



## A Comparative Study of the Attitudes between the Students and Teachers of Two Public Elementary Schools in Northern Mindanao toward the K to 12 Curriculum Shift

Lourd Gregory D. Crisol, MAELS<sup>1</sup> and John Brian L. Alamillo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mindanao State University- Iligan Institute of Technology

<sup>2</sup>Mindanao State University- Naawan Campus

\*Lourd Gregory D. Crisol: crisol.lourdgreggory8@gmail.com

\*John Brian Alamillo: zushiki24@gmail.com

**Abstract:** The Philippines being the only country in Asia with a 10-year basic education cycle has recently shifted to a 12-year cycle just this June of 2012. This curriculum shift is called the K-12 educational policy. This study was thus conceived to determine the attitudes of the major stakeholders of the two rural public elementary schools from Northern Mindanao, Philippines toward this very novel curriculum. Moreover, this seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the attitude of the students of Karaos Elementary School and Rufino Santos Sr. Elementary School towards the implementation of the K to 12 program?
2. What is the attitude of the teachers of the two schools to the implementation of the said program?
3. What is the overall attitude of the respondents to the implementation of the program?

To answer the above questions, the researchers used survey method as well as personal interviews. The responses were consolidated, tallied and were analysed.

Results obtained revealed that majority of the respondents are positive towards the implementation of the program for they believed that the added years will provide them ample knowledge and skills and enable them to become globally-competitive graduates.

Further, it was recommended that: (1) The students should continue to pursue their studies despite the change in the curriculum, (2) orientations about the K - 12 program should be given to the students for them to be motivated to continue their education, (3) Teachers should find ways for professional growth, especially with the current trends in education for them to be effective in their fields and (4) Future researchers should consider looking into the other aspects of the K - 12 curriculum shift such as cognitive preparedness, environmental conditions and others.

**Keywords:** Philippine education system; k-12 curriculum; public elementary schools; comparative study; affective domain

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is at an academic disadvantage. According to Quismundo (2010), The Philippines is the only country with a 10-year cycle, according to UNESCO. One only has to see public school students' achievement test scores to see that the system has failed the Filipino student, said

Dina Ocampo, associate dean at the University of the Philippines College of Education. If one would look at the data, achievement scores are very low. So if one would think about it, it's really not working. We can't keep it as it is because the curriculum is too crammed, Ocampo said. Furthermore, Education Undersecretary Alberto



Muyot said the scores were really scary. Average National Achievement Test (NAT) scores of elementary school students are at a failing 64 percent. The number further slides in high school, with the national average at 46 percent. Filipino students fade even deeper into the background on the international stage, as reflected in results of the 2003 TIMSS (Trends in International Math and Science Study). Results of the test, taken by second year high school students, placed the country 41st among 45 participating countries, lagging at the bottom with African countries. Filipino students scored an average 35 percent, barely above students from Ghana and Botswana.

The present curriculum is described as congested. This means that students do not get enough time to perform tasks because the curriculum is designed to be taught in a span of 12 years and not 10 years. The more obvious result of this is the fact that most high school students graduate without the readiness to take upon higher education or employment. These students are not equipped with the basic skills or competencies needed at work. Furthermore, the short duration of our basic education program puts Filipinos who are interested to either work or study abroad at a disadvantage. This is because other countries see our 10-year program as incomplete, which then, causes Filipino graduates to not be considered as professionals abroad (Velasco, 2012).

Given all these supporting facts, there is indeed a need to improve the quality of basic education by enhancing it and by expanding the basic education cycle (Velasco, 2012).

As stated by Bilbao (2002), one of the most often repeated definition of a curriculum is that curriculum is the total learning experience. This description implies that the crux of a curriculum is the different planned and unplanned activities which have been lived, acted upon or done by the learners with the guidance of the teacher. Hence in curriculum development, the teaching and learning are actions necessary to accomplish a goal in education.

