



A Phenomenological Inquiry of Experiences of Pioneer Senior High School Graduates under General Academic Strand: Influence on Career Decision Making

Mary Ann B. Gatpandan, Ph.D.¹, Felinda E. Cruz, Ph.D.² and Edwin G. de Taza, MEM³

¹ Gen. E. Aguinaldo National High School-Bailen, meanngatpandan@yahoo.com

² Gen. E. Aguinaldo National High School-Bailen, felinda.cruz001@gmail.com

³ Gen. E. Aguinaldo National High School-Bailen, iq008_wynewiser1984@yahoo.com

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Abstract

As Philippines fully implemented one of the biggest changes in its educational system, the impact of the new K to 12 curriculum to pioneer senior high school (SHS) graduates in their selection of career after completing the basic education is described. Thus, this paper presents the experiences of General Academic Strand (GAS) graduates in different subjects which they find significant and influential in their development and career choice to come up with recommendations on how to improve teachers' subject instruction and the implementation of the school GAS program itself.

The main sources of data are from the survey, interviews participated in by pioneer graduates and documentary analysis of their individual portfolio. All fifty-seven graduates were asked to rate the level of influence of thirty-one subjects in their personal and skills development and eventually to their career choice. Seven interviewed co-researchers who shared their individual experiences were purposefully selected based on the ratio of the outcome of the survey about their plan as they exit SHS: four will pursue college, one will enter the military, one is planning to look for a job and one is undecided on the day the interview was conducted. Clark Muostaka's phenomenological treatment of qualitative data is used to analyze and interpret the individual transcript of interviews.

Findings from the study show individual textural description of experiences: "A More Responsible and Compassionate Research Leader", "Built Character through Various Social Sciences Disciplines", "Fascinated by Technology, From Carefree to a Disciplined Man", "Mystified by Philosophy", "Enlightened by World Religions" and "The Accidental Writer". Though reduction, eidetic insights to serve as the essence of the experiences include "Self-discovery and Awareness", "Guided by Educators" and "Learners' Transformation".

Introduction

Philippines through the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented a new curriculum which started during the school year 2012-2013. This is a major reform in basic education. From Basic Education Curriculum, the country shifted the educational system to K to 12 Curriculum as mandated by the Republic Act 10533 otherwise known as Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013. One of the changes introduced in the said curriculum is the extension of years spent in school. From ten years of basic education, it has been modified to twelve years. There are additional two years for Senior High School (SHS).

While other Academic SHS strands focus on specific college courses and career of students, General Academic Strand (GAS) on the other hand is offered to SHS students who are undecided on what course to pursue in college. The aim of GAS is to help students realize their potentials and skills to decide for the future. According to Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order Number 105 series of 2017 or the Policy on the Admission of SHS Graduates to the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) Effective Academic Year 2018-2019, all grade 12 graduates are eligible to enter college regardless of the track or strand taken in the SHS as long as they passed the admission requirements of the admitting HEI.

GAS curriculum has a total of thirty-one subjects. The SHS students are required to take up to 15 core subjects with eight learning areas: Language, Humanities, Communication, Mathematics, Science, Philosophy, Social Science and Physical Education, 7 applied subjects in which the context depends on the track and 9 specialized subjects. Under specialized subjects offers two electives depending on what the school can offer and students' interest.

Two years of SHS offers students new learning experiences to assess themselves, their interest and skills to help them make up their mind on what career to pursue after SHS. It is not easy to mature and make decisions about the future. Wilcox (2017) said that it requires all to control emotions and physical being. Guiding students with their decisions is a very crucial responsibility of the school.

The main objective of this study was to identify and highlight the subjects or activities for two school years which greatly influenced the pioneer graduates' decision on what path to take after exiting SHS and uncover the picture of the experiences of the first batch

of senior high school graduates of Gen. E. Aguinaldo National High School-Bailen under GAS. This paper describes how subjects' experiences influenced the graduates' identity development and career decision-making and recommend ways to improve teachers' instruction related to GAS curriculum as well as school's GAS program.

Literature Review

Findings from previous studies were significant in conceptualizing the purpose of this study. A study of Gaylor and Nicol (2016) supports the positive relationship between a particular class and its relevance in the increase of learners' skills especially when there are evidence-driven practices. The need to find out the career options of SHS graduates is crucial for the researchers to understand the effect of a 2-year pilot implementation of the curriculum.

