

# Learners' Perception on The Strengthened Senior High School Curriculum

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*Abstract* — This study examined the perceptions of Grade 11 learners at San Agustin National High School, Sagbayan, Bohol regarding the implementation of the Strengthened Senior High School (SHS) curriculum during the 2025-2026 school year. The study focused on flexible learning outcomes, industry alignment, school-level delivery of education, and stakeholder alignment. A quantitative-descriptive research design was used, with data collected from 233 Grade 11 learners using a validated researcher-made questionnaire. Weighted mean was used to determine perception levels, while independent-samples t-test and one-way ANOVA were utilized to analyze variations in perceptions based on gender and career pathway. Results revealed that learners generally held positive perceptions of the SHS curriculum across all areas. School-level delivery of education received the highest rating, reflecting clear instruction, organized implementation, and supportive school policies, whereas stakeholder alignment received the lowest rating, indicating limited parental involvement and weak collaboration among stakeholders. Findings further showed that female learners reported more favorable perceptions than male learners, while perceptions across career pathways were generally comparable. The study concludes that the Strengthened SHS curriculum is generally effective from the learners' perspective but requires enhanced stakeholder engagement. Based on the findings, an action plan is proposed to strengthen learner support, enhance stakeholder collaboration, and further improve the implementation of the Strengthened SHS curriculum.

*Keywords* — *Strengthened SHS Curriculum, Learner Perceptions, School-Level Delivery, Industry Alignment, Stakeholder Engagement, Gender Differences, Curriculum Implementation*

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## I. Introduction

Education plays a vital role in shaping individuals and preparing them for future opportunities. In the Philippines, the implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program under Republic Act 10533 marked a significant reform aimed at improving the quality of education. A key component of this reform is the Senior High School (SHS) program, which aims to equip learners with the knowledge and skills for college, employment, or entrepreneurship.

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Despite its intended goals, concerns have been raised regarding its effectiveness in actual practice, leading to the introduction of the Strengthened Senior High School curriculum.

The strengthened curriculum aims to address existing gaps by reducing content overload, improving learning pathways, and aligning education with real-life situations and labor market demands. According to the Department of Education (2025), the revised curriculum emphasizes flexible learning outcomes, stronger industry connections, and better collaboration among stakeholders. However, the success of any curriculum depends not only on its design but also on how it is implemented and experienced by learners in the classroom.

Globally, curriculum reforms often encounter challenges during implementation. UNESCO (2020) highlighted issues such as resource limitations, content overload, and mismatches between intended and actual learning outcomes. Similarly, results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (OECD, 2023) indicate ongoing difficulties in improving student performance in key areas. In the Philippine context, studies have reported challenges such as heavy academic workload, limited resources, and inconsistencies in program implementation (PIDS, 2020). While some studies emphasize the benefits of the SHS curriculum, including the development of career readiness and essential skills (Marin & Natividad, 2025), others note concerns related to student stress and insufficient support (Gurobat & Lumbu-an, 2022; Antipolo et al., 2024).

These findings highlight the importance of examining learners' perceptions, as they reflect how students experience and respond to the curriculum. Positive perceptions can enhance motivation and engagement, while negative experiences may hinder academic performance. Furthermore, stakeholder support, including teachers, parents, and the community, plays a crucial role in shaping learners' experiences.

At the local level, San Agustin National High School in Sagbayan, Bohol serves as a pilot school for the implementation of the Strengthened SHS curriculum. This context provides an opportunity to explore how learners experience the revised curriculum in practice. However, there remains limited research focusing specifically on learners' perceptions of the strengthened curriculum in local settings, creating a gap in the literature.

Thus, this study aims to examine the perceptions of Grade 11 learners at San Agustin National High School regarding the Strengthened Senior High School curriculum for the school year 2025–2026. It focuses on four key areas: flexible learning outcomes, industry alignment, school-level delivery of education, and stakeholder alignment. Additionally, it seeks to determine whether significant differences exist in learners' perceptions when grouped according to gender and career pathway. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for learners, educators, school administrators, and policymakers in improving curriculum implementation and support systems.

## **II. Methodology**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

To achieve the purpose of this research, the researchers utilized a quantitative-descriptive research design to examine the perceptions of Grade 11 learners regarding the Strengthened Senior High School (SHS) curriculum. This design was chosen because the study aimed to describe and measure learners' perceptions based on their actual experiences, without changing or manipulating any variables.

### **RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT**

The study was conducted at San Agustin National High School, located in San Agustin, Sagbayan, Bohol. The school is one of the institutions that piloted the Strengthened Senior High School curriculum and offers different academic and technical-vocational tracks for learners.

### **RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

There are 233 Grade 11 learners who were purposely selected because they are among those currently experiencing the Strengthened SHS curriculum.

### **RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

To gather the needed information, a researcher-made questionnaire was used to measure learners' perception on the Strengthened SHS curriculum in four key areas: flexible learning outcome, improved industry alignment, improved school-level delivery of education, and improved alignment of stakeholders. Each item was rated using a 4-point Likert scale, from 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Agree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). To confirm validity, the instrument was reviewed and validated by experts to match the study's objectives and theoretical framework. Their suggestions were used to improve the clarity and relevance of the questions. The instrument was also tested for reliability through a pilot test conducted among learners with similar characteristics. The results showed that the questionnaire was consistent and reliable, making it suitable for use in the study.

### **DATA COLLECTION**

The researchers followed proper procedures in collecting the data. First, permission was secured from the school principal of San Agustin National High School. Coordination was also made with the teachers to allow the researchers to conduct the survey. Before distributing the questionnaires, the purpose of the study was clearly explained to the respondents. They were informed that their participation was voluntary and that their answers would be kept confidential. The questionnaires were then distributed personally to the respondents during their free time to avoid interrupting classes. Clear instructions were given to ensure that all questions were answered

properly. After completion, the questionnaires were collected and checked for completeness before being prepared for data analysis.

