



Senior High School Curriculum Implementation: Challenges and Experiences of Teachers

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Abstract

This study evaluated the experiences and challenges of educators teaching Senior High School (SHS) in selected private and public Basic Education schools. The study was conducted using a descriptive survey method, and respondents were chosen using stratified sampling. The data gathered were analyzed using weighted mean to assess teachers' perception of the implementation of the SHS Program. The result of the study reveals that the implementation of the Senior High School program has posed minimal challenges to the respondents. However, aspects related to inexperience, curriculum awareness, training adequacy, and student engagement continue to limit teachers' grasp of the Senior High School curriculum. Furthermore, the school administration should focus on providing targeted professional development, enhancing curriculum training, and implementing strategies to boost teachers' performance.

Keywords: teacher readiness, student engagement, curriculum awareness, professional development

Introduction

In 2013, the Department of Education in the Philippines introduced the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum, which led to the establishment of the Senior High School (SHS) Program. Education is a critical part of students' lives and society, helping to develop responsible and productive citizens essential for societal development. The education sector in the Philippines must focus on producing graduates who are not only self-focused but also responsive to societal needs. The program was implemented so that the Philippine curriculum would be at par with the world. However, the implementation of the SHS program created positive and negative impacts on learners, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders. According to the program will help equip graduates with the necessary skills to face the real world (Argate et al., 2024).

However, the recent evaluation of the Senior High School program has shown many internal and external challenges that led to the different streamlining policies to ensure that the outcome of the program will still result in its targeted goals (Abrigo & Orbeta, 2023). One of the many issues concerning SHS is the employment aspect after graduation. Based on reports, many companies are not accepting SHS graduates due to a lack of skill and knowledge. This setback is attributed to the way how learners are taught and trained. Subsequently, teachers are also having problems teaching learners, especially for skill-based subjects due to a lack of resources.

Accordingly, the availability of resources and teaching support during classroom discussions helps learners understand better (Mohammad et al., 2023). Nonetheless, the implementation of the K-12 curriculum introduced a new system to the Philippine education sector, necessitating the evaluation of human capital, infrastructure, grading systems, and school management to create an effective curriculum that produces individuals who can contribute positively to society. This K-12 educational reform was signed into law in 2013, and the first batch of graduates emerged in 2018. Before this implementation, the Philippines was the only country in Asia with a 10-year basic education system. This puts Filipino graduates at a disadvantage in the global job market, which the new educational reform aims to address. The new graduates are expected to be more competitive globally, contributing to national development and aligning with international standards (Carada et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the success of the Senior High School curriculum largely depends on the readiness and preparation of teachers. Readiness involves the mental, emotional, and professional preparedness of teachers to take on new



teaching responsibilities. Preparation involves the systematic training and support provided to teachers. The use of technology and the integration of 21st-century skills in instruction can help improve learners' understanding of the lesson (Buenvinida et al., 2020).

Additionally, the availability of teaching resources plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of the SHS curriculum. Teaching resources include textbooks, teaching aids, technological tools, and other instructional materials that support effective teaching and learning. Adequate teaching resources are essential for delivering a comprehensive and engaging curriculum. High-quality teaching materials directly affect the quality of education by enabling teachers to plan and execute lessons more effectively. Appropriate teaching resources will deliver the expected outcome of the activity or lesson (Moore et al., 2023). When teachers have access to up-to-date textbooks, journals, and other digital resources, they can provide students with relevant and diverse content that enhances understanding and retention of the lesson. Therefore, the role of educators in education is very significant in the implementation of the Senior High School Program. This important role should be reciprocated will ample support and help from the education sector of our country. Hence, after a decade of implementation of the program and the thriving dedication of Senior High School teachers, the question remains of how they were able to cope with the challenges of the SHS curriculum.