Career decision-making is one of the most problematic issues for parents and other people involve in the academic community. Many factors may influence it. Some of these factors according to Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) are parents influence, influence from peers, gender, print media, financial reasons and interest.

Career choice has become one of the significant matter and a complicated science, considering that the decision is influenced by numerous factors including extrinsic, intrinsic or even combination of both. (Nyamwange, 2016). Hewit (2010) as mentioned in the study of Nyamwange (2016) stated that most students are heavily influenced by professions of their parents or their achievement, some is because of the high salary and benefits of the career and some follow their passion and interest. (Hewit, 2010 as cited in Nyamwange, 2016)

Limjuco (2018) mentioned that in the Philippines, there is a conventional frame of mind that white collar jobs are the most wanted path the future graduates are looking forward to in their lives and SHS program is an avenue for young learners to know themselves more in terms of their skills and ability to further decide on what to take after SHS. Senior High School was implemented to produce graduates who are ready to face three options: trabaho (work), negosyo (entrepreneurship) and kolehiyo (college). Daquiog (2012) in his article that emphasizes that SHS aims to produce productive and responsible citizens equipped with essential competencies and skills for lifelong learning and employment.

Career exploration during the adolescent stage is necessary. Learners should begin exploring themselves

more to identify potential career options. The planning of **career is important to high school students and parents are the first people whom they will approach for help and advice (Witko, Bernes, Magnusson, & Bardick, 2005)**, mentioned in their study that students' self-efficacy, together with interactive relationships among learning experiences in the process of career-decision making and that school counselors have to provide more effective career intervention programs for the students. Also, students consider their own skills and interest, intellectual capacity, parents' advice, choices of their peers, individual value and even perception from the society (Ampofu & Bless, 2017). They added that teachers' advice, the occupation of parents are also things considered by students when making career decisions. The school should provide realistic choices to students through career guidance and conferences, programs, field trips to companies for real experiences and expose them to work immersion. The school has to maximize the guidance office in guiding students in career decision making. Guidance and counseling help students to assess their potentials and make proper career decisions and development in life (Gibson & Mitchelle, 1990 as cited by Ampofo & Bless, 2017).

Objectives

The main objective of this study was to describe the experiences of the first batch of senior high school graduates of Gen. E. Aguinaldo National High School-Bailen under General Academic Strand (GAS) and examine the influence of the subjects' experiences on graduates' identity development and career decision-making.

Specifically, it answered the following questions:

- 1.) What are the exit plans of pioneer SHS students after high school?
- 2.) What subjects under GAS curriculum the pioneer senior high school graduates find substantial to their decision making on what path to take after SHS?
- 3.) What are the implications of the insights from the subjects' experiences of the participants on improvement of instruction?
- 4.) Based on the first batch graduates' experiences and perspectives, what suggestions can be made to teachers and school for improved instructions related to General Academic Strand curriculum?

Conceptual Framework

The description of the different experiences of pioneer senior high school graduates helped the

researchers to come up with recommendations to teachers to improve their instruction for coming school years and to suggest how to improve school's GAS program. These suggestions can help the teachers on their professional development as they continue their work as senior high school teachers and also to school administrators.

Research Methodology

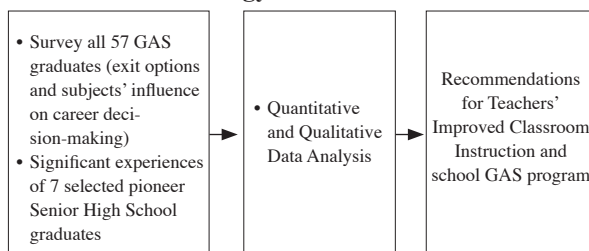


Figure 1: Research Paradigm

In this study, mixed method or quantitative and qualitative means of investigation were employed through a simple survey questionnaire followed by interviews and documentary analysis for selected co-researchers. SHS graduates' perspective, insights and experiences showed the extent of how the subjects in the curriculum affect their major decision in life and identify the need for improvement of the teachers' instruction through some suggestions on selected subjects.

