



Cognitive and Social Drivers of Success: Evaluating the Open High School Program

Marez I. Stauner

Candelaria National High School, Candelaria, New Washington, Aklan

Corresponding Author Email: marezstauner@gmail.com**Received:** 30 July 2025**Revised:** 11 September 2025**Accepted:** 22 September 2025**Available Online:** 25 September 2025**Volume IV (2025), Issue 3, P-ISSN – 2984-7567; E-ISSN - 2945-3577**<https://doi.org/10.63498/etcor456>

Abstract

Aim: This study aimed to determine the influence of students' cognitive and social skill levels on the effectiveness of the Open High School Program at Ochando National High School during School Year 2018–2019.

Methodology: A survey-correlational research design was employed, involving thirty-seven (37) students from Grades 7 to 10 enrolled in the Open High School Program. Cognitive skills were measured using a 30-item validated test questionnaire, while social skills were assessed through another 30-item validated instrument. The effectiveness of the program was evaluated using a 15-item researcher-made questionnaire, which underwent face and content validation by a panel of experts and was pilot-tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. Data were analyzed using the mean, standard deviation, Kruskal-Wallis test, and Spearman's rho.

Results: Students demonstrated "Approaching Proficiency" in cognitive skills and "High" levels of social skills. The Open High School Program was rated as "Effective." However, statistical analysis revealed no significant difference in program effectiveness across varying levels of cognitive and social skills. Additionally, no significant relationships were found among program effectiveness, cognitive skills, and social skills.

Conclusion: The study concluded that the effectiveness of the Open High School Program was not influenced by students' cognitive or social skill levels. The program demonstrated its capacity to provide quality education regardless of individual differences in cognitive and social development.

Keywords: open high school program, cognitive skills, social skills, program effectiveness, correlational study

INTRODUCTION

School has a great influence on the overall development of a child. Attending a regular school plays an important role in cultivating and strengthening a student's ability to become a well-balanced person. However, in the Open High School Program (OHSP), students experience a different configuration where teacher guidance is reduced, and independent learning is prioritized. This makes it necessary to examine whether students can still acquire fundamental skills under limited classroom interaction. With proper guidance, teachers help students understand lessons and provide interventions when competencies or topics are difficult to grasp. In this program, achievement largely depends on the learner's individual capacity to develop strong cognitive abilities such as problem-solving, attention, and memory, as well as social abilities like cooperation and communication, which are usually nurtured through interpersonal relationships. These two dimensions—social and cognitive—are integral drivers of learning outcomes in an adaptive learning setting (Abenojar et al., 2025).

In line with the global call for inclusivity in education, United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4 emphasizes providing alternative paths to achieving quality education for all (UNESCO, 2022). At the national level, the Philippines has responded by scaling up flexible learning options to address issues related to poverty, distance, and physical disability (Tria, 2020), in support of the Education for All (EFA) functional literacy goal. Locally, this study was conducted at Ochando National High School, the only school in Aklan implementing the Open High School Program, to evaluate its effectiveness in connecting learners to schooling and ensuring they build competencies comparable to those of traditional students (Pangilinan, 2025).

The effectiveness of this program in improving students' cognitive abilities remains a crucial issue. While modules and virtual platforms provide opportunities for independent learning, they sometimes result in misconceptions and confusion. In flexible learning systems, reduced teacher supervision often creates challenges for timely feedback and correction, potentially affecting students' readiness for higher education and real-life problem-solving (Alvarez, 2021). Cahapay (2020) underscored that modular learning became the most viable mode

645



of instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines, ensuring continuity despite restrictions. Similarly, Barrot et al. (2021) noted that while modular and online distance learning expanded access, many students reported difficulties in maintaining motivation and focus, leading to gaps in comprehension and performance. Supporting this, Dangle and Sumaoang (2020) highlighted that modular distance learning, though flexible, often left learners struggling without adequate guidance, resulting in gaps in cognitive functioning (Amihan et al., 2023).

