

A Perception-Based Curricular Review on the K to 12 HUMSS Strand Curriculum

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Abstract

This study examines the perception of Humanities and Social Science teachers among public Senior High Schools in the Department of Education's Humanities and Social Sciences strand in the Philippines. It uses Erden's element-based model of evaluation by considering the alignment to the goals of the Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines, the purpose, and core courses of the program, and the teaching-learning process. It also uses Tyler's Rationale as frameworks in assessing the curriculum. Likewise, the study examines the problems and difficulties in curricular implementation. Upon administering a survey to 25 Humanities and Social Science teachers among four public senior high schools, data revealed that the respondents perceived the curriculum goals, and the purpose of the program as highly observed, while the core courses of the program and teaching-learning process were satisfactorily observed in the curriculum. Also, sex and age were not factors in their level of assessment of Humanities and Social Science goals. The problems and difficulties encountered by teachers included unbalanced time allocation of learning competencies, lack of available learning materials, and lack of specialized teachers. Based on the findings, it is suggested that the government provide stronger teacher support programs to address the gap in curriculum implementation. The K to 12 program also needs a full review, as the study only provides a presurvey to more significant institutional issues. While the Humanities and Social Science curriculum appears aligned with the goals of their disciplines, and to the country's educational goals, its realization still depends upon the teachers' implementation in the classroom level.

Keywords: basic education, HUMSS, basic education, educational reform, teacher perception

Introduction

The Philippines overhauled its 10-year basic education curriculum following the implementation of the Republic Act 10533 or “The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013”. The said law aimed at improving the curriculum and raising the number of years of basic education. This educational reform resulted in the addition of the two-year Senior High School (SHS) program and the mandatory kindergarten year. The new curriculum generally aimed at providing Filipino students with enough time to master the skills and concepts for a college education with the addition of two exit points: work and entrepreneurship (International Consultants for Education and Fairs Monitor, 2013).

These two years of SHS encompass Specialized and Applied Subjects for skills development and Core Subjects for college readiness. It also facilitates four career paths which are the Academic, Technical-Vocational Livelihood, Sports, and Arts and Design Tracks (Shahani, 2015). Among the strands under the Academic Track is the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS). This curriculum generally seeks to produce critical thinking, socially responsible, and globally aware citizens. These include skills development on logical reasoning, creativity, appreciation of one’s culture, research and communication skills, responsibility, productivity, environmental consciousness, and global visioning (Southeast Asian Minister of Education, Organization, Innovation and Technology, 2012).

While the goals of the new curriculum are promising, the K to 12 program allegedly lacks systematic conceptualization and implementation (Umil, 2014). Ridon, the nationalist *Kabataan* party-list representative, viewed the K to 12 program as haphazardly implemented (Umil, 2014). While teachers are always ready to teach the students, the curriculum support is not sufficient to equip them with K to 12 competencies. Additionally, the League of Filipino Students, a progressive youth group, viewed the new curriculum to be not for the Filipinos, but for the capitalists who need already-trained workers for their companies. They saw it as only producing semi-skilled laborers and peddling graduates to foreign capitalists, and suggest that the whole education sector is fast becoming a large exploitative machine (Umil, 2014).

Anakbayan, another progressive youth activist group, has affirmed this issue by highlighting the flawed, problematic framework of the K to 12 program. Crisostomo, the group chairperson, said that this will only create cheaper, more exploitative labor and will only further subject Filipino youths to foreign monopolies. Thus, the K to 12 program may well be problem-ridden rather than solution-oriented (Education Crisis Worsened Under Aquino, 2012, as cited in Calderon, 2014, p. 546).

Additionally, the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT), a nationalist organization of teachers, has also expressed the need to suspend the K to 12 program, citing its lack of preparation for classroom facilities and qualified teachers. Valbuena, the ACT chairperson, identified a backlog in the construction of classrooms and laboratories, in the deliveries of references, and in the hiring of competitive and qualified teachers to teach SHS (Human Rights Philippines, 2015, as cited in Abulencia, 2015, p. 234).

Teacher-interest lobbyists such as the Teachers’ Dignity Coalition (TDC) and *Ating Guro* Partylist affirm these concerns. They rated the Department of Education (DepEd) with a B (74%-below) regarding its K to 12 program implementation. Basas, the TDC chairperson, similarly cited a shortage of essential resources such as seats, classrooms, learning and teaching

materials, and other facilities, and teacher readiness (Malipot, 2014, as cited in Abulencia, 2015, p. 233).

