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BRIDGING POLICY AND PRACTICE: EVALUATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC TRACK ACROSS KEY EDUCATIONAL PILLARS

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Abstract

Background: The Philippine Senior High School (SHS) program is designed to prepare students with the appropriate skills and competencies for tertiary education and employment. This investigates the views of teachers and administrators regarding the effectiveness of the program, specifically in curriculum implementation, instructional strategies, and resource management. Although results show that major elements, including lesson planning and student skill building, are wholly in place, there are shortcomings in career counselling, community engagement, and program monitoring. Overcoming these issues through improved cooperation among educators, policymakers, and industry stakeholders can further strengthen the quality and effectiveness of SHS education.

Result: The findings show that both teacher and administrator respondents see the Senior High School (SHS) program as implemented, especially in terms of curriculum alignment, instructional strategies, and utilization of resources. The most highly rated indicators are the integration of ICT in education, deployment of teachers by expertise, and creation of work immersion modules. Yet some, such as career guidance, community engagement, and monitoring of the program, had slightly lower ratings, which are areas for concern. In spite of a slight gap in perceptions between teachers and administrators, overall findings indicate that the SHS program is well positioning students with pertinent skills for employment, calling for ongoing cooperation and improvement.

Conclusion: It suggests that the Senior High School (SHS) program is effectively implemented, equipping students with relevant knowledge and skills for the job market. However, areas such as career guidance, community involvement, and program monitoring require further enhancement to ensure comprehensive student development.

Keywords: Policy, Practice, Senior High School Academic Track, Educational Pillar.

Introduction

The adoption of the Senior High School Academic Track has drawn much interest from scholars and policy-makers because of its possible effect on student achievement and educational advancement. Various research works have delved into the difficulties and benefits entailed in its implementation, giving insights on administrative and instructional habits that contribute to its success or impede its performance. The realization of this program calls for thoughtful consideration of school administrative practices, instructional strategies, curriculum development, facilities, and support services. Effective leadership, good management practices, sufficient allocation of resources, and effective coordination among school administrators, teachers, and stakeholders are important in making it a success.

By studying these variables, researchers and policymakers can have insights into efficient methods for strengthening the implementation of the program and enhancing the learning experience of senior high school students. Technology and innovative teaching approaches can enhance learning experiences and outcomes for students in special programs. Analyzing the integration of technology involves assessing the use of assistive technologies, educational apps, interactive multimedia, and virtual learning platforms to support and enhance instruction. Research by Wang et al. (2020) highlights the potential of technology to promote accessibility and personalized learning experiences in special education.

Methods

Research Design

The descriptive correlational research design was used in analyzing the relationship of the assessment on the administrative and teaching practices on implementation of the different senior high school academic track.

Respondents of the Study

The central focus population for this study consist of Senior High students, teachers, and administrators within the Schools Division of Manila.

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Instruments of the Study

An expert has validated the self-structured questionnaires in the survey after undergoing content validation. The outcome demonstrated that the modified-structured questionnaire is appropriate and was approved for use as a research instrument. Additionally, a reliability test employing the internal consistency technique is performed on the research instrument. A test's internal consistency evaluates the relationship between several items meant to measure the same concept (Middleton, 2022).

Result

Demographic Profile

Age

The data presented the percentage and frequency distribution of respondents by age. Among teacher-respondents, the 31–40 age group ranked first with 70 respondents while the lowest is and 51 & above group (11.11%).

For administrator-respondents, the 51 & above group ranked first with 8 respondents (40%), followed by the 31–40 and 41–50 groups shared place with 6 respondents each (30%).
Overall, the 31–40 age group had the highest representation among both teachers and administrators, with a total frequency of 76 (41.76%).

Sex

The data shows percentage and frequency distribution of respondents according to sex, frequency distribution, indicator female, dominated the respondents, got a frequency of 100 and 12 respectively, which is 61.73% and 61.54% of the total sample. While indicator male, got a frequency of 62 and 8, which is 38.27% and 38.46% respectively of the total sample.

Highest Educational Attainment

For teacher respondents, the largest percentage has a Bachelor's Degree with MA/MS units (26.54%), followed by those having an MA/MS Degree (24.07%). Both the Bachelor's Degree and the MA/MS Degree with EdD/PhD units have the third-highest percentage (20.99%), while the EdD/PhD Degree has the lowest (7.41%).

Among respondent-administrators, the EdD/PhD Degree is most prevalent (40%), followed by MA/MS Degree with EdD/PhD units (35%). The Bachelor's Degree with MA/MS units (15%) and MA/MS Degree (10%) are third and fourth, respectively, with no administrators indicating only a Bachelor's Degree.

Rank

Teacher III had the highest representation among teacher-respondents, with 102 respondents (62.96%). While, Master Teacher I ranked second, with 48 respondents (29.63%). Teacher II ranked third, with 9 respondents (5.56%).

Level of Implementation of the SHS Program Academic Track

Administration

The findings show that teachers and administrators rated highly the assignment of teachers by expertise and their participation in student projects. Other fully implemented elements were parent-teacher conferences, lesson planning, and establishing clear program goals. Lower ratings were accorded to monitoring program implementation, procurement of learning materials, and assessing the effectiveness of different activities in meeting program outcomes, which are areas for improvement.

