

Research Review on K-12 Curriculum Implementation in The Philippines: A Generic Perspective

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Manuscript information:

Received: January 18, 2022

Revised: May 12, 2022

Accepted: May 21, 2022

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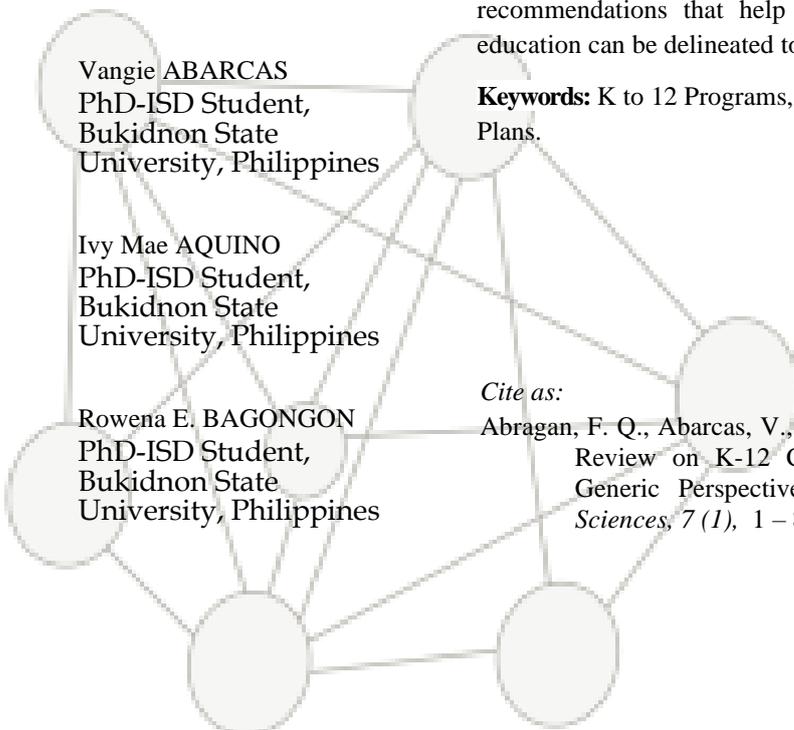
Abstract

When people heard news of the K-12 program implementation in the country, it received mixed reactions. Suddenly, there was a combination of backlashes and praise in the background with the students left puzzled on whose voice to listen to. There are still challenges and standards of quality to consider but the important thing is to establish that development is present as a result of the new program. Now that the K to 12 system is fully implemented in the country, how did it affect the Philippine education system? And was it successful in its objectives prior to implementation? This analysis used a systematic approach and review design to come up with a general idea that answers the main objectives of this research review. This research specifically looked into the different perspectives of the teachers, parents and students on the implementation of the K-12 program in the Philippines which added two more years before a student can proceed to college. It also described the various problems that arise as a result of the implementation of this new program and the action plans established by the government to address these issues. Moreover, to make possible recommendations that help improve the curriculum to make sure that quality education can be delineated to all the learners who will be part of this new program.

Keywords: K to 12 Programs, Challenges of the New Program, Perspectives, Action Plans.

Cite as:

Abragan, F. Q., Abarcas, V., Aquino, I. M. & Bagongon, R. E. (2022). Research Review on K-12 Curriculum Implementation in The Philippines: A Generic Perspective. *European Journal of Educational and Social Sciences*, 7 (1), 1 – 8. <https://www.doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7272126>



INTRODUCTION

Education is a weapon to improve one's life. It is probably the most important tool to change one's life. Education for a child begins at home. It is a lifelong process that ends with death. Education certainly determines the quality of an individual's life. Education improves one's knowledge, skills and develops the personality and attitude. One of the benefits of education is that the educational system teaches us how to obtain and develop critical and logical thinking and make independent decisions. Education is the key to turn a weakness into a strength. It offers different tools and ways to understand problems that lay ahead of us and helps resolve them. More importantly, education provides us with considerable mental agility to make the right decisions and spring into action when needed.

The Philippines is the last country in Asia and one of the three nations that has a ten year pre university education program before the implementation of the K-12 system. K-12 program indicates a good quality of education especially for the standard of education system worldwide, qualification to work abroad, and development of skills in employment. K to 12 program implementation aimed at creating more skilled students with basic skills for lifelong learning and employment. This program promoted the mutual recognition of Filipino learners and professionals in other countries because they were able to master the skills and learn the core competencies which were necessary to meet the demands of the global market.

The goal of implementing the K - 12 Basic Education Program is to create a functional basic system that will produce productive and responsible citizens equipped with the essential learning and employment. This is in line with the agenda of the President Aquino of having quality education as a long term solution to poverty. The K - 12 Education vision from the Department of Education (DepEd, 2010) every graduate of the Enhanced K - 12 Basic Education Program is an empowered individual who has learned through a program that is rooted on sound principles and geared towards excellence (Mohammad, 2016).

