ZIPGRADE APPLICATION: A TOOL IN ASSESSING LEARNERS' EVALUATION

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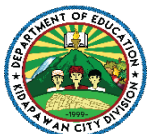Kidapawan City Division

ABSTRACT:

This quantitative and qualitative study on the use of Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation among Senior High School Teachers of Kidapawan City National High School aimed to know how efficient its use is. The responses of the ten (10) respondents of survey questionnaire and the findings accumulated from the interview are consolidated and analyzed. The result of the survey shows that the ten (10) respondents of this study strongly agree to the use of Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation as evidenced in the grand mean which was computed to be 3.83. This was reinforced by its individual mean which obtained highest value. They affirmed that the use of this technological assessment tool allows easy access of learners' examination results, manifests a user-friendly tool that can read bubble answer sheets done with pen and pencil and is timely since it can be administered through the use of smartphone. Its least individual mean still suggests strong agreement on the use of the said application. The findings of the discussion made through interview resonates the result of the survey. The informants affirmed the efficiency of the use of Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation. They were convinced that the said application had helped them quickly checked their learners' examination answer sheets, instantly allowed them to give their learners feedback on their outputs, tracked their learners who need intervention and provided them the needed item analysis.

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I.   Context and Rationale

The article by the World Bank, "Urgent, Effective Action Required to Quell the Impact of COVID-19 on Education Worldwide", stated that teachers must quickly adapt, be creative and shift roles this time of pandemic. Indeed, the need to enliven these traits is a necessity among teachers. Hence, the roles of teachers have been greatly affected by the change brought by the pandemic. The normal face to face class modality is not permitted anymore to be held. Instead, the blended learning modality through self-learning modules, synchronous and asynchronous, and the use of learning management system has replaced the normal learning modality. This modality has been adopted too by the Kidapawan City National High School – Senior High School Program in adherence to DepEd Order no. 31 series of 2020.

As the adoption of this new modality requires more tenuous preparation, teachers are moved to be creative and resourceful to meet the demands of their new roles and responsibilities. They find ways and means of meeting them. The Senior High School Techers of Kidapawan City National High School also manifest these traits. They make use of a productivity tool in assessing learners' evaluation which is facilitated by smartphone devices camera, the Zipgrade Application.

Curiosity to the efficiency of the Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation moves the researchers to conduct this study. They want to know if the teachers who use this application have become more efficient in accomplishing their tasks. If the results of this study warrant positive response, then the use of this application must be highly recommended too among other teachers.

To cope with the demands in becoming efficient in the educational processes during this new normal, teachers need to adapt to new trends suited to the present situation. With this, Yokozeki (2020), director of UNESCO Institute for Capacity Building in Africa, encouraged teachers to make the most of the situation by immersing themselves through continuing professional growth and development. Teachers may attend webinars and massive online open courses to be more empowered, creative, and innovative. For Philippine education, this will appropriately answer to the requirement set by the DepEd Order no. 031 s. 2020 under adverse

circumstances. Wherein, in designing optimal learning experiences and assessing learning progress effectively, the teachers must do them with utmost creativity and relevant innovation. The same DepEd Order necessitates the utilization of alternative tools and strategies for assessing and supporting learning. The use of technology as productivity tool in assessing learners is an advantage and offers significant help in accomplishing one's task efficiently said Stephanie A. Schlitz et. al (2009). Scott L. Howell in his Seven Strategies for enabling faculty success in distance education identified the incorporation of technology in the classroom as enabler of success, too.

The use of Zipgrade Application, a technology tool in assessing learners' evaluation, is found helpful among teachers. Lynch (2022) affirmed that its use in administering tests, quizzes, exit tickets and more in its identified bubble answer sheets is so efficient. Scanning the accomplished answer sheets with the use of Smartphone or Tablet (Prior), in seconds, its results are already available. Learners can see their scores instantly. At the same time, with the test results at hand, educators can be able to redirect or differentiate learning in the earliest possible time. They can provide immediate intervention and academic assistance to struggling learners. When this happens, the identified learners can still cope since ample time is given to them.

II.   Proposed Innovation, Intervention and Strategy

This quantitative and qualitative study is deemed important for the teachers in efficiently assessing learners' assessment (formative or summative). The findings of this study may prove useful in providing teachers with mechanisms that can aide them to become efficient on their tasks. This may be useful too in improving the test that they will construct as form of assessment.