Senator Cayetano and Senator Gatchalian's positions confirm these issues further. Senator Cayetano, who is the current Lower House Speaker, recently asked the Legislative Branch to review the K to 12 program as it is not fulfilling its purpose in preparing the SHS graduates for college and work (Diaz, 2019). Graduates of the new curriculum cannot find jobs nor exhibit college readiness skills. These problems add to the existing institutional issues on the lack of classrooms, facilities, and teaching personnel. Senator Gatchalian, who leads the committee on K to 12 program implementation, even expressed the need to assess the government's readiness in implementing the K to 12 program citing insufficient preparation and declining student performance (Terrazola, 2019).

Thus, it has become essential to evaluate the K to 12 program, especially the SHS curriculum implementation. In particular, the HUMSS strand needs curricular assessment if the curriculum is to comply with the goals of the Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines, which are the development of critical thinking skills, and the development of socially responsible and globally aware citizens (Kallendorf, 2002; Southeast Asian Minister of Education, Organization, Innovation and Technology, 2012). These are the same skills needed for one to examine the perceived problem-ridden nature of the K to 12 program.

Literature Review

Tyler (1949) stated that a curriculum should be a program of constant evaluation and revision. A good curriculum must be dynamic as it looks into the nature and structure of knowledge, the learners' needs, and the society's needs. Referred to as Tyler's Rationale, it explores curriculum perspectives such as educational objectives, selection of learning experiences and its organization, and method of assessment. Thus, most curricular reviews employ this paradigm. For Tyler, the identification of educational objectives will set the content and type of student learning. It will be the basis for the selection and organization of contents and materials, the development of instructional procedures, and the preparation of tests and examinations. More importantly, the curriculum must adhere to the philosophy of the discipline and the country's educational system. Lastly, the results of the evaluation will be the basis for improving or adjusting the curriculum to attain the educational objectives. However, Tyler's Rationale is a linear model and lacks a feedback mechanism that could place importance on the opinions of teachers.

Erden (1998) developed the element-based model of evaluation, by looking into the opinions and viewpoints of participants regarding program components. With specific curriculum elements set, fundamental flaws and deficiencies in the curriculum quickly emerge. This model explicitly seeks to evaluate the extent of meeting the objectives and the underlying defects and problems of a curriculum. Erden (1998), as cited in Aslan and Günay (2016), said this model answers evaluations on general and specific objectives, conditions of learning and testing, and relationships between curricular elements. The said curricular elements help in identifying potential problems that may emerge during the design and implementation. Thus, by considering program components on targets, content, education, contexts, and evaluation as curricular elements, Erden's element-based model allows for a holistic approach in curriculum evaluation (Aslan & Günay, 2016). This model is also best evaluated using teachers' and students' opinions, who are the interpreters and receivers of the curriculum.

While the two curricular evaluation models allow for a broader perspective of the curriculum, Bilbao et al. (2015) highlighted the principles of scope, sequence, continuity, integration, articulation, and balance as specific elements of a good curriculum. By considering these curricular principles, the educational system would respond to the goals of the discipline, the needs of the students and teachers, and the goals of education.

Generally, curriculum evaluation occurs via four different phases: curriculum planning, which considers the school's vision-mission and goals; curriculum designing, which includes the selection and organization of learning activities; curriculum implementation, which is the actual application of the design or plan in the classroom to produce the intended learning outcomes; and curriculum evaluation, which determines the extent of achievement of educational goals (Bilbao et al., 2015; Erden, 1998; Tyler, 1949). Thus, the analysis of data for the current study will revolve around these theories.

Related Studies

Curriculum reviews aim to evaluate academic programs by highlighting its processes, effectivity, relevance, and deficiencies (Erden, 1998; Tyler, 1949). It is a critical examination involving curriculum implementers and receivers. Results and recommendations of different curriculum reviews are thematically grouped, based on the following problem areas:

Problem of Educational Goals and Purpose. The study of Muhammad et al. (2019) suggested a need to review curricular outcomes to align the country's demand towards Education 5.0, Industry 4.0, and Sustainable Development Goals. Similarly, Gallagher et al. (2013) saw a need to revisit Westwood Public Schools' mission-vision statements and the need for content and skills continuity. On the other hand, Leduc (2010) observed the alignment of Natick Public Schools' K-12 Social Studies curriculum to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Frameworks. However, the development of shared resources was still needed.