1. Population and Samples. During the first year of implementation of senior high school, the school has 57 students only. They served as the respondents of this study. They are expected to graduate when the survey was conducted. Among 57 students, the researchers selected co-researchers for the qualitative part of this study. Researchers selected students from different plans after senior high during the time this research was conducted. The researchers selected participants in an 8:1 ratio and this was based on the outcome of the survey: four of them will go to college, one will enter the military, one has to stop and will look for a job and one is still undecided on what to do after senior high school.

2. Research Instrument. The researchers listed thirty-one subjects under General Academic Strand curriculum and asked fifty-seven students to rate each subject based on the level of its influence to their identity or personal development and to career decision-making. Students based their responses on their subject experiences during the semester it was taught. It is answerable by a 5-point Likert scale as follows:

The researchers also asked students about their

Table 1. Scale Used in the Study

Scale	Range	Level of Influence /Verbal Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Extremely Influential
4	3.41- 4.20	Very Influential
3	2.61- 3.40	Somewhat Influential
2	1.81-2.60	Slightly Influential
1	1.00-1.80	Not at all Influential

plan after senior high school. The options included in this study were the most common exit options in the Philippines specifically in the 5th class municipality of Gen. E. Aguinaldo, Cavite. The students have five options: will go to college, will be an entrepreneur, will enter Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), will look for a job and undecided. The option will enter in the AFP was included because in this town, almost 80% of the household has a member who is a military. With the help of the survey result, purposive sampling was used as a basis for selecting co-researchers for the individual interview. Since more students will go to college, 4 students from this exit option were interviewed and 1 co-researcher each from other options.

For qualitative part, the perspective of the pioneer SHS graduates regarding some questions such as “What are the subjects that made you realize and discover your skills and potentials?”, “What are your experiences in SHS that made you decide to continue to college/ apply in the AFP/ find a job”? “Was there an instance that an activity for a particular subject convinced you to take up the course you are enrolled now?” What keeps you undecided of the college course or path until now?” served as basis for the analysis of data and arrived to individual textural description. The questions were formulated to deeply analyze the experiences of the students in various subjects which served significant influence in their decision-making.

3. *Collection of Data.* Survey was administered a month before the graduation of the pioneer batch of senior of high school while interviews were done after graduation on April 7, 2018. This was an open-ended interviewing and discussions. According to Creswell (2008), meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. Qualitative researchers tend to use open-ended questions in the interview so that the co-researchers can share their views. The researchers also used the power of social media whenever there are follow-up questions to the co-researchers or something to be clarified. The researchers

used messaging applications and e-mail in asking co-researchers follow-up questions. Transcript of individual interviews was examined to draw out meaningful experiences from the lives of the co-researchers. Another source of data is from a documentary analysis of the individual students’ portfolio that the co-researchers prepared and submitted to SHS department as part of a subject requirement. The portfolio consists of students’ autobiography, personal essay, achievements, narrative of significant experiences from elementary to senior high school with emphasis on unforgettable learning and experiences in academic life and future plans and goals.

4. *Data Analysis.* For the first set of survey, all grade 12 students were asked about their plans after senior high school. It was then followed by a list of subjects in the curriculum that they rated. The aim of these surveys was to determine how these subjects influenced their realizations of their potentials and what to do after SHS. Frequency, percentage and weighted mean were used to determine the students’ plan after SHS and subjects’ level of influence to the students’ career decision-making. Said surveys and results were used as basis in selecting co-researchers. The last part of the data gathering is the interview of seven co-researchers. Clark Moustakas phenomenological method of analyzing qualitative data were used to describe the experiences of the co-researchers. In his book, he mentioned “by adopting a strictly descriptive approach, we can let the phenomena speak for themselves. The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions general or universal meaning are derived (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13).

5. *Ethical Issues.* There are some ethical issues needing to be discussed by researchers to senior high school teachers before the conduct of this study. First, it was clearly explained by the researchers to the teachers that the results of students’ responses on the survey is not an evaluation of their teaching performance during the two school years but rather how the experiences influenced the students. That is why the researchers only revealed the top influential subjects to the expected graduates to avoid negative impact on the teachers or some subjects which ranked low. All agreed that students’ responses to surveys down to the interviews will be respected and will not be treated personally. Moreover, the names of the seven co-researchers were not revealed in this study.