III.   Action Research Questions

This action research aimed to know the experiences of the Kidapawan City National High School – Senior High School Teachers in using ZipGrade Application in assessing learners' assessment. Specifically, this study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of efficiency of the use of ZipGrade Application among Kidapawan City National High School – Senior High School Teachers?
2. What are the lived experiences of Kidapawan City National High School – Senior High School Teachers in the use of Zipgrade Application.

IV.   Action Research Methods

a. Participants and/or other Sources of Data and Information

Ten (10) Senior High School Teachers of the Kidapawan City National High School, who are currently using ZipGrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation, participated in this study. These teachers are coming from HUMSS strand. They are composed of four (4) male teachers and six (6) female teachers. All of them responded to the survey questionnaire and five of them were randomly chosen to answer in the interview.

b. Data Gathering Methods

In gathering the needed information, the researchers used Survey Questionnaires and conducted individual interview.

Survey Questionnaires were conducted to the ten (10) Senior High School Teachers of Kidapawan City National High School who are currently using Zipgrade Application. The results of the survey were presented in a table.

The other method of gathering data was through individual interview. This was done among five participants who were randomly picked based on their availability. They shared their lived experiences on the use of Zipgrade Application.

Thus, the data gathered from both methodologies are utilized in this research.

c. Data Analysis Plan

It has been observed that some Senior High School Teachers of the Kidapawan City National High School who use Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation were able to compute quickly and accurately their learners' grades and gave immediate feedback on their test ratings. It is in this position that this study was conducted to verify the extent of help that Zipgrade Application has provided to the chosen respondents. The data gathered from the survey questionnaires were being consolidated. The mean score of each item was computed and presented in a table together with their grand mean.

In relation to the result of the interview, thematic analysis was employed to put them into category. The responses taken from the interview were assigned into codes and later to themes. Numerous themes were assigned as specific themes. Then, all specific themes were placed into an overall theme which is termed as general theme.

V. Results and Discussion

The table below shows the results of the survey. The mean score of each statement was computed and so its grand mean.

Table 1. Level of efficiency of the use of ZipGrade Application among Kidapawan City National High School – Senior High School Teachers.

Statements	Mean	Description
1 I find it easier to assess learners' evaluation using Zipgrade application rather than checking it manually.	3.9	Strongly Agree
2 Zipgrade application can access online evaluation preferably answered by modular distant learners.	3.7	Strongly Agree
3 Zipgrade application is able to read answer sheets up to 100 items.	3.9	Strongly Agree
4 It does not require internet access when in use.	3.6	Strongly Agree
5 Feedback on learners' evaluation results can easily be accessed by learners when Zipgrade application is used.	4	Strongly Agree
6 It is able to read answer sheets done with pen and pencil.	4	Strongly Agree

7 It allows teachers to grade multiple choice type of test accomplished by their learners.	3.9	Strongly Agree
8 It analyzes the students' evaluation results.	3.8	Strongly Agree
9 Zipgrade application is affordable.	3.5	Strongly Agree
10 Zipgrade application can be used in the classroom by using smartphone device's camera as a grading scanner.	4	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	**3.83**	Strongly Agree

Legend:

Interval	Description
3.26 - 4.00	*Strongly Agree*
2.51 - 3.25	*Agree*
1.76 - 2.50	*Disagree*
1.00-1.75	*Strongly Disagree*

Table 1 shows the Efficiency of Zipgrade Tool in assessing learners' evaluation. Statements 5 (*Feedback on learners' evaluation results can easily be accessed by learners when Zipgrade application is used.*), 6 (*It is able to read answer sheets done with pen and pencil.*) and 10 (*Zipgrade application can be used in the classroom by using smartphone device's camera as a grading scanner.*) posted the highest individual mean of 4.0. However, statement 9 (*Zipgrade application is affordable.*) has the least individual mean of 3.50. Grand mean was computed to be 3.83 which means that the respondents strongly agree to use Zipgrade to assess learners' evaluation.

The result of the study was substantiated by the findings of Lynch (2022) stating that with Zipgrade, learners can see their scores instantly. Also, Prior (2022) added that Zipgrade turns your smartphone or tablet as a scanner. It further affirms that Zipgrade provides instant feedback to students by grading exit tickets, quizzes and formative assessments as soon as they finish.

Table 2 presents the themes which reflected the lived experiences of the research participants. The general themes that surfaced were efficiency and effectivity.