Problem of Content and Continuity. Aside from Gallagher et al. (2013), this is also shared by Shin (2017), citing insufficient theoretical grounds and unclear achievement standards, as well as a gap between classroom and practical learnings. Similarly, Khoza (2015) revealed that in-service teachers' lack of familiarity with learning theories underpinning curriculum resulted in implementation problems. Using Tyler's Rationale, Fozoni et al. (2016) showed the need to emphasize the concepts and skills of citizenship learning and the creation of appropriate activities. Jaca et al. (2018) also saw the difficulty in actual classroom implementation, which was partly caused by a lack of specific criteria brought by a poorly articulated content standard. Correspondingly, the absence of a proper framework defining the inclusion and organization of learning competencies was shown by Bernardo and Mendoza (2009), following the 2002 Philippine Basic Education reform. This reform included problems with unsuitable suggested time allotment, lack of teaching-learning materials, and creation of additional tasks for teachers. Additionally, the curriculum review by Roy (2015) highlighted a "loaded curriculum", where the emphasis on state standards resulted in the inclusion of an overwhelming number of subject content areas. There was also a need for integration between the classroom and external realities.

Problem of Moderate to Negative Perception. Aside from the issue of content due to unbalanced curriculum courses and undefined content standards, Alghazo (2015) determined that respondents only had positive regard on core courses but not on majors. Using the element-based model of evaluation, Aslan and Günay (2016) revealed the moderate opinions of teachers

and students on curricular elements. However, respondents were more likely to answer the “disagree” choices. Correspondingly, a negative teachers’ view was seen by Taole (2013) following a curricular change, and highlighted that teacher support was still the basis for every curricular reform. Teacher support is an essential component as teachers’ presumptions affect curriculum interpretation and implementation.

Problem of Implementation. The need for teacher support is most common in different curricular reviews. Yusof et al. (2017) showed teachers’ positive regard on curricular change. However, there were problems such as inappropriate competencies on modules, time constraints, lack of teacher training, and extra efforts leading to teacher burden. Similarly, Thompson et al. (2011) revealed a lack of teaching-learning resources and unfamiliarity with the topics as problems; and Kilinc (2016) on curriculum deficiencies such as lack of learning materials and insufficient curriculum content though there was generally a positive view. In the local study of Rivera (2017), there seems to be complacency of Filipino teachers in the K to 12 program implementation. This study revealed that teachers’ pedagogy deviates from the learner-centered aims of the program. Additionally, the study of Calderon (2014) emphasized the critical role of teachers, given that the curriculum is new but old problems such as the lack of facilities and declining performance still exist.

Focusing on the ideas and issues discussed about curriculum, this study identifies the gap between standard classroom education and actual classroom implementation. It will do this by assessing the alignment of the K to 12 HUMSS curriculum, based on the identified curricular elements and the problems and difficulties encountered by the teachers of this curriculum.

Methodology

Research Questions

This study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the respondents’ level of perception on the Humanities and Social Science goals as observed in the HUMSS curriculum?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the overall level of perception of the Humanities and Social Sciences Goals, and the respondents’ sex and age?
3. What is the respondents’ level of perception on the HUMSS curriculum regarding:
 - 3.1 Purposes of the Program;
 - 3.2 Core Courses of the Program; and
 - 3.3 Teaching-Learning Processes?
4. What problems and difficulties do teachers encounter in the implementation of the HUMSS curriculum?

Research Locale, Research Design, Respondents

This study focused on determining the perception of SHS teachers among four public High Schools offering the HUMSS strand in Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines. This study followed the descriptive research design. It aimed at gaining the respondents’ perceptions on how well were the curricular elements namely, the alignment to (1) Humanities goals, and (2) Social Sciences goals; (3) purpose of the program; (4) core courses of the program; and the (5) teaching-learning process, were observed in the HUMSS curriculum. Each of the sub-questions therein was rated using a five-point scale where 1 was Not Observed at All (NO), 2 was Fairly Observed (FO), 3 was Satisfactorily Observed (SO), 4 was Highly Observed (HO), and 5 was

Very Highly Observed (VHO). The last part of the questionnaire contained three semi-open ended questions, asking the respondents to provide additional information on the problems and difficulties they had identified.