### DATA ANALYSIS

To determine the learners' level of perception on the Strengthened Senior High School curriculum, the researchers utilized a simple weighted mean. To test the significance of the differences in the learner's level of perception on the Strengthened Senior High School curriculum according to gender and career pathway, the independent-samples t-test and One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was utilized.

### ETHICAL STANDARDS

Ethical standards were observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to decline or withdraw at any time. The researchers made sure that all information collected remained confidential and was used only for academic purposes. No personal identifying information was included in the questionnaire, ensuring the anonymity of the respondents. The study also followed the guidelines of the Data Privacy Act of 2012, ensuring that all data were handled responsibly and securely.

## III. Results and Discussion

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

CAREER PATHWAY	MALE	FEMALE
CP01	6	15
CP02	17	11
CP03	2	33
CP04	39	12
CP05	6	32
CP06	4	3
CP07	6	0
CP08	27	8
CP09	2	1
CP10	0	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>233</b>	

The table shows the respondents' demographic profile by gender across career pathways. The distribution varies, with a total of 109 males and 124 females, showing slightly higher female participation in the Strengthened Senior High School Program.

**Table 2. Learners’ Overall Perception on the Strengthened Senior High School Curriculum**

CATEGORIES	MEAN	DESCRIPTION
Flexible Learning Outcome	3.17	Positive Perception
Improved Industry Alignment	3.17	Positive Perception
Improved School-level Delivery of Education	3.19	Positive Perception
Improved Alignment of Stakeholders	3.14	Positive Perception
<b>COMPOSITE MEAN</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>Positive Perception</b>

The results show that improved school-level delivery of education obtained the highest mean (3.19), interpreted as a positive perception. This indicates that learners generally viewed instructional practices—such as lesson organization, support, and classroom management—as effective and consistent, contributing to a structured learning environment. This supports the findings of Marin and Natividad (2025), who emphasized the role of clear instructional practices in enhancing academic preparation.

In contrast, improved alignment of stakeholders recorded the lowest mean (3.14), though still interpreted positively. This suggests that while coordination among teachers, families, and other stakeholders is present, it may not be consistently experienced by learners. This aligns with the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2025), which noted challenges in communication and support during implementation.

Overall, the composite mean of 3.17 reflects a positive perception of the Strengthened Senior High School curriculum. While school-level practices appear well-established, stakeholder alignment remains an area for improvement. Consistent with Adarlo and Jackson (2016, as cited in Siason et al., 2025), strengthening collaboration among stakeholders is essential to enhance curriculum implementation and ensure a more cohesive learning experience.

**Table 3. Difference of Learners’ Perception on the Strengthened Senior High School Curriculum when Responses are Grouped into Gender**

Category	Mean	Standard Deviation	df	t stat	p-value	Decision
Male	3.13	0.36	228	-2.53882	0.011789	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
Female	3.25	0.37				

The computed p-value of 0.011789 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates a significant difference in learners’ perceptions of the Strengthened Senior High School curriculum based on gender. Female learners obtained a slightly higher mean score (3.25) than male learners (3.13), suggesting a more positive perception among females. This finding supports Dou and Shek (2022), who noted that female students tend to respond more positively to learner-centered curriculum reforms. Overall, both male and female learners perceived the curriculum positively. However, the observed differences imply that gender may influence engagement and learning experiences. This highlights the need for educators to adopt inclusive and varied instructional strategies to effectively support all learners.

**Table 4. Difference of Learners’ Perception on the Strengthened Senior High School Curriculum when Responses are Grouped into Career Pathways**

Category	Mean	Standard Deviation	Computed P-value	Alpha Value	Decision
CP01	3.14	0.11	0.1542	0.05	Failed to reject H <sub>0</sub>
CP02	3.14	0.19			
CP03	3.30	0.10			
CP04	3.16	0.13			
CP05	3.25	0.09			
CP06	3.22	0.09			
CP07	3.32	0.10			
CP08	3.09	0.16			
CP09	3.12	0.40			
CP10	3.45	0.24			

Since the computed p-value of 0.1542 is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating no significant difference in learners’ perceptions across career pathways. Although CP10 obtained the highest mean (3.45) and CP08 the lowest (3.09), these differences are not statistically significant. Overall, learners across all career pathways positively perceive the Strengthened Senior High School curriculum, recognizing its role in developing non-cognitive skills, leadership, and career readiness. This finding supports previous studies which suggest that learners’ perceptions are more influenced by factors such as workload, access to resources, and instructional support rather than the specific career track (Abragan et al., 2022; PIDS, 2020; Dou & Shek, 2022; Marin & Natividad, 2025). These results imply that the curriculum provides a relatively consistent learning experience regardless of the chosen pathway.

#### IV. Conclusion

Learners generally perceive the Strengthened Senior High School (SHS) curriculum positively, with school-level delivery rated highest and stakeholder alignment lowest. Female learners viewed the curriculum more positively, while perceptions across career pathways were consistent. Overall, the curriculum is effective, though improving stakeholder involvement and real-world learning connections may further enhance its implementation.

#### V. Recommendations

Based on the study’s findings, the researchers recommend strengthening academic support programs, including mentoring and guidance services, to enhance learner performance. Teachers are encouraged to sustain learner-centered strategies and provide additional support to struggling students. Schools should promote inclusive environments that support participation across genders. Increased parental involvement is also advised to improve learner motivation. Furthermore, curriculum developers may review and enhance the curriculum to better support global readiness and stakeholder collaboration. Future studies may include broader samples and qualitative approaches to gain deeper insights into learner experiences.

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