Table 2. Lived experiences of Senior High School Teachers of Kidapawan City National High School in the use of Zipgrade Application

General Theme	Specific Themes
Efficient and Effective	Time saver
	Productivity
	Acquisition of accurate result
	User-friendly
	Easy feedbacking
	Data transparency
	Quick provision of item analysis

Efficient and Effective

The Senior High School Teachers of Kidapawan City National High School found the use of Zipgrade Application to be efficient and effective. This claim can be elaborated by the specific themes expounded hereafter.

a. **Time Saver and Productivity**

Participants of the study shared that they were able to check quickly their learners' answers on their quizzes, summative tests and examinations. Compared to manual checking, the use of Zipgrade Application is found time saver. An average of 60 answered bubble sheet can be scanned within an hour as they claimed. This has allowed them to become more productive with their tasks. Thus, they still have much time working on other tasks.

b. **Acquisition of accurate result**

The results provided by the use of Zipgrade Application of the learners' evaluation are accurate. Learners' responses done in bubble sheets are being checked against the encoded set of correct choices. The certainty of the results depends on the certainty of the answer key encoded in the application.

c. **User-friendly**

Zipgrade application scanning can be administered through Android Smartphones camera. It means that we can make use of our cellphones with camera in the process. This makes the application user-friendly. It can also scan answers done with paper and pen. It will easily recognize answers which are correctly shaded or darkened. However, one informant commented that in poor-lighted working areas,

scanning is difficult to perform. So, this would suggest that it should be done in a well-lighted area.

d. Easy feedbacking

After scanning, the test scores of learners can quickly be known. With this, teachers can easily feedback to learners the results. Learners who perform poorly in the test will immediately be given intervention. Otherwise, learners who perform well will be encouraged to keep on aiming high. The application recognizes learners who failed to take the test as well.

e. Data Transparency

The scanned data are automatically stored in the application. These data can also be accessed through the use of laptop where the application is installed. Opening the same account, the available data can readily be transferred to the e-class record. Thus, it can be used for automated computation of grades.

f. Quick provision of item analysis

Another important component of Zipgrade Application is its ability to give instant item analysis. It comprehensively provides item analysis that contains the number of learners who answered in each selection. To access on this, user may simply tap the item analysis button. Once opened, it can readily be available for printing.

VI. REFLECTION/CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

As the Department of Education mandated the implementation of blended learning modality in response to the change brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers in turn are also called to redefine their roles to keep themselves relevant and abreast to the demands of the present situation. As their tasks increase, they need to be more creative so they can still be efficient in accomplishing them.

Some Senior High School teachers of the Kidapawan City National High School manifest this calling. Their use of the Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation evidently shows their effort to be efficient in their task.

The result of the survey shows that the ten (10) respondents of this study strongly agree to the use of Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation as evidenced in the grand mean which was computed to be 3.83. This was reinforced

by its individual mean which obtained highest value. They affirmed that the use of this technological assessment tool allows easy access of learners' examination results, manifests a user-friendly tool that can read bubble answer sheets done with pen and pencil and is timely since it can be administered through the use of smartphone. Its least individual mean still suggests strong agreement on the use of the said application.

The findings of the interview resonate the result of the survey. The informants affirmed the efficiency of the use of Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation. They were convinced that the said application had helped them save more time in checking, helped them to be more productive, acquire accurate results of learners' assessment, is user-friendly, provide quick result that leads to easy feedbacking, provide data transparency and the needed item analysis.

RECOMMENDATION

This study shows the efficiency of the use of Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation. Thus, the use of this application can be very useful among other teachers, too. With this the following recommendations are being proposed:

1. A conduct of School Leaning Action Cell (SLAC) on the use of Zipgrade Application to all teachers of Kidapawan City National High School shall be planned and implemented. This is to orient the teachers on the use of the said application.

2. That the school administration will encourage their teachers to use Zipgrade Application in assessing learners' evaluation. This is to save time from checking learners' answers specifically on summative tests and quarterly examination which are crafted in a multiple-choice format.

Action Plan

Objectives	Activities	Persons Involved	Budget Allocation	MOV (Means of Verification)
Conduct an orientation to teachers on the use of Zipgrade Application.	Teachers' orientation in the use of Zipgrade Application	All Teachers Invited Speaker	Charged to school MOOE	Pictures Narrative report
Present to school administrator the result of the study.	Presentation of Result to school administration	School Administration	Not Applicable	Research Outline Raw Data Survey Questionnaires
Submit proposal on institutional/ departmentalized subscription of Zipgrade Application	Drafting and Presentation of Proposal	School Administration	Not Application	Submitted proposal
Allocate equipment such as smartphones and load data to be used by teachers	Presentation of purchased request to Finance Office	School Administration	Charged to school MOOE	Purchase Request Form (c/o Finance Office)

Signature: Signature:

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