The respondents were chosen based on their teaching positions and subjects handled. First, the respondent must be an appointed Senior High School teacher from the Civil Service Commission. Second, the respondent has taught any of the Specialized HUMSS subjects: Community Engagement, Solidarity and Citizenship; Creative Non-fiction; Creative Writing; Disciplines and Ideas in the Social Sciences; Disciplines and Ideas in the Applied Social Sciences; Introduction to World Religions and Belief Systems; Philippine Politics and Governance; and Trends, Networks, and Critical Thinking in the 21st Century (Academic Track, n.d.). A total of 25 teachers qualified, which represented the respondents' entire population.

Limitations

The study focused on the first two years of SHS program implementation (2016-2017; 2017-2018). It considered all four public schools offering the HUMSS strand in Mandaue City, assuming that private schools have substantial administrative support while public schools do not because they depend on government support. More importantly, the study examined teachers' perceptions of their curriculum-related experiences, therefore providing primarily a qualitative description of these experiences.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire composed of 44 questions including the profile in terms of age, sex, and educational background; the curriculum; and the problems and difficulties. The sets of questions considered the available literature and the curricular elements previously studied. The instrument was pilot-tested with a Cronbach alpha reliability of 0.945. The study complied with ethical research standards by getting permission from the Schools Division Superintendent and the school principals, ensuring respondents' confidentiality, and getting the respondents' consent before survey administration.

For the descriptive measures, the study used descriptive statistical treatments, such as frequency and percentage distribution, mean, and standard deviation, in presenting and analyzing the data. For correlational statistical treatment, a chi-square test determined the independence of the level of assessment concerning gender. In contrast, a Pearson-*r* test determined the level of significance of the level of assessment concerning age.

Findings

On the Goals of the Humanities and Social Sciences Disciplines

Generally, respondents viewed the goals of the Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines as highly observed in the HUMSS curriculum. As to the Humanities goals, respondents highly observed "tolerance" while "sense of local and national history" was least observed. This difference in perception means that some components of the Humanities goals require greater emphasis. However, the respondents generally perceived this curricular element as highly observed.

Table 1. Respondents' Perception of the Goals of Humanities in the HUMSS Curriculum

HUMANITIES GOALS	Weighted Average	Qualitative Description*
<i>1.1 An inquiring mind:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum allows students to think uniquely.	3.48	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum allows students to think logically.	3.52	HO
<i>Mean</i>	3.50	HO
<i>1.2 A sense of history - local and national:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum promotes local history.	3.48	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum promotes national history from the perspective of one's locality.	3.48	HO
c. The HUMSS curriculum promotes understanding of world history from the perspective of local/national history.	3.40	SO
<i>Mean</i>	3.45	HO
<i>1.3 Tolerance:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum helps students to respect others' points of view.	3.88	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum promotes appreciation and recognition of human diversity.	4.04	HO
c. The HUMSS curriculum provides an avenue for inclusivity.	3.72	HO
<i>Mean</i>	3.88	HO
<i>1.4 A sense of internationalism:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum recognizes the emerging world community to which people can identify.	3.72	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum advocates for greater cooperation among nations.	3.40	SO
<i>Mean</i>	3.56	HO

*Legend used in subsequent tables:
4.21-5.00 - Very Highly Observed (VHO)
3.41-4.20 - Highly Observed (HO)
2.61-3.40 - Satisfactorily Observed (SO)
1.81-2.60 - Fairly Observed (FO)
1.00-1.80 - Not Observed At All (NO)

In relation to the Social Sciences goals, respondents highly observed “integrating ideas and making connections from other disciplines” while “civic responsibility and active civic participation” were least observed. These differences in perception means that there are components of the Social Science goals that also need greater emphasis. However, the respondents generally perceived this curricular element as highly observed.