In the study of Caup, D. and Buda, A. (2017), The DepEd lays high confidence on the K+12 Program in providing better quality of education that is based on spirally progressing curriculum starting with simple topics moving toward increasing complexity in order for the learners to gain mastery of concepts and skills. Graduates of the K+12 program are therefore envisioned as better prepared to compete globally for employment opportunities. This change on basic education cycle caused the conduct of stakeholder consultations, policy discourses, and education summits to gather inputs and feedback on the educational reform; however the K to 12 Program remains an issue of inquiries on its implementation and effectiveness. It continuously solicits different responses among various individuals from the students, teachers and parents. The grade 7 students are put to a certain level of confidence performing varied learning activities aided with learning modules in the K to 12 Program.

This change on basic education cycle caused the conduct of stakeholder consultations, policy discourses, and education summits to gather inputs and feedback on the educational reform, however, the K to 12 Program remains an issue of inquiries on its implementation and effectiveness. It continuously solicits different responses among various individuals from the educators, students, parents and various stakeholders (Cabansag, 2014). There were also too many controversies and praises that hound this new law, however, many schools in the country have to buckle up to cope with the demands as they have already been competing globally even before the passage of the law. And in order to meet the global demands, the schools have to face the challenges that come with the K to 12 program implementation (Calderon, 2014).

From the different positive notes on the implementation of the K-12 program, a number of challenges was also seen and experienced by parents, teachers and students. Despite all the problems found as a result of the implementation of this new curriculum, many had believed that the long-term effects of the K to 12 program were very beneficial to all Filipino graduates. Therefore, support and encouragement for the betterment of the new educational system implemented by the government be shown by all Filipinos. By



investing more time and resources to education, national growth and development can truly be achieved.

Statement of the Problem

This research paper would like to know the perspectives of teachers, parents and students on the implementation of K to 12 programs in the country. This research used a systematic procedure to analyze the data.

Specifically, it wishes to answer the following questions:

1. What are the challenges of the K to 12 program upon its implementation?
2. What are the perspective of teachers, students and parents on the implementation of this new curriculum?
3. What are the proposed action plans that would address the gaps seen in this new curriculum?
4. What are the recommendations that can be created to address the problems under the implementation of K to 12 programs?

METHOD

This research paper used a systematic search and review design where personal views were analyzed to understand and to provide insights as to how the problem can be resolved. Data were extracted to find some information which are very useful in creating new knowledge and understanding.

The content and presentation of this paper utilized related studies or reviews as a point of reference in finding comprehensive information that answers the questions of this research paper. Moreover, this looks into possible solutions to address the gaps of the existing issues identified on the implementation of the K to 12 programs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Challenges of the K to 12 program upon its implementation

A research conducted by Combalicer (2016) aimed at identifying/investigating the practices of Kindergarten, Elementary and Secondary Teachers in the implementation of K+12 curriculum and the underlying problems along with its implementation with an end view of determining the teachers' best practices to come up with a more effective implementation of the Senior High School. The study revealed that teacher-respondents lack seminars, trainings and readings related to the area of their specialization and of the K+12 curriculum imply that these hinder them to design lessons/activities prescribed in the newly implemented curriculum. This also implies the need for teachers to be familiar with the latest teaching strategies and techniques to create fun and engaging lessons. Also, many teacher-respondents do not expose the learners to community resources, integration of the community as resources is not evident imply the needs of the students to be engaged to excursion/fieldtrips to make learning effective, direct and authentic. Evidently, most of the teacher-respondents lack appropriate technology-assisted instruction and ICT-related material which implies that teachers have to be equipped with knowledge and skills in manipulating such. This helps to catch the learners' interests especially nowadays that they are in the digital age. The more engagements to the resources, the more that learning occurs.

Moreover, many teacher-respondents need to be resourceful enough to address the scarcity of teaching



materials imply that teachers must tap community members and materials in the local community which can be very good substitutes for what are needed to implement the curriculum. Some can be resource speakers. They can be interviewed. The whole community can serve as a curriculum resource thus each has a great stake in curriculum implementation. This study found out the top ten most pressing problems encountered by the teachers in the initial implementation of the K+12 Curriculum such as: no available modules for use in the different subject areas, very few books and other references are found in the school library, very limited related reading materials are available in the community library, very few available materials for projects and research work, absence of resource persons to enhance discussions on specific topics, inadequate seminar-workshops/symposia to broaden knowledge on K+12, lack of technology-assisted instructional materials, insufficient computers and other IT equipment in aid of instruction, community resources are meager for student exposure, and lack of textbooks in the different subject areas (Combalicer, 2016).

B. Perspective of teachers, students and parents on the implementation of new curriculum

The goal of implementing the K - 12 Basic Education Program is to create a functional basic system that will produce productive and responsible citizens equipped with the essential learning and employment. This is in line with the agenda of the President Aquino of having quality education as a long-term solution to poverty. The K - 12 Education vision from the Department of Education (DepEd, 2010) every graduate of the Enhanced K - 12 Basic Education Program is an empowered individual who has learned through a program that is rooted on sound principles and geared towards excellence.

In the study of Jennilyn (2013), truly, the implementation of K - 12 program of the Department of Education is a great help to every student. But some which has a noble purpose for every Filipino pupil or student. From their own point of view or perspective this is another burden on the part of the students and parents. It will add to the financial problem of the individual family, and the advantage of implementing this program are for the people who wants to continue studying or work abroad because the curriculum is almost parallel to another country. This is some of the problems that this study is going to focus on and to hear the sentiments of the parents regarding the implementation of K - 12 program.

Furthermore, the study of Caup and Buda (2017) revealed that students “strongly agreed” that K to 12 offers balance approach to learning and they believed that the K to 12 program will help them become equipped with the skills, competencies, and receive recognized certificates equivalent to a two-year college degree. It was also revealed that the student respondents believed that, the DepEd entered into agreements with the industries for employment opportunities in the K to 12 graduates, there will be matching competency requirements and standards to the skills needed to the labor market, it is sufficient to prepare students for work, and it allows Certificates of Competencies and National Certificates.

From a teacher’s point of view, as quoted from the Acosta study, I. and Acosta, A., (2016) found that there were five predisposing factors, namely: qualifications, hiring requirements, streamlining of courses, management of surplus labor, and alternative programs to assess the readiness of senior high school teachers and higher education institutions to ensure stability and to encourage and protect the health of the faculty involved and other workers in the higher education field.

A positive impression was identified by the study by Lacorte, E. (2011) as mentioned in the study of Dizon, et al. (2019) that teachers are likely to have been adequately prepared for the implementation of the K to 12 programs in terms of teaching skills, teaching strategies and teaching materials and there was a considerable variation in the readiness of private and public schools, as well as the readiness of their respective teachers, and this, was mostly attributable to the different settings and conditions in the two



groups of schools.

Another study Caup and Buda (2017) cited that teachers believed that K to 12 program provides balance approach to learning, promotes mastery of competencies needed in job markets, and the graduates will be equipped of skills and competencies recognized equivalent to the two-year college degree. Moreover, the teachers “agreed” to only one statement, and the program is less expensive for the parents.

In the K to 12 program as cited by (Madamba, 2011), the DepEd official further stated, teachers are provided guides aligned to the new system. But teachers can modify these modules to fit the needs of their students. She also mentioned that consultations were made with the local government units and nongovernment organizations on the K to 12. The education expert also pointed out that providing quality education cannot be done by schools alone, but partnership is a must. On the other note critics have always looked on to parents as the primary victims of the K12 education system. Given the additional two years in high school, they insist that this program will bring no good and only additional financial burden for poor Filipino families.

During the survey conducted in the study of Mohammad (2016) the parents were still commenting and asking so many questions as if K -12 is a new program. Is K - 12 really needed or necessary? Is the additional two years the answer to the emerging problems in our country? “Why not invest on teachers’ education and on their salary to be able to hire competent ones instead of adding two more years?” These are the same questions asked several times especially by the parents. Some believe, simply adding two more years in the education of a child does not guaranty that the child will have the skills they hope to achieve.

Mohammad, N. (2016), stressed that some parents viewed this program in a negative light, which gave them and their children a different burden both physically and financially, but some parents viewed the program positively and thought that it helped learners to choose and decide the career that best suits their skills. Different perspectives were identified from various studies from those individuals who were involved with the change of the educational system of the country. There were positive and negative impressions however, let it be viewed in wider perspectives the beneficial effects of this new curriculum. It was not an aim of this new curriculum to give additional years for sufferings but rather to standardized the educational system of the country where it strengthened the academic subjects and prepared students’ work readiness as skills were enhanced and developed. Furthermore, this new system produced graduates who were competent, skills and highly employable

However, the study of Caup and Buda (2017) implied that the parents understand that the K to 12 program give assurance to the job market that will open to K to 12 program because, the department of education (DepEd) has entered into an agreement with business organization and local and foreign chambers of commerce and industries that graduate will be employed, the K to 12 program matches with the competency requirements needed by the labor market K to 12 is sufficient to prepare K to 12 graduate in work, help students acquire certificate of competency and national certifications, the K to 12 will allow graduate to have middlelevel skills and will offer them better opportunities to be gainfully employed or become entrepreneurs, and there will be a school industry partnership in technical-vocational tracks to allow opportunity to give work experience while studying and offers the opportunity be absorbed by the companies.

The study showed the different perspective of parents, teachers , and students in the implementation of the K-12 program. What is noted more importantly is that despite the differences in views, it was noted that many believed that clearly, the new K-12 system in the Philippines is not just about a stretched curriculum and an additional financial stress on the parents. It targets and enhances children’s progress and future, too.



C. Recommendations created to address the problems under the implementation of K to 12 programs

K-12 curriculum in the Philippines is under a series of observation, different details in this curriculum are scrutinized to test its importance in the system. The success of a system is dependent to different factors, if neglected will result to another social issue. Issues were revealed during the process of implementation of SHS curriculum in the Philippines, however despite of different issues and challenges it was not enough to suspend its application to fully operate SHS curriculum. Thus, to solve these challenges and problems encountered along, there should be equest assistance from different Non-Government Organization and generous stakeholders to resolve issues on inadequacy of important infrastructures and learning materials; education sector should assist schools in creating affiliations with different business sectors to formulate agreements that will allow senior high school students conduct On- the Job Training opportunities; Philippine Government should create initiative for private business sectors to invite senior high students for hands-on learning sessions or On-the Job training opportunities and incentives for hiring a senior high school graduate; education sector should develop more assessment program to develop an impeccable curriculum guide for senior high school; and endorse more form of assessments to measure level (Nacorda et. al, 2019).

It is as well imperative that teachers will be given adequate trainings not just on the pedgagogies-centered workshop but should also more on content-knowledge because the problems observed and experienced nowadays are that, teachersare given bulk of paperdocument responsibilities where most of their time for instructions is sacrificed. The trainings conducted by various academic related organizations are too idealistic which somehow affect the capacity of the teachers to teach the content to their students. Emphasis of the contentbased workshop is a need to be taught to the teachers not to discredit the credibility and abiity of some teachers because many have undergone higher academic pursuit trainings but this is one thing which should be looked over by the education sectors in our country. Government should take an initiative in reviewing and legislating all the academic policies in all levels. Mass promotion is not a key to solve the problems of drop-outs and poor performance of the students, it is the quality of teaching not the minimum quality standards which have been emphasized. Mass promotion has been much emphasized in our educational system nowadays but basing the principles of assessment this slogan is very contradicting. Assessment in terms of students' acquiision of knowledge and skills with imbued values should be the valid instrument in measuring the performance of each learner. Then provided that intervention is done over and over and yet the students are still not performing, and let iut be that students should be retained. Retention policy should be strictly implemented though this has big impact to the school's pefromance but on the other side, this gives and allows the students to strive more for learning because learning must be not sacrificed.

In summary, the government must take into consideration in addressing the problems encountered in the current implementation of the k-12 curriculum, such as: a. content-based training and workshop, b. no to bulk of document responsibilities, c. core function in instruction must constitute a bigger percentage on the teachers' responsibility, c. principles of assessment and d. overall the government must revisit and review the curriculum and be it legislated.

CONCLUSION

The K-12 curriculum envisions to produce graduates that are ready to take the challenges of today's generation. Students, teachers, and parents alike both encountered problems in the implementation of the K – 12 program, they all have variety opinions or thoughts about the said program. Some parents were viewing this program in negative viewed which is this will be another burden for them and for their children both physically and financially, but some parents overviewed the program positively and thinking that this



will help the learners choose and decide the career which best suits to their skills. The narratives of teachers and students in the different studies have legitimized the existence of these issues. Nevertheless, a good disposition in life, as well as careful planning, can help them deal with these challenges. Likewise, the proper awareness and understanding of the new curriculum will enable them to participate in the curriculum change actively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The full implementation of the new K to 12 system showed unprecedented change for Philippine education, shaped by aggressive reform measures from within. The implementation of the K-12 plan in the Philippine Basic Education Curriculum is the key to our nation's development. Though the government faces many problems as it implements the program over the course of several years, it is a necessary improvement since increasing the quality of our education is critical to our nation's success.

The following recommendations are derived from the findings and conclusions.

1. The government to ensure that students will have sufficient instructional time for subject-related tasks, making them more prepared in every subject area.
2. Ensure teachers' training to achieve the envisioned K-12 curriculum which is designed to be learner-centered, which will greatly encourage students to be more engaged in their learning process. Because the learning is focused on the individual preferences of each student, the process of acquiring new information and skills that are useful for daily life and for the future will become more beneficial and enjoyable for students.
3. Further researches must be conducted to identify and to keep on track the progress on this new curriculum.

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