



## 21st CENTURY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXIT POINTS

DOI 10.5281/zenodo.13896737

**Dr. Suzette S. Belandres**

Principal IV, Victorias National High School, School Division of Victorias City, Philippines

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6066-8892>

### Abstract:

The purpose of the study was to determine the extent of 21st Century skills development among Senior High students. Identified skills were used as a descriptor/indicator showing the Department of Education is on the right track in preparing the student towards a successful future. Themes were identified to shed light on: 1. Program for Skill Development, 2. Instructional Framework for 21st Century Learning, 3. Skills Introduction and Integration within Curriculum, 4. Program Integration Assessment Findings reveal the significant difference in the extent of skills development of the participants when grouped according to age and none according to sex and track. Significant correlation was revealed between the participant's extent of skills development and the program exit points of participants. Frequency, percentage, weighted mean, T-test and Chi-square were used to measure the variables. Further, the majority of the senior high school graduating students were geared towards pursuing their studies to higher education (Colegio). Thus, the findings of the study served as the basis for the researcher to improve, update or enhance the curricula of the senior high school program to make this more responsive to the needs of the fast changing world. Further, it is recommended that the Senior High School Curriculum be revisited and identify the extent to which the 21st Century Skills are integrated in the subjects taught.

**Keywords:** K-12 Enhanced BEC, 21st Century Skills, Exit points

### Introduction:

#### *Nature of the Problem*

Section 4 of the Republic Act No. 10533, also known as the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013", encompasses at least one (1) year of kindergarten education, six (6) years of elementary basic education, six (6) years of secondary basic education. Meanwhile, from the original 4 years of Secondary (4) years of junior high school two (2) years of senior high school are added. Students of the new system will graduate at the age of 18 and will be ready for employment, entrepreneurship, middle-level skills development, and higher education upon graduation.

A career decision is very important for a senior high school graduating student to take although doing it is a lifelong process (Georgia Career Information Center, 2013). It is a continuous process throughout the development of a person. Prior to the implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum program, problems and challenges were already identified by the Department of Education based on their studies. Among those, the Philippines is the last country in Asia and one of only three countries in the world (the other two being Djibouti and Angola of Africa) with a ten-year pre-university program. In addition, poor quality of basic education was reflected in the inadequate preparation of high school graduates for the world of work which contributes to the relatively high unemployment rate among the young and the educated (Care & Valenzuela, 2012). The demands for careers of the 21st century consisted of 73% of the fastest-growing occupations that required some form of postsecondary education or training (Dohm & Shniper, 2007). Once students have undergone this, they become 2 college-prepared and more so for postsecondary education and the workforce (Cline, Bissell, Hafner & Katz, 2007) and finally be ready to participate in the social and political aspects of citizenship (Dougherty, Mellor & Smith, 2006) than are students who are not college-prepared.

As the batches of the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum program graduates are increasing, many senior high school students are hesitant and worried if they will be able to land a job, establish a business on his/her own, proceed to college, or take the higher vocational course. This is because of the demands for adaptable, highly skilled, and knowledgeable personnel to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing economy and society in today's workforce (Fleming, 2013). Moreover, enduring understandings, skills, and long-term transfer goals to prepare students for ongoing post-secondary learning and adaptability to meet the demands of today's workforce must be focused on schools. Anent to this, Secondary education institutions have focused their efforts on skills development and students' understandings for college and career readiness. Thus, K to 12 graduates must be equipped with the following 21st century skills: (1) information, media, and technology skills; (2) learning and innovation skills; (3) communication skills; and (4) life and career skills (DepEd Order 21, s. 2019, par. 18).



Since its Senior High School implementation in 2014, Murcia National High School has produced two batches of Senior High School Graduates. No knowledge of research has been identified that determined the extent of 21st Century skills development among Senior High Schools in the Division, Region or National level. It was in this regard that the researcher conducted the study to get a glimpse on how secondary senior high schools implement programs and curriculum activities.

### **Current State of Knowledge**

The implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program is considered to be one of the most significant reforms in the country. It seeks to provide the Filipino learners with the necessary skills and competence to prepare them to take on the challenges of the 21 century with regards to development (DepEd Order #21 s, 2019). It will make the Philippines basic education at par with international standards by ensuring that it is appropriate, responsive, and relevant to the learners.