As presented in the article of Velasco (2012), President Benigno S. Aquino announced:

*"We need to add two years to our basic education. Those who can afford pay up to fourteen years of schooling before university. Thus, their children are getting*

*into the best universities and the best jobs after graduation. I want at least 12 years for our public school children to give them an even chance at succeeding."*

In line with this, the 1987 Philippine Constitution states that, "The State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and the society." Such mandate gives justice to the basic rights of every Filipino child: the right to quality education and the right to a quality life.

According to the K to 12 DepEd Primer (2011), "K-12 means "Kindergarten and the 12 years of elementary and secondary education." Kindergarten points to the 5-year old child who undertakes the standardized curriculum for preschoolers. Elementary education refers to 6 years of primary school (Grades 1-6) while secondary education means four years of junior high school (Grades 7-10 or HS Year 1-4). In addition to this, two years are now allotted for senior high school (Grades 11-12 or HS Year 5-6).

Prof. Lorina Calingasan of the College of Education in UP Diliman explains that "K-12 means extending basic education by two years, so instead of having a high school graduate at 16 (years old), we will have high schoolers graduating at 18."

The DepEd discussion paper (2010) on the enhanced K-12 basic education program explains that this new setup "seeks to provide a quality 12-year basic education program that each Filipino is entitled to" (p.5). Furthermore, the purpose is not simply to add 2 more years of education "but more importantly to enhance the basic education curriculum" (p.5).

With the K-6-4-2 model, the 2 years for senior high school is aimed at giving the students time to strengthen competencies and academic skills. The curriculum will also provide specializations in the following: science and technology, music and arts, agriculture and fisheries, sports, business and entrepreneurship, etc, depending on the occupation or career that they intend to pursue. These two years will build on skills that are essential to their chosen field (DepEd discussion paper, 2010).

Records will show that as early as 1925, there were already efforts to improve the basic



education curriculum and recommendations have been put forward since then. Thus, this idea of adding years to the present curriculum is not new (DepEd discussion paper, 2010).

The K-12 Curriculum envisions “holistically developed learners with 21st century skills” (Deped Primer, 2011). At the core of this basic education program is “the complete human development of every graduate” (DepEd discussion paper, p.6). This further means that every student would have an understanding of the world around him and a passion for life-long learning while addressing every student’s basic learning needs: “learning to learn, the acquisition of numeracy, literacy, and scientific and technological knowledge as applied to daily life” (p.6). In addition to this, every graduate is envisioned to have respect for human rights and would aim to become “*Maka-Diyos, Maka-tao, Makabansa, Maka-kalikasan*” (p.6)

The K-12 vision aims to have relevance in the socio-economic realm, as well. This means that the students would understand their role as productive members of the country. Such vision can only be possible through an enhanced curriculum (Deped Primer, 2011).

However, for any shift to succeed or fail, one should also look into the attitudes of the people towards it. As stated by Russel (1978), attitude is the readiness to respond. A state of readiness, organized through experience, which exacts a directive or dynamic response to all objects and situations to which is related.

According to Brown (1994), *Affect* refers to emotion or feeling. The affective domain is the emotional side of human behaviour, and it may be juxtaposed to the cognitive side. The development of affective states or feelings involves a variety of personality factors, feelings both about ourselves and about others with whom we come into contact.

According to Allport (1935), an attitude is an expression of favor or disfavor toward a person, place, thing, or event.

Furthermore, an attitude can be defined as a positive or negative evaluation of people, objects, event, activities, ideas, or just about anything in a person’s environment. Eagly and Chaiken (1998), for example, defines an attitude as "a psychological

tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor."

Moreover, as defined by Jung, attitude is a "readiness of the psyche to act or react in a certain way" (Jung, [1921] 1971:par. 687). Attitudes very often come in pairs, one conscious and the other unconscious.

And lastly, as defined by Sarong (2009), attitude is an inward feeling expressed by outward behavior. People always project on the outside what they feel on the inside. A person’s attitude colors every aspect of his/her life. It is like the mind’s paintbrush. It can paint everything in bright, vibrant colors –creating a masterpiece. Or it can make everything dark and dreary. There is not a single part of a person’s current life that is not affected by his/her attitude.