Results and Discussion

Problem 1. Through a simple survey, the researchers asked all fifty-seven students who are expected to graduate on April 2018 about their plans or options as they exit SHS. The summary of the responses is written on the table below:

Table 2. Senior High School Candidates for Graduation Exit Options

Exit Options	Number of Students	Percentage
will go to college	33	57.90%
will be an entrepreneur	0	0
will enter Armed Forces of the Philippines	8	14.03%
Look for job	8	14.03%
Undecided	8	14.03%
Total	57	100%

The table above allows researchers to know the future plan of grade 12 students as they exit SHS. Based on the results, more than half of the expected graduates will continue their studies to college. No grade 12 student wants to be an entrepreneur after SHS that is why there is no co-researcher selected from this exit option. All other options obtained a percentage of 14.03%. Clearly, most of the students want to have a degree. It is evident that today's young people are inherently aware of the return on investment provided by a college education (Glatter, 2016). This result served as a basis in selecting co-researchers for the interview.

Moreover, the result showed that 85.96% of the students clearly identified their career exit plans. The giving importance to the high percentage of graduates who were already decided to their chosen career should also be given to the remaining percentage of 8% who were still undecided. These students are less likely to persist whether in entering college, or in getting a job.

Problem 2. On the other hand, the next table will reveal the top 10 subjects which greatly influenced the pioneer graduates' identity and personal development and eventually their career-decision making:

Based on the result, most of the students' way of thinking of how to decide for their career or plans upon exiting senior high school was influenced by the subject IPHP, one of the fifteen core subjects in the curriculum. According to the students, they can freely think and express their thoughts during the discussions in the subject without worrying what their classmates will think about them. A co-researcher said that most questions on this subject helped him to reflect on his life and provided direction for his future. It is through this subject that

Table 3. Top 10 Influential Subjects to Expected SHS Graduates SY 2017-2018

No.	Subjects	WM	Verbal Description
1	Introduction to the Philosophy of the Human Person (IPHP)	4.62	Extremely Influential
2	Work Immersion/Research/ Career Advocacy/ Culminating Activity	4.48	Extremely Influential
3	Contemporary Arts from the Philippine Region (CPAR)	4.21	Extremely Influential
4	Introduction to World Religions and Belief Systems	4.16	Very Influential
5	Personal Development (PerDev)	4.06	Very Influential
6	Empowerment Technologies (E-tech)	3.88	Very Influential
7	21 st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World	3.81	Very Influential
8	Practical Research 1 (PR1)	3.63	Very Influential
9	Business Mathematics (BM)	3.63	Very Influential
10	Disaster Readiness and Risk Reduction (DRRR)	3.51	Very Influential

students are able to think for themselves. It is in discussing philosophy, people can think, this way it builds thinking people and the intelligentsia are engaged (Hicks & Holbrook, 2017). This is somewhat similar on what they experienced in the subject PerDev wherein they became aware of different stages of development and maturity. A co-researcher said, "I became more mature and realized that I have to act my age." In an article Rodrigo (2012) mentioned that the more doors an individual opens the more he or she realizes there are to be opened. Personal development starts at a point of self-awareness and may as well be the ultimate end (Johns, 2005).

Moreover, the subject Work Immersion/Research/ Career Advocacy/ Culminating Activity also affects how the students will plan their career. High number of students said that experiences outside the school especially when they conducted a community research project related to the town's arts and culture provided them with insights and realizations on the importance of appreciation of one's community. It helped them to reflect on the needs of the society. One of them said, "Our town is rich with agricultural resources but I know only one student who is currently taking up course related to agriculture." As of the writing of this study, 2 graduates will take Bachelor of Science in Agriculture in a nearby State University. Their experiences on the research project regarding the irrigation system of a remote area for farmers motivated them to pursue the course. Also, under the same subject, 1-week Career Orientation likewise helped them to be motivated on what path to take after senior high school. Part of the activity is a forum wherein the school invited 10 young professionals in different

fields who are all product of the school. Students said that this activity opened up their minds to what the real world is all about.

