

Attainment of Learning Outcomes Among Senior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the attainment of learning outcomes of the senior high school program of a private high school as assessed by grade 12 students. Specifically, it sought to determine: 1) the academic profile of the senior high school students in terms of strand 2) student-respondents' assessments of the level of attainment of the learning outcomes of the senior high school programs; and 3) differences in the respondents' assessments of attainment level when grouped by their strands. Descriptive method was used involving 214 students from Grade 12 in different strands (STEM, HUMSS, ABM, and Tech-Voc) and identified with stratified random sampling

technique. The participants rated the attainment of the learning outcomes for the four curriculum exits: Higher Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship and Middle Skills Development. All the four curriculum exits were rated moderately attained, with higher education having the highest average mean, followed in descending order by middle-skills development, employment, and entrepreneurship. The results significant differences when respondents were grouped according to strand indicating that student's readiness is influenced by their curricular specialization. The study concludes that SHS program equips students with foundational competencies needed for their future endeavors. However, continuous interventions should be done to address the gap especially on entrepreneurship.

Keywords: *SHS Program, Curriculum Exits, Assessment*

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education aims to provide an inclusive and quality education to the Filipinos. To achieve these objectives, teachers continuously exert effort to prepare students for the future. The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 introduces Grade 11 and Grade 12 in the education system, making it a 12-year in basic education.

The implementation of the K to 12 programs in the Philippines, with its introduction of the Senior High School Track, helps the senior high school graduates to be globally competitive with honed skills and knowledge in their respective careers.

The Senior High School Program offers different tracks namely: Academic Track, Sports Track, Arts and Design Track and Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Track. The Academic Track has four strands which includes Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) Strand, Humanities and Social Science (HUMSS) Strand, General Academic Strand (GAS), and the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strand. Similarly, the TVL Track has four strands: Agri-Fishery Arts, Home Economics (HE), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and Industrial Arts.

The Senior High School Program's different tracks were aligned with the curriculum benefits Kolehiyo (higher education), Trabaho (employment), Negosyo (entrepreneurship), and middle skills development. This means that senior high graduates have paths to consider which allows them to grow. Students who choose Trabaho have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge especially after taking the TVL track. For students with entrepreneurial skills may opt to take Negosyo applying their learning on the ins and outs of business. Meanwhile, choosing Kolehiyo offers professional careers particularly courses offering licensure examinations.

Furthermore, the program allows the student to acquire adequate time for concept skill and skill mastery, developing lifelong learners, preparing graduates for tertiary education, middle-level skill development, employment, and entrepreneurship (DepEd). Senior high school students have diverse needs and interests in life after graduation, specifically choosing their careers that suit their capacity and interest (Parajenog et al., 2022).

These changes in the education system signify a fundamental stage in the academic journey of the students. There is an academic pressure that adds to critical decision-making regarding future career paths. In the study conducted by Bragas et al., as cited by Aquino et al. (2023), students perceived K to 12 programs as a shift towards competency-based learning, while others see it as an additional workload and another adjustment to be made. In the same study, it was also mentioned that the transition has socio-economic implications, which may affect the career decisions of the students.

In the context of the private schools, students have a distinct level of attainment compared to public SHS program. Though some students find support from private schools, others face unique challenges that shapes their readiness for the four curriculum exits prescribed by the K to 12 programs. In the case of the senior high school students, their challenges and strengths should be recognized. Explicitly, their strength should be identified and nurtured, as this strength helps them to transition successfully in their chosen careers.

The study is relevant to the developing educational system of the Philippines as it emphasizes that SHS students should be prepared to compete with the heightened demands of professionals, innovators and skilled workers. The increasing demand for professionals requires that senior high school graduates be prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the careers they may choose. Exploring their challenges and strengths may help contribute in providing comprehensive intervention program in the country. Such programs should enhance the students' strengths and their employment, higher education, entrepreneurial competencies and technical skills which would affect their pursuits of their career goals.

