and comparative analysis skills, reconcile their nationalistic identities, and encourage efforts to impart awareness of cultural differences and similarities [5].

Meanwhile, world history is essential to be integrated into the curriculum in high school, for students need to realize that people share the earth with people whose beliefs and actions are different from their own and arise from divergent cultural heritages [6]. It introduces the past and present, including development, cultural background, people's experience, and diverse events, as it can awaken students' curiosity, build their identity, facilitate thinking skills, and develop personalities [7]. In addition, it will give them the idea to understand discrimination, marginalization, and opposition, as well as power and privilege, which will teach them how to respond in the future and encourage efforts to impart not only awareness of cultural differences and similarities but also comparative analysis skills in the larger context [8].

In the Philippines, the K-12 *Araling Panlipunan Curriculum* is based on the Education for All 2015 and the K-12 Basic Education Curriculum Framework, wherein the primary objective is to promote 21st-century skills among students to produce "functionally literate and developed Filipino" [9]. The main goal in making world history a subject is to help the students understand the interaction of man in his environment and the contributions that gave way to the emergence of ancient civilization if heritage shaped the lifestyle of the current generation [9]. However, World history is considered one of the most content-loaded areas that compromise the histories of ancient civilizations, geography, politics, and economics of countries worldwide [10]. To deepen students' historical understanding requires much reading and memorization to imagine the topic, which is one of the challenges [11].

Since world history has many things that need to be understood and remembered, memorizing factual events and details is one of the challenges of achieving the learning competencies in learning history [12]. In addition, students often found topics in world history to be broad, tedious, and complicated, and it took much work to acquire concepts, especially those complicated ones that connect them to other historical occurrences [13]. On the other hand, students' challenges in achieving the learning competencies in world history are also because some teachers still use traditional/ outdated instructional strategies and materials that make students feel bored in learning the subject [14].

Several studies on World history were conducted in the Philippines, particularly in secondary public schools, in-state universities, and colleges [15]. Studies were conducted in the Philippines to measure students' achievement, proficiency, and learning competencies, particularly in public schools. Given these studies, there is a dearth of literature on the student's achievement of learning competencies specific to world history, especially in the context of public schools. Besides, it was recommended in the studies of Quirao et al. [14], Rios et al. [16], and Montelibano et al. [17] to conduct further studies on assessing the proficiency level of students of the learning competencies in various disciplines. This is the research gap that this study would like to fill in.

Thus, the study assessed the level of student achievement in learning competencies in World History among Grade 8 students in public schools within a district of Northern Negros during the academic year 2023–2024. It also investigated differences in students' achievement of learning competencies in World History when grouped according to sex, family monthly income, parents' educational attainment, and teachers' educational attainment. Furthermore, it

identified the challenges students encountered in learning World History. The findings of the study served as a basis for formulating a Proposed Strategic Instructional Material (SIM) aimed at the continuous improvement of instruction, thereby assisting students in achieving learning competencies in World History

2.0 Framework of the Study

The study theoretically assumed that the level of student achievement in Grade 8 among public high schools in the district of Northern Negros varies according to their sex, family monthly income, parents' educational attainment, and teachers' educational attainment. This assumption is anchored in Walberg's (1992) Theory of Academic Achievement. This framework describes that a student's academic achievement is influenced not only by their psychological traits but also by external factors such as family resources, parents' educational background, teaching methods, and classroom environment. This means that this framework highlights that academic achievement results from both internal abilities and external influences, emphasizing the importance of combining effective teaching, supportive family backgrounds, and adequate resources to enhance student achievement. In the context of the study, student's demographics influence their level of achievement in learning competencies in World History. The student's sex, family monthly income, parent's educational attainment, and teachers' educational attainment are considered external factors that vary, which have something to say on their level of achievement of learning competencies in World History.

3.0 Methods

The study utilized a quantitative research design, particularly the descriptive-comparative approach. Specifically, the descriptive approach determined the level of students' achievement of learning competencies in World History in public schools of Northern Negros Occidental during the academic year 2023-2024. Meanwhile, the comparative approach investigated the significant difference between the demographics of the grade 8 students and their level of achievement of learning competencies in World History. The respondents were 269 Grade 8 students in public high schools in a district in Northern Negros, which were determined using stratified random sampling.

In assessing the level of achievement of learning competencies of Grade 8 students in World History, a validated and reliability-tested researcher-made multiple-choice test questionnaire based on the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) of World History was utilized to determine the level of achievement of learning competencies of grade 8 students in World History.

It comprised 50 items across two areas: Geography and Early Civilization and The World in the Classical and Transitional Periods, guided by a Table of Specifications. Meanwhile, the instrument was validated and yielded a score of 0.92. Moreover, this was pilot-tested on 30 non-actual respondents with characteristics like those of the actual assessors. The results indicated a high level of reliability with a score of 0.96, affirming the reliability of the instrument. The data were interpreted using the scale of interpretation formulated by the Statistician: beginning, developing, approaching Proficient, Proficient, and advanced.