Distance learners also tend to face social challenges due to limited peer interaction, which is vital for emotional and interpersonal development. Osher et al. (2020) argued that social and emotional growth cannot be separated from academic achievement, making online support channels essential for holistic development. Likewise, Martin et al. (2022) emphasized that structured opportunities for peer interaction in online contexts are crucial for building communication and collaboration skills, which are key components of learners' social development (Bontuyan, 2025).

This study applied Ausubel's Meaningful Learning Theory and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. Ausubel stressed the importance of internal motivation, interest, and guided instruction for meaningful understanding, while Bandura highlighted the interaction among personal, behavioral, and environmental factors, asserting that learning can occur through direct experience or observation. Together, these theories emphasize the need for both cognitive and social support in learning, raising the question of whether OHSP can adequately meet learners' developmental needs (Carvajal et al., 2025).

This study provides valuable insights into how social and cognitive abilities are developed in adaptive learning settings. Its findings contribute to policy reforms, improve teaching practices, and guide targeted OHSP interventions. Furthermore, it enriches the literature on alternative education by offering empirical support to help teachers, administrators, and policymakers enhance open and distance learning in the Philippines. Nonetheless, there remains a gap in fully determining how well the OHSP develops both cognitive and social abilities. Teachers can refine teaching strategies and instructional materials by evaluating how OHSP fosters cognitive and social skills. Thus, this study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of OHSP in shaping the cognitive and social drivers of student success, aiming to generate insights that could guide improvements in flexible learning systems for Filipino learners. Hence, this research sought to determine the influence of students' cognitive and social skill levels on the effectiveness of the Open High School Program at Ochando National High School.

Statement of the Problem

The effectiveness of the Open High School Program (OHSP) remains a pressing concern in the Philippine educational system, particularly in rural and resource-limited communities. While the program is designed to provide alternative access to education for students who cannot attend regular classes, its success is often influenced by learners' individual characteristics, including cognitive and social skills. At Ochando National High School, where the OHSP has been implemented, there is a need to examine how these skills affect students' performance and the overall effectiveness of the program.

Despite its relevance, limited empirical evidence has been presented that links the OHSP's effectiveness with the cognitive and social dimensions of learning. This lack of data presents a challenge to educators and policymakers who aim to strengthen the program's implementation. By identifying the extent to which cognitive and social skills contribute to the effectiveness of OHSP, the study will provide valuable insights that can guide future instructional strategies, intervention programs, and policy reforms. Thus, this research seeks to address the gap by evaluating the effectiveness of OHSP in relation to students' cognitive and social skills during the school year 2018–2019.

Research Objectives

General Objective

To ascertain the effectiveness of the Open High School Program as influenced by the cognitive and social skills of students at Ochando National High School, S.Y. 2018–2019.

Specific Objectives

1. To determine the level of cognitive skills of Open High School students.
2. To determine the level of social skills of Open High School students.
3. To assess the level of effectiveness of the Open High School Program.
4. To examine the differences in program effectiveness among students with varying levels of cognitive skills.
5. To examine the differences in program effectiveness among students with varying levels of social skills.
6. To analyze the relationships among program effectiveness, cognitive skills, and social skills of Open High School students.



Research Questions

1. What is the level of cognitive skills of Open High School students?
2. What is the level of social skills of Open High School students?
3. What is the level of effectiveness of the Open High School Program?
4. What differences exist in the effectiveness of the Open High School Program among students with varying levels of cognitive skills?
5. What differences exist in the effectiveness of the Open High School Program among students with varying levels of social skills?
6. What relationships exist among program effectiveness, cognitive skills, and social skills of Open High School students?

METHODS

Research Design

The research design used in this study was survey-correlational, which aimed to determine the impact of the Open High School Program (OHSP) on the cognitive and social skills of students at Ochando National High School. This design was chosen as it allowed the researcher to assess not only the effectiveness of the program but also the strength and direction of relationships between cognitive and social skills, which directly aligned with the study's objectives. Similar approaches have been widely used in educational research to analyze interrelated factors influencing student outcomes (Pangilinan, 2025).