Table 2. Respondents' Perception of the Goals of Social Sciences in the HUMSS Curriculum

SOCIAL SCIENCES GOALS	Weighted Average	Qualitative Description*
<i>2.1 Civic responsibility and active civic participation:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum promotes attitudes needed in nation-building.	3.80	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum provides avenues for students to participate in civic work.	3.72	HO
<i>Mean</i>	3.76	HO
<i>2.2 Critical thinking skills:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum promotes reflective and reasonable thinking.	3.92	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum helps students in problem-solving or decision-making.	3.72	HO
c. The HUMSS curriculum develops students' strategies and skills in decision-making.	3.76	HO
<i>Mean</i>	3.80	HO
<i>2.3 Integrating ideas and making connections from other disciplines:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum promotes an interdisciplinary understanding of human society and the natural world.	4.00	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum helps students connect ideas from various disciplines.	4.08	HO
<i>Mean</i>	4.04	HO
<i>2.4 Developing awareness and understanding of contemporary social issues:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum promotes awareness of different social issues.	3.84	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum promotes a holistic understanding of different social issues facing the world today.	3.92	HO
<i>Mean</i>	3.88	HO

On the Respondents' Age and Sex and their Perception of HUMSS Goals

Generally, the respondents' sex and age were not factors in their perception of the alignment of the HUMSS curriculum with the Humanities and Social Sciences Goals. The computed chi-square of 1.85 and a p -value of 0.1736, which was greater than $\alpha=.05$, means that sex was not related to their perception of Humanities goals. Similarly, the computed chi-square of 1.10 and a p -value of 0.2936, which was greater than $\alpha=.05$, means that sex was also not a factor towards their perception of the Social Science goals.

Table 3. Relationship between Respondents' Sex and their Perception of the Humanities and Social Sciences Goals

Group		Teachers' Perception		χ^2	<i>p</i>
		Not Observed at All/ Fairly Observed/ Satisfactorily Observed	Highly Observed/ Very Highly Observed		
Humanities Goals	Male	2	8	1.85 ^{ns}	0.1736
	Female	7	8		
Social Sciences Goals	Male	2	8	1.10 ^{ns}	0.2936
	Female	6	9		

*ns = not significant

Age was not a factor in their perception of the Humanities as indicated by the computed Pearson *r* of 0.056 and a *p*-value of 0.78, which was greater than $\alpha=.05$. Similarly, age was not a determinant towards their perception of the Social Science goals with the computed Pearson *r* of 0.305 and a *p*-value of 0.14, which was greater than $\alpha=.05$. As to the Social Sciences, the calculated *r*-value of 0.056, which was <0.2 , means that there was a very weak relationship between age and their perception, thus, a negligible correlation existed for this relationship.

Table 4. Relationship between Respondents' Age and their Perception of the Humanities and Social Sciences Goals

	Variables	N	Mean	SD	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Humanities Goals	Age	25	37.48	8.25	0.056 ^{ns}	0.78
	Level of Assessment		3.61	0.67		
Social Sciences Goals	Age	25	37.48	8.25	0.305 ^{ns}	0.14
	Level of Assessment		3.73	0.68		

*ns = not significant

On the Purpose of the Program

Generally, respondents perceived the purpose of the program as highly observed with a general weighted average of 4.01. Respondents highly observed that the curriculum “prepares students for a college education” while “promotion of the country’s national interest” as the least. However, the respondents perceived all elements as highly observed. This high perception means that respondents viewed the educational goals to be well-articulated in the HUMSS curriculum.

Table 5. Respondents' Perception of the HUMSS Curriculum's Purpose of the Program

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM	Weighted Average	Qualitative Description*
<i>3.1 Adherence to the Department of Education's Mission and Vision</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum follows DepEd's Vision to "create Filipinos who passionately love their country and whose values and competencies enable them to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to nation-building" (Department of Education, n.d.).	4.04	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum follows DepEd's Mission to "protect and promote the right of every Filipino to quality, equitable, culture-based, and complete basic education" (Department of Education, n.d.).	4.04	HO
<i>Mean</i>	4.04	HO
<i>3.2 Promotion of the country's national interest:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum adheres to national state policies such as pursuing the right to self-determination, social justice, the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights, etc.	3.92	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum discusses contemporary international issues that are significant to the country.	3.80	HO
<i>Mean</i>	3.86	HO
<i>3.3 Preparation of students for college education:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum prepares students with needed knowledge for a college education.	4.16	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum prepares students with the required skills needed for a college education.	4.08	HO
<i>Mean</i>	4.12	HO
General Weighted Mean	4.01	HO

On the Core Courses of the Program

Generally, respondents perceived the core courses of the program as only satisfactorily observed, with a general weighted mean of 3.35. Interestingly, respondents perceived the sequence of contents and theories as highly observed. At the same time, they only had satisfactory observation of the number of subjects that were either over-represented or under-represented. This difference means that while the HUMSS curriculum contains enough content and theories, there is a problem with the allotted time.