It further provides that the K to 12 graduate is a holistically developed Filipino who has built foundations for learning throughout life. They are individuals equipped with information, media and technology skills, learning and innovation skills, life and career skills, and communication skills necessary to tackle the challenges and take advantage of opportunities of the 21 century. Thus, this study is timely for assessing the extent of developed skills of SHS graduates' in relation to the expected 21 century skills of the Department of Education, (Section 18 of DepEd Order No.21, s. 2019).

21st-century skills are key words which have been most searched in recent past. Yet, there seems to be amiss on how teachers should be prepared to teach 21st-century skills. Limited research insights imply lack of actionable inputs for design of teacher education programs. As the cultivation of 21st-century skills is recognized as a crucial outcome of education across all levels, it's important to grasp what these skills entail. Notably, various sources define 21st-century skills from different angles. Some reports characterize these skills as the capacity for advanced reasoning, content comprehension, and problem-solving through the application and transfer of knowledge. (Almazroa, H., & Alotaibi, W., 2023).

In the study of Amadi, C. S. (2023) suggested that future research can concentrate on students' assessment in science rather than the expected skills to be developed as suggested in the curriculum. This concentration will be more effective as the researcher will understand the delivery of science instruction and investigate students' ability to demonstrate 21st-century skills as stated in the respective curriculums. Also, the US can be compared with other developed states—aside from Canada—with necessary similar contexts to verify the findings in this research. Lastly, the science curriculum analysis for grades 10 to 12 can be conducted since these grades concentrate specifically on the science disciplines for the "knowledge" foundation.

Moreover, ICT technologies are an integral part of today's digitized society. Therefore, it is important that children acquire ICT skills as part of 21st century skills education to prepare them for later life. Drawing on the literature, seven 21st century skills can profit from the addition of ICT skills, i.e., technical, information, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creative, and problem-solving skills. While many efforts have been made to integrate ICT skills as part of 21st century skills education into primary and secondary school curricula, the implementation of these skills in early childhood education and care remains a challenge due to developmental concerns (Weber, A. M., & Greiff, S., 2023).

### **Theoretical Underpinnings**

This study is anchored on the philosophical theory of Existentialism, a philosophical thought that deals with the conditions of existence of the individual person and his emotions, actions, responsibilities, thoughts, freedom, and choice (Jack, 2016). Existentialism defined in an educational context focuses on the individual, seeking out a personal understanding of the world. Each individual characterizes for himself or herself the concepts of reality, truth, and goodness and as a result, schools exist to aid children in knowing themselves and their place in society. Kierkegaard (1843) as cited in Saeverot (2011) believed that education is the course undergone by the individual to catch up with himself and that the person who will not go through this course is not much helped by being born in the most enlightened age.

The stated philosophical thought is directly linked to this study which determined the extent of the 21st skills development among Senior High School (SHS) graduates. As the learner decides what he envisions himself to become in the future, he should equip himself of the 21st century skills in order to thrive in the future. Assessment of interests is done in the eighth grade to determine their personal preferences. The career guidance of the school intensifies support to help determine learners' career preferences that will impact their decision making as to the exit points they choose in senior high school. The SHS curriculum is designed to assist the students to hone their potential skills into becoming a reality that they can use to become productive members of society. The K to 12



curriculum provides the students with the choices they make in preparation for the world of work after graduation, or for college/university degrees if they decide to pursue higher learning. Thus it is vital to determine if indeed the students are prepared for their next journeys as entrepreneurs, employees, or students of higher learning

**Objectives**

This study aimed to determine the extent of the 21st skills development among graduates of Murcia National High School (MNHS) Senior High and its correlation to the Senior High School Program exit points. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following queries: 1) the profile of the participants in terms of age, sex and SHS track; 2) the extent of skills development of the participants when taken as a whole and when grouped in terms of communication skills, learning and innovative skills, life and career skills and information, media, and technology skills; 3) the exit points of the participants in terms of colegio, trabaho, and negosyo; 4) the significant relationship between the participants' extent of skills development and the Senior High School program exit points.

**Methodology**

This section presents the discussion of the research methodology used, the subjects and respondents of the study, the research instruments used, the validity and reliability of the instruments, the procedure for data gathering, and the statistical tools and procedure for data analysis.

**Research Design**

Descriptive Correlational Research Design was used in this study wherein the data collected attempts to test the hypothesis and answer the different questions that the researcher would like to know. The researcher would like to describe the relationship among variables without seeking to establish a causal connection. Descriptive correlational research (Calderon, 1996) is a purposive process of gathering, analyzing, classifying and tabulating data about the prevailing conditions, practices, beliefs, process, trends and cause and effect relationship, thus, making adequate and accurate interpretations about such data with or without the aid of a statistical method (Laguador, 2010). This study aimed to determine the extent of the 21st skills development among the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High (MNHS) from School Years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, and its correlation to the Senior High School Program exit points. By determining the extent of skills development among participants and its correlation to the senior High School Exit points, the researcher will be able to make a training design that would enhance/strengthen the 21st century skills among Senior High School students.

**Study Respondents**

A total of two hundred eighteen (218) graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High for the two consecutive years participated in this study. The sample size of the study was determined using the purposive sampling technique in identifying the research participants. This technique allowed the researcher to select participants based on the array of requirements identified, the selection basis for participation were: (1) Participants should be a graduate of the Murcia National High School Senior High for school years 2017- 2018 and school year 2018-2019. (2) Participants should be currently engaged with the three Senior High School exits namely; Colegio, Trabaho, or Negosyo. Given this selection criteria, the researcher got varied experiences which greatly helped with the completion of this study.

**Instruments**

The data gathering instrument for this study was a researcher-made questionnaire that was distributed to graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High. The questionnaire is composed of two parts. The first part sought information on the personal characteristics of the research participants while the second part is the questionnaire proper which includes issues and concerns that have bearings on the 21st century skills development that were acquired by the participants while engaged on the three SHS exit points. The responses of the participants were interpreted as follows:

Range	Interpretation	Description
4.50 – 5.00	Very Great Extent	Participant’s skills development is highly evident at all times.
3.50 – 4.49	Great Extent	Participant’s skills development is evident most of the time.
2.50 – 3.49	Moderate Extent	Participant’s skills development is sometimes evident.
1.50 – 2.49	Low Extent	Participant’s skills development is rarely manifested.
1.00 – 1.49	Very Low Extent	Participant’s skills development is not evident or rarely manifested.

It was subjected to validity (4.20-highly valid) and reliability (0.909-highly reliable). All of them were interpreted as worthy and good; respectively.



### Data Gathering Procedure

Data gathering started with the preparation of the research instrument for reliability testing. Communication letters were sent to the School Head of the targeted school for the conduct of reliability testing, after which the researcher subjected it to data processing using Cronbach Alpha. Another communication letter was sent to prospective research validators and the result was collected by the researcher for computations. Adequate copies of the questionnaires were reproduced. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the graduates with the assistance of some generous friends. These enabled the researcher to gather the responses of the participants and assured herself of 100 percent retrieval of the filled-up questionnaires. The work of Gines and Macatangay gives us an insight on the importance of the tracer for the graduates and gather information on their present situation and make the data gathered as basis for policy making regarding improvement of career offerings in

schools. This uses a back-tracing of students who graduated and assessed as to the extent of 21st Century Skills development they acquired in their senior high school years. The accomplished questionnaires were subjected to data processing in preparation for analysis and interpretation. Computations were done with the assistance of a Statistician and processed with the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Likewise, the statistical tables were constructed as per the consideration of the problem that was stated in the study.

### Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objective No.1 used a descriptive-analytical scheme and frequency count and percentage to facilitate the description of the profile of the participants.

Objective No.2 used a descriptive-analytical scheme and mean to determine the extent of skills development of the research participants when taken as a whole and when grouped in terms of the aforementioned variables.

Objective No.3 used a descriptive-analytical scheme and frequency count and percentage to solve for the exit points of the graduates Murcia National High School senior High when taken as a whole and in terms of the given variables.

Objective No. 4 used a comparative analytical scheme and Mann-Whitney U-test and Pearson r to determine the significant difference in the extent of skills development and the Senior High School exit points of the research participants when taken as a whole and when grouped according to variables.

### Ethical Consideration

For ethical considerations, the researcher identified and acknowledged the source of information used in this study. Citations were always practiced to respect others' ideas and works. Before the distribution of the questionnaires, the researcher sought the permission of the participants personally through individually chatting with them through social media platform, messenger, if it were alright for the m to answer questions validating their identity and whether they were graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High in 2018 and about their level of skills development while being engaged with the SHS exit points). Questionnaires were submitted to the Senior High School teacher of the school to whom these were retrieved from. The researcher strongly adheres to keeping the identity of the participants confidential and more so their answers kept secret and will be used for intellectual or research purposes only.

### Results and Discussion

This section deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered to carry out the objectives of this study. All these were made possible by following certain appropriate procedures so as to give the exact data and solution to each specific problem.

**Table 1**  
Profile of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Age	Younger (20 years & below)	167	76.6
	Older (above 20 yrs. Old)	51	23.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100</b>
Sex	Male	104	47.7
	Female	114	52.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100</b>
SHS Track	Academic	158	72.5



TVL	60	27.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100</b>

The data in Table 1 shows that out of the 218 participants, 167 of them were identified to have age ranging from 20 years old and below and were considered as the younger group. The remaining 51 participants were categorized as the older group; whose members have ages above 20 years old. This implied that the majority of the participants fall under 20 years old and below. This is similar to the study of the Philippine National Statistics Coordination Board which stated that most of the secondary school graduates were having an average age of 20 during graduation. In terms of sex, out of the 218 participants, the male group accounted for 104 members while there are 114 female participants responded to this study. This showed that there are more female SHS graduates than their male counterparts. According to the Statistics on Filipinos in public secondary schools, 64.06 percent were composed of female students while 35.94 percent were males. On the SHS track choices category, data depicted that out of 218 participants, 158 of them were Academic Track graduates while 60 participants enrolled in TVL Track. This showed that the majority (72%) of the graduates have taken the Academic Track and only a fraction (28%) of that was TVL graduates. This supported the study of Gines, (2014) which confirms that there were more Academic Track graduates in the Education sector compared to those of TVL courses.

**Table 2**  
Extent of Skills Development of graduates of Murcia National High School

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Learning and Innovative Skills	4.26	.58784	Great Extent
Effective Communication Skills	4.30	.34926	Great Extent
Life and Career Skills	4.26	.39165	Great Extent
Media and Information Technology Skills	4.28	.51943	Great Extent
Overall	4.28	.51943	Great Extent

4.50- 5.00-Very Great Extent, 3.50-4.49-Great Extent, 2.5-3.49-Moderate Extent, 1.50-2.49-Low Extent, 1.00-.149-Very Low Extent

Another concern of this study was on the extent of the 21<sup>st</sup> skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High when taken as a whole. Table 2 showed that the overall mean registered at 4.28 and interpreted to a great extent. It shows that all 21<sup>st</sup> century skills acquired by Senior High School Students were at a rate of Very Satisfactory. Although all the skills identified were interpreted to a great extent, Learning and Innovative Skills and Life and Career Skills got the lowest mean of 4.26, while Communication Skills got the highest mean of 4.30. This implied that the graduates were able to learn effective communication competencies which helped them cope with the demands of their workplace. This holds with the study of Miller, 2009 which stated that employers see communication skills as an important factor for workplace success of their employees.

**Table 3**  
Extent of Skills Development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High on Learning and Innovative Skills

Learning and Innovative Skills	Mean	SD	Interpretation
As a Senior High School graduate, I . . .			
1. love to create new things	4.29	0.81	Great Extent
2. work creatively & collaborate with others	4.21	0.81	Great Extent
3. introduce and implements innovative ideas	3.86	0.84	Great Extent
4. have a positive appreciation towards learning	4.40	0.62	Great Extent
5. am self-motivated to explore new learning	4.46	0.65	Great Extent
6. accepts criticism constructively and objectively	4.41	0.65	Great Extent
7. am adaptable and flexible towards learning	4.24	0.77	Great Extent
8. love to solve complex problems	3.84	1.09	Great Extent

4.50- 5.00-Very Great Extent, 3.50-4.49-Great Extent, 2.5-3.49-Moderate Extent, 1.50-2.49-Low Extent, 1.00-.149-Very Low Extent

Data in Table 3 shows that the extent of skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High on Learning and Innovative Skills, the 5<sup>th</sup> (am self-motivated to explore and learn new things) got the highest mean of 4.46. This meant that the graduates were self-motivated to explore new learnings and accepted criticism constructively and objectively. While the 8<sup>th</sup> item (love to solve complex problems) got the lowest mean of 3.84 which explains that the graduates were less enthusiastic in solving complex problems that they met. These findings confirmed the study of Miller (2009) on the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills through the use of online social network tools. He confirmed that high school and college students liked to explore new learnings using social media tools but did not like facing complex ideas.

**Table 4**



**Extent of Skills Development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High on Communication Skills**

<b>Communication Skills</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
As a Senior High School graduate, I . . .			
9. pay close attention to the person speaking	4.22	0.62	Great Extent
10. allow others to speak without interruption	4.40	0.68	Great Extent
11. understand other people's emotion & select an appropriate response	4.56	0.54	Very Great Extent
12. exhibit confidence by making eye contact while I's addressing someone.	4.24	0.64	Great Extent
13. love to share my experiences through verbal communication	4.33	0.68	Great Extent
14. accept critical feedback and provide constructive inputs to others.	4.27	0.59	Great Extent
15. consider my audience and on how to effectively communicate with them.	4.06	0.66	Great Extent
16. speak clearly and audibly so that I will be heard.	4.30	0.61	Great Extent

4.50- 5.00-Very Great Extent, 3.50-4.49-Great Extent, 2.5-3.49-Moderate Extent, 1.50-2.49-Low Extent, 1.00-.149-Very Low Extent

Data in Table 4 shows that the extent of skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High on Communication Skills. The 3rd item, (understand other people's emotions and select an appropriate response) got the highest mean of 4.56. This meant that when talking to someone, the graduates were considering the emotions of the one they are talking to and choose a proper response. While the participants got low on the 1<sup>st</sup> item (pay close attention to the person speaking) with the mean score of 4.21, it connotes that the graduates did not pay close attention when others were talking. These findings are in contrast with the study of Miller (2009) on the development of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills through the use of online social network tools where he concluded that high school and college students were attentive to others while they were talking.

**Table 5**

**Extent of Skills Development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High on Life and Career Skills**

<b>Life and Career Skills</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
As a Senior High School graduate, I . . .			
17. am adaptable to varied roles and other responsibilities.	4.08	0.69	Great Extent
18. deal positively with praises, setbacks and criticisms.	4.17	0.68	Great Extent
19. set achievable goals and continue learning.	4.27	0.65	Great Extent
20. utilize and manage time and work effectively	4.27	0.57	Great Extent
21. can effectively work independently or with a team.	4.17	0.75	Great Extent
22. plan, manage and prioritize work to achieve the intended result.	4.14	0.69	Great Extent
23. consider individual differences in dealing with people.	4.48	0.57	Great Extent
24. consider my career choice as the option for the future.	4.51	0.75	Very Great Extent

4.50- 5.00-Very Great Extent, 3.50-4.49-Great Extent, 2.5-3.49-Moderate Extent, 1.50-2.49-Low Extent, 1.00-.149-Very Low Extent

Table 5 revealed that the extent of skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High on Life and Career Skills, the 8th item (consider my career choice as the best option for the future) got the highest mean of 4.51. This means that the graduates considered their career choice as the best option for the future considering the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills acquisition they acquired as Senior High School Students. While the 6<sup>th</sup> item (plan, manage and prioritize work to achieve the intended result) got the lowest mean of 4.14 which explained that the graduates were low on planning, managing, and prioritizing work to achieve the positive result. These findings supported the study of Hughes (2012) on the use of project-based learning (PBL) to gain insights on the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills used by the learners. This study also substantiated claims that project-based learning was a feasible instruction in honing the 21<sup>st</sup> century skill of the student.

**Table 6**

**Extent of Skills Development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High on Media & Information Technology Skills**

<b>Media &amp; Information Tech. Skills</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
As a Senior High School graduate, I . . .			



25. have adequate skills in media & information technology.	4.06	0.77	Great Extent
26. have no difficulty in using technological skills in my chosen career.	3.89	0.76	Great Extent
27. use media and information technology to help improve my performance.	4.25	0.73	Great Extent
28. use information technology to effectively communicate with other people.	4.32	0.70	Great Extent
29. believe that media and information technology plays a vital role in any organization.	4.52	0.66	Very Great Extent
30. realize the help of technology in widening my opportunities in my chosen career.	4.42	0.71	Great Extent
31. love to work with other people using media & info. Tech.	4.12	0.88	Great Extent
32. understand the importance of media & info technology to my chosen career	4.62	0.67	Very Great Extent

4.50- 5.00-Very Great Extent, 3.50-4.49-Great Extent, 2.5-3.49-Moderate Extent, 1.50-2.49-Low Extent, 1.00-.149-Very Low Extent

Table 6 shows that the extent of skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High on Media and Information Technology Skills the 8th item (understand the importance of media and information technology to my chosen career) got the highest mean of 4.62. This meant that the graduates understood the importance of Media and Information Technology in their chosen careers. While the 2<sup>nd</sup> item (have no difficulty in choosing technological skills in my chosen career) got the lowest mean of 3.89 which explained that the graduates have little difficulty in using technology in their chosen career. These findings back the study of Geiselhofer (2010) to identify components of a new model for teaching and learning 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills.

**Table 7**  
Exit Points of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High

Variables	f	%
Colegio	208	95.4
Negosyo	1	0.5
Trabaho	9	4.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 7 depicts the Exit Points of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High. The table illustrated the distribution of the participant's engagement relative to the Senior High School exit points program that the Department of Education offered. On the three exit points, Colegio got the highest percentage in terms of frequency for it covers 95.4% of the population, while only one graduate engaged in doing business as the career choice. This implied that most of the senior high school graduates opt to pursue their higher education and become career professionals in whatever fields they venture in. This study is in support of the observation of Reyes, 2018 in her blog "What's next for Senior High School?" which narrates that the majority of the senior high school graduates in the country, especially those who took the academic track, decided to enroll in higher education. This study further supports the findings of Maurice Dence B. Bacaling where the majority of the students' career decisions after graduation will enroll in college/university.

**Table 8**  
Significant Difference in the Extent of Skills Development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High when grouped according to Age

Variables	Category	U-value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	Younger (104.43) Older (126.12)	23411**	0.031	Significant

Note: p < 0.05 \*\*

Table 8 shows the significant difference in the extent of skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High when grouped according to Age. Utilizing Mann-Whitney U - test, table 9 shows that there was a significant difference in the extent of skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High when grouped according to age [U=3411, p=0.031] at 0.05 level of significance. We can further declare that the age of the participants has something to do with the readiness of skills development that they have acquired during their stay in the school. These findings supported the study of Hughes, 2012 which revealed that the older the students were, the more they were able to learn the competencies and can easily adjust to the challenges brought about by global competition.

**Table 9**



Significant Difference in the Extent of Skills Development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High when grouped according to Sex

Variables	Category	U-value	p-value	Interpretation
Sex	Male (111.84)	5684.5	0.60	Not Significant
	Female (107.36)			

NS - Difference was not significant (  $p \leq 0.05$ )

There was no significant difference in the extent of skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High when grouped according to Sex, [U = 5684.5,  $p = 0.60$ ] at 0.05 level of significance. Table 9 data suggested that the maleness or femaleness of the participants have nothing to do with their ability to efficiently learn the competencies included in the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills development. This was in contrast with the study of Hillman, 2012 that says that female participants have a higher rate of learning as compared to their male counterparts.

**Table 10**

Significant Difference in the Extent of Skills Development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High School when they are grouped according to Track

Variables	Category	U-value	p-value	Interpretation
Track	Academic (113.44)	4118	0.134	Not Significant
	TVL (99.13)			

NS - Difference was not significant (  $p \leq 0.05$ )

Data on Table 10 revealed that there is no significant difference in the extent of skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High when grouped according to SHS Tracks, [U = 4118,  $p = 0.134$ ] at 0.05 level of significance, this means that the learning skills of the graduates did not vary whether they belong to Academic or TVL tracks. This is in contrast with the study of Masangcay (2013) which shows that Academic track students have a higher learning rate compared to those taking up TVL.

**Table 11**

Correlation on the Extent of Skills Development and the level of Exit Point Program of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High

Variables	X <sup>2</sup>	p-value	Interpretation
Track and Skill Development	0.870*	0.00	Significant

Note:  $p < 0.05^*$

Table 11 presents the statistics on the correlation on the extent of skills development and the exit point program of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High. Utilizing the chi-square test of association, table 12 shows that the extent of skills development and level of exit point program of senior high school graduates have a high positive correlation [ $X^2 = 0.870$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ] at 0.05 level of significance. This result shows that the exit point program where the Senior High School graduates of Murcia National High School engaged in did influence the level of their skills development. These findings led the researcher to reject hypothesis 3 which states that there is no correlation between the participant's extent of skills development and the Senior High School Program exit points.

### Conclusions:

With regards the Senior High School Program exit points, it revealed that most of the graduates were engaged with college education with 95.4% of the total population, while there was only one graduate who is working and the rest of the participants were engaged in business. Results further revealed that on significant differences, no significant difference exists between the extent of skills development of the graduates of Murcia National High School Senior High when grouped according to sex and chosen tracks. While in the age category, there was a significant difference with .031 p-value lower than the prescribed significant level of 0.05. Moreover, as to the correlation between the participant's extent of skills development and the level of Senior High School program exit points, results revealed that there was a significant correlation that exists with the p-value of 0.00 less than the required value of 0.05. Based on the findings, this study concludes that a shift in the curriculum from the Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) to the K to 12 Curriculum emphasized honing the skills and career pathways of Filipino learners. K to 12 Curriculum prepares students to be globally competent individuals. Further emphasized in the senior high school program the importance of career decision and the curriculum exits namely: Trabaho, Negosyo, and Colegio. This study further concludes that the majority of the senior high school graduating students pursued higher education (Colegio). Also, it is significantly noticeable that students did not want to find a job after graduation (Trabaho). Although career guidance is being highlighted in the curriculum program, there are still students who can't decide what to pursue after graduation. Moreover, the extent of 21st century skills development shows significance with the exit points they have chosen.





## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, this paper calls with the following to:

**Department of Education (DepEd).** It is recommended that the findings of this study will serve as a basis and help the agency in the formulation of legislation, laws, and policies governing the proper implementation of the program. This work may provide a basis for strengthening and establishing a comprehensive reform in the department regarding the identified pitfalls during and after its implementation.

**Schools Division Superintendent.** It is recommended to the hierarchy of the School Divisions to utilize the findings of this study during the formulation of programs, plans, and policies to make interventions to address these problems in program implementation. Further, it is recommended that the Senior High School Curriculum be revisited and identify the extent to which the 21st Century Skills are integrated into the subjects taught.

**School Heads/Administrators.** It is recommended to the school heads and administrators that the result of this study may serve as an eye-opener and make necessary adjustments in their approaches and strategies during the program implementation. The researcher recommended to the school head to conduct a three-day Senior High School Curriculum Exits Fair which would aim to help the first batch of K to 12 graduates land the different curriculum exits – Trabaho, Negosyo, and Colegio. The three-day activity corresponds to the Job Fair, Business Fair, and College/University and Vocational School Fair for the students to decide what career they want after graduation.

**Public School Teachers.** This study recommends that teachers, being curriculum implementers, should be aware of the present situation to be reminded of their important role in the successful implementation of the program in their respective stations. Further recommended to attend training relevant to the implementation of 21st century skills and its integration to the curriculum.

**Students.** This study recommends that the students be aware of the program being offered to them. The decision as to the exit points best rely on them but regardless of what exit point they choose, they must keep themselves aware and be mindful that the 21st century skills will greatly benefit them by way of equipping them with the necessary skills needed to succeed in the future.