A research gap exists in this research area when considering how students from private institutions transitions through the curriculum exits compared to those from public schools. Most research has focused on the public schools, which may have different findings if conducted in a private institution because of a different academic setting. As Cartas (2023) concluded on his study that economic status and learning areas were factors in choosing their curriculum exits implying that institutional differences should be considered in constructing effective and responsive programs.

Research Questions

The research aimed to explore the challenges and strengths of senior high school students in private schools. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the students according to:
 - a. Strand
2. What are the respondents' assessments of the level of attainment of the learning outcomes of the senior high school programs?
3. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' assessments of attainment level when grouped by the profile variables?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To attain the objectives of this study, the researcher employed quantitative descriptive research. Quantitative research was used to measure the respondent's answer to the research questions. The qualitative approach provides an in-depth exploration of attainment of the learning outcomes of private senior high school students.

Participants

The participants of the study were 214 Grade 12 students of Saint Tonis College, Inc. during the school year 2025-2026. The researcher used a stratified proportional random sampling method, stratified by students' strands. The sample size was based on the numbers of the students per stratum.

Instrument

The research questionnaire was adapted from Dr. Henry James Echalar which consists of assessment indicators on four parts namely: higher education, employment, entrepreneurship and middle skills level. These are the curriculum exits that students may choose after graduation from senior high school. The tool consists of 40 items with 10 items each part which were answered by the respondents from 4 (Fully Attained) to 1 (Not Attained).

Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought permission from the school head. The respondent's permission was taken through letter of consent and oral informed consent to participants before starting the data collection. All answers were treated with privacy and confidentiality and were used only for the purpose of the research.

Data Gathering Procedure

A formal request letter was sent by the researcher by the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs to obtain a permission to conduct a study among Grade 12 students. After the approval, the request was coordinated to the Senior High School Principal for scheduling of the data gathering.

Before the distribution of the research instrument, the researcher informed the participants of the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation and confidentiality of their responses. The respondents were given ample time to answer their instrument and completed instrument were retrieved immediately after administering the survey.

Data Analysis

To attain an objective interpretation of data, a Four-point Likert scale was used for the assessment on the attainment of the learning outcomes. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the profile of the respondents.

Weighted mean was used to determine the assessment of the respondents on the attainment of the learning outcomes with the following range and qualitative descriptions:

| Range | Qualitative Descriptive |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 3.25–4.00 | Fully Attained |
| 2.50–3.24 | Moderately Attained |
| 1.75–2.49 | Slightly Attained |
| 1.00–1.74 | Not Attained |

Analysis of Variance was used to determine significant differences of the respondents when grouped by strands.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of Attainment of Learning Outcomes

Level of Attainment of Learning Outcomes for Higher Education

The participants assessed the level of attainment of the learning outcomes of the senior high school programs in terms of higher education. Among the indicators, the senior high school curriculum offered sufficient and professional exposure to various academic disciplines, enabling them to make informed choices about their tertiary level education program were perceived highest, however, the acquisition of proficiency in Information and Communications Technology, necessary for tertiary level education got the lowest. All the indicators fall under the description of moderately attained. The results show that the respondents “moderately attained” on the learning outcomes for higher education with an average mean of 2.95. Indicators such as confidence for tertiary education ($M = 2.99$), academic curiosity ($M = 3.04$), and exposure to various disciplines ($M = 3.14$) received the highest means, suggesting that SHS effectively develops academic readiness and intellectual curiosity. The results means that senior high school curriculum exposed the students to different college programs through various academic tracks and subject which allows them to explore their interests, strengths and career paths. this is evident through the work immersion programs, projects and career guidance allowing them to connect theories into real life situations. This allows students to have a glimpse of the demands of the different fields and chosen tertiary program.

The students’ low proficiency in Information and Communications Technology ($M = 2.86$) contrasts with the findings of Indrinal (2022) and Baterna et al. (2020), who reported strong ICT awareness and digital literacy among SHS and STEM students. However, it aligns with Galve and Labio (2023), who observed that although students possessed high ICT skills, they performed weakest in data processing and content creation, and with Alinea et al. (2024), who noted that Tech-Voc students were only “marginally prepared” in technology literacy. In line with these findings, Roxas (2022) emphasized the need for integrating ICT-based strategies into the SHS curriculum to strengthen employability and academic readiness.

