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Practices in the Contextualization of the English Curriculum in the Public Secondary Schools

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Abstract. Contextualizing instruction has been the growing consensus among educators. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has consistently called for educational reforms that reflect, and respect local contexts, traditions, and values based on the local needs and relevance to the learners. Likewise, the K to 12 curriculum framework highlights the cardinal importance of using context to shape the curriculum emphasizing that it shall be contextualized to allow schools to localize and indigenize for teachers to make the content relevant to the lives of learners considering their local, cultural knowledge, and even historical and biogeographical conditions in the planning, delivery, and overall implementation of the curriculum. Hence, it is necessary to investigate whether or not teachers in the Department of Education adhere to the contextualization mandate. This study aimed to describe the extent of practice in the contextualization of the English Curriculum in the degrees of localization and indigenization of a medium-sized schools division in Central Philippines. It also sought to find out if significant difference exists in the extent of contextualization practice in terms of sex, educational attainment, and length of teaching experience. Employing the descriptive-comparative design and a researcher-developed questionnaire, the study was conducted to 150 respondents. Results revealed that the extent of practice in the overall contextualization of the English curriculum and in terms of its degrees was very great except when respondents were grouped according to sex where male teachers' extent of contextualization practice was only great. Furthermore, extent contextualization practice was strikingly lower in the degree of indigenization. Meanwhile, the difference in the extent of practice in the contextualization of the English curriculum was found to be statistically significant in terms of sex and length of service. In conclusion, English teachers' extent of contextualization is influenced by their sex and length of service. Specifically, English teachers who are female and have more than ten years of teaching experience have better contextualization practices. The findings of this study formed the basis of the Contextualization of the English Curriculum Self-Check Tool designed for teachers to enable them and their schools to monitor and seriously contextualize the English Language Curriculum.

Keywords. English Instruction, Extent of Contextualization Practice, Descriptive-Comparative, Philippines

1. Introduction

Contextualizing instruction has been the growing consensus among educators [54]. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has consistently called for "educational reforms that reflect, and respect local contexts, traditions, and values"

[57] based on the local needs and relevance to the learners [47]. Moreover, the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SGD 4) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda intends to promote lifelong opportunities for all learners by ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education [58]. Aligned with this call, contextualization promotes transforming the curriculum to the local learning content specific to the learners' community by using local knowledge, material, language, and culture in designing curriculum instructions [49].

A contextualized curriculum uses authentic contexts to provide the students the means to learn language skills used in the real world. Contextualization remarkably improves students' performance in English subjects, particularly in grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing [22][7] [45] [40]. Besides utilizing the language, teaching must integrate culture to facilitate the development of communication skills appropriate for the language users' environment [32]. On the other hand, a study claims that students of English as a Second Language (ESL) fail to learn English grammar effectively because of the lack of authentic learning material [60]. Thus, contextualizing the English Language Curriculum is important since putting language into context is believed to affect learning significantly.

In the Philippines, the K to 12 curriculum framework highlights the cardinal importance of using context to shape the curriculum and, consequently, the teaching-learning process. Specifically, RA 10533 or The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, Sec. 5, states that the "K-12 curriculum shall be learner-centered, inclusive and developmentally appropriate, relevant, responsive, research-based, culture-sensitive, contextualized, global, and flexible enough to allow schools to localize, indigenize and should be enhanced based on their respective educational and social contexts" [18]. Moreover, DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2015 [15] defines contextualization as the educational process of relating the curriculum to a particular setting, situation, or application area to make the competencies relevant, meaningful, and valuable to all learners. Therefore, it may be distinguished into two degrees: (1) Localization and (2) Indigenization [19]. These two areas match the content and instructional strategies while utilizing things, situations, and experiences relevant to the students [37]. Relatedly, DepEd has recommended REACT Strategy, a structure for curricula and instruction in contextual learning strategies advocated by the Center for Occupational Research and Development [8]. REACT stands for relating, experiencing, applying, cooperating, and transferring [44] [28] [52].