Population and Sampling

The participants of this study were all 37 Open High School students at Ochando National High School, utilizing total population sampling. This method enabled the researcher to include the entire population, ensuring comprehensive data collection and minimizing the risk of excluding relevant insights. Previous studies confirm that maximizing the inclusion of target populations strengthens the validity of findings in small-scale school-based research (Amihana & Sanchez, 2023).

Instrument

To gather the required data, the researcher utilized three researcher-made tools specifically designed to measure the effectiveness of the OHSP as well as the cognitive and social skills of OHSP students. These included: (1) the OHSP Effectiveness Questionnaire, (2) the Cognitive Skills Test, and (3) the Social Skills Questionnaire. The instruments were subjected to face and content validation by a panel of experts to ensure clarity, relevance, and accuracy. They were subsequently revised based on the evaluators' feedback.

The validation process involved three experienced professionals in education and educational measurement: a Master Teacher with 20 years of teaching experience and 2 years in research instruction, an English specialist with 7 years of teaching experience and 2 years in research instruction, and a School Principal who pioneered the OHSP in the Division of Aklan. Their expertise ensured that the instruments were both reliable and contextually appropriate. A pilot test was then carried out to enable item analysis, construct validation, and reliability testing using SPSS. Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure reliability, and the results showed that all instruments had acceptable internal consistency.

The OHSP Effectiveness Questionnaire contained 15 Likert-scale items designed to measure students' experiences of the program. It covered important areas such as learner independence, relevance and clarity of module content, frequency and quality of teacher feedback, development of critical thinking, and participation in school activities. The Cognitive Skills Test consisted of 30 multiple-choice questions that measured verbal reasoning, numerical ability, logical thinking, and reading comprehension. Meanwhile, the Social Skills Questionnaire included 30 Likert-scale questions assessing emotional regulation, peer interaction, teamwork, communication, and classroom behavior. The multi-dimensional focus of the instruments is consistent with modern reflective and inclusive practices in education (Bontuyan, 2025).

Data Collection

After pilot testing, the researcher obtained clearance from the principal of Ochando National High School, District of New Washington, to conduct the study. Having secured approval, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires to Grades 7–10 OHSP students to ensure honest responses and immediate retrieval. Due to the non-traditional schedules of OHSP students, appointments were scheduled at their convenience, and home visits were conducted when necessary. A clear explanation of the items in the questionnaire was provided to ensure



comprehension. This adaptive approach reflects the importance of responsive methodologies in educational research (Abenojar et al., 2025).

Treatment of Data

Computer-processed statistical methods were applied to the data collected in the study. Frequency count and percentage were used in reporting the demographic profile and distribution of the respondents, providing a clear outline of sample characteristics. The mean was used to evaluate the overall success of the OHSP, as it provided a central tendency of responses on program effectiveness. Standard deviation was computed to measure the consistency or variability of responses, ensuring that results were both representative and valid.

To analyze potential differences in cognitive and social skills across groups, a One-Way ANOVA was utilized, as it is appropriate for comparing the means of more than two groups. Lastly, Pearson r , at a significance level of 0.05, was employed to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between students' cognitive and social skills and their judgments of OHSP effectiveness. This process fulfilled the core research objective of investigating interrelationships among the study's main variables. All data retrieved were coded and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for accurate interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the study, the researcher ensured that all ethical guidelines were observed, including obtaining informed consent and safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of participants' responses. Participation was voluntary, and students were informed that they could withdraw at any time without penalty. Such adherence to ethical protocols is vital in fostering trust and accountability in educational research (Carvajal et al., 2025).

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This section presented, analyzed, and interpreted both descriptive and inferential data to determine the levels, differences, and relationships among the cognitive skills, social skills, and perceived effectiveness of the Open High School Program.