Students’ possession of strong oral and written communication skills required for tertiary skills got the lowest mean (2.83). The results align with Yoshida and Guzman (2025) revealing that while Tech-Voc students have demonstrated good technical skills, they experience low proficiency on communication skills needed in the workforce. The same study conducted by Pregoner (2025) implying that SHS students possess a low level of communicative competence showing ineffective use of language. The domains of difficulty include vocabulary, grammar, written and spoken discourse and strategic competence. The results of the study on low communication skills affects the job performance on their workforce. While communication skills are important in all aspects of life, weak communications skills can be a threat to properly convey ideas especially that one of the essential skills for 21st century is communication.

Meanwhile, the study contradicts the findings of Barayuga et.al. (2024) revealing that students have a high manifestation of writing skills with moderately high attitudes toward writing and idea generation. Indicator like feedback use, revising and awareness and control revealed a high level. Overall, the study

may reveal that communication skills marked moderately attained, it needs instructional support especially from especially in communication, ICT proficiency, and higher-order competencies—to fully meet the demands of tertiary education and future careers.

Level of Attainment of Learning Outcomes for Employment

The indicators on the assessment on the learning outcomes of the program in terms of employment were assessed as moderately attained. The highest obtained indicator was “the senior high school curriculum effectively cultivated teamwork and collaboration skills vital for the workplace”, while the “SHS curriculum instilled a sense of responsibility and accountability in learners regarding work ethics” got the lowest indicator.

In the domain of employment, the findings reveal an average mean of 2.85 (Moderately Attained), indicating that SHS graduates perceive themselves as adequately prepared for employment contradicting the study Palconit (2023) giving emphasis that SHS graduates lack employability skills. The highest-rated indicators include teamwork and collaboration ($M = 3.04$) which are important in the workplace. Activities, projects, and performance task allows the students to learn to work with others, share ideas and take responsibility helping students to practice proper communication, cooperation and problem solving in a team setting resulting to a more preparation to work with people, followed by preparedness for workforce entry ($M = 2.99$). While the second lowest-rated indicator are practical experiences and strong work ethics ($M = 2.73$) which indicates that students should be exposed to hands-on experiences in preparation for the workforce. Flores and Cruz(2025) states that work immersion experiences of SHS curriculum improves students transforming theoretical knowledge to practical competencies, while, Yazon and Garcia (2020) on work immersion program highlights the importance in enhancing work immersion and bridge the gap between school and workplace. Similarly, Hoyt and James (2023) states that internship framework helps students gain insights improving skill outcomes.

Another second lowest-rated indicator is the strong work ethics of students which means that students need to improve work ethics in their job endeavors. This could be attributed to their limited practical experiences. Meanwhile, the result of the study of Tangente and Ediang (2024) is that SHS students are tagged as “employment ready” with strong work ethics and adaptability however, practical job seeking skills, stamina for prolonged work periods, and problem-solving abilities still needs improvement. Collectively, the assessment of senior high school program as to employment indicates that students possess the vital employability skills.

While the lowest indicator “The SHS education curriculum instilled a sense of responsibility and accountability in learners regarding work ethics got moderately attained but it requires attention to elevate the indicator. In today’s competitive competency for employment, responsibility and accountability are essential to become employable, but the results, connotes that students may struggle in time management. The result is attributed to the findings of Roxas (2022) on his study that students obtained a low-level proficiency in time management which is crucial in any workplace. If students shows poor management, other challenges like productivity and taking ownership of their work may arise.

Level of Attainment of Learning Outcomes for Entrepreneurship

The indicators on the assessment on the level of attainment of the leaning outcomes in terms of entrepreneurship were tagged as moderately attained. The highest is obtained by indicator “The senior high school curriculum encouraged learners to think innovatively and explore new business ideas” however, “The senior high school curriculum included modules or projects that allowed learners to develop and pitch their business plans and of feasibility studies” got the lowest scored indicator.