The subject of this study is a medium-sized division in Central Philippines, where an Indigenous Peoples Community exists. Through the Curriculum Implementation Division, the Department of Education of the selected Schools Division has been initiating write shops to develop contextualized learning materials [46], and teachers are called to utilize contextualized learning resources which include contextualized lesson plans, and designing contextualized instructional materials and learning activities [16]. In teaching English, especially in literature classes, teachers are urged to develop contextualized storybooks from culture-based stories in the locality. These initiatives of the selected division must be responsive to students' unique cultural needs, especially with an IP Community.

However, despite the overwhelming evidence backing the importance of integrating contextualization in Education, especially in English language teaching, there is currently no available tool to assess the teachers' extent of contextualization; let alone studies on the assessment measuring the extent of contextualization of the English curriculum in general and in terms of its degrees—localization and indigenization - in relation to teachers' demographics, bringing to the surface the compelling reason to conduct this study.

Considering the scarce resources on contextualization, as most studies focus on the effectiveness but little on the extent of practices in the contextualization of the English

curriculum, the findings of this study formed the basis of the Contextualization of the English Curriculum Self-Check Tool designed for teachers to enable them and their schools to monitor and seriously contextualize the English Language Curriculum constantly. In one way or another, this could enhance the knowledge and skills of school administrators and teachers in contextualizing their learning materials and the actual teaching-learning process.

2. Framework of the Study

The paper theorized that the teachers' extent of contextualization of the English curriculum in the degrees of localization and indigenization may be influenced by their sex, educational attainment, and length of service. Their extent of contextualization reflects their adherence to the standards set forth by the K-12 curriculum. Contextualization skills, however, may differ in terms of English teachers' demographics.

This study was mainly anchored in Contextual Learning Theory (CTL), which asserts that learning transpires only when teachers relate abstract lessons to real-life situations making the content relevant and applicable to the everyday life of the students. It allows the processing of new information or knowledge to make sense in their frames of reference (their memories, experiences, and responses).

The philosophy of CLT was rooted in the progressivist principles of John Dewey that proposed theories on curriculum and teaching methodologies relating to students' interests and experiences [20]. According to him, educators must actively involve students in the learning process inside the classroom because they will learn effectively if they can relate their experiences to the content they are learning.

The CLT was later adopted by the Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD), which posits that the human mind searches for meaning in context by searching for relationships that make sense and appear useful [9]. It further states that taking that idea into account, contextual learning theory deals with just any environment where learning occurs—a classroom, a laboratory, a computer lab, or a worksite. In such environments, learning occurs when teachers can present information in a way that would allow the students to construct meaning based on their own experiences. It encourages educators to utilize learners' experiences in designing learning environments to achieve desired learning outcomes.

Further, the K-12 curriculum framework through DepEd Order N. 32 S. 2015 [15] defined contextualization as the educational practice of relating the curriculum to a setting, situation or area of application to make the competencies relevant, meaningful and useful to all learners and identified two degrees by which contextualization may be performed: localization—using information and materials in the learners' community to relate the learning content to their setting and culture and indigenization—enhancing the competencies in the curriculum, the resources, and the teaching-learning processes to suit the context of the learners' community.

In such context, this study determined the extent of practices in the contextualization of the English curriculum as assessed by secondary public school English language teachers through a researcher-made self-assessment questionnaire.

3. Methods

3.1 Design

The quantitative research design using the descriptive-comparative approach was employed to determine the extent of practice of contextualization of Secondary Public-School English teachers of the selected Schools Division. The descriptive analysis was used to find the

extent of contextualization practice through the mean and standard deviation. Meanwhile, a comparative analysis was used to get significant differences when the respondents were grouped according to demographics.

3.2 Respondents

The respondents of the study were the total population of 150 secondary public-school English teachers in a medium-sized division in Central Philippines during the School Year 2020-2021. The number of respondents was determined through stratified random sampling.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

