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Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of the Education Program among Senior High School Students in The Philippines

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A B S T R A C T

The K-12 Education Program is a new education curriculum in the Philippines that further develops students' skills and concepts in different strands to prepare them for tertiary education and exhibit competence as lifelong learners; however, its implementation has several drawbacks. Thus, researchers identified and analyzed the typical issues that Sultan Kudarat State University –Laboratory High School SHS students faced in implementing the K-12 Education Program and dealt with those challenges and coping strategies. This study employed the qualitative research design, specifically, the phenomenological approach. Focus group discussion and individual interviews were employed to get the needed data. Based on the study findings, students perceive the new curriculum as a significant burden, with the top challenges of having more years in high school, lack of assistance, and learning facilities. They also agreed on the benefits of the new educational system, which include more knowledge and learning, increased competency, and future career chances. Despite the difficulty adjusting to the K-12 program, they tend to cope with the challenges using various coping strategies such as time management, adjustment, acceptance, peer support, as they are aware of the program's value to their academic advancement. As a result, this research can assist students in preparing for the obstacles they may face in senior high school and recommend possible coping mechanisms.

A R T I C L E   I N F O

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a significant social investment for families or parents as well as the entire nation. Our world relies on the future, and the end will be the present generation that we have. Education is the most trusted way to have a successful life. Our forefathers always remind us to educate ourselves for our future, as what Doctor Jose Rizal our National hero says "Ang Kabataan Ang Pag-asa ng Bayan".

As the Philippine government moves for this goal and perspective, the Basic Education Act of 2013 (Republic Act 10533), commonly referred to as the K-12 Program, was raised and implemented in the whole island of the Philippines (Abulencia, 2015). This education program has so many advantages in different aspects of students' lives as future leaders. It includes the better experiences they will encounter in the senior high school that they can use to find jobs in different parts of the world.

However, as this program implementation gains compliments, it also gains many disadvantages raised by the people who will experience the K-12 program, both parents and students of the Philippines (Montebon, 2014). Some parents of the students who will have the financial responsibility for the students who will take the K-12 program hinder the program's implementation. Students who will experience do not agree to these programs as they shared the same opinion of added responsibility and hardships in their education years.

Thus, those conflicts in the Implementation of the K-12 Program prompted the researchers to study the challenges encountered by the students or the senior high school students, specifically in Sultan Kudarat State University Laboratory High School.

2. METHOD

The research design used in this study was qualitative, particularly the phenomenological approach. Phenomenological research design is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. To gather the data, **Table 1** shows contextualized themes from the key informants' responses.

Table 1. Contextualized themes from the key informants' responses.

Themes	
Importance to the society	• Perfomance and knowledge
	• Further job opportunity
	• World competency
Advantages to the educational system	• Additional knowledge
	• Preparatory for tertiary education
	• Future job opportunities
Negative feedbacks to the implementation of K-12 education program	• Years wasted and delayed professuin attainmnet
	• Lack of facilities
	• Lack of financial support
Common challenges as a SHS student	• Time Management
	• Difficulties in academic and learning environment
	• Lack of financial support
Strategies in over-coming challenges from K-12 education program	• Self – trust and time management
	• Adjustment and acceptence
	• Comfort from people

We conducted interviews using guide questionnaires that contained information about the different challenges encountered in implementing the K-12 Education Program. After collecting the data, it was recorded, analyzed, classified, and organized using necessary measures in determining the results.

We transcribed and did the initial analysis of the raw data. After all the interviews were transcribed, similar responses were categorized into themes. All themes were identified by title and then defined by the primary researcher.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
3.1. Theme 1: Importance to the Society

Based on the interpretation of the data gathered, students of Sultan Kudarat State University Laboratory High School perceived the K-12 education program as a good indicator that can contribute to society. It boosts the students' performance and knowledge that they can use for the job they want and can help in global competency that involves skills and talents. Performance and knowledge are the program's significant contributions as it aims to nurture individuals to become truly human beings. However, due to global competition, there is a necessity to holistically develop students to be competitive like students worldWIDE, Abulencia, (2015). The SHS curriculum is intended to prepare students to enter college/university, work in the industry, or be an entrepreneur. This is why respondents shared their insights and thoughts on the K-12 education program as a valuable tool for a better society. However, Mohammad (2016) stated in his article that we should have a receptive mind to assess and adopt the ideas and suggestions of people about this educational system as they are part of what we call society.

3.2. Theme 2: Advantages of K-12 Education Program on the Educational System

Based on the analysis of the data, additional knowledge is the K-12 education programs' high advantage in the Philippines' educational system. Quality education is what our government wants us to have; additional knowledge helps students become better persons with the appropriate skills for their future profession and desired job. Mohammad (2016), in his article '*the perception of the parents and students on the implementation of k-12 basic education program in the Philippines'* emphasized that the K – 12 Program's primary goal is to calibrate graduates with knowledge and skills that will arm Filipino with excellence in the global standards. In addition, Buabeng-Andoh (2015) reveals that the K-12 education program can integrate information and communication technology in education. However, Abulencia (2015) stressed in his article 'the unravelling of the k-12 program as an education reform in the Philippines" that there are beneficiaries of the K-12 Program, but some sectors will be drastically affected. The sectors that will be affected are those who failed to support this new educational program, and that there is a need to be open-minded with the ideas and have an open eye and listening ear to consider and integrate the ideas and suggestions of people.