Literature Review

Readiness and Preparation of Teachers for SHS Implementation

The implementation of the Senior High School Program has created waves in the academe. Questions on the readiness of educators in handling subjects and type of learners came into the story. However, as the government promised, many trainings were provided to prepare teachers and students. Continuous professional development is crucial, as it ensures teachers are equipped with the latest pedagogical skills and content knowledge. A comprehensive professional development program could improve teacher performance and learners' achievement (Sancar et al., 2021). It is emphasized that professional development can lead to significant changes in teaching practices and student outcomes. Additionally, support systems within schools play a critical role. Fullan (2007) points out that teachers need strong support from administration and colleagues to adapt effectively to new curricula. The role of school leaders is also significant in improving teachers' readiness and preparation. Moreover, the availability of resources, such as teaching materials, technological tools, and adequate funding, is important to the improvement and satisfaction of teachers (Thomas et al., 2020). Even during the advent of the pandemic, teachers are also adopting to new normal setup of education.

Professional Development and Growth

Professional development must address the specific needs of teachers to be effective. When professional development activities fail to meet teachers' needs, it can negatively affect their performance, teaching abilities, and styles. Al Balushi (2023) found that professional development programs that do not consider teachers' needs are often impractical. Badri et al. (2017) also highlighted teachers' dissatisfaction with the amount of time spent on in-service professional development programs that did not meet their classroom needs. Therefore, professional development planners must incorporate teachers' needs into their programs. It is also highlighted that intensified training is needed before deploying teachers to their stations (Napanoy et al., 2021). When these needs are met, teachers are more likely to provide positive feedback that benefits learners' performance. Similarly, the co-teaching process also helps in the teachers' development and growth (Kervinen et al., 2022). Effective in-service training, including workshops, seminars, and refresher courses, can significantly improve instructional practices. However, teachers can learn more when a collaborative approach is being utilized (Khasawneh, 2023).

Teaching Loads and Assignments

The effective implementation of the SHS curriculum is significantly influenced by how teaching assignments and workloads are managed. "Loading" refers to the distribution of teaching hours among educators, while teaching assignments involve specific subjects. Both factors are crucial for maintaining a balanced and effective teaching environment. Based on the report of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM), 62% of the teachers in Basic Education are handling subjects that they did not major in college. For example, 98% of teachers teaching Physical Science and Physics subjects do not have a background in the field. This kind of problem can also be answered through the continuous academic development of teachers.

The Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM) also released a report last January 23, 2024, stressing the fact that teachers are burdened with many administrative loads not related to teaching. Additionally, the EDCOM report associated teacher's workload with the poor performance of learners. Excessive teaching loads can lead to



teacher burnout, reducing their effectiveness in the classroom (Jomud et al., 2021). It is stressed that workloads contribute to stress and burnout, negatively impacting teachers' performance and student outcomes. This situation was also noted as one of the causes of our poor performance in Math and Science during the Programme for International Assessment of Students (PISA) last 2018 and 2022. When teachers are overburdened, they have less time for lesson planning, grading, and providing individualized attention to students, which are critical components of effective teaching (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Furthermore, inappropriate teaching assignments—such as assigning teachers subjects outside their expertise do not provide good outcomes for learners' performance (Guiaselon et al., 2022). This mismatch can lead to superficial coverage of the curriculum, depriving students of a deep and comprehensive understanding of the subjects. Additionally, excessive workloads and poor assignment practices can demoralize teachers and inhibit student achievement and motivation (Madigan et al., 2021).

Availability of Teaching Resources

Teaching resources help bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, making learning more meaningful and engaging for students. Teaching resources and other manipulatives motivate learners to be more engaged and participative in classroom activities. For example, in science subjects, laboratory experiments are indispensable for illustrating complex concepts and fostering critical thinking skills. Technology has the potential to enhance student motivation and foster positive attitudes toward the potential to tailor learning to the unique requirements of each student (Meisuri et al., 2023). However, the lack of adequate teaching resources poses significant challenges to SHS curriculum implementation. Insufficient resources can lead to overcrowded classrooms, where teachers struggle to provide individual attention and support. The OECD (2009) reports that schools with limited resources often experience lower student performance and higher dropout rates, as students may not receive the necessary support and stimulation to succeed academically. Additionally, technology and teaching resources can be tools relied upon to improve learners' motor development and problem-solving skills (Carstens et al., 2021). Technology-driven instruction is also vital, especially for tracks and strands of the Senior High School like STEM and TechVoc.

Research Questions

This study aims to identify the key obstacles faced by educators and administrators, exploring their impact on the overall effectiveness of the SHS program.

Specifically, this study will answer the following :

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of the following:
 - 1.1 baccalaureate degree;
 - 1.2 years in teaching;
 - 1.3 training and seminars; and
 - 1.4 graduate studies?
2. What is the level of perception of respondents towards the implementation of the Senior High School Program in terms of the following:
 - 2.1 readiness and preparation;
 - 2.2 professional development;
 - 2.3 loading and teaching assignments; and
 - 2.4 available teaching resources?

Methodology

The researchers employed a descriptive survey method in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data. This approach enhances the validation of findings since it requires a more comprehensive interpretation of results. The respondents were selected using stratified sampling. An online survey questionnaire was sent to teachers for their responses. The data gathered were analyzed using weighted mean to assess teachers' perception of the implementation of the Senior High School (SHS) program. This method allowed for a comprehensive understanding of teachers' attitudes and opinions by assigning varying levels of importance to their responses. By calculating the weighted means, we were able to identify key trends and areas of concern, highlighting the factors that most significantly influence teachers' perceptions.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the analysis of data and the presentation of the results of the findings. This chapter presents the analysis of data and the presentation of the results of the findings.



Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Measure	Item	Count	Percentage (%)
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree, Course	14	46.67
	Master's Degree	4	13.33
	Masters Units	10	33.33
	Doctorate Degree	1	3.33
	Doctorate Units	1	3.33
Number of years teaching in Senior High School	0-5 years	22	73.33
	6-10 years	7	23.33
	11-15 years	0	0.00
	16-20 years	0	0.00
	>21 years	1	3.33
Subjects Taught	Specialized Subjects	6	20.00
	Core Subjects	10	33.33
	Applied Subjects	8	26.67
	Institutionalized Subjects/Elective	1	3.33
	Multi-Subject	5	16.67
Number of Training Attended relevant to SHS	1-3 times	23	76.67
	4-6 times	6	20.00
	7-9 times	1	3.33
	10-12 times	0	0.00
	>13 times	0	0.00
Additional Roles or Responsibilities in School	Club Adviser	12	40.00
	Grade Level Coordinator	3	10.00
	Department Head	0	0.00
	Subject Coordinator	10	33.33
	Guidance Counselor	2	6.67
	Others	3	10.00
TOTAL		30	100

Table 1. Presents the demographic profile of the respondents, revealing a relatively young and inexperienced group of Senior High School teachers. While many have pursued advanced studies, most lack significant teaching experience. The focus on professional development, as evidenced by participation in training programs, is encouraging.

The demographic data reveals key insights into the respondents' educational qualifications, teaching experience, training, and graduate studies. In terms of baccalaureate degrees, most respondents (46.67%) hold a Bachelor's Degree, while 33.33% have pursued graduate studies, with 13.33% already holding Master's Degrees. Only a small percentage (3.33%) have completed a Doctorate Degree.

Regarding teaching experience, the majority of respondents (73.33%) have less than five years of experience, indicating a new cohort of teachers. A smaller group (23.33%) has 6-10 years of experience, while only 3.33% have taught for over 21 years. In terms of professional development, 76.67% of respondents have attended 1-3 training sessions, indicating limited exposure to training opportunities. A smaller group (20.00%) has attended 4-6 sessions, while only 3.33% have attended 7-9 sessions, suggesting a need for more comprehensive training.

Lastly, while many respondents have begun graduate studies, only 13.33% have completed a full Master's Degree, and fewer (3.33%) hold a Doctorate Degree. This highlights the need for more teachers to pursue and complete advanced graduate studies to improve educational outcomes.

While the respondents demonstrate foundational qualifications and a willingness to participate in professional development, there is room for growth in terms of training, experience, and graduate studies.



Table 2. Perception of respondents towards the implementation of the Senior High School Program

Table 2.1 Readiness and preparation

Item No.	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		Neutral (3)		Agree (4)		Strongly Agree (5)		Mean score and quantitative description
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
I feel confident in my knowledge and understanding of the SHS subject(s) I teach.	0	0.00	1	3.33	3	10.00	16	53.33	10	33.33	4.17 (Agree)
I feel confident in my ability to differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of SHS students.	0	0.00	1	3.33	5	16.67	16	53.33	8	26.67	4.03 (Agree)
I am fully aware of the SHS curriculum's content, sequencing, and assessment requirements.	0	0.00	2	6.67	5	16.67	16	53.33	7	23.33	3.93 (Agree)
Mean											4.04 (Agree)

Legend: 1.00-1.80 - Strongly Disagree | 1.81-2.60 - Disagree | 2.61-3.40 - Neutral | 3.41-4.20 - Agree | 4.21-5.00 - Strongly Agree

As shown in Table 2.1, data reveals that respondents generally have a positive perception of their readiness and preparation for the implementation of the Senior High School (SHS) program. Most respondents feel confident in their knowledge and understanding of the SHS subjects they teach, with 53.33% agreeing and 33.33% strongly agreeing with this statement. Only a small fraction (3.33%) expressed neutrality or disagreement, resulting in a mean score of 4.17, which falls under the "Agree" category.

Similarly, when asked about their ability to differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of SHS students, the majority of respondents (53.33%) agreed, and 26.67% strongly agreed. A minority expressed neutrality (16.67%) or disagreement (3.33%), leading to a mean score of 4.03, indicating that most respondents feel confident in their instructional abilities.

In terms of awareness of the SHS curriculum's content, sequencing, and assessment requirements, respondents were slightly less confident. While 53.33% agreed and 23.33% strongly agreed, 16.67% remained neutral, and 6.67% disagreed. The mean score of 3.93 still reflects a generally positive perception but highlights an area where some respondents feel less prepared.

The average mean score for these indicators is 4.04, which corresponds to a perception of "Agree." This suggests that while most respondents feel ready and prepared to implement the SHS program, there are areas, particularly related to curriculum content and assessment, where further support or development may be beneficial.



Table 2.2 Professional Development

Item No.	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		Neutral (3)		Agree (4)		Strongly Agree (5)		Mean score and quantitative description
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
I have received adequate training and support to teach the specialized SHS subjects in my field.	0	0.00	3	10.00	8	26.67	16	53.33	3	10.00	3.63 (Agree)
The school provides adequate support for SHS teachers in terms of mentoring, coaching, and professional development.	0	0.00	2	6.67	7	23.33	18	60.00	3	10.00	3.73 (Agree)
Mean											3.68 (Agree)

Legend: 1.00-1.80 - Strongly Disagree | 1.81-2.60 - Disagree | 2.61-3.40 - Neutral | 3.41-4.20 - Agree | 4.21-5.00 - Strongly Agree

The data reflects the respondents' perceptions of professional development in the implementation of the Senior High School (SHS) program, particularly in terms of training, mentoring, coaching, and professional support. Regarding the adequacy of training and support to teach specialized SHS subjects, the majority of respondents (53.33%) agreed that they have received sufficient training, with 10.00% strongly agreeing. However, a notable portion (26.67%) expressed neutrality, and 10.00% disagreed, indicating that while most respondents feel adequately trained, a significant minority are either unsure or believe there is room for improvement. The mean score of 3.63, which falls under the "Agree" category, suggests that while respondents generally feel supported, there is potential for enhancing training initiatives.

In terms of broader support provided by the school, such as mentoring, coaching, and professional development, the data again reflects a positive perception. A substantial 60.00% agreed, and 10.00% strongly agreed that the school provides adequate support in these areas. Meanwhile, 23.33% remained neutral, and only 6.67% disagreed, which shows that the majority feel well-supported by their institution, although some respondents are either indifferent or dissatisfied. The mean score for this item is 3.73, also indicating an overall "Agree" response, further solidifying the perception that professional development efforts are effective, though there remains room for improvement.

The overall mean score for professional development stands at 3.68, which corresponds to "Agree." This indicates that respondents generally perceive the school's efforts in professional development, including training, mentoring, and coaching, as adequate and beneficial. However, the presence of neutral and disagreeing responses suggests that some teachers feel they could benefit from further training or enhanced professional support to better equip them for teaching SHS subjects. To strengthen professional development initiatives, the school could focus on addressing the concerns of those who expressed neutrality or disagreement, ensuring that all educators feel fully prepared and supported in their roles.



Table 2.3 Loading and Teaching Assignment

Item No.	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		Neutral (3)		Agree (4)		Strongly Agree (5)		Mean score and quantitative description
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
The workload associated with teaching SHS (e.g., lesson planning, grading, administrative tasks) is manageable.	0	0.00	2	6.67	3	10.00	21	70.00	4	13.33	3.90 (Agree)
I find it challenging to keep SHS students engaged and motivated in their studies.	0	0.00	1	3.33	3	10.00	15	50.00	11	36.67	4.20 (Agree)
Mean											4.05 (Agree)

Legend: 1.00-1.80 - Strongly Disagree | 1.81-2.60 - Disagree | 2.61-3.40 - Neutral | 3.41-4.20 - Agree | 4.21-5.00 - Strongly Agree

The data indicates that respondents have a generally positive perception of their loading and teaching assignments in the implementation of the Senior High School (SHS) program. The majority of teachers find their workload manageable, with 70.00% agreeing and 13.33% strongly agreeing that tasks such as lesson planning, grading, and administrative duties are well within their capacity. With a mean score of 3.90, it is evident that most educators feel confident in balancing their teaching responsibilities. The minimal disagreement (6.67%) suggests that workload-related issues are not widespread, though the school may still want to ensure that any isolated concerns are addressed to maintain this positive sentiment.

More importantly, the data highlights a significant challenge in student engagement. A combined 86.67% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they find it difficult to keep SHS students engaged and motivated, reflected in a high mean score of 4.20. This reveals a critical area where support is needed. Teachers are struggling to maintain student interest, and this challenge could impact the effectiveness of instruction and overall learning outcomes. While the workload is perceived as manageable, the demands of engaging students in meaningful and sustained learning require urgent attention.

With a strong mean score of 4.05, it is clear that teachers generally feel their teaching load is reasonable and manageable. However, the significant concern regarding student engagement cannot be overlooked. To strengthen the SHS program, the school should focus on providing additional resources, training, and strategies specifically designed to enhance student motivation. Addressing this challenge will not only improve teachers' experiences but also ensure that students remain actively involved in their education, leading to better outcomes across the board. This proactive approach will further solidify the successful implementation of the SHS program.



Table 2.4 Available Teaching Resources

Item No.	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		Neutral (3)		Agree (4)		Strongly Agree (5)		Mean score and quantitative description
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
I have access to sufficient teaching materials, textbooks, and technology to effectively implement the SHS curriculum.	0	0.00	2	6.67	4	13.33	17	56.67	7	23.33	3.97 (Agree)
The school facilities and infrastructure (e.g., classrooms, laboratories, and libraries) are adequate for delivering the SHS curriculum.	0	0.00	6	20.00	6	20.00	13	43.33	5	16.67	3.57 (Agree)
There is effective collaboration and communication among teachers, school administrators, and other stakeholders involved in SHS.	0	0.00	3	10.00	5	16.67	17	56.67	5	16.67	3.80 (Agree)
Mean											3.78 (Agree)

Legend: 1.00-1.80 - Strongly Disagree | 1.81-2.60 - Disagree | 2.61-3.40 - Neutral | 3.41-4.20 - Agree | 4.21-5.00 - Strongly Agree

The data collected on respondents' perceptions regarding implementing the Senior High School (SHS) Program reveals a generally positive view, particularly concerning available teaching resources. With a mean score of 3.97 (Agree), a significant majority of respondents (80%) believe they have sufficient access to teaching materials, textbooks, and technology necessary for effectively implementing the SHS curriculum. This confidence in resource availability fosters a conducive learning environment.