Data were gathered using a researcher-made instrument composed of 50 items equally divided into two areas or degrees: localization and indigenization. Each degree consists of 25 items with five items for each of the REACT Strategy components (Relating, Experiencing, Applying, Cooperating, and Transferring) while integrating the DepEd contextualization guidelines, evident under DepEd Order No. 43, s. 2013 (Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013) [17]. The questionnaire used a Likert scale to gauge the participants' responses as to their extent of contextualization on the degrees of localization and indigenization. The instrument was subjected to content validation using Lawshe's method with a Content Validity Index of 0.93 interpreted as valid. Ten field experts composed of an English Program Supervisor, Learning Resources Management System Coordinator, University Professors, Contextualization Researchers, and Public School English teachers with at least a master's degree served as the validators of the instrument. The instrument was likewise subjected to a reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha results of 0.973 for the degree of localization, 0.977 for the degree of indigenization, and 0.987 for the overall contextualization; all interpreted as reliable. The instrument was pilot-tested on 30 English teachers who were non-respondents to the study.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher first sought the approval of the School's Division Superintendent of the selected Division by sending a request letter stipulating the nature and details of the research. She then sought the division's endorsement of all secondary public schools in the division. Finally, she requested the list and number of Public Secondary English teachers and identified the respondents.

After the validity and reliability test of the instrument, data gathering was conducted online. Before accomplishing the online survey, the respondents were given a written explanation about the research's nature and all their rights stipulated in the informed consent. They were then given a choice to proceed with or reject the google form section indicating their full consent to participate in the study. The respondents were given sufficient time and access to the online questionnaire. After all the respondents had accomplished the survey, the data were retrieved, tabulated, and analyzed through appropriate statistical tools.

3.5 Data analysis procedure

The descriptive and comparative analyses were used to analyze and interpret the data on the extent of practice of contextualization in the English curriculum of the public secondary schools in the chosen division and how the demographics of the Secondary English teachers influence their extent of contextualization practice. Frequency, percentage, and mean were used for the descriptive analysis.

After which, a normality test was conducted to determine whether a parametric or non-parametric test would be used for the statistical treatment of the data. Kolmogorov-Smirnov was used to determine the normality of the variables which revealed that the localization [KS=0.127, p=0.000], indigenization [KS=0.139, p=0.000] and contextualization [KS=0.139, p=0.000] are not normally distributed. Hence, a non-parametric statistical tool was used.

The Mann-Whitney U test was employed to get the significant difference in the extent of contextualization of the respondents when grouped according to demographics in the degrees of localization and indigenization.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

The researcher conformed to the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB) ethical guidelines and addressed the general ethical principles of social value, informed consent, vulnerability of the research participants, risk and benefits, justice, transparency, qualifications of the researcher, and community involvement. This study determined the extent of Secondary Public-School English teachers' practice of contextualization in the English curriculum as part of the K-12 Curriculum mandate, which aims to make educational content meaningful and relevant to the students' lives. The researcher made sure that the teachers' research participation was voluntary. Likewise, since the study was conducted during the pandemic, standard safety and health protocols were observed accordingly to avoid health risks for the researcher and participants. The researcher furnished the respondents with a copy of the informed consent form stipulating the title, nature of the research, the possible risks they may encounter once they go through the research process, the requisite for their full willingness to participate in the study, and the assurance of their right to privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. The researcher then asked the respondents to express their agreement to participate by affixing their e-signature in confirmation of their full consent to participate in the study. They were also informed of their right to withdraw their participation from the study anytime. Furthermore, the respondents were not asked or coerced to give information not stipulated beforehand, nor will any financial inducements or gifts be given to them for their participation. Finally, the data collected for this research shall be discarded after the study is published in a refereed journal.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Extent of Practice in the Contextualization of the English Curriculum and in terms of the Degrees of Localization and Indigenization

Table 1.A shows that the extent of contextualization of the English curriculum in the degree of localization, in general, was very great (M=4.47, SD=0.45). The results further reveal that the teachers localized their lessons to a very great extent in all the essential engagement strategies in contextualization, namely, relating (M=4.43; SD=0.51), experiencing (M=4.35; SD=0.52), applying (M=4.50; SD=0.48), cooperating (M=4.55; SD=0.49), and transferring (M=4.53; SD=0.49). However, in terms of sex, male teachers have a lower extent of practice of contextualization (M=4.27; SD=0.54), getting the lowest mean in the area of experiencing (M=4.11; SD=0.61), which involves learning in the context of exploration, discovery, and invention. In terms of educational attainment, teachers with only a bachelor's degree performed point one (0.1) higher in their extent of contextualization practice (M=4.47; SD=0.45) than those with advanced degrees. Finally, in terms of length of service, teachers with longer years of service obtained a higher mean score (M=4.56, SD=0.44) than those with shorter experience (M=4.43, SD=0.45). However, both still have a very high extent of contextualization practice.