It was revealed from the results that along with other subjects, these top subjects served their purpose for GAS students. Aside from enjoying different activities in the subjects, they were influenced by these subjects on finding their skills and interest and even their strength and weaknesses. Furthermore, it was shown that students enjoyed arts subjects. It was shown in the subjects Research Project and Culminating Activities, CPAR and E-tech.

Also, influential subjects and activities are those that get into the inner part of the students' personality as they have experienced in PerDev and Introduction to the Philosophy of the Human Person.

Problem 3. The following highlights individual subject experiences of selected co-researchers:

A Compassionate Research Leader and Environment Lover -Co-researcher 1 is taking up Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science. In his statement, "In senior high school, I have developed skills which I was not able to discover when I was in junior high school, I can be a leader in a research group and help struggling members. I learned to love the environment more because of the DRRR and Philosophy subjects. My love for environment was strengthened when we had a career orientation and a speaker talked about this course. I got more curious and now have more willingness to know what this course is all about." ("Sa senior high school, andami kong nadevelop na mga skills ko na hindi ko natuklasan noong junior high school, pwede pala akong maging leader sa research at makatulong sa mga kagrupo, mas minahal ko ang environment dahil sa DRRR at Philosophy na lalong ipinamulat sa akin noong career orientation ng isang guest kaya lalo akong naciurious at nagkaroon ng willingness na alamin ang nilalaman ng kursong ito.")

Built Character through Various Social Sciences Disciplines – Co-researcher 2 is a consistent student-leader who is very communicative and can express her feelings and ideas well. She wanted to be a teacher since she was in junior high school. However, her problem is what specialization to concentrate on. In her stay in GEANHS, she was fascinated by the different social science disciplines such as Philosophy, Understanding Culture, Society and Politics, World Religions and Personal Development. She said, "PerDev helped me to realize what specialization to take in college. In our

lesson about stages of maturity, I appreciate Human Science. I also enjoyed other social science subjects like Philosophy which allowed me to think deeper about life. I can always relate my life to the lessons. During the career talk, when I listen to the forum, my plans became clearer when I realized that having a degree will bring more benefits in my life." ("PerDev po talaga isa sa nakatulong sa'kin noong grade 11, pinag-aralan po namin ang stages of maturity. Naappreciate ko ang ganda pag-aralan ang Human Science. Natulungan po ako ng subject sa pag-iisip ng kukuning course. Tapos nag-enjoy po ako sa ibang social sciences gaya sa Philosophy nakakapaisip po 'yung lalim ng hugot sa buhay, naiirelate ko ang sarili ko. Pero noong career talk po mas naging malinaw sa akin ang lahat dahil alam ko mas maraming benefits sa buhay kapag tapos sa pag-aaral.") Now she is taking up Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Social Science in a State University in the province of Cavite.

Fascinated by Technology- Co-researcher 3 is currently taking up Bachelor of Science in Information Technology. Because he is from a big family of 8, he never experienced a life of abundance. He is known to his classmates as a student who keeps on looking for means to earn money to support his everyday needs. An example is encoding classmate's assignments. He said during the interview that before senior high, he has many choices on what course to take in college such as Business Management, Nursing, Education and Tourism. During his journey in SHS, he had enough time to know and discover his skills. Among the subjects he has taken in SHS, he said that Empowerment Technologies helped him to realize his potential. He enjoyed web designing with hypertext marked-up language (HTML) programming. He said, "The subject E-tech molded me to become a computer enthusiast. I learned so much in every lesson, things that I never encountered in my academic life but I learned them easily and I enjoyed so much." ("E-tech po talaga ang humubog sa akin na maging mahilig sa computer. Andami kong nalaman na lessons na never ko pang na-encounter pero andali kong natutunan at naging masaya ako.")