However, the adequacy of school facilities, reflected in a mean score of 3.57 (Agree), shows moderate concern, as 20% of respondents disagreed that the infrastructure—such as classrooms, laboratories, and libraries—is sufficient, indicating a need for improvement. Additionally, collaboration and communication among stakeholders received a positive mean score of 3.80 (Agree), with 73.34% affirming effective interactions among teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders. Despite this, the 10% disagreement points to ongoing challenges that must be addressed.

Overall, the combined mean score of 3.78 (Agree) indicates that while teachers feel supported in many aspects, there are areas—especially regarding facilities—that require attention. To further enhance perceptions, the school administration should conduct regular assessments of resources and infrastructure, promote initiatives to strengthen stakeholder communication and invest in upgrading facilities to better meet the demands of the SHS curriculum, ultimately creating a more supportive educational environment for both teachers and students.



Table 3. Summary

Item No.	Mean score and quantitative description
I feel confident in my knowledge and understanding of the SHS subject(s) I teach.	4.17 (Agree)
I feel confident in my ability to differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of SHS students.	4.03 (Agree)
I am fully aware of the SHS curriculum's content, sequencing, and assessment requirements.	3.93 (Agree)
I have received adequate training and support to teach the specialized SHS subjects in my field.	3.63 (Agree)
The school provides adequate support for SHS teachers in terms of mentoring, coaching, and professional development.	3.73 (Agree)
The workload associated with teaching SHS (e.g., lesson planning, grading, administrative tasks) is manageable.	3.90 (Agree)
I find it challenging to keep SHS students engaged and motivated in their studies.	4.20 (Agree)
I have access to sufficient teaching materials, textbooks, and technology to effectively implement the SHS curriculum.	3.97 (Agree)
The school facilities and infrastructure (e.g., classrooms, laboratories, libraries) are adequate for delivering the SHS curriculum.	3.57 (Agree)
There is effective collaboration and communication among teachers, school administrators, and other stakeholders involved in SHS.	3.80 (Agree)
Mean	3.89 (Agree)

Legend: 1.00-1.80 - Strongly Disagree | 1.81-2.60 - Disagree | 2.61-3.40 - Neutral | 3.41-4.20 - Agree | 4.21-5.00 - Strongly Agree

Despite a generally positive perception of their readiness for teaching, with an average mean score of 4.04 reflecting confidence in knowledge and instructional abilities, areas of concern remain. For instance, respondents expressed less confidence regarding their awareness of the SHS curriculum's content, sequencing, and assessment requirements, resulting in a mean score of 3.93. This indicates that while teachers feel prepared overall, they might require additional support and professional development focused specifically on curriculum alignment and assessment strategies.

Moreover, while 53.33% of respondents agreed they received sufficient training for teaching specialized SHS subjects, a notable 26.67% remained neutral or disagreed, highlighting a significant gap in professional development. This is reflected in the overall mean score for professional development, which stands at 3.68, suggesting that while efforts are perceived as adequate, there is still room for improvement. The presence of neutral and disagreeing responses indicates that some teachers feel inadequately prepared, which could hinder their ability to deliver high-quality instruction.

Another critical challenge identified is student engagement, with 86.67% of respondents finding it difficult to keep SHS students motivated. This high mean score of 4.20 suggests that, despite manageable workloads (mean score of 3.90), teachers struggle to engage students effectively, which can negatively influence learning outcomes. Therefore, addressing this challenge is paramount for the successful implementation of the SHS program.

Conclusion

The result of the study shows that the implementation of the Senior High School Program does not pose any challenges or difficulties to teachers. Thus, teachers demonstrate foundational qualifications and a generally positive outlook on their readiness and preparations, challenges related to inexperience, curriculum awareness, training



adequacy, and student engagement persist. However, to strengthen the implementation of the Senior High School program, the government, school leaders, and administrators should focus on providing targeted professional development, enhancing curriculum training, and implementing strategies to boost teachers' skills, knowledge, and performance. By addressing these challenges, the school can foster a supportive environment for both educators and students, ultimately improving educational outcomes.

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