The findings imply that English teachers practiced contextualization of the English curriculum based on the definition and guidelines set by the DepEd in all of the lesson components of every lesson. Meanwhile, in terms of demographics, the findings further reveal that female teachers with a bachelor's degree and more than ten years of teaching experience practiced relating the learning content specified in the curriculum to local information and materials in the learners' community as stipulated in DepEd Order N. 32 S. 2015 [15] to a higher extent than their counterparts.

The very high extent of practice of contextualization in the degree of localization is supported by a study which states that it is necessary to intentionally link academic standards to the real world of students' communities in order to close the gap between the knowledge students learn at school and the actions they are expected to perform after or between what students must discover and what they can contribute [13]. A Philippines study also suggests that schools need to continuously conduct capability building that would train teachers on localizing the curriculum since linking skills to authentic content and concrete applications increase the possibility of learning [22].

Table 1.A
Extent of Practice in the Contextualization of the English Curriculum and in terms of Localization

Variable	Relating			Experiencing			Applying			Cooperating			Transferring			Localization		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex																		
Male	4.33	0.63	VGE	4.11	0.61	GE	4.29	0.59	VGE	4.29	0.61	VGE	4.36	0.55	VGE	4.27	0.54	VGE
Female	4.44	0.50	VGE	4.38	0.50	VGE	4.53	0.46	VGE	4.57	0.47	VGE	4.55	0.48	VGE	4.49	0.43	VGE
Educational Attainment																		
Bachelor's Degree	4.41	0.49	VGE	4.37	0.51	VGE	4.52	0.47	VGE	4.54	0.50	VGE	4.54	0.51	VGE	4.47	0.45	VGE
Master's/Doctorate Degree	4.48	0.56	VGE	4.32	0.55	VGE	4.47	0.50	VGE	4.56	0.48	VGE	4.50	0.41	VGE	4.46	0.46	VGE
Length of Service																		
Shorter	4.37	0.49	VGE	4.31	0.52	VGE	4.47	0.48	VGE	4.51	0.50	VGE	4.50	0.50	VGE	4.43	0.45	VGE
Longer	4.56	0.52	VGE	4.44	0.50	VGE	4.57	0.47	VGE	4.62	0.48	VGE	4.60	0.45	VGE	4.56	0.44	VGE
Whole	4.43	0.51	VGE	4.35	0.52	VGE	4.50	0.48	VGE	4.55	0.49	VGE	4.53	0.49	VGE	4.47	0.45	VGE

Note: VGE=Very Great Extent, GE=Great Extent

Table 1.B shows that the extent of practice in the contextualization of the English curriculum in the degree of indigenization was likewise very great as a whole (M=4.41, SD=0.49) and in all essential engagement strategies in contextualization-relating (M=4.35; SD=0.56), experiencing (M=4.34; SD=0.54), applying (M=4.47; SD=0.50), cooperating (M=4.50; SD=0.51), and transferring (M=4.40; SD=0.55). However, unlike in localization, where male teachers' extent of contextualization practice was only great when it comes to experience, in the degree of indigenization, male teachers consistently practiced contextualization to only a great extent throughout the five contextualization strategies. Only that this time, they had the lowest mean in cooperating (M= 4.07; SD=0.57), which deals with contextualized learning through sharing, responding, and communicating with fellow learners.

The figures imply that English teachers, except the males, firmly adhere to the indigenization mandate suggesting that while female teachers indigenized the English curriculum in all of the lesson components of every lesson, the male teachers indigenized in all of the lesson components at least once a week. This means that female teachers are better at

enhancing the English curriculum, competencies, education resources, and teaching-learning process in relation to the learner's community's bio-geographical, historical, and socio-cultural context [15].

These findings appear to contradict the results of the study conducted in 2019 which revealed that the implementation of Philippine policies on the rights to education of indigenous peoples, including the indigenization of curriculum stipulated in the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997, is more of a tokenism; a symbolic effort but not religiously implemented [21]. Moreover, teachers, families, and school staff should collaboratively address existing inequities in education [13]. Deepened family and community engagement in the schools can help incorporate and reflect the rich funds of community knowledge and experience in the content.

