Research Article

Open High School Program during Pandemic an Assessment: Basis for Program Enhancement

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ABSTRACT

Education plays a significant part in moulding the future of our young generation of learners and leaders, and recognized as a basic human right. It is an essential requirement for a person's well-being. Education is an absolute right of every individual which will enable him/her to become a productive citizen, globally competitive and can make the difference to every individual's quality of life. Schools faced unprecedented challenges to ensuring sustainable education during the novel coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. As school closures due to COVID-19 separate students from structured routines and educational supports, the number of disengaged students may continue to grow. Accordingly, this quantitative study reported that the Rizal High School in Pasig City, Philippines continuously adopted Open High School Program to meet with the disengaged students in the new normal. The subjects of the study were the twenty randomly selected teachers of Rizal High School during the School Year 2020-2021. It was found out that summary of the assessment on the open high school program based on goals and objectives has a general weighted mean of 3.75 interpreted as strongly agree, implies that the goals and objectives of the Open High School Program were well planned, organized and clearly defined. Such that, the methods of teaching had a general weighted mean of 3.46 "Strongly Agree." Further, there was an issue in the open high school program learners that needs to be addressed.

***Keywords**: open high school program, COVID-19, Rizal High School, Program Enhancement*

Introduction

Education assumes a significant part in moulding the future of our young generation of learners and leaders (Tao & Benjamin, 2020). Fundamentally, education was attributed as a main component of individual and collective success of a productive citizen, and globally competitive professional workforce (Cuyugan et al., 2017; Dasig & Pascua, 2016). Educational

and training institutions have faced unprecedented challenges to enable quality education while the world is operating remotely due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic (Schleicher, 2020; Calantoc, 2021). The experience of educators in all places of the world in carefully designing and delivering emergency remote teaching, supporting displaced or isolated students, and communicating with faculty members and the staff was convincingly need more attention and great effort (Chick et al., 2020; Dasig, 2015). The COVID-19 pandemic has unmasked technological and pedagogical capabilities of schools and organizations towards emergency learning modalities (Rajab et al., 2020), a cycle of stress, resilience, of fear to relief, and pessimists hope, thereafter (Unger & Meiran, 2020; Arulkumar & Latha, 2019).

As posited by (Zhu & Liu, 2020), the best curriculum in the emergency learning environment is the curriculum that is flexible and adaptable to the demands of futures thinking (Mishra et al., 2020; Dasig et al., 2021). Accordingly, the best curriculum thinkers begin with the end in mind and work methodically to forecast plans and design for the future. They identify best practices and productively critique work until it is near what is believed to be beneficial to the learners. However, the challenge this pandemic may bring to education still fulfils the responsibility to serve the learners.

Pedagogical and technological shift have made several ramification the teaching and learning in the Philippines and even around the world particularly during the onslaught of COVID-19 pandemic. Educators, students, and schools have migrated and transitioned from coping and adjusting to distance learning education to also promote health and well-being (Azzahra, 2020; Gao et al., 2021) amidst varying stressful environments. Due to the varying and changing landscape of technological challenges of distance education in the Basic Education such as managing disengaged online learners, an Open High School Program, an alternative mode of delivering secondary education for both public and private schools was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic (Torres & Tan, 2021). In the Open High School Program modality, educators should be aware of and look for signs of disengagement and act

to maximize engagement and supports for at-risk students during COVID-19 (Wardhana et al., 2022; Dasig et al., 2017; Pahayahay et al., 2017).

This study aimed at determining teacher respondents' assessment on the Open High School Program (OHSP) as an alternative mode of secondary education that uses distance learning, a program that caters learners who are unable to attend the regular class program due to physical impairment, work, financial difficulties, distance of home to school, and other justifiable and legitimate reasons. Particularly, it aims to determine the perception of the respondents as to the OHSP goals and objectives, method of teaching, and learners.

Methods

The study is quantitative research focused on the assessment of the Open High School Program in the Philippine context. Accordingly, quantitative methods in education engage in the science and practice of educational measurement and evaluation, primarily through the development and application of statistical methods, informed by the study of teaching and learning statistics (Mendez & Dasig, 2020; Mishra et al., 2020). The descriptive method was employed in this study. Descriptive research is defined as a research method that describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon studied. This methodology focuses more on the "what" of the research subject than the "why" of the research subject (Yipeng et al., 2021). The term descriptive research then refers to research questions, the design of the study, and data analysis conducted on that topic.

In this study, the researcher found it apt to determine the respondents' assessment of the Open High School Program at Rizal High School located at Dr. Sixto Antonio Avenue, Caniogan Pasig City. There were twenty (20) randomly selected Open High School Program Teachers of Rizal High School considered in the study who were handling courses run under the OHSP of Rizal High School SY. 2020-2021. Researcher developed questionnaire was validated using the Cronbach alpha with 0.9, implies that the developed questionnaire highly acceptable internal consistency.