## Acknowledgment

The researcher would like to express her sincere gratitude to all those who have supported her throughout the course of her research paper. To her adviser and panel committee, thank you for your invaluable guidance, encouragement, and expertise. Your insights and constructive feedback were instrumental in shaping this work. To her family and friends, thank you for your unwavering support and encouragement. Your belief in her kept her motivated during those challenging times. Everyone, thank you all for being part of this journey.

## References:

- Almazroa, H., & Alotaibi, W. (2023). Teaching 21st Century skills: Understanding the depth and width of the challenges to shape proactive teacher education programmes. *Sustainability*, 15(9), 7365. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15097365>
- Amadi, C. S. (2023). The Integration of 21st-Century Skills in Science: A Case Study of Canada and the USA. *Education and Urban Society*, 55(1), 56-87. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00131245211062531>
- Weber, A. M., & Greiff, S. (2023). ICT Skills in the Deployment of 21st Century Skills: A (Cognitive) Developmental Perspective through Early Childhood. *Applied Sciences*, 13(7), 4615. <https://doi.org/10.3390/app13074615>
- ACT, (2013); Conley, (2012; National Assessment Governing Board, 2009).
- Asaad, A S. and Hailaya, W M. (2004) *Measurements and Evaluation Concepts and Principles*, Manila, Rex Bookstore.
- Bacaling, Maurice Dence B., *Career Decision and K to 12 Curriculum exits of Senior*
- Cabansag, M. G. (2014) *Impact Statements on the K-12 Science Program in the enhanced*
- Calderon, J F. and Gonzales, E C. (2004) *Methods of Research*
- Cañet, A. S. (2018) *Sunstar Philippines article dated February, 2018.*



- Creed, P. A. & Gagliardi, R. E. (2015). Career Compromise, Career Distress, and Perceptions of Employability: The Moderating Roles of Social Capital and Core Self-Evaluations
- Dohm, A. & Shniper, L. (2007) Occupational employment projections to 2016. Monthly
- Eliver, A., Abule, A., Cornel, M., & Maguate, G. (2023). Teachers research Perception, competence and Work Performance: Basis for A Capability Building Plan. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM)*, 11(10), 42-73.
- Geiselhofer, M. A., (2010) A Delphi Study to Identify Components of a New Model for Teaching and Learning 21st Century Literacy Skills, Ed.D. Dissertation, Walden University.
- Gernalin, J., Bautista, M., & Maguate, G. (2023). Compliance with the code of Conduct and Teaching performance. *Valley International Journal Digital Library*, 3036-3062.
- Gines, A. (2014) Tracer Study of PNU Graduates, Philippine Normal University Taft Avenue cor. Ayala Blvd, Manila, Philippines
- Good C V. and Scates, D. (1956) *Methods of Research*, New York: Mc Graw Hill Book of Co.
- Hughes, C. (2018) *Educating for the 21 Century: Seven Global Challenges*, Brill.
- Jayme, R., & Maguate, G. (2023). Issues and Concerns of Teachers towards Modular Distance Learning Approach. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM)*, 11(08), 2848-2857.
- Laguador, J. M. (2016) Employability of Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas
- Macapagong, E., Maguate, G., & Geroso, M. J. S. (2023). Living and Teaching Internationally: Teachers' Experiences, Prospects and Challenges. *Valley International Journal Digital Library*, 2882-2894.
- Macatangay, R. (2013), in his study entitled "Tracer study of BSCS graduates of Lyceum of the Philippines University from 2004-2009.
- Ohoylan, J. G. D., & Maguate, G. (2023). TikTok: Undistressing Tool for Teachers. *International Journal of Latest Research in Humanities and Social Science (IJLRHSS)*, 6(07), 149-155.
- Senior High Strand I Enderun Colleges. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.enderuncolleges.com/senior-high-strand/>
- Tiauzon, M. J., Moyani Jr, G., Bautista, M., & Maguate, G. (2023). Management Skills of Department Heads in Relation to Employees Work performance. *Valley International Journal Digital Library*, 5327-5334.
- Zimmerman, D. (2013) *8 Essential Characteristics of Project Based Learning, Building Jewish Identity*. Behrman House, 2013.