Table 1.B

Extent of Practice in the Contextualization of the English Curriculum in terms of Indigenization

Variable	Relating			Experiencing			Applying			Cooperating			Transferring			Indigenization		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex																		
Male	4.13	0.58	GE	4.10	0.60	GE	4.16	0.55	GE	4.07	0.57	GE	4.14	0.56	GE	4.12	0.54	GE
Female	4.37	0.55	VGE	4.36	0.53	VGE	4.50	0.49	VGE	4.55	0.49	VGE	4.43	0.54	VGE	4.44	0.48	VGE
Educational Attainment																		
Bachelor's Degree	4.38	0.53	VGE	4.38	0.52	VGE	4.49	0.49	VGE	4.52	0.51	VGE	4.42	0.53	VGE	4.44	0.48	VGE
Master's/Doctorate Degree	4.26	0.62	VGE	4.24	0.57	VGE	4.43	0.53	VGE	4.45	0.53	VGE	4.34	0.59	VGE	4.34	0.53	VGE
Length of Service																		
Shorter	4.28	0.56	VGE	4.31	0.53	VGE	4.43	0.51	VGE	4.47	0.51	VGE	4.37	0.54	VGE	4.37	0.48	VGE
Longer	4.49	0.54	VGE	4.41	0.56	VGE	4.56	0.48	VGE	4.58	0.53	VGE	4.47	0.57	VGE	4.50	0.50	VGE
Whole	4.35	0.56	VGE	4.34	0.54	VGE	4.47	0.50	VGE	4.50	0.51	VGE	4.40	0.55	VGE	4.41	0.49	VGE

Note: VGE= Very Great Extent, GE=Great Extent

Table 1.C shows that when grouped according to sex, male teachers only practiced contextualization in the English curriculum to a great extent (M=4.20; SD=0.52) which is noticeably lower than the female teachers' extent of contextualization practice which was very great (M=4.47; SD= 0.44). Male teachers scored consistently lower than females in the degrees of localization and indigenization but performed the lowest in the degree of indigenization (M=4.12; SD=0.54). Nonetheless, the extent of practice in the overall contextualization of the English curriculum as a whole (M=4.44; SD=0.46) was very great. The English teachers' assessment of the extent of contextualization practice in the degree of localization (M=4.47; SD=0.45), however, had a higher mean score than that of the degree of indigenization (M=4.41; SD=0.49), although both mean scores are verbally interpreted as very great.

The results generally mean that teachers practiced contextualization based on the definition and guidelines set by the DepEd in all lessons except the male English teachers, who only practiced contextualization at least once a week in all of the lesson components. This further signifies that female English teachers practiced contextualization better and more often than male English teachers.

The findings conform with the studies which revealed that teachers indeed embrace the idea of curriculum contextualization through their evident extensive contextualization in the

curriculum implementation, instructional process, and instructional materials used [12]. On the contrary, the findings oppose the results of the studies conducted in 2013 and 2018 respectively. The former revealed that only an average of two out of four teachers practice contextualization in general and do not often implement contextualization practice [43]. The latter stated that the teachers neither ask nor motivate students about things visible in their immediate surroundings, which is one of the primary steps in contextualization [44]. Furthermore, another study claims that women have been documented to have an advantage in early language development and that female brains are inherently designed for language system and communication acquisition over men's [1].

Table 1.C
Extent of Practice in the Contextualization of the English Curriculum

Variable	Localization			Indigenization			Contextualization		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex									
Male	4.27	0.54	VGE	4.12	0.54	GE	4.20	0.52	GE
Female	4.49	0.43	VGE	4.44	0.48	VGE	4.47	0.44	VGE
Educational Attainment									
Bachelor's Degree	4.47	0.45	VGE	4.44	0.48	VGE	4.46	0.45	VGE
Master's/Doctorate Degree	4.46	0.46	VGE	4.34	0.53	VGE	4.40	0.48	VGE
Length of Service									
Shorter	4.43	0.45	VGE	4.37	0.48	VGE	4.40	0.45	VGE
Longer	4.56	0.44	VGE	4.50	0.50	VGE	4.53	0.45	VGE
Whole	4.47	0.45	VGE	4.41	0.49	VGE	4.44	0.46	VGE

Note: VGE= Very Great Extent, GE= Great Extent

4.2 Difference in the Extent of Practice in the Contextualization of the English Curriculum and in the Degrees of Localization and Indigenization

Table 2.A shows no significant difference in the extent of practice in the contextualization of the curriculum in terms of the degree of localization when the teachers are grouped according to sex [U=708.500, p=0.115] and educational attainment [U=2148.000, p=0.825]. There was, however, a significant difference when teachers were grouped according to the length of service [U=1985.000, p=0.050].