Thus, researching about attitudes of the different stakeholders is an important factor when looking into the K-12 curriculum shift because it is a domain which is less researched upon and it could also determine the success or failure of such shift. Furthermore, according to Hilgard (1963), purely cognitive theories of learning will be rejected unless a role is assigned to affectivity.

This study aims to compare the attitudes of the faculty and students of Karaos Elementary School, San Francisco, Agusan del Sur and Rufino Santos Sr. Elementary School Poblacion, Bacolod, Lanao del Norte on the implementation of the K - 12 program.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In order to obtain the needed data, the researchers used the educational survey method. A set of questionnaires were distributed to each of the schools. They were collected immediately after each respondent had finished answering.

The instrument used for this study consisted of two types of questionnaires. The first type was for the teachers while the second one was for the students. Each questionnaire consisted of items related to their attitudes towards the K-12 curriculum shift. The answers were then tabulated. Percentage and frequency were used to treat the collected data.



Do you think that K - 12 will be successful?						
	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
Students	128	78%	36	22%	164	89%
Teachers	16	80%	4	20%	20	11%
Total	144	78%	40	22%	184	100%

This study involved the faculty members and students of Rufino Santos Señor Elementary School and Karaos Elementary School.

Rufino Santos Señor Elementary School is a small public elementary school located in the coastal area of Poblacion, Bacolod, Lanao del Norte. This school was founded on June 1979. This school's principal is Mrs. Clariss G. Crisol. The faculty force of this school is eight while the student number is 181 including the the kindergarten pupils. The students of this school come from low-income families whose parents work as farmers, fishermen, motorcycle (habal-habal) drivers, and small scale vendors.

While Karaos Elementary School is also a small public elementary school located in the rural areas of San Francisco, Agusan del Sur. It has two administrators, a faculty force of ten and a student number of 323. These students come from low income families having a monthly income of less than P10,000.00.

These two schools were purposively chosen by the respondents since there was a notion that the first institutions to be affected by this curriculum shift would be the public schools. Also, these schools were chosen since the respondents have connections inside these two schools.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Responses of students towards K-12 Program

The following are the responses of the students to the questions asked to them:

Do you agree on the K - 12 education system?						
	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
Students	109	66.5%	55	33.5%	164	89%
Teachers	17	85%	3	15%	20	11%

Total	126	68%	58	32%	184	100%
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Figure 1: Students' and Teachers' approval on K-12

Figure 2: Students' and Teachers' assessment whether K-12 will be successful.

Figure 1 presents the attitude of the respondents (students and teachers) on the implementation of the K -12 program. As reflected in the total response, 109 (66.5%) out of 164 students from the two schools approve the implementation of the K - 12 program. The remaining 55 (33.5%) students do not agree its implementation. As to the teachers' response, 17 (85%) approves the implementation and only 3 (15%) of them are negative on the program's implementation.

Figure 2 also presents the students' and teachers' perspective on the program as to its success. 128 (78%) out of 165 students believe that

	Are you prepared for K - 12?				Total	%
	Yes	%	No	%		
KES	0	0%	11	100%	11	55%
RSSE	2	22%	7	78%	9	45%
Total	2	10%	18	90%	20	100%

the program will be successful in the long run, while the remaining 36 (22%) students are negative about its success. On the other hand, the teachers are as well positive on the success of the program.

There are several factors that they believe that would contribute to the success or failure of the program. The first is the budget of the government to the materials such as books, facilities and equipment for the courses that will be added in the curriculum. Another factor is the socio economic status of the Filipino families, especially those who are living in the rural areas. Some reasons why these students do not agree on its implementation is that the parents have no enough budget to send their children to school for to additional years.

Figure 3: Teachers' perception whether the program will become successful in achieving its goals.



Figure 3 presents the teachers' responses on the question "Do you believe that the curriculum will become successful in achieving its goals?" There were 8 (73%) out of 11 teachers from Karaos Elementary School believes that the program will become successful while the remaining 3 (27%) of them said no. On the other hand, there were also 8 (88%) out of 9 teachers from Rufino Santos Sr. Elementary school who believe that the program will be successful while 1 (12%) does not believe the program will be successful.