Descriptive-comparative analyses were utilized to analyze the data. The descriptive analysis, specifically the mean, standard deviation, frequency count, percentage, and rank, was used to determine the level of achievement of students' learning competencies and their demographic profile. Meanwhile, the comparative analysis analyzed the significant difference between the students' demographics and their level of achievement in learning competencies.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to determine the normality of the variable. The normality test revealed that the variable achievement [KS=0.108, p=0.000] was not normally distributed. Since the variable was not normally distributed, nonparametric tests were used for inferential questions. Hence, the Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis were used.

Lastly, the researcher addressed the general principles of respect for persons, justice, and beneficence to fully guarantee the ethical soundness of the study in line with the guidelines established by the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB). Specifically, it addressed issues regarding the privacy of the participants and the confidentiality of the data gathered.

4.0 Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the World History Grade 8 students among public high schools in a district of Northern Negros Occidental in terms of sex, family monthly income, parent's highest educational attainment, and teacher's highest educational attainment. In terms of sex, there were more female (n=149, 55.4%) than male (n=120, 44.6%) students. In family monthly income, greater students came from lower income (n=147, 54.6%) than higher income (n=122, 45.4%). Regarding the parents' highest educational attainment, those students with parents who graduated elementary (n=125, 46.5%) outnumbered those with parents who graduated high school (n=105, 39%) and college (n=39, 14.5%). Lastly, in teachers with the highest educational attainment, students are taught mostly by teachers with bachelor's degrees rather than master's degrees (n=104, 38.7%).

The demographic profile of Grade 8 World History students in public high schools within a district of Northern Negros Occidental indicates a higher number of female students compared to males, which may reflect broader enrollment trends in a district in Northern Negros. Most students come from families with lower monthly incomes, and some students may face financial constraints that limit their access to educational materials, internet connectivity, and enrichment opportunities, which may lead to potentially reducing time and focus for their academic tasks. Most students have parents who completed elementary; this low parental educational attainment may affect the kind of academic support students receive at home, as parents may have limited capacity to assist with their children's schoolwork. Furthermore, a limited number of teachers with postgraduate qualifications may reflect a need for more professional development, as teachers with advanced degrees often bring enhanced pedagogical strategies, deeper content knowledge, and a stronger capacity for curriculum adaptation, which is essential in teaching World History. Support efforts such as teacher training programs, stronger involvement of parents, assistance for students, and easy access to learning materials are important in battling the learning gap.

Moreover, Filgona and Sababa indicate that sex has been advanced as one of the predictor variables that may be factored into students' achievement of learning competencies [18]. According to Daud et al. [19], family income plays a vital role in student achievement of learning competencies in World History. Parent's educational attainment is an essential factor that helps students improve their academic achievement in learning competencies in the most productive way [20]. Bamidele and Adekola indicate that teachers with higher qualifications performed better than those with lower qualifications [21].

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variable	f	%
Sex		
Male	120	44.6
Female	149	55.4
Monthly Income		
Lower (Php 15,000 and below)	147	54.6
Higher (Over Php 15,000)	122	45.4
Parents Educational Attainment		
Elementary Level	125	46.5
High School Level	105	39.0
College Level	39	14.5
Teacher's Educational Attainment		
Bachelor	165	61.3
Masters	104	38.7
Whole	269	100.0

Achievement of Learning Competencies of Students in World History of Grade 8

Achievement of learning competencies in World History refers to successfully attaining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes outlined in the curriculum that enables students to understand historical events, analyze their significance, and relate them to contemporary issues. It emphasizes critical thinking, problem-solving, and applying historical concepts in real-life contexts [9].

Table 2 presents the Grade 8 students' level of achievement of learning competencies in World History in public high schools in the district of Northern Negros in terms of geography and early civilization and the world in the classical and traditional periods. Generally, the student's level of achievement of learning competencies in the district in Northern Negros (M=33.96, SD=7.26) was rated proficient. The geography, early civilization (M=17.05, SD=3.45), and the world in the classical and traditional periods (M=16.91, SD=4.22) were rated proficient. In terms of the demographics, all categories were rated proficient.

Achievement of Learning Competencies of Students in World History of Grade 8 as a Whole

The Grade 8 students in a public high school in a district of Northern Negros demonstrated a proficiency level, indicating that they developed the fundamental knowledge skills and core understandings and can transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks in World History. However, this demonstrates the need for ongoing improvement as they are not advanced. Perhaps they need to develop or enhance their knowledge of geography, early civilization, and the world in the classical and traditional periods.