Level of Cognitive Skills of Open High School Students

In response to Research Question 1, which focused on assessing the cognitive skills of OHSP students, Table 1 presented their mean scores and standard deviation. The results indicated that the cognitive skills of Open High School students were within the "Approaching Proficiency" level, with a mean score of 15.32 ($SD = 4.10$).

Table 1 *Mean and Standard deviation of cognitive skills of Open High School students*

Variable	Mean	Description	SD
Cognitive Skills	15.32	Approaching Proficiency	4.10
Description	Scale		
28.01 – 35.00	Advanced		
21.01 – 28.00	Proficient		
14.01 – 21.00	Approaching Proficiency		
07.01 – 14.00	Developing		
00.00 – 07.00	Beginning		

This result suggested that students had established necessary foundational abilities but still needed additional cognitive development to attain greater mastery of fundamental concepts. The findings suggested the requirement for focused instructional support to enhance students' understanding and foster greater learning. Since these learners did not attend regular classes, their grasp of key concepts and correction of misconceptions were likely limited, affecting their overall cognitive development. While they may have possessed prior knowledge from personal experiences or informal contexts, this knowledge was often inappropriate or misaligned with new learning, potentially hindering their understanding.

These findings concurred with the view that distance learners were challenged in fully developing cognitive skills without organized assistance. Dignath and Veenman (2021) emphasized that under self-instructional or distance learning situations, students were not likely to have metacognitive strategies to manage their study effectively. Lacking frequent teacher feedback and well-structured classroom interaction, students inclined to retain misconceptions and neglected to form meaningful relationships between prior knowledge and new information.



Their study emphasized the need for direct cognitive and metacognitive support within adaptive learning environments to enhance students' academic performance.

In consonance with this, Baloran (2020) had quoted that when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, most of the Filipino students struggled academically and learned ineffectively because of limited instructional support, poor internet connections, and the absence of structured guidance at home. This was paralleled by the "Approaching Proficiency" result in the present study, reiterating the need for long-term guidance and structuring to foster cognitive development in flexible learning settings.

Level of Social Skills of Open High School Students

To address Research Question 2, which focused on assessing the social skills of OHSP students, Table 2 presented their mean scores and standard deviation. Findings showed that the social skills of Open High School students were at a "High" level, with a mean score of 3.57 (SD = 0.41).

Table 2 *Mean and Standard Deviation of Social Skills*

Variable	Mean	Description	SD
Social Skills	3.57	High	0.41
Scale	Description		
4.20 – 5.00	Very High		
3.40 – 4.19	High		
2.60 – 3.39	Moderately High		
1.80 – 2.59	Low		
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low		

This suggested that despite limited face-to-face interaction, students were capable of engaging effectively in interpersonal communication during one-on-one sessions with their advisers. They demonstrated the ability to manage both intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships, showing social competence even with minimal contact with peers and teachers. Their involvement in school-based activities further supported the development of these skills, allowing them to interact meaningfully within the campus setting despite participating in a distance learning program.

This was in line with Jones and Kahn (2017), who noted that social, emotional, and academic growth of students could be fostered when schools gave intentional space for constructive engagement and powerful adult support. Their model indicated that even where there were non-traditional or distance learning settings, guided activities and caring relations allowed learners to enhance their social competence. This concurred with the current study findings, which underscored that OHSP students could develop and maintain effective interpersonal skills despite having limited classroom interactions.

Consistent with this, Lowenthal, Borup, West, and Archambault (2020) established that organized online engagement, like the employment of asynchronous video, maintained student connectedness and promoted interpersonal relationships under distance learning. Likewise, in the Philippine context, Cahapay (2020) reiterated that learners in flexible learning setups continued to gain adaptability and social interaction skills with teacher support and guided activities. This was a direct reflection of the "High" social skills level found in the current study. Combined, these results agreed with the hypothesis of the study that effective interaction, even with restrictions, may build social competence in flexible learning settings.