Results and Discussion
Assessment of Open High School Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic in terms of Goals and Objectives

Table 1 presents the assessment of the respondents on the Open High School Program in terms of Goals and Objectives. Overall, the Goals and Objectives have a general weighted mean of 3.575 interpreted as *"Strongly Agree."* Out of the 10 items measured, item number 1 *"Open High School Program is under Republic Act (R.A.) 10665 that aims to provide access to secondary education in the country through the open learning modality"* got the highest mean of 3.75 interpreted as *"Strongly Agree."* Inversely, item 10 *"Open High School Program provides students with self-learning modules and allows them to receive education remotely and at their own pace. This gives every youth a chance to complete his/her education, which may not be feasible under the standard set up,* *given their personal and financial difficulties"* has a weighted mean of 3.45, got the lowest mean but still with a verbal interpretation of "Strongly Agree."

The Goals and objectives establish criteria and standards against which you can determine program performance. Goals are ideals, major accomplishments, ends, or states of affairs to be achieved. They direct a manager's planning, development of strategies, and direction of his or her organization's activities. Objectives operationally support goals and are measurable, verifiable statements of intermediate tasks that must be accomplished for goal attainment. Objectives help define goals, identify conflicting activities, guide elements of the decision-making process, and ensure accountability of personnel within an organization. Without clearly defined goals and supporting objectives, goal displacement often occurs.

Table 1. Assessment of Open High School Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic in terms of Goals and Objectives

I. Goals and Objectives The Open High School Program	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Is under Republic Act (R.A.) 10665 that aims to provide access to secondary education in the country through the open learning modality.	3.75	Strongly Agree
2. Adopt the K-to-12 enhanced basic education curriculum.	3.65	Strongly Agree
3. Is learner-centered and flexible, enabling learners to learn at the time, place and pace which satisfies their circumstances and requirements.	3.5	Strongly Agree
4. Is open to elementary graduates and high school qualifiers of two tests: the Philippine Educational Placement Test and the Accreditation and Equivalency Test of DepEd's Alternative Learning System.	3.5	Strongly Agree
5. Combines the convenience and flexibility of self-paced without forgoing the critical outcomes that come from social interactions.	3.65	Strongly Agree
6. Aims to retain in school potential dropouts; encourage out-of-school youth to return to school; and contribute to the accomplishment of the Education For All (EFA 2015) target which is 100% participation rate and zero dropout rate.	3.5	Strongly Agree
7. Aligned with Philippine Constitution, recognizing this right, mandates that every individual regardless of age, sex, race, political or socio-economic status must enjoy access to quality and relevant	3.65	Strongly Agree

I. Goals and Objectives The Open High School Program	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
basic education.		
8. Its vision is to enable the youth to overcome "personal, geographical, socioeconomic and physical constraints" to education.	3.5	Strongly Agree
9. Brings education services to high school students through different means such as print, radio, television, computer-based communications, satellite, broadcasting, teleconferencing and other multimedia learning and teaching technologies.	3.6	Strongly Agree
10. Provides students with self-learning modules and allows them to receive education remotely and at their own pace. This gives every youth a chance to complete his/her education, which may not be feasible under the standard set up, given their personal and financial difficulties.	3.45	Strongly Agree
General Weighted Mean	**3.575**	**Strongly Agree**

N= 20

Assessment of the Respondents on Open High School Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic in terms of Methods of Teaching

Table 2 presents the assessment of the respondents on the Open High School Program in terms of methods of teaching. Overall, the general weighted mean of 3.46 with a verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree.

Table 2. Assessment of Open High School Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic in terms of Methods of Teaching

II. Methods of Teaching As a teacher in the Open High School Program	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Check attendance, participation in text chat, output, and attentiveness of the learner	3.7	Strongly Agree
2. Have teacher-led classroom learning using direct instruction similar to traditional regular teaching, facilitation, and individualized tutoring.	3.6	Strongly Agree
3. Practice one-on-one mentoring/remedial lessons	3.7	Strongly Agree
4. Promotes collaboration and cooperation that makes learners experience to involve in activities to improve people skills and ability to communicate effectively.	3.25	Agree
5. Assigning students activities to do at home using the FAPE modules and/or resources reproduced from traditional textbooks	3.6	Strongly Agree
6. Reinforce learning where videos and other learning materials were utilized to explore the topic.	3.55	Strongly Agree
7. Have sufficient computer knowledge and IT skills to conduct online lectures.	2.6	Agree
8. Play multiple roles which includes pedagogical,	3.45	Strongly Agree

II. Methods of Teaching As a teacher in the Open High School Program	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
social, managerial, and technological role.		
9. Monitor and keep records of learner's accomplishment and submission of all task's requirements.	3.6	Strongly Agree
10. Communicate and coordinate with parents/ or guardian for feedback of learner's progress.	3.55	Strongly Agree
General Weighted Mean	**3.46**	**Strongly Agree**

It is very perceptible in item 1 *"teachers check attendance, participation in text chat, output, and attentiveness of the learner"* has a highest mean of 3.7 interpreted as Strongly Agree; and item 3 *"teachers practice one-on-one mentoring/remedial lessons"* with a weighted mean also of 3.7 interpreted as Strongly Agree. While item 7 *"teachers have sufficient computer knowledge and IT skills to conduct online lectures"* has a weighted mean of 2.6 interpreted as agree have the lowest score. The result only showed that for an open high school program class, it is really important to keep check attendance and conduct remediation for teachers only meet their class once a week.

Motivating the learner to learn is pertinent to curriculum implementation. This is because motivation is an influential factor in the teaching-learning situations. The success of learning depends on whether or not the learners are motivated. Highly motivated learners are likely to learn readily, and make any class fun to teach, while unmotivated learners may likely learn very little and generally make teaching painful and frustrating. Since modern education is compulsory, teachers cannot take learners' motivation for granted, and they have a responsibility to ensure learners are motivated to learn. Teachers must persuade learners to want to do what they ought to do. Sakiyo (2020)

Assessment of the Respondents on Open High School Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic in terms of Learners

Table 3 represents the Assessment of the Respondents on Open High School Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic in terms of Learners. As gleaned from table 3, the overall assessment of the respondents as to the Open High School Program in terms of Learners has a general weighted mean of 2. 91 interpreted as "Agree."

Accordingly, item 3 *"learners have a learning center that refers to a room in the mother high school or another designated area where the open learners can conduct researches or gather additional information on topics under study"* has a weighted mean of 2.5, item 7 *"learners were able to submit quality outputs at a given deadline sets by their teachers"* has a weighted mean of 2.35, while item 9 *"that learners can gain, develop, and exercise time management skills and other 21st century skills (e.g. Information, media, technology skills, learning and innovation skills, communication skills, life, and career skills"* has a weighted mean of 2.4.

The respondents "Agree" on item 2, *"learners have sufficient equipment and facilities (computer/tablet/internet) computer knowledge and IT skills to participate in online learning",* item 4 "*are passers of Independence Learning Readiness Test (ILRT) and the Informal Reading Inventory (IRI)"* and item 10 *"are showing apparent improvement on their academic Performances"* all with a weighted mean of 2.6.

Table 3. Assessment of the Respondents on Open High School Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic in terms of Learners

III. Learners During this pandemic, Open High School Program students…	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Are Filipino citizen and independent learner	3.45	Strongly Agree
2. Have sufficient equipment and facilities (computer/tablet/internet) computer knowledge and IT skills to participate for online learning.	2.6	Agree
3. Have learning center that refers to a room in the mother high school or other designated area where the open learners can conduct researches or gather additional information on topics under study.	2.5	Disagree
4. Are passers of Independence Learning Readiness Test (ILRT) and the Informal Reading Inventory (IRI)	2.6	Agree
5. May start at their own time and at their own pacing, provided they complete their entire high education within a maximum period of six (6) years.	3.65	Strongly Agree
6. 6. able to ask the instructor questions and clear doubts during online sessions.	3.65	Strongly Agree
7. 7. able to submit quality outputs at a given deadline sets by their teachers	2.35	Disagree
8. 8. are unable to pursue formal secondary education due the rigid requirement of regular class schedules.	3.3	Strongly Agree
9. 9. are able to gain, develop, and exercise time management skills and other 21st century skills (e.g. Information, media, technology skills, learning and innovation skills, communication skills, life and career skills	2.4	Disagree
10. Are showing apparent improvement on their academic performances	2.6	Agree
General Weighted Mean	**2.91**	**Agree**

N= 20

Further, the respondents *"Strongly Agree"* with item 1 *"open high school program learners are Filipino citizens and independent learners"* with a weighted mean of **3.45**; and item **5** *"learners may start at their own time and their own pacing, provided they complete their entire high education within a maximum period of six (6) years"* weighted mean of **3.65;** item 6 *"learners able to ask the instructor questions and clear doubts during online sessions"* with a weighted mean of 3.65; and item **8** *"learners are unable to pursue formal secondary education due the rigid requirement of regular class schedules"* with a weighted mean of **3.3**.

Education needs to address the social and emotional needs of the students, and actively partner with families to develop the whole child. It should recognize that each student has needs within their heart, mind, body, and spirit, and teach students how to take care of themselves. They empower students to set their own goals and determine their own action steps.

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings of the study, the teachers respondents were dominated by female gender and age bracket of 41 years old and above. The teachers teaching experience were mostly 21 years and above. Further, there were items in the implementation of Open High School Program during pandemic particularly the methods of teaching and students/learners were assessed significantly different by the teacher respondents. Moreover, there were

significant differences in the assessment of the respondents in terms of the above-mentioned variables. The researcher recommends that the administrators must pursue higher education on the area of school leadership while the teachers on the area of their specialization. Their expertise will rebound to the effective and efficient management of school and teaching instruction. Similarly, the school administrators need to enhance the area on curriculum and strategies through the re-orientation and in service trainings of teachers, conduct periodic evaluation of Open High School Program with the involvement of the teacher's implementers to assess the strength and weaknesses of the said program. Further, other secondary private and public schools to consider offering the Open High School Program to help achieve the government goal of zero drop-out rates especially during this pandemic, as such, the teachers should continue providing varied activities and differentiated instructions that will hone the talents and skills of the students, and to extend more time for consultation and give feedbacks to students. Researchers may conduct similar study on the Open High School Program to determine the level of implementation of the program and to validate the findings of this study.

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