The level of attainment of the senior high school program on entrepreneurship obtained an average mean of 2.77 with all the indicators assessed as “moderately attained”. The highest-rated indicator (M=2.93) states that SHS curriculum encouraged the students to think innovatively and explore new business ideas allowing the students allow to think creatively in exploring business ideas through different activities. Students were given the opportunity to come up with new ideas and improve existing products or services that fits the needs of the society, while the lowest-rated indicator (M=2.66) is “The senior high school curriculum included modules or projects that allowed learners to develop and pitch their business plans and of feasibility studies.”

The result of the lowest indicator supports the finding of Arago, et.al 2023 stating that due to lack of opportunities to attend trainings, seminars, and workshops related to entrepreneurship was a challenge experience of the students. These findings explain the study of Caliat, et.al., (2024) that one to ten years after college, students show willingness in engage in business but lack of business investment and experience hinder their opportunity. This means that students’ experience in entrepreneurship should include more project, feasibility study and mentorship from business professionals.

Level of Attainment of Learning Outcomes for Middle-Level Skills Development

The assessment on the level of attainment of the program in terms of middle level skills development is assessed as moderately attained. The highest indicator is obtained by “Learners are motivated to engage in on-going learning and skill development to advance in their chosen middle-level skill development program and career path”. The results tells that students are willing and motivated to undergo ongoing learning and skill development to continuously meet the demands of their career path. By continuously learning, students improve their skills which increases their chances of employability leading to long-term job stability. While motivation comes in many forms, Held and Meje (2024) on their research on self-regulated learning as a motivation resulted to improvement of their motivation when students take an active role in their studies. Meanwhile, Pandya and Zala (2024) noted on their research that vocational program should support continuous learning that enables students to be competitive and capable of meeting the heightened job requirements.

However, the lowest indicator is “Learners demonstrate proficiency in problem-solving and critical thinking within the context of middle-level development skills training.” This means that students have limited ability to apply problem-solving and critical thinking within the context of middle-level development skills training. It suggests that while students possess basic technical skills, they experience challenges in real-world applications. This is evident on the study conducted by Sharif, et.al.,(2021) which

concluded that majority of the vocational educational undergraduate possess low to moderate to proficiency in both critical thinking and problem-solving. This happens due to lack of exposure to real world application resulting to hardship in adapting skills to new workplace. Furthermore, Khairul and Mustafa (2024) states that critical thinking and problem-solving skills are strongly linked. These findings highlight the need for instructional strategies that emphasize experiential learning, real-world problem scenarios, and higher-order thinking tasks to better prepare learners for the demands of middle-level skills occupations.

Overall Level of Attainment of the Learning Outcomes of the Senior High School Programs

Based on the data, all areas on the level of attainment of the learning outcomes of the senior high school programs are assessed by the respondents as moderately attained. The higher education obtains the highest average mean of 2.98. This means that students will pursue college after years in senior high school. The result supports the finding of Arimbay, et.al., (2023) that majority of the students show interest in going to school after senior high school.

On the other hand, Orbeta et.al., (2025) highlighted in his study that only 20% of SHS graduates enter the labor force, most students opted to continue to higher education. Meanwhile, Alinea, et.al., (2024) found out in his study that Tech-Voc students were prepared to join the workforce but needs improvement on technical literacy.

Entrepreneurship, having the lowest average mean (2.77) means that respondents assessed the level of attainment for entrepreneurship as moderately attained. One possible reason was the finding of Maglasang (2024) where students often struggle with essential business competencies such as preparing a business model canvas, highlighting the need to strengthen entrepreneurship education.

The result of the data supports the notion that SHS graduates regardless of their track opted to pursue higher education. Thus, the data support the notion that SHS curriculum serve as a preparatory stage for higher education letting aside entrepreneurship as a curriculum exit.

Differences on the Level of Attainment of the Learning Outcomes when Grouped According to Strand

The result of ANOVA on the level of attainment of SHS program in terms of higher education where $p=.862$ states that there is no significant difference when grouped according to strand. It means that strand has nothing to do with the respondent's assessment of the attainment of learning outcomes in preparation for higher education. Padios et.al., (2021) as cited by Awi et.al., (2021) states that recent study of SHS graduates reveal that majority of the SHS graduates pursue higher education than employment and entrepreneurship to enhance their skills acquired in senior high school. Similarly, Palabrica et.al., (2023) confirmed that most SHS graduates prefer higher education than immediate employment or business venture while Maravilla et.al., (2020) on their study reported 77.47 % of the 2019 graduates chose higher education as their curriculum exits.