The findings signify that the heavy content load and the complex nature of World History pose significant challenges for students in public high schools in the district in Northern Negros, potentially hindering their ability to fully comprehend and retain key concepts. The emphasis on memorization of dates, names, and events, without sufficient context or connections to broader historical themes, may reduce students' engagement and deeper understanding of the subject. Additionally, the continuous expansion of the curriculum with new information could overwhelm students, leading to cognitive overload. These factors imply

that instructional strategies should simplify content, foster critical thinking, and provide a more interactive and engaging learning environment to improve students' academic performance and long-term retention in World History. The results indicate the need for continuous improvement of instruction in World History since emphasizing proficiency in World History can contribute to achieving educational goals. Also, it is important to develop an interest in the subject among students, which is necessary to gain proficiency in World History.

Moreover, due to challenging topics in World History, it focuses on memorizing names, dates, and events, along with its constant addition of new information, which often overwhelms students and may hinder achieving an advanced level in World History [12]. Furthermore, World History is a highly content-heavy subject that covers various aspects like ancient civilizations, geography, politics, and economics, making it complex and challenging for students to grasp, especially when connecting concepts across different historical events [13]. Moreover, the availability of learning environments, facilities, and resources may impede the students' achievement in learning competencies, a concern emphasized by educators, particularly in public secondary schools [22].

Achievement of Learning Competencies of Students in World History of Grade 8 in Geography and Early Civilizations

Regarding the areas, the proficient result in Geography and Early Civilizations is one area that needs improvement. The result indicates that they develop the fundamental knowledge skills and core understandings and can transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks in World History in the areas of Geography and early civilizations. The proficiency level suggests that students understood how geography influenced early human settlements, such as the importance of rivers, fertile land, and climate. These findings imply that students are not only acquiring factual knowledge but are also developing the ability to analyze how geographic factors shape early human development. However, it demonstrates the need for ongoing improvement as they have not yet reached an advanced level.

Several factors can be attributed to the proficient result. Almost all students have a minor problem with Geography and Early Civilizations because it requires understanding the geographical identity of their community and nation and mastering the diversity of people and cultures without superiority or inferiority. In addition, students lack identification of the emergence of early civilizations, giving birth to the agricultural culture led by the four civilizations, namely Mesopotamia, the Indus, Egypt, and Mesoamerican civilizations, which affect their achievement of learning competencies in World History. Students need to elaborate on the significant influence of each civilization, which they miss to connect as part of their daily lives.

Lastly, as Dikshit [23] explains, students often find it difficult to understand certain topics because they struggle to grasp the geographical foundations of early civilizations and are expected to examine events in the past. Students failed to appreciate that geography is not merely a collection of facts. However, it involves an imaginative leap and an intellectual effort to understand why countries claim territories beyond their immediate reach [24]. Moreover, in the present world, where conflict and misunderstanding arise between countries, students failed to evaluate and understand the evolution of conflict that started even with the development of early civilizations [25].

Achievement of Learning Competencies of Students in World History of Grade 8 in World in the Classical and Transitional Period

Regarding the areas, the proficient result in the World in the Classical and Transitional Periods is one area that needs improvement. Students were able to develop fundamental knowledge skills and core understandings. They can transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks in the World in the classical and Transitional Periods, which resulted in a proficient rating. Students could apply what they learned independently through tasks that reflected real-life or meaningful situations. In addition, this ability to connect their learning to practical tasks led to proficient achievement in learning competencies in World History. Students not only recall information but also make sense of it and use it in a different context.

It might be attributed to students finding it challenging to understand and grasp concepts, including the Crusades, the rise of Islam, and medieval European history, the interplay of religion, politics, and society, teaching students about the long-term impacts of ideology, conflict, and cultural integration on world history. They can comprehend the geographical identity of their community and nation and grasp the diversity of people and cultures without superiority or inferiority. It indicates that students have moved beyond simple recall of facts and are beginning to apply their knowledge more meaningfully. Students' ability to demonstrate understanding through authentic performance tasks shows they can connect historical concepts to real-world situations. However, while the proficient rating is a positive sign, it also implies that there is still room for deeper understanding and more advanced reasoning to reach the next level of mastery.

According to multiple studies mentioned by Mitchell and Greatex [26], the area of the World in the classical and Transitional Periods encouraged students to critically examine patterns of the past and how they continue to shape present-day societies across the world. These kinds of historical exploration help students see patterns of rise and decline, cultural exchange, continuity, and change over time [27]. The historical context helps students recognize that world history was not just a personal belief system but also a powerful force in shaping laws, leadership, and social behavior [28].

Achievement of Learning Competencies of Students in World History of Grade 8 in terms of Demographics

The results indicate that proficiency levels of students in a public high school in the district of Northern Negros are consistent across demographics such as sex, monthly income, parents' educational attainment, and teachers' educational attainment. They can develop fundamental knowledge skills and core understandings and transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks in World History. These results provide an overview of how individual and contextual characteristics are reflected in proficiency levels.

This implies that public high schools in the district of northern Negros have been able to provide balanced learning opportunities, regardless of students' sex, family monthly income, and parents' and teacher educational attainment. However, proficiency alone does not guarantee a deep or critical understanding of historical content. Therefore, the study underscores the need for sustained and enhanced instructional interventions that are not only equitable across demographics but also geared toward pushing students' basic proficiency toward mastery of World history content.

Regarding the demographics, Filgona and Sababa [18] found that the achievement of learning competencies in both males and females reflects individual capability and signals the

success of teaching approaches and classroom management. In addition, Daud et al. [19] mentioned that family monthly income can influence academic achievement; a sufficient family income often ensures better nutrition, safer housing, and a healthier environment, all of which contribute to a student's physical and mental readiness to learn. Ofiaza [21] also stated that in-service training and seminars are essential for teachers to attain the necessary skills in teaching.

Achievement of Learning Competencies of Students in World History of Grade 8 when grouped according to Sex

The results indicate that both males and females achieved proficient learning competencies in World History. This emphasizes that students can develop fundamental knowledge skills and core understandings and transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks in World History. Their proficiency reflects consistent learning progress across both groups.

This implies effective classroom instruction, equal access to learning resources, and a balanced learning environment supporting both male and female students. Both male and female students are equally engaged and responsive to the world history competencies. The proficient level of both groups indicates that teaching strategies used in the classroom are inclusive and promote equal academic opportunities. This outcome reinforces the importance of maintaining gender-sensitive approaches to ensure continued academic success for all students.

According to Clark et al. [29], when schools promote gender equality in classroom settings, male and female students can reach proficient levels when given equal access to quality education and instruction. Rodriguez-Martinez and Gallardo [30] argue that while there may be differences between males and females, their level of academic achievement equalizes when students are placed in an environment that fosters support, engagement, and motivation. Filgona and Sababa [18] found that the achievement of learning competencies in both males and females reflects individual capability and signals the success of teaching approaches and classroom management.

Achievement of Learning Competencies of Students in World History of Grade 8 when grouped according to Family Monthly Income

The findings of the study revealed that Grade 8 students in public high schools in the district of Northern Negros, across different levels of family monthly income, attained a proficient level in the achievement of learning competencies in World History. The result indicates that students could develop fundamental knowledge skills and core understandings and transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks in World History. The overall achievement of learning competencies indicates that learners are meeting the expected standards of understanding and performance in World History.

This implies that the family's monthly income did not create a substantial barrier to achieving learning competencies in the subject. This may be attributed to the availability of support systems such as teacher intervention, access to learning resources, and parental support that help bridge gaps commonly associated with income disparity. When educational support is consistent, students from varying income brackets can perform effectively.

Daud et al. [19] emphasize the importance of family involvement, specifically the family's monthly income, in enhancing the academic achievement of students. Similarly, Flores-Mendoza et al. [30] found that family monthly income is a significant predictor of students' achievement of learning competencies, suggesting that the individual capabilities of

the students improve if the learning resources are available. In addition, Fang et al. [31] mentioned that family monthly income can influence academic achievement; a sufficient family income often ensures better nutrition, safer housing, and a healthier environment, all of which contribute to a student's physical and mental readiness to learn.

Achievement of Learning Competencies of Students in World History of Grade 8 when grouped according to Parent's Educational Attainment

The findings of the study revealed that Grade 8 students in public high schools in the district in Northern Negros, regardless of their parent's educational attainment, garnered a proficient level in the achievement of learning competencies in World History. The result indicates that students could develop fundamental knowledge skills and core understandings and transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks in World History. The overall achievement of learning competencies demonstrates that despite differing levels of parents' educational attainment, students could achieve and perform at par with the curriculum standards.

This implies that parents' educational attainment is often a strong factor in shaping academic achievement. However, students can still perform well even when their parents have limited formal education. This may be attributed to strong school-based support, effective teaching strategies, and parental support that foster active engagement regardless of the student's parent's educational attainment. The potential of public high schools to equalize learning outcomes across diverse parents' educational attainment by compensating for gaps in home-based academic support.

Nisar et al. [20] emphasized that parental educational attainment significantly influences students' academic success, highlighting the multifaceted role parents play in their children's education. Aparna et al. [32] state that parents' educational attainment contributes to the home learning environment, although school-based support can help balance performance among students from different backgrounds. Lastly, Escol and Alcopra [33] noted that even when parents have lower educational attainment, their involvement in their children's schooling can still lead to positive academic success.

Achievement of Learning Competencies of Students in World History of Grade 8 when grouped according to Teacher's Educational Attainment

The findings of the study revealed that Grade 8 students attained a proficient level in World History, regardless of their teachers' educational attainment. Whether the teacher held only a bachelor's degree or an advanced graduate degree, students consistently demonstrated proficient mastery of the expected learning competencies. The result indicates that students could develop fundamental knowledge skills and core understandings and transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks in World History. Furthermore, quality instruction delivered in the classroom remained effective across varying levels of teacher education attainment, reflecting a strong curriculum framework and possibly robust teaching practices that support student achievement.