Table 6. Respondents' Perception of the Core Courses of the HUMSS Curriculum

CORE COURSES OF THE PROGRAM	Weighted Average	Qualitative Description*
<i>4.1 The sequence of contents and theories in core courses:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum contains the right content needed for Humanities.	3.60	HO
b. The HUMSS curriculum contains the right content needed for Social Sciences.	3.56	HO
c. The curricular design for HUMSS subjects is progressive such that one subject becomes a prerequisite to a higher subject.	3.44	HO
<i>Mean</i>	3.53	HO
<i>4.2 The number of over-represented subjects:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum contains topics with too much number of hours required per curriculum guide (CG). For example, a topic has two-week coverage in CG, but the topic should only be for one week.	3.08	SO
<i>4.3 The number of under-represented subjects:</i>		
a. The HUMSS curriculum contains topics with less number of hours required per curriculum guide (CG). For example, a topic only has one-week coverage in CG, but the topic should go for two weeks.	3.08	SO
General Weighted Mean	3.35	SO

On the Teaching-Learning Process

Generally, respondents perceived the teaching-learning process as satisfactorily observed with a general weighted average of 2.96. Respondents had a moderate opinion on teacher readiness and availability of teaching-learning resources. However, respondents assessed “the manner of implementation” as highly observed while the “availability of teaching guides and references” as fairly observed. These differences in perception mean that while teachers are ready to teach, they lack the tools needed to deliver the curriculum.

Table 7. Respondents' Perception of the Teaching-Learning Process of the HUMSS Curriculum

TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS	Weighted Average	Qualitative Description*
<i>5.1 The manner of implementation by teachers of the curriculum:</i>		
a. HUMSS teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to teach the curriculum.	3.72	HO
b. HUMSS teachers use various strategies that resulted in higher student performance.	3.68	HO
<i>Mean</i>	3.70	HO
<i>5.2 The availability of teaching guides and references:</i>		
a. DepEd teaching guides available for teachers' use.	2.92	SO
b. DepEd learning materials are available for students' use.	2.28	FO
c. DepEd books, references, and other resources are available for teachers' and students' use.	2.20	FO
<i>Mean</i>	2.47	FO
General Weighted Mean	2.96	SO

On Problems and Difficulties in the Implementation

Table 8 confirms the results in the core courses and teaching-learning process. Fourteen (14) respondents said that there were too many learning competencies for a short period. Seventeen (17) respondents also identified the lack of books or references, which forced them to use their money to purchase resource materials. Additionally, three respondents said that there was a lack of specialized teachers to teach HUMSS. On the other hand, respondents identified least on learning competency being too general, lack of teaching equipment, non-cooperation of external stakeholders, and excessive extra-curricular activities. These issues only mean that there is a problem in the implementation of the HUMSS curriculum in the actual classroom setting.

Table 8. Respondents' Opinions on the Problems and Difficulties in the Implementation of the HUMSS Curriculum

Problems and Difficulties	<i>f</i>	Rank
1. HUMSS Curriculum		
• there are too many learning competencies for a short period	14	1
• the topics are repetitive/overlapping	8	2
• the curriculum is too crowded	4	3
• the sequence is disorganized	4	4
• learning competencies are too general	3	5
2. Resource Materials		
• there are no DepEd books or references provided	17	1

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher uses personal money to purchase resource materials 	16	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school does not have the equipment needed for 21st-century learning 	4	3
3. Others		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lack of specialized teachers in HUMSS 	3	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extra-curricular activities affect classes 	1	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> non-cooperation of external stakeholders 	1	3

Discussion

The results of these analyses suggest that, overall, teachers had high perceptions of the HUMSS curriculum. This level of perception means that, generally, teachers have a favorable view of the K to 12 program. This positive view is in contrast to Taole (2013), where teachers had a negative view following a curricular change. However, a detailed analysis of the curricular elements also revealed flaws and deficiencies of the HUMSS curriculum of the K to 12 program.