Level of Effectiveness of Open High School Program

Addressing Research Question 3, which focused on evaluating the perceived effectiveness of the Open High School Program, Table 3 presented the overall ratings from respondents. Results showed the mean, standard deviation and description of level of Effectiveness of Open High School Program. It revealed that the level of Effectiveness of Open High School Program was "Effective" with a mean score of 3.89 (SD = 0.27).



Table 3 *Mean and Standard Deviation of Effectiveness of Open High School Program*

Variable	Mean	Description	SD
Effectiveness of Open High School Program	3.89	Effective	0.27
Scale	Description		
4.20 – 5.00	Very Effective		
3.40 – 4.19	Effective		
2.60 – 3.39	Moderately Effective		
1.80 – 2.59	Less Effective		
1.00 – 1.79	Ineffective		

Based on the results, the program's flexibility allowed learners to acquire essential competencies despite irregular school attendance, making it well-suited to their circumstances. It also promoted independent learning, helping students build critical research and self-study skills. Additionally, the use of engaging modules and workbooks supported academic growth by providing meaningful and accessible learning experiences that fostered both skill development and deeper understanding of content.

This result aligns with the research of Borup, Chambers, and Stimson (2019), which emphasized that successful online and alternative learning programs thrive if they offer flexible pacing, learner-accessible materials, and instructor feedback that encourages independent learners. Their research underscored that organized learning materials and ongoing support enhance both academic success and the growth of self-directed learning skills in non-traditional schooling environments.

In support of this, Bao (2020) demonstrated that carefully planned structured yet adaptable models of online learning with engaging content and learner-focused strategies significantly enhanced student performance. Similarly, in the Philippine scenario, Tria (2020) contended that pandemic flexibility in learning guaranteed educational continuity and brought about student autonomy through the use of self-learning modules and guided teachers' assistance. These results concurred with the current findings and confirmed the hypothesis that the OHSP's independent and flexible learning characteristics were key to enabling both academic achievement and necessary skills development among students.

Inferential Data Analysis

Difference in effectiveness of Open High School Program among the levels of cognitive skills of Open High School students

To answer Research Question 4, inquiring whether there was a significant difference in the perceived efficacy of the OHSP across the levels of cognitive ability of the students, a one-way ANOVA was conducted.

As shown in Table 4, the calculated F-value of 0.465 at a significance level of $p = .632$ was higher than the 0.05 alpha level. This showed that the effectiveness of OHSP did not differ statistically when students were divided into groups based on their level of cognitive skills.

Table 4 *Analysis of Variance of Effectiveness of Open High School Program Among the Levels of Cognitive Skills*

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.068	2	.034	0.465	.632
Within Groups	2.475	34	.073		
Total	2.543	36			

* $p < 0.05$ significant @ 5% alpha level

ns $p > 0.05$ not significant @ 5% alpha level

The findings suggested that the effectiveness of the Open High School Program (OHSP) was not significantly influenced by students' cognitive skill levels. This indicated that the program's design and implementation were effective regardless of individual variations in cognitive abilities. As a flexible distance learning initiative, OHSP was tailored to meet the needs of students who could not attend regular classes. With its



specialized curriculum and standardized modules, the program ensured consistent delivery of essential competencies. At Ochando National High School—the only institution in Aklan offering this program—highly committed and qualified teachers were assigned to guide OHSP learners. These advisers were responsible for contextualizing the curriculum based on students' learning levels, thereby supporting the development of key cognitive skills such as verbal reasoning, numerical ability, logical thinking, and reading comprehension. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there was no significant difference in the effectiveness of OHSP across varying levels of cognitive skills was upheld.

The result aligned with Alipio (2020) which revealed that Filipino learners in flexible and distance learning modalities were nevertheless able to achieve academically despite previous learning differences, as long as adequate instructional resources and teacher support were provided. This result was echoed by the outcome of the current study, emphasizing that the effectiveness of OHSP rested not on the learners' pre-program cognitive abilities but on the systematic program design and robust facilitation provided by teachers. These associations supported the maintained null hypothesis, which reaffirmed that the OHSP effectiveness was rooted in systemic modules and teacher facilitation instead of cognitive differences between students.