Articulating the concepts of program theory, provides a conceptual foundation for refining and developing the program, as well as new program concepts. A distinct picture emerges as a result of this (Sharpe, 2011). Policymakers will be able to use a successful program theory that has been evaluated. Additional comparable programs to create equivalent structures because of the importance of this data in practice, for a specific purpose similar services will be able to thrive as a result of the study.

Instruction

The findings emphasize that both teachers and administrators acknowledge the complete implementation of the SHS curriculum, with the most highly rated indicator being lesson alignment with curriculum content. However, a dramatic perceptual gap is present in that administrators uniformly rated higher than teachers. Lower ratings were seen for career guidance, helping undecided students with course enrollment, and using proper teaching strategies, which indicate potential improvement areas in student support and instructional method.

According to Sigrid, M., (2018), The quality of teaching depends on program-level curriculum alignment, or the constructive coherence between teaching, learning, and assessment. Ensure that every activity contributes to the realization of learning objectives in order for learning objectives to become actual learning outcomes and, therefore, to optimize students' learning. Alignment may be achieved rather simply within the framework of a single course or module, but it is more challenging to achieve alignment at the program level.

Curriculum

The data indicates that both teachers and administrators perceive the Senior High School (SHS) curriculum as fully implemented, with strengths in integrating higher-order thinking skills,

ensuring equal access to quality instruction, and incorporating ICT. However, the lowest-rated indicator for both groups was community involvement in student development, suggesting a need for stronger engagement with external stakeholders.

Students who have a good education are able to develop all of their talents and abilities in order to fulfill their full potential as human beings and members of society as stated by Rashid, A (2019). As a result, quality education bears a thorough examination of the educational institution's goals for each student. Set a high benchmark for the learner and assist them in achieving it. For a country's total economic, social, and moral prosperity, there is no substitute for high-quality education. Only a high-quality education can turn students into skilled workers who can compete in the global job market. Educational institutions, teacher training, infrastructure development, and ICT facilities have already been built by our administration.

Facilities

The full implementation of the Senior High School (SHS) Academic Track program in terms of facilities was generally rated as fully implemented by teacher and administrator respondents alike, although there were some areas rated as only implemented. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) integration got the highest rating, indicating its contribution towards enhancing educational access and quality. Yet, there are still concerns over the provision of TVL standards and facility development. The Department of Education's improvement in maximizing resources and infrastructure enhances the aim of offering quality education, with ICT at the forefront of digitalization.

As Fu, J., (2013) have stated, ICT is used as a tool for students to discover learning topics, solve problems, and provide solutions to the problems in the learning process. ICT makes knowledge acquisition more accessible, and concepts in learning areas are understood while engaging students in the application of ICT.

Services

The findings shows that both school administrators and teachers highly valued the building of students' knowledge and competencies appropriate for the job market as the most completely applied element. The top-rated measures also included the development of work immersion modules, schools-cooperatives partnership, compliance with legislative policies, and industry-influenced contextualization of SHS subjects. Though all the indicators were scored as fully implemented, there were small perceptual differences between the two groups. The study points to the common realization that the SHS program has an important function of equipping skilled workers with marketable skills, highlighting the significance of working together between education specialists and practitioners to ensure proper implementation.

Bacaling, M. (2018), stated that the shift of curriculum from Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) to Special Program Curriculum emphasized honing the skills and career pathways of Chinese learners. Special Program Curriculum prepared students to be globally competent individuals. Moreover, it was emphasized in the senior high school program the importance of career decision and the four curriculum exits (Trabaho, Negosyo, Kolehiyo, and Middle Skills Development).

Indicators	AWM	SD	VI	R	AWM	SD	VI	R	
2.1 Administration	3.53	0.60	FI	3	3.56	0.72	FI	5	0.17
2.2 Instruction	3.49	0.67	I	4	3.73	0.53	FI	3	0.24
2.3 Curriculum	3.59	0.54	FI	1	3.77	0.45	FI	2	0.18
2.4 Facilities	3.37	0.74	I	5	3.70	0.55	FI	4	0.33
2.5 Services	3.55	0.60	FI	2	3.78	0.45	FI	1	0.23
Composite Weighted Mean	**3.51**	**0.64**	**FI**	**0**	**3.67**	**0.57**	**FI**	**0**	**0.16**

Legend: 1.00 – 1.74 Not Implemented (NI); 1.75 – 2.49 Moderately Implemented (MI); 2.50 – 3.24 Implemented (I); 3.25 – 4.00 Fully Implemented (FI); AWM – Average Weighted Mean; SD – Standard Deviation; VI – Verbal Interpretation; R – Rank; MD – Mean Difference

Conclusion

The study concludes that both administrators and teachers view the Senior High School (SHS) program as being implemented at full capacity, with major areas of strength including curriculum alignment to the needs of the job market, teacher capabilities, and the development of work immersion. However, community participation, career counseling, and program monitoring were slightly lower rated. These imply the importance of increased interaction between educators, industry, and policy-makers in order to further improve

student support systems and guarantee the program's sustainability in producing highly prepared graduates.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest in the conduct of this research. Results have been deduced objectively; nothing influenced this result by any individual, monetary, or institutional interests. In effect, utmost endeavors were in order to conduct a bias-free operation of gathering and analyzing the data into interpretation and producing a study based on merit, away from research inconsistencies.

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