Alignment to Humanities and Social Sciences Disciplines

The teachers highly observed the alignment of the HUMSS curriculum to the goals of the Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines. This high perception means that the specific goals of these disciplines were well-articulated and well-observed in the curriculum. In contrast to Aslan and Günay (2016), teachers only had a moderate level of opinions on curricular elements. For Kallendorf (2002), this alignment of the HUMSS curriculum may produce literate citizens who can speak and write with clarity, who are active in the community, and who can make sensible decisions. Thus, the HUMSS curriculum is viewed as an effective curriculum in molding and delivering the social skills and values needed to create socially responsible and globally aware Filipinos.

Factors of Perception. The respondents' age and sex were not factors in their perception of the HUMSS curriculum. These two variables were likely not associated because teachers, regardless of sex and age, freely determine the content of learning and the manner of classroom delivery. The National Research Council (2012) also supports the view that the teacher ultimately decides how and what to teach in the classroom. Correspondingly, teachers are the ones who finally decide the fate of any educational enterprise (Ndlovu, 2017). Thus, the HUMSS teachers' perception of the HUMSS curriculum is not affected by their sex and age.

Purposes of the Program

Results indicated that teachers highly observed the integration of national goals and the DepEd's Mission and Vision in the HUMSS curriculum. This result is consistent with Leduc (2010), however it was again in contrast to Aslan and Günay (2016), where teachers only viewed these elements as moderately observed. Similarly, Gallagher et al. (2013) and Muhammad et al. (2019) also saw the need to reassess prescribed educational goals with the current needs of their countries. The recent implementation of the SHS program in 2016 probably explains this contrasting view. Thus, the revised HUMSS curriculum remains relevant to the needs of society.

The highly observed perception on the adherence of the HUMSS curriculum to the DepEd's Mission and Vision, and the promotion of the country's national interest, means that the educational philosophy and the goals of the nation were well-represented in the HUMSS

curriculum and its teaching-learning process. Using Tyler's Rationale, the educational purpose of the school to create nationalistic, law-abiding, and productive citizens was well-articulated in the curriculum, and the ability of these goals to produce educational experiences that students need to undertake was evident. Thus, the perceived strong relevance of the HUMSS curriculum contrasts with the perception of many youth activists, who suggest that the K to 12 program only produces semi-skilled laborers.

Core Courses of the Program

Results also indicated that teachers only viewed the sequence and organization of the curriculum as satisfactorily observed. The moderate observation of curricular elements is consistent with Aslan and Günay (2016). Alghazo (2015) had the same results where core courses were positively regarded but still needs additional resources to other subject areas. Balantic (2014), Fozoni et al. (2016), Gallagher et al. (2013), and Roy (2015) also had similar results where they identified problems on clear scope and sequence; concepts, skills, and learning activities; and curriculum continuity. However, teachers highly observed the sequence of contents and theories. As per Bilbao et al. (2015), an effective curriculum follows the principles of scope, sequence, continuity, integration, articulation, and balance, and these were perceived as well-articulated in the HUMSS curriculum.

Conversely, respondents only satisfactorily observed the number of subjects that were either over-represented or under-represented. Following the suggested time allocation in the curriculum guide, there are topics that "take more time" to discuss while some are "too dragging." This unbalanced time allocation was also consistent with the studies of Balantic (2014), Bernardo and Mendoza (2009), Gallagher et al. (2013), Jaca et al. (2018), Roy (2015), and Shin (2017), which identified curricular problems in criteria, scope, and continuity. Thus, although the HUMSS curriculum contains the right topics, its existing suggested time allotment and topic organization appear problematic.

Teaching-Learning Process

Results also indicated that teachers viewed the HUMSS curriculum as only satisfactorily observed. While teachers had the required knowledge and skills to be able to teach the curriculum, it missed out on teaching tools. As to the manner of implementation, the readiness of teachers to teach HUMSS subjects was probably because of the series of regional training before the SHS implementation (Department of Education Region VII, 2016). This readiness to teach contrasts with the lack of teaching guides and learning materials, which only had a fairly observed rating. Perhaps this was due to the tight implementation timeline of the K to 12 program which left the government with a limited period to acquire learning materials (Umil, 2014). These problems echo the concerns of *Anakbayan* (Calderon, 2014), ACT, TDC, and *Ating Guro* Partylist (Abulencia, 2015). These same issues were also identified in the studies of Bernardo and Mendoza (2009), Kilinc (2016), Thompson et al. (2013), and Yusof et al. (2017), where there is a lack of materials and teaching tools to attain the learning competencies. Using Tyler's Rationale, the lack of learning resources and teaching guides were indicators that there is a problem in meeting the educational purpose of the HUMSS curriculum.