Out of the 20 respondents from the two schools combined, there were 16 (80%) teachers who agreed that the curriculum will become successful while only 4 (20%) of them disagreed.

This defines the teachers' attitude as to their perception on the success of the K - 12 program. The teacher respondents are positive that the program will be effective in achieving its goals. This finding provides an overview on the success of the program. Since these teachers are the ones who will receive trainings on the additional two years of the curriculum, the administration then would find it easy to train these teachers since they already have a positive impression on the program.

Figure 4: Self-assessment of the teachers as to their

	Do you believe that the curriculum will become successful in achieving its goals?				Total %	
	yes	%	No	%		
KES	8	73%	3	27%	11	55%
RSSSES	8	88%	1	12%	9	45%
Total	16	80%	4	20%	20	100%

preparedness for the K-12

Figure 4 presents the teachers' self-assessment with regards to their preparedness on the program. As reflected, all (100%) the respondents from Karaos Elementary School believe that they are not yet equipped for the program. Similar results were also taken from Rufino Santos Sr. Elementary School where 7 (78%) out of 9 teacher respondents

believe that they are not prepared for the program. The remaining 2 (10%) of the teachers believe that they are prepared for the new curriculum.

These teachers believe that they are not prepared for the implementation of the K - 12 program because they think they are not equipped with trainings and facilities that will make effective for the program.





		<b>Do you think the K-12 will help you better in getting a job in the future?</b>		
		YES	NO	Total
KES	<b>Count</b>	92	10	102
	% Within school	90.2%	9.8%	100%
	% within Do you think the K-12 will help you better in getting a job in the future?	62.6%	58.8%	
	% of total	56.1%	6.1%	
RSSES	<b>Count</b>	55	7	62
	% Within school	88.7%	11.3%	
	% within Do you think the K-12 will help you better in getting a job in the future?	37.4%	41.2%	
	% of total	33.5%	4.3%	
TOTAL	<b>Count</b>	147	17	164
	% Within school	<b>89.6%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
	% within Do you think the K-12 will help you better in getting a job in the future?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of total	89.6%	10.4%	100.0%

Figure 5: Students' Perceptions as to whether they will land a better job in the future.

Figure 5 presents the students' response on the question "Do you think the K - 12 will help you better in getting a job in the future?" As revealed, out of 102 respondents from Karaos Elementary School, 92 (90.2%) agreed that the education that they have obtained under the program will help them get a good job while only 10 (9.8%) disagreed. In parallel to their responses, 55 (88%) out of 62 students agreed while 7 (11.3%) disagreed from Rufino Santos Sr. Elementary School.

A great percentage 89.6% of the respondents of the two schools combined welcomes the idea that the additional years in education would help them land into a better job. This result agrees with Primer (2011) that the K-12 vision aims to have relevance in the socio-economic realm, as well. This means that the students would understand their role as productive members of the country.

Likewise, the students will become more mature in dealing with the problems that they encounter daily, thus enabling them to become effective members of the workforce. This strengthens the statement of DepEd (2011) that every student would have an understanding of the world around him and a passion for life-long learning while addressing every student's basic learning needs: "learning to learn, the acquisition of numeracy, literacy, and scientific and technological knowledge as applied to daily life". So instead of having a high school graduate at 16 (years old), the schools will have high schoolers graduating at 18 (Calingasan, 2011).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The following are the findings of this study:

The students were positive to the implementation of the K - 12 program, they also



are optimistic that it will be successful in achieving its goals. Moreover, the students are willing to invest their time and resources to undergo the program.

The teachers also approve the implementation of the program. They believe that the program will effectively equip the students in the fields and careers that they have chosen. Although they are willing to embrace the program, still they find themselves not equipped to teach the students since they believe that they need more trainings.

Furthermore, the following are recommended:

The students should continue to pursue their studies despite the change in the curriculum.

Orientations about the K - 12 program should be given to the students for them to be motivated to continue their education.

Teachers should find ways for professional growth, especially with the current trends in education for them to be effective in their fields.

Future researchers should consider looking into the other aspects of the K - 12 curriculum shift such as cognitive preparedness, environmental conditions and others.

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