The findings reveal that the teachers' sex and educational background did not influence their extent of contextualization practice in the degree of localization. On the other hand, teachers who have served longer than ten years and two months have a significantly greater extent of contextualization than those who have taught for a shorter period. More experienced teachers are better at relating learning the lessons to the local information and materials in the learners' community.

A recent study conducted opposes the findings as it found the length of teaching experience and even teaching position insignificant factors in determining teaching performance [53]. Nonetheless, the findings of one study explained that gains in teacher effectiveness continue to be significant as teachers reach the second to third decades of their careers [31]. Furthermore, the study contends that more experienced teachers benefit students'

learning and the school as a whole as more experienced teachers are exposed to numerous training and professional development programs.

The findings of the study find further support from studies which claim that the length of teaching experience significantly affects teachers' effectiveness [6] [29]. A primary factor that drives the localization of school curricula and the localization of schooling content is the ethnic and linguistic diversity of many nations. Schools and educators must consider this diversity when designing school lessons, both in local relevance and linguistic delivery, to create the vital links previously mentioned between learners and materials [56].

Table 2.A

Difference in the Extent of Practice in the Contextualization of the English Curriculum in terms of Localization

Variable	U	z	P
Sex	708.500	-1.575	0.115
Educational Attainment	2148.000	-0.221	0.825
Length of Service	1985.000*	-1.964	0.050

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

Table 2.B reveals a significant difference in the extent of contextualization of the curriculum in terms of the degree of indigenization when the teachers are grouped according to sex [U=604.500, $p=0.024$]. However, there is no significant difference in the extent of contextualization of the curriculum in terms of the degree of indigenization when the teachers are grouped according to the length of teaching experience [U=1976.000, $p=0.340$] and educational attainment [U=2053.000, $p=0.091$].

These statistical data show that female teachers have a significantly greater extent of contextualization than male teachers. Agreeing with the results shown in Table 4C, the teachers' sex is a significant factor in the extent of practice in the contextualization of the English curriculum, particularly influencing their extent of indigenization. Data further suggest that some male teachers have not seriously enhanced the curriculum, competencies, education resources, and teaching-learning process in relation to the learner's community's bio-geographical, historical, and socio-cultural context as prescribed by DepEd Order N. 32 S. 2015 [15].

In relation to this, a study showed higher commitment and positive attitudes towards teaching among females [41]. It was likewise explained that being male or female significantly affects a teacher's pedagogical style and effectiveness [3]. Males are described to be moderate and rational, while females are primarily diverse even in sentence construction, emotional, flexible, and communicative. Similarly, the findings conform to the 2021 study which revealed that teachers indeed embrace the idea of curriculum contextualization, which is evident in extensive contextualization in terms of curriculum implementation, instructional process, and instructional materials used [12]. On the contrary, the findings refute the results of the studies which respectively revealed that only an average of two out of four teachers practice contextualization in general and do not often implement contextualization practices and that the teachers neither ask nor motivate students about things that are visible in their immediate surroundings, which is one of the primary steps in contextualization [42] [43].

Table 2. B

Difference in the Extent of Practice in the Contextualization of the English Curriculum in terms of Indigenization

Variable	U	Z	P
Sex	604.500*	-2.250	0.024
Educational Attainment	1976.000	-0.954	0.340
Length of Service	2053.500	-1.691	0.091

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

Table 2.C shows a significant difference in the extent of practice in the contextualization of the English curriculum when teachers are grouped according to sex [U=643.500, $p=0.046$]. However, there is no significant difference in the extent of contextualization practice of the English curriculum when the teachers are grouped according to educational attainment [U=2010.000, $p=0.063$] and length of teaching experience [U=2046.000, $p=0.513$].