Problems and Difficulties

The responses to the problems and difficulties provide a better understanding of the teachers' perceptions. Generally, the number of learning competencies and time allocation were problems encountered by teachers. This concern is consistent in the studies of Balantic (2014), Bernardo and Mendoza (2009), Kilinc (2016), Roy (2015), and Yusof et al. (2017) of a loaded curriculum, and where subjects were either dragged or contracted.

As to the learning competencies, one teacher noted that the learning contents and skills were “*very heavy*” yet teachers have only one semester to deliver it. This same teacher said that some subjects must be implemented for one year to be “*fully internalized by the students while emphasizing the practical application*”. Another respondent also noted that the content standard did not relate to the learning competencies, for example, on the topic of migration.

As to the time allocation, topics were repetitive or overlapping such that there were topics that can go with another subject. Teachers also highlighted the problem of a disorganized sequence of subjects with prerequisites yet were offered in the same semester. Perhaps this was because of the limited number of HUMSS teachers in each school, which forced them to provide cognate subjects at the same time.

As to the resource materials, DepEd did not provide books and learning materials. Thus, teachers had to use their money to buy teaching resources in addition to more preparation time. Another problem was the lack of qualified teachers handling HUMSS subjects wherein three respondents were Mathematics teachers yet were assigned to teach HUMSS subjects. Another issue involved work immersion as students were still underage, and the excessive number of extra-curricular activities that affected the delivery of instruction.

These were the same issues highlighted by Bernardo and Mendoza (2009), Taole (2013), and Thompson et al. (2013) where major educational reforms resulted in problems in content, implementation, and support. Though the respondents perceived the HUMSS curriculum as highly aligned to the Humanities and Social Sciences goals, it still had issues in the actual implementation by the teachers.

Overall, it seems evident that, regardless of country and type of curriculum, teacher support is still the basis for every curricular reform (Calderon, 2014; Taole, 2013), which the Philippines falls short in its implementation of the HUMSS strand of the K to 12 program. The concerns expressed by different activist groups and government officials confirm that the K to 12 program needs an institutional review following a lack of support at the classroom implementation level.

Recommendations

The national government is advised to take a more proactive role in the monitoring and implementation of the K to 12 program. Years after the law’s passage, it still needs strong support at the grassroots level. The government should establish strong teacher support programs to address the problems encountered by the primary implementers of the curriculum. This program refers to creating feedback mechanisms where teachers can voice their ideas, and where they can participate in the decision-making process. Also, the Department of Education needs provision to address the backlog of school buildings, teaching equipment, and facilities. The hiring of more qualified teachers would fundamentally address the issue of teachers teaching subjects outside their field of expertise. Lastly, there is a need for a curriculum review of the whole K to 12 program, aimed at investigating curriculum deficiencies and problems in terms of content, target, context, time allocation, and evaluation. This study only provided a glimpse of what could be more significant problems for the rest of the program.

Conclusion

Generally, this study has revealed that the HUMSS curriculum of the K to 12 program provides a systematic learning experience for the students to grow academically and socially competent. The new curriculum embodied the principles of a good curriculum as it follows the principles of scope, sequence, continuity, integration, articulation, and balance. Using Erden's element-based model of evaluation, the current study revealed that the respondents positively observed the alignment of the Humanities and Social Sciences goals, the purpose of the curriculum, the core courses, and the teaching-learning process of the HUMSS curriculum. By then using Tyler's Rationale, the study revealed that these teachers highly perceived the articulation of the country's educational purpose and its organization in the HUMSS curriculum.

However, problems and difficulties in implementing the said curriculum appear to hinder the achievement of its educational purpose. Although the K to 12 program as associated with the HUMSS curriculum remains a good concept, it still lacks sufficient support at the level of classroom implementation. This seems to stem from perennial problems involving the lack of classrooms and teaching-learning facilities, as well as inadequate government support for the teachers who ultimately decide the fate of all educational endeavors. In turn, this has created a gap between the formal standards for classroom education and actual classroom implementation. Thus, because of insufficient support being provided, the K to 12 program appears unable to implement the country's major educational reform at an adequate level.

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