Table 3
Level of Student's Achievement of Learning Competencies in World History of Grade 8

Variable	Geography and Early Civilization			World in the Classical and Transitional Period			Achievement		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex									
Male	16.33	3.53	Pr	16.22	4.30	Pr	32.55	7.40	Pr
Female	17.63	3.28	Pr	17.47	4.07	Pr	35.10	6.97	Pr
Monthly Income									
Lower	16.73	3.42	Pr	16.48	3.97	Pr	33.21	6.90	Pr
Higher	17.44	3.46	Pr	17.43	4.45	Pr	34.87	7.60	Pr
Parents Educational Attainment									
Elementary Level	15.70	2.90	Pr	15.23	3.57	Pr	30.94	5.98	Pr
High School Level	17.85	3.37	Pr	17.78	4.05	Pr	35.63	7.05	Pr
College Level	19.23	3.57	Pr	19.95	4.24	Pr	39.18	7.31	Pr
Teacher's Educational Attainment									
Bachelor	16.85	3.41	Pr	16.86	4.33	Pr	33.71	7.29	Pr
Masters	17.38	3.50	Pr	16.99	4.05	Pr	34.37	7.23	Pr
Whole	17.05	3.45	Pr	16.91	4.22	Pr	33.96	7.26	Pr

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard deviation, Int=Interpretation, Pr=Proficient

The result suggests that while higher teacher's educational attainment may enrich a teacher's subject matter expertise, they are not the sole determinants of student achievement. Effective instructional methods, classroom engagement, and professional teaching experience likely significantly improved students' achievement. The value of continuous training, curriculum alignment, and teaching strategies rather than over formal academic credentials alone. In addition, teachers with only undergraduate degrees can still deliver quality education, provided they are competent, dedicated, and well-supported.

Nisar et al. [20] state that the teachers serving the school can participate in in-service training that can enhance their professional skills, knowledge, and interest regardless of their status. Hidayatullah et al. [34] also stated that in-service training and seminars are essential for teachers to attain the necessary skills in teaching. In addition, Ofiaza [21] stated that teachers with graduate degrees are engaged in research, attend international conferences, and publish their work, demonstrating their ability to establish global connections.

Difference in the Students' Achievement of Learning Competencies in World History

Table 4 presents the difference in the Grade 8 students in public high schools in the district of Northern Negros achievement of learning competencies in World History when grouped according to sex, family monthly income and teacher's highest educational attainment, and parent's highest educational attainment. The results revealed no difference in terms of family monthly income [$U=7819.500$, $p=0.070$] and teacher's highest educational attainment [$U=8035.500$, $p=0.380$]. However, there were significant differences in terms of sex [$U=7076.000$, $p=0.003$] and parents' educational attainment [$\chi^2(2)=44.794$, $p=0.000$]. In terms of sex, females scored significantly higher than male students. Post hoc tests further showed that students whose parents are at the elementary level scored significantly lower than those whose parents are at the high school level and college level.

Differences in the Students' Achievement of Learning Competencies in World History when grouped according to Sex

The results show a significant difference in the level of achievement of learning competencies of grade 8 students in World History when grouped in terms of sex. Using the Mann-Whitney U test, the result revealed a significant difference in their level of achievement of learning competencies when grouped according to sex [$U=7076.000$, $p=0.003$]. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Post hoc tests further showed that females scored significantly higher than male students.

The difference indicates that female students demonstrate a higher level of achievement in learning competencies in world history than male students. These differences may stem from several factors, such as differing study habits, classroom engagement, or societal influences on each sex's approaches to learning competencies in World History. Females often display more consistent study habits, follow instructions correctly, and show greater focus and discipline in doing tasks in world history. These results highlight the need to give value to the underlying causes of this gap and consider strategies to support male students in achieving learning competencies in World History in public high schools in the district of Northern Negros. Furthermore, societal expectations and sex learning approaches might also contribute to these observed differences in the achievement of learning competencies in World History.

In the study of Diso [35], sex has always been connected to learning, and patterns are undoubtedly an important component of a student's level of achievement in learning competencies. Female students tend to outperform males in achieving learning competencies in World History due to factors such as having study habits that help them attain a higher level of learning in the subject [18]. Furthermore, male students might demonstrate different coping mechanisms or approaches to learning, which could sometimes be less structured or focused, potentially affecting their performance [36]. These imply that addressing the sex gap in academic performance could involve developing strategies that engage male students more effectively in learning. Additionally, fostering gender-sensitive teaching practices may help ensure more equitable outcomes for both male and female students.

Differences in the Students' Achievement of Learning Competencies in World History when grouped according to Parents' Educational Attainment

The result shows a significant difference in the level of achievement of learning competencies of grade 8 students in World History when grouped in terms of parents' educational attainment. Using the Kruskal Wallis, the result revealed a significant difference in their level of achievement of learning competencies when grouped according to parents' educational attainment [$\chi^2(2) = 44.794$, $p=0.000$]. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. The post hoc test further shows that students whose parents have only completed elementary education scored notably lower than those whose parents have completed high school or college.