The results indicate that female teachers have a significantly greater extent of contextualization than male teachers. This means that female teachers generally relate the English curriculum to a setting, situation, or area of application to make the competencies relevant, meaningful and useful to all learners better and more often than male English teachers do.

This is because sex significantly affects 'pedagogical style and effectiveness such that male teachers prioritize moderation, rationality, and everyday speech structures' while female teachers value 'diversity in sentence construction, emotional coloring, flexibility, and general communicative skills [3]. The findings conform an international study which posits that commitment and positive attitude to the teaching profession were higher among female teachers than male teachers [41]. The need for a contextualized English curriculum is also emphasized [60]. English as a Second Language (ESL) students learn English grammar ineffectively because of the lack of authentic and contextualized learning material. To solves this problem, teachers need to understand the importance of creating authentic and contextualized learning opportunities, especially for grammar [2] [34].

The findings of the study imply that some public school secondary English teachers, mostly males, do not practice contextualizing the English curriculum religiously. In the light of contextual learning theory, female teachers are therefore better at relating abstract English lessons to real-life situations making the content relevant and applicable to the everyday life of the learners. They allow more the processing of new information or knowledge to make sense to the learners' frames of reference (their memories, experiences, and responses).

Notably, the weakest contextualization strategy teachers use is experiencing, which involves exploration, discovery, and invention and is the heart of contextual learning. Hence, teachers' underperformance in this aspect of contextualization may explain why students' operational, scientific, and comprehension skills are not optimized, explaining the poor PISA results of Filipino learners. Moreover, the results imply that some teachers lack effort in reflecting or relating the students' cultural context to provide the appropriate experiences in the English curriculum. This lack of contextualization may compromise its primary objective to provide quality education, thereby denying the students equal opportunity to learn.

As such, there is a need for seminars and training on how to optimize the practice in the contextualization of the English curriculum, emphasizing the degree of indigenization using the 'experiencing' component of REACT strategy. Furthermore, to facilitate the teachers'

contextualization of every lesson they plan, it would benefit them to assess their lessons using a self-check tool.

Table 2.C

Difference in the Extent of Practice in the Contextualization of the English Curriculum

Variable	U	Z	P
Sex	643.500*	-1.994	0.046
Educational Attainment	2046.000	-0.655	0.513
Length of Service	2010.000	-1.862	0.063

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

5. Conclusion

The extent of practice in the contextualization of the English Curriculum in the public secondary schools in a medium-sized division in Central Philippines was very great as assessed by the English teachers based on the definition and guidelines set by the Department of Education. There was likewise a very great extent of practice in the contextualization of the English curriculum in the degrees of localization and indigenization in terms of educational attainment and length of service. In terms of sex, however, males only had a great extent of contextualization in the degree of indigenization and in the overall contextualization of the English curriculum, which is comparatively lower than the female teachers' extent of practice in the contextualization, which is very great.

There was a significant difference in the extent of practice in the contextualization of the English curriculum in terms of sex and length of service. The difference in sex was statistically significant in the overall contextualization and in the degree of indigenization. In contrast, the difference in the length of service was statistically significant in the degree of localization.

The findings imply that the English teachers in the selected division conform to the framework of the K-12 curriculum that is contextualized and relevant, as stated in Section 5 of the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, which is evident in the very high extent of their contextualization practice in the curriculum. The findings further signify that the extent of practice in the contextualization of the English curriculum is significantly influenced by the teachers' sex and length of service. Those who are female and have more than ten years of teaching experience have a higher extent of contextualization practice, which means that they relate and make the learning content relevant to the lives of their learners, which studies have shown results in better performance.

There were two major limitations in the findings of this study: lack of emphasis on the location and time of the study and the dominance of respondents who have a shorter length of service. Had the study not been conducted in a highly urbanized city where teachers are a bounty of resources and established stronger rapport with the students, the findings could be different if they were not conducted during a pandemic. In the same manner, the dominant number of respondents who have shorter years of service might have greatly influenced the results of the study.

It is therefore recommended that factors like the sustainability of contextualization practices, established standards in contextualization, instructional materials development, and

quality assurance office be explored by future researchers to add greater value and scope to the topic.

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