3.3. Theme 3: On the Negative Feedbacks on the K-12 Education Program

Based on the insights of the participants, delayed professional attainment and wasted years are the common negative feedbacks from the participants. Most of them answered delay of professional attainment and two wasted years as they consider this new educational program. Two years is a long worthy time for the students and parents. With the implementation of the new program in the Philippines, they tend to accept and embrace the additional two years as Senior High School students. Abulencia, (2015) stated that the implementation of the K-12 program would drastically affect some sectors in society. Also, he

further stressed that the K-12 Program would be a burden on parents and students, not just for an emotional, physical reason but also in the financial aspect because this program will prolong the years of stay in the students' school (Mohammad 2016). Regardless of the negative feedback, the K-12 system desires to improve Filipino students' mathematical, scientific, and linguistic competence. With the new curriculum, DepED is determined to offer higher quality education through tracks. Each track will provide students ample time to master their field and enhance their skills. The K-12 graduates will become globally competitive and will obtain a spot in the still labor market (Three practical benefits of the Philippines to the K-12 Program).

3.4. Theme 4: Common Challenges They Encounter as an SHS Student in Sultan Kudarat State University – Laboratory High School

Based from the responses of the participants, time management is the biggest or common challenge that the SHS students encounter. Students, just like athletes, shared their opinions as they experienced difficulty in balancing their time. Also, non-athlete students experienced a hard time balancing their personal life, school works, activities, and assignments. With this, Mohammad (2016) stated in his article '*the perception of the parents and students on the implementation of k-12 basic education program in the Philippines*' that the K – 12 Program will be a burden on parents and students. He said that it could affect the emotional and physical health of the students. Students' managing their own time generates pressures on their emotional and physical health. The factors that were tested covered academic content area, grade level of the students, roles of the distance learning program, roles of the instructor, length of the program, type of school, frequency of the distance learning experience, pacing of instruction, the timing of instruction, instructor preparation and experience in distance education, and the setting. On the contrary, the K – 12 Program is abreast with a new idea to fully develop and cultivate students' skills so that they will not become liabilities to the country, but instead, these will be valuable citizens of this country. (Mohammad, 2016).

3.5. Theme 5: Over-Coming the Challenges of the K-12 Education Program

Based on the analysis of data gathered, according to the participants, they encounter challenges as SHS high school students, and they tend to seek answers to cope with these difficulties. Trust oneself is one way. Also, strengthening one's faith can build a strong foundation as a student. Time management is also a way to settle what one has to do and needs to do. For Mohammad (2016), this K – 12 Program will burden parents and students, not just for emotional, physical reasons but also in financial aspects as it will prolong the years of stay in school. However, Abulencia, (2015) states in his article 'the unravelling of k-12 program as an education reform in the Philippines' that education is a significant social investment for families or parents and the entire nation. Hence, students who have struggled in the new educational system need to fight and go through the challenges they face, for they cannot do anything about the new educational curriculum since it is one of the mechanisms to attain the profession they want.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, researchers formulated the following conclusions: Senior high school students of the Sultan Kudarat State University faced common challenges as they experienced the K-12 Education program. These are how they manage their time (time

management), how they cope with the new educational system (coping mechanism), and parents' lack of source for additional two years (financial source). They also shared the same insights as to the advantages of the new educational systems' not just to them but also to society - job opportunities, additional learnings, and the preparation for tertiary education, to name a few. K – 12 Program aims to equip the graduates with knowledge and skills that will arm Filipino graduates to be at a solid ground where if not for excellence with foreign countries but at least, quality workers (Nhelbourne, 2016). In addition, the K-12 education program can be the instrument for the integration of information and communication technology in education (Buabeng-Andoh, 2015). Meanwhile, they also shared negative feedbacks for the program. These are lack of facilities, lack of financial support, and the delay of professional attainment. Though senior high school students faced those challenges and difficulties upon dealing with the new educational system, they likely have ways to boost their minds and confidence to meet the challenges despite the challenges. According to Mohammad (2016), the K – 12 Program will be a burden on parents and students, not just for emotional, physical reasons but also in financial aspects because this program will prolong the years of stay in the school of the students. Thus, students tend to adapt and learn to their new educational system even though it has so much to burden them. They even motivate themselves and work on their mindsets to overcome the stress and pressure that the new educational system has brought. With the said questions and difficulties that the senior high school students of the Sultan Kudarat State University experienced, they continue to battle with the new educational program's hardships. They shared those things like time management and accepting reality. By seeking help from those around them, like their family, relatives, friends, and classmates, they tend to overcome them as their coping strategies to continue their journey as senior high school students.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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