This suggests that parental educational background may be crucial in shaping students' academic performance, with higher parental education levels potentially contributing to better student outcomes. Additionally, the lower scores of students with parents who have only completed elementary education can be because parents may struggle to help with academic tasks and not participate in school-related activities, affecting the child's performance in achieving learning competencies. Furthermore, students with college-level parents often receive stronger academic support at home; these parents are more likely to assist with assignments, monitor progress, and reinforce learning. Parents' educational attainment on students'

performance could be linked to the level of academic support and encouragement provided at home, with higher levels of education typically leading to higher levels of learning competency of students in public high schools in the district of Northern Negros.

Parents' educational attainment helps students improve their academic achievement and learning competencies most effectively [37]. Parents with higher educational attainment have a powerful influence on children's cognitive development and student achievement compared to parents who could not finish their education [20]. Parents with higher educational attainment are more knowledgeable. They can create an ideal learning environment at home better than those who could not complete their studies [31]. Moreover, students from families with lower educational backgrounds may require additional support to bridge the achievement gap in learning competencies in world History.

Table 3
Difference in the Students' Achievement of Learning Competencies in World History

Variable	U	z	p
Sex	7076.000*	-2.943	0.003
Monthly Income	7819.500	-1.809	0.070
Teacher's Educational Attainment	8035.500	-0.877	0.380
Variable	χ^2	df	p
Parents Educational Attainment	44.794*	2	0.000

Note: *the difference in the means is significant when $p \leq 0.05$

Challenges encountered by the Students in Achieving Learning Competencies in World History

Table 5 presents the challenges encountered by the students in public high schools in a district of Northern Negros in achieving learning competencies in World History in terms of students, teachers, learning environment, resources, facilities, and subjects of the public high schools in the district in Northern Negros. In students, the top issues that challenge them are their lack of interest in reading long passages from books (f=269, 100%), difficulty in memorizing dates, people, and events (f=267, 99.3%), lack prior knowledge of the World History subject (f=255, 94.8%), and lack the critical thinking skills in learning the subject (f=254, 94.4%)

In terms of teachers of the public high schools in the district of Northern Negros, most students are challenged in terms of missing to connect the lessons to real-life situations (f=198, 73.6%), missing to give feedback on the student's activities and examinations (f=190, 70.6%), demand unattainable tasks with the given time (f=185, 68.8%), and the use of traditional teaching strategies (f=178, 66.2%). The public high schools in the district of Northern Negros, learning environment, resources, and facilities, the students are having issues in terms of inadequate facilities and resources for learning the subject (f=269, 100%), outdated books and learning resources (f=269, 100%), non-conducive learning environment at home for studying (f=269, 100%), and the non-conducive classroom for teaching and learning (f=267, 99.3%). In terms of subject, the students are having issues with the lessons or topics that are too heavy to understand (f=268, 99.6%), World History is a content-loaded subject (f=267, 99.3%), the references and learning materials for the subject are inaccessible (f=262, 97.4). That little time is allocated per topic (f=249, 92.6%).

Students

The challenges faced by students in the public high schools in the district of Northern Negros in World History, including their lack of interest in reading long passages, difficulty in memorizing key facts, and limited critical thinking skills, can be attributed to several factors. These may include an overreliance on rote memorization, which limits critical thinking and the ability to make meaningful connections between historical events. Many students struggle with insufficient engagement with the material, making it difficult to sustain interest and retain information. A lack of foundational knowledge further hinders their ability to grasp more complex historical concepts. Adding to these problems is the large number of topics covered in World History, which can be too much for students to handle. This often causes them to feel confused and have trouble remembering, which students find utterly understanding the subject.

Table 4A
Challenges in Achieving Learning Competencies in World History

<i>The students</i>	f	%
Lack of interest in reading long passages from books	269	100.0
Have difficulty in memorizing dates, people, and events	267	99.3
Lack of prior knowledge of the World History subject	255	94.8
Lack of critical thinking skills in learning World History.	254	94.4
Lack of skills in recalling important dates, names, and technical phrases in World History.	252	93.7
Have difficulty in acquiring concepts, especially those complicated ones that connect them to other historical occurrences	250	92.9
Have difficulty connecting and applying the lessons in their lives.	247	91.8
Struggle to comprehend the sequence of events in World History	215	79.9
Find the World History subject boring and difficult to understand	165	61.3
Have difficulty managing their time in studying World History	160	59.5
Lack of interest and motivation to study World History subject.	153	56.9

Students have difficulty memorizing, lack prior knowledge, and struggle with critical thinking skills in World History, so their overall understanding of the subject is significantly hindered. Without a basic understanding or background context about the subject, new information becomes overwhelming. Students may feel lost or confused, resulting in a shallow grasp and a limited ability to apply what they have learned. Furthermore, the absence of critical thinking skills significantly limits the depth of students' engagement with the subject. These difficulties create a barrier to meaningful learning, leading to a problem in achieving the learning competencies in World History.