From Carefree to a Disciplined Man – Among the co-researchers, co-researcher 4 is the most improved student when it comes to behavior. During his junior high school days, he was one of the problem students. Gradually, he has shown great improvement in his academics and behavior during his senior high school. He said some subjects helped him to have plans and

opened his mind about life. He also mentioned that guidance and advice of teachers made him to be more mature and eventually became disciplined in doing his responsibilities as a student. He said, "Philosophy and World Religions opened his mind to the realities of life. Before I am just a happy-go-lucky person but my experiences in senior high helped me to be mature." ("Ang Philosophy po at World Religions ang nagpalawak ng kaisipan ko tungkol sa buhay. Dati pa easy-easy lang po ako pero ngayon nagmature na rin po ako kahit papaano.") However, even though he wants to go to college, he needs to help his family. He decided to enter the military after senior high school. He added, "I need to help my family in terms of financial needs. I don't like to wait for the time that I can go to college, I don't want to waste my time." ("Kelangan ko po makatulong sa pamilya ko, ayoko naman po tumambay habang naghihintay kung kailan po ako makakapag-aral kaya ayoko po mag-aksaya ng panahon.")

Mystified by Philosophy- Co-researcher 5 was chosen to be a part of this study because from the very start of his senior high school journey, he was very vocal to tell that he has no plans to go to college due to his family's financial constraints. He said after SHS, he will find a job to help his parents. When the researcher interviewed him, he said, "Philosophy is the best subject. I know what to do with my life now without thinking of what other people will say. It opened my mind to the beauty of life and made me think deeply about its realities." ("Philosophy talaga ang best subject para sa akin, namulat ang kaisipan ko sa kung anong dapat kong gawin sa buhay. Hindi ko dapat iniisip ang sasabihin ng ibang tao. Napalalim ko ang aking isipan tungkol sa ganda ng buhay at katotohanan ng buhay."). His determination to improve his life was reinforced when he heard a testimony during career orientation week of a Department of Science and Technology scholar that said he never let poverty defeat his dreams to become a teacher. Co-researcher 5 mentioned that he can help his parents more when he has a degree. Currently, he is enrolled at Cavite State University to pursue his dreams of becoming a computer scientist. He will be helped financially by relatives and will look for part-time jobs to support his studies to reach his target in life.

The Accidental Writer- Co-researcher 6 is a Journalism freshman in a State University. She wanted to be a teacher but discovered her skills in writing when they had activities on poem interpretation on the subject 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the

World. She said, "We had an activity about interpreting a poem and illustrating it. I enjoyed that activity on that subject and aside from career talk, that convinced me to continue college and take Journalism courses." ("Meron po kaming activity tungkol sa pagpili ng landas then may poem and illustration. Iinterpret po namin 'yung poem. Nagustuhan ko po ang ginagawa namin sa subject na 'yon at 'yun po ang nagpakumbinsi sa akin na magpatuloy sa college at kumuha ng kursong Journalism, bukod po sa career talk.")

Enlightened by World Religions – Co-researcher 7 is enrolled in a State University and taking up Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. His original plan and dream since he was a child is to take up Bachelor of Evangelical Ministry. He has a deep love for his religion, Iglesia ni Cristo, an International Church originated in the Philippines. He was also inspired by the subject Introduction to World Religions and Belief Systems. He said, "The subject Introduction to World Religions and Belief Systems became THIS SENTENCE DID NOT END "Naging sobrang relevant sa akin ng subject. Naging informed ako sa mga religions sa buong mundo at itong subject na ito ay hindi lang para malaman ang tungkols a mga religions kundi mapromote and respeto sa mga 'yon at paniniwala ng ibang tao." However, during his 2 years of stay in senior high school, his mathematical knowledge and skills were enhanced, "When, we are doing the payroll system, it was a great challenge that tested my skill and also I was the top in our Statistics class." ("Noong gumagawa po kami ng payroll system, challenge po talaga, 'yun po ang sumubok sa kakayanan ko plus ako po ang nag-excel sa Statistics.") He added that after he finished an engineering course, he will continue his first plan of finishing Evangelical Ministry course. He realized that he has to have a degree in engineering first before continuing to serve his religion. He said, "I will study again. I think it is better to have a college degree before pursuing my plans." ("Mag-aaral po ako ulit. Mas maganda po kasi may pinanghahawakan na akong degree.")

The eidetic insights derived from the phenomenon are the following:

The Self-discovery and Awareness. Finding the importance of little things means a lot. Senior high school graduates' experiences helped them to discover their interests and potentials. They said that although during the start of senior high school that they experienced lack of facilities and learning materials, these served as a new beginning of an amazing journey. With the school head

and teachers, they learned to be resourceful and flexible. One of the graduates said that it was not easy for them to adapt to the new system such as new policies, new set of subjects and new way of teaching in SHS. However, opportunities through experiences came their way and helped them to be aware of themselves and discovered their wants in life.