The ANOVA result on employment where the $p\text{-value}=.005$, which is less than .05 level of significance revealed that the student-respondents in the four strands differ significantly in their assessment on the level of attainment of learning outcomes in terms of employment. Basing on the data, students' assessment of their readiness for employment is influenced by their chosen strand. This is specifically true

to Tech-Voc and STEM whose curriculum have stronger practical components. The result is aligned with the finding of Garcia, et.al., (2020) who highlighted that alignment between work immersion and employability contributes to the employment readiness of students. In contrast, the strands ABM and HUMSS focuses more on theoretical learning which explains the low mean score in employment indicators.

Meanwhile, the result of the level of attainment of SHS program as to entrepreneurship where $p\text{-value}=.007$ is less than $.05$ shows the significant differences in assessments among the strands. It implies that students enrolled in different strands perceived learning outcomes differently. The result of the data connives with Maglasang 2023) where SHS students generally have lower proficiency in entrepreneurial competencies which is connected to the findings of Arago,et.al., (2023) that students lack opportunities to attend training, workshop, and seminars related to entrepreneurship. As Caliat, et.al., (2024) states that students are willing to engage in business in the future however, it is hindered by lack of investment and experiences. Furthermore, the level of attainment for entrepreneurship got an average mean of 2.74 having the lowest among the four curriculum exits suggest that SHS program allows students to acquire foundational knowledge but not at a proficient level as shown on Table 2.3 where business planning ($m=2.63$) and financial literacy ($m=2.66$) scored the lowest.

For middle skills development, the ANOVA result, where $p=.000<.05$, resulted to significant difference among strand. This means that student's level of attainment varies across strands where certain strand shows higher attainment than others. The result is consistent with Farillon (2022) who found out that SHS exhibit developed level of critical thinking but the degree of development differs by strand. Delima,et.al.,(2022) emphasized that SHS students are aware of the digital and critical thinking skills but lacks to connect these skills into real world contexts. Students may have the theoretical knowledge on digital and critical thinking skills but struggles to put into practical situation which is a key component of middle-level skills. Similarly, Carada, et.al.,(2022) found out that SHS graduates displays a strong cognitive, technical and emotional skills but requires enhancement in practical problem-solving and adaptability which is needed in the middle-skills competency.

Meanwhile, the overall result with a $p=.001$ showed that the students among the four strands do not differ in their assessment of the attainment of the learning outcomes in the four exit points of the senior high school program.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study revealed that SHS program moderately attained its intended learning outcomes across the four curriculum exits. Among the curriculum exits, higher education obtained the highest level of attainment which shows that students regardless of their strand pursue higher education. Entrepreneurship had the lowest level of attainment which need more interventions. Overall, the SHS program equipped the students for their next endeavor.

Furthermore, one aspect (Higher Education) has no significant difference in assessment among the strands, the overall result showed that the students in the different strands differ significantly in their

assessment of attainment of learning outcomes in the four-curriculum exit. This means further that strand has something to do with their assessment of the level of attainment of the SHS program learning outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby proposed:

1. Strengthen the continuous integration of ICT according to strand. The use of ICT based on strands allows the students to be more prepared in their future endeavor.
2. Strengthen work immersion program through partnership to different agencies aligned with their stand. Career coaching, interview simulation, workshops and trainings by professionals adequately prepares the student not only for career choice but it enhances their communication skills and professionalism.
3. Develop entrepreneurial programs or activity designed to all strands that focuses on business management and financial planning that allows student to be innovative.
4. Practical and hands-on training through simulation with partner agencies like TESDA to encourage students learning through certificate programs which will improve technical skills and employability.
5. Future researches are encouraged to have a wider scope and to provide broader insights into the program certificates.

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