The study by Kabombwe [38] shows that world history requires extensive reading, which is one of the challenges students face because they lack interest in reading long passages. Furthermore, World history requires students to master historical thinking skills, for they need to memorize and recite such historical events [12]. Students were required to remember key dates, names, and technical terms, recognize accurate historical connections, and understand the causes and consequences of historical events [39]. Knowledge of terminology, details, and elements used in word history is unfamiliar to the students, so they struggle to learn the subject [38].

Teachers

Related to the teachers in public high schools in the district of Negros, the data reveals that students face significant challenges with their teachers in several areas, most notably in the failure to connect lessons to real-life situations, which can hinder the relevance of the material and student engagement. A lack of timely feedback on activities and exams further complicates the learning process, as students are not given enough guidance on their progress. Teachers sometimes assign unattainable tasks within the given time frame, which may lead to stress and diminished academic performance. Using traditional teaching strategies suggests students may not receive the interactive or modern learning experiences needed to foster deeper understanding. These challenges highlight the need for more effective teaching practices in public high schools that incorporate real-world connections, timely feedback, and flexible, student-centered approaches.

Teachers' ineffective teaching strategies contribute significantly to the learning challenges faced by the students in World History. When teachers fail to connect lessons to real-life situations, the subject becomes abstract and less meaningful, preventing them from seeing the relevance of historical events in their lives and making it harder to retain and apply the knowledge. The absence of timely feedback limits students' ability to monitor their progress and correct misunderstandings, as feedback is a crucial tool for learning. The reliance on traditional teaching methods fails to cater to the diverse learning needs of the students, who often do not promote active engagement and critical thinking. Moreover, there is a clear need for teachers to incorporate real-world applications, timely feedback, and differentiated instructions to develop a deeper understanding of World History.

According to multiple studies, some teachers failed to emphasize real-life connections. Instead, they are more focused on making students memorize the names, dates, years, and events that make them bored with learning the subject [12]. When lessons lack connections to students' everyday experiences, and constructive feedback is absent, learners become further disengaged, perceiving history as a remote, inconsequential subject [40]. Moreover, it is an 'eye opener' for all World History teachers to revise some teaching styles that can help motivate the students and improve their academic performance in the subject [41].

Table 4B
Challenges in Achieving Learning Competencies in World History

Teachers	f	%
Missed to connect the World history lessons to real-life situations	198	73.6
Missed to give feedback on the students' activities and examinations.	190	70.6
Demand unattainable performance tasks within the given time.	185	68.8
Use traditional/not up-to-date teaching strategies (e.g., memorization, lecture)	178	66.2
Are not competent or qualified to teach the subject	139	51.7
Demand a very high standard of learning.	121	45.0

Learning Environment, Resources, and Facilities

Regarding learning environment, facilities, and resources, the data reveals significant issues in these aspects, with all students reporting inadequate resources and outdated learning materials. Many schools still use old textbooks that do not match the current curriculum or fail to capture students' interest. Additionally, non-conducive home environments for studying highlight challenges in supporting academic success outside school. The nearly universal concern about classroom conditions indicates a need for improved infrastructure to enhance

teaching and learning experiences. These findings emphasize the urgency of addressing these barriers to ensure equitable and effective education for all students in the public high schools in the district of Northern Negros.

Related to inadequate resources and outdated learning materials can be attributed to insufficient funding and poor investment in educational infrastructure. The non-conducive learning environment at home may be influenced by socioeconomic factors, where students lack a quiet and comfortable space to focus on their studies, which hinders their achievement of learning competencies in the subject. Classroom conditions could be attributed to outdated facilities, overcrowding, or a lack of proper maintenance, affecting teaching and learning quality. These challenges may also reflect broader systemic issues, including insufficient policy attention or support for education in certain areas. These factors combined hinder students' ability to achieve their full academic potential and need urgent intervention by the division office of the district in Northern Negros.

Correspondingly, in the study of Zysberg and Schwabsky [42], it is important to make provisions for learning resources, facilities, and learning environments that will be utilized to enhance the students' achievement of learning competencies. In schools, it is essential to make provisions for learning resources, facilities, and a learning environment that will be utilized to enhance students' academic performance [43]. In addition, although textbooks and other print materials have been provided, resources still need to be added for the several learning competencies to satisfactorily meet the needs of the students in the achievement of learning competencies [43]. A lack of adequate technological resources in schools is a major challenge to students' achievement, along with the need for more frequent training and familiarization with these technologies [45].

Table 4C
Challenges in Achieving Learning Competencies in World History

Learning Environment, Resources, and Facilities	f	%
The school has inadequate facilities and resources for World History learning (e.g., library, computer laboratory).	269	100.0
The library has outdated books and learning resources for utilization.	269	100.0
Learning environment at home is not conducive for studying.	269	100.0
The classroom is not conducive to teaching and learning World History	267	99.3
Lack of administrative support for World History activities and instruction.	222	82.5

Subject

Learning of World History is significantly affected due to the lessons or topics that are too heavy to understand, content-loaded, and the references and learning materials for the subject are inaccessible. That little time is allocated per topic. It requires students to process vast amounts of information, which can be overwhelming without sufficient scaffolding. The inaccessibility of references and learning materials further compounds these difficulties, limiting students' ability to deepen their understanding. The insufficient time allocated per topic suggests that the pace of instruction may not allow students to fully absorb the material. Students' difficulties in understanding World History in public high schools in the district of Northern Negros, are due to an overloaded curriculum, limited resources, and insufficient time for each topic.

The challenges students in public high schools in the district of Northern Negros, face in understanding World History can be attributed to the overwhelming volume of content, which may not be effectively paced for optimal learning. The subject's complexity is compounded by a lack of accessible references and learning materials, making it harder for students to study independently. The limited time allocated per topic could result from rigid curricula or time constraints in the academic schedule, preventing thorough exploration of the material. These factors collectively suggest a need for curricular and instructional reforms to better support student learning in World History in public high schools in the district of Northern Negros.

Moreover, World History is considered one of the most content-loaded areas, encompassing the histories of ancient civilizations, geography, politics, and economics of countries worldwide [13]. This complexity makes it challenging for students to achieve learning competencies in the subject. According to Ihalon [13], the topics are broad, tedious, and complex, requiring significant effort to grasp, particularly the intricate concepts that link them to other historical events. Furthermore, schools need more resources, such as learning materials for the subjects that are accessible to students [46]. However, the curriculum parameters the Department of Education sets require clear implementation guidelines, frameworks, and additional time allocation for each competency [47].

Table 4D
Challenges in Achieving Learning Competencies in World History

<i>The Subject</i>	f	%
Topics/lessons in World History are too heavy to understand	268	99.6
World history is the most content-loaded area	267	99.3
World history's references, books, and learning materials are inaccessible.	262	97.4
Little time is allocated per topic	249	92.6
The learning competencies in World History are unattainable.	245	91.1
Bombarded with ideas like understanding essential names, dates, and phrases used in the classroom.	212	78.8

The findings regarding Grade 8 students' achievement of learning competencies in World History in public high schools in a district of Northern Negros strongly align with Walberg's Theory of Academic Achievement, which emphasizes that while individual ability matters, external factors, especially family monthly income, parents' educational attainment, and teachers' educational attainment can significantly shape a student's academic success. With the difference between demographics of sex and parents' educational attainment as to the achievement of learning competencies in world history, these results strongly validate Walberg's theory of Academic Achievement, which posits that academic success is influenced not only by individual ability but also by psychological and environmental factors, particularly related to the home and social context. The significant difference in sex aligns with the students' psychological characteristics in Walberg's model, such as self-concept, which can vary between male and female students due to societal expectations or classroom dynamics. Moreover, the significant difference in parents' educational attainment also supports Walberg's assertion that the home environment, which includes parents' educational attainment, plays a critical role in shaping student achievement. Thus, the results confirm that while students generally performed well, sex and parent's educational attainment significantly affected their academic achievement, a core principle of Walberg's theory of Academic achievement. This supports the continued relevance of Walberg's framework in understanding and improving students' achievement in specific subject areas like World History.

5.0. Conclusion

The findings imply an improvement in World History instruction focusing on the identified challenges. Perhaps a closer look into the teaching strategies and assessments can help elevate the quality of instruction. The proposed output can help enhance these aspects. By addressing these areas, the achievement level can be improved to advanced. Moreover, the findings imply the importance of ensuring students fully achieve all learning competencies through their teachers.

6.0. Limitations of the Findings

The findings are only limited to quantitative research, particularly the descriptive-comparative approach. In terms of schools, the study was confined to a district in Northern Negros. Additionally, only two areas of the subject of World History are included in the study: Geography and Early Civilization and the World in the Classical and Traditional Periods. The questionnaire is researcher-made. Moreover, the study is focused on determining the level of achievement of learning competency in World History, neglecting to explore the challenges teachers face in teaching the subject, which could be provided with valuable concepts and teaching strategies. Addressing these limitations in future studies could provide more information to improve students' level of achievement of learning competencies in World History.

7.0. Practical Value of the Paper

This study has practical implications for academic communities. The findings provide a basis for the proposed Strategic Intervention Material (SIM) to address learning gaps. This enhances student mastery through deeper exploration and skill development. Beyond local applications, these can benefit schools globally, contributing to instructional quality and student outcomes. It also fills gaps in literature, offering insights into future research.

8.0. Directions for Future Research

Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies on a larger scale to understand how different contexts affect learning. Expanding the scope and including diverse samples can offer broader insights. Using other methods may improve analysis. This study focused on the first two quarters; future research should cover the remaining topics to develop effective teaching strategies. Exploring teachers' challenges and using standardized questionnaires can further deepen understanding of World History.

9.0. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No potential conflicts of interest relating to the research, writing, or publishing of this work were disclosed by the authors, according to their report.

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