Guided by Educators. During the early month of second semester of SY 2017-2018, only 19 students plan to go to college. But thru teachers' motivation, 19 became 33 and as of the final writing of this paper, 41 of them are currently enrolled in college. Pioneer graduates said that it was the teachers who made a great impact on their career choice. Because of the small number of enrolled students during the first year of senior high school at Gen. E. Aguinaldo National High School, they were properly guided by teachers in terms of choosing their career path. Moreover, they said that the teaching style influenced them the most. Teachers need to stop teaching to the test and adopt a more philosophical teaching style across the curriculum (Taylor, 2012). This was proven when they had their first-hand experience in conducting a research. They said that this brought them to conquer their fears and prove to themselves that they can do what they thought they could not. The co-researchers also mentioned that because the subjects in senior high school are very specific, it helped them to learn more about the content unlike when they were in junior high school. For instance, they said that they know that there are disasters happening and that is being discussed in science subject, but learning the specific kind of disasters in the subject Disaster Readiness and Risk Reduction allowed them to appreciate science more.

Learners' Transformation. Pioneer SHS graduates became mature as they face big challenges in this curriculum. They learned how to manage their time because of the requirements for the subjects and as they survive to different activities and subjects, their self-confidence increased and realized that they can do more things than what they have expected.

Problem 4. Based on the results of this study, the following are the researchers' suggestions:

Since the subject Introduction to the Philosophy of the Human Person is one of the most loved subjects by the students, the curriculum should promote to include philosophical discussion, if applicable in every subject because the subject teaches the student not only what to think but how to think which helped them to be guided in every decision they will make.

Use of Differentiated Instruction. Teachers should provide more differentiated activities based on the interest of students especially on subject that hone skills like Empowerment Technology. Students should be freer in doing performance task and other written outputs on subject where it is applicable.

Maximize Elective subjects. The school should provide more options for electives and primarily will focus on 3 Academic Strands: Humanities and Social Science, Accountancy and Business Management and *Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics*. A survey can be conducted to junior high school students of the school prior to the start of the school year to identify the interest and skills of incoming senior high school students. Furthermore, to fulfill the ultimate mission of senior high school which is to produce students who are ready for Kolehiyo (College), Negosyo (Entrepreneurship) and Trabaho (Employment), the school offering GAS should provide other options for elective subject such as Cookery, Bookkeeping, Computer System Servicing and other areas that will make students more competent and ready for employment and business.

Work Immersion or On-the-Job Training. This is one area in the subject Work Immersion/Research/ Career Advocacy/ Culminating Activity should be strengthened and be given more effort. Graduating SHS students' interest should be identified and grouped so that they can be brought to agencies purposefully based on what they need to be developed and not merely to comply with the subject requirement only. Undecided students can be given more real-world experiences through work immersion or by providing seminar-workshop and even undergoing counseling in order for them to have confidence in choosing their career.

Journalism in SHS. This should be strengthened. This co-curricular activity can be an avenue to discover and develop students who have the potential to write or any other skill related to it such as lay outing and cartooning. For Integrated Schools or schools which administration is the same for senior and junior high school, SHS can have a separate newsletter from JHS and can have quarterly issue so that editors and writers can have more time in molding their talent in writing by the journalism advisers.

Teachers Equipped with Research Skills. All teachers must have knowledge and skills in conducting research on their respective specialization to serve as advisers of students in conducting research. For instance,

GAS students can conduct a research related to STEM strand. Aside from the research teacher, Mathematics and Science teachers can be the research advisers of the students who will conduct STEM-related research.

As of today, the school has 142 grade 11 enrollees. Too far from 57 pioneer graduates. For 2 years, the school has a tremendous increase in its enrolment. The first batch has an ideal number of students per section which resulted in the ability to give of more attention and guidance to each student. Due to increasing number of students, the school should improve mechanisms on how to serve its students leading to the realizations of their skills and potentials that will help them to plan for their future career.

Finally, because of the reality that not all Filipino parents can bring their children to college, the school can also design a scholarship program to financially-challenged but deserving SHS graduates to send them to colleges and universities.

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