While earlier research by Means et al. (2010) revealed that high-quality online and blended learning courses can produce equivalent or even better results than traditional classroom learning, independent of students' individual differences. Their research emphasized that achievement in flexible learning environments tends to be more determined by instruction design and support from teachers than by students' initial levels of cognitive ability.

Difference in effectiveness of Open High School Program among the levels of social skills of Open High School students

In order to answer Research Question 5, which inquired as to whether there was a significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of the OHSP by levels of social skills of students, a one-way ANOVA was conducted.

As presented in Table 5, the calculated F-value of 1.825 at a significance level $p = .162$ was greater than the 0.05 alpha level. This meant that no statistically significant difference was observed in the perceived effectiveness of OHSP when students were divided into social skill levels.

Table 5 - *Analysis of Variance of Effectiveness of Open High School Program among the Levels of Social Skills*

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.362	3	.121	1.8246	.162
Within Groups	2.181	33	.066		
Total	2.543	36			

* $p < 0.05$ significant @ 5% alpha level

ns $p > 0.05$ not significant @ 5% alpha level

The findings showed that the success of the OHSP was not determined by the levels of social skills of students. Although students were predisposed to social interaction, the program further enhanced the development of their social skills through organized activities like sports, cultural competitions, and organizational activities performed both in and out of school. These experiences enabled students to meaningfully interact with their peers, even in a distant learning environment. OHSP also utilized numerous teaching strategies and approaches in order to meet the different learning and social requirements of its students.

This added to the point of Greenberg et. al (2017), who emphasized that it was an investment in human development that would pay off a lifetime if social-emotional learning was implemented in schools. Students' social, emotional, and physical health had a significant function towards their overall success. In the same vein, Jones and Kahn (2017) pointed out that developing students' social and emotional competence through organized opportunities for collaboration and participation greatly increased their ability to succeed both academically and in life. The study implied that such abilities were not inherent but could be developed within friendly school settings, paralleling the role of OHSP in enhancing social competence.



Relationships among Effectiveness of Open High School Program, cognitive and social skills of Open High School students

To answer Research Question 6, which inquired as to whether there were considerable correlations between the OHSP effectiveness, cognitive abilities, and social abilities, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated.

As seen in Table 6, the OHSP effectiveness-social skills correlation was positive but weak ($r = 0.212$, $p = .208$), whereas the OHSP effectiveness-cognitive skills correlation was negative but very weak ($r = -0.022$, $p = .897$). The correlation between social and cognitive skills was weak and negative ($r = -0.083$, $p = .627$). All three associations were revealed to be non-statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level.

Table 6 Pearson r Between Effectiveness of Open High School Program, Cognitive Skill and Social Skill

Variables	r	Sig
Effectiveness of Open High School Program and Social Skills	0.212	.208
Effectiveness of Open High School Program and Cognitive Skills	(-)0.022	.897
Social and Cognitive Skills	(-)0.083	.627

* $p < 0.05$ significant @ 5% alpha level

ns $p > 0.05$ not significant @ 5% alpha level

The results showed that the effectiveness of the program was not significantly related to students' cognitive or social skills. This meant that the program succeeded in providing quality education despite differences in students' reasoning capabilities, understanding, or social interaction. The OHSP's adaptable design, uniform modules, and situation-specific teaching methods were all put in place to help cater to diverse learners—whether they were extremely social, intellectually developed, or developing in these aspects.

Similarly, no significant relationship was found between students' cognitive and social skills. This reinforced the idea that each learner had a unique developmental path—some were intellectually capable but less socially active, while others thrived socially but needed cognitive reinforcement, and some excelled in both.

These results confirmed the null hypothesis indicating that there was no significant correlation between the effectiveness of the Open High School Program, social skills, and cognitive skills. It underscored the OHSP's inclusivity and flexibility in addressing students' educational needs across different backgrounds and learning profiles.

This finding was consistent with Tomlinson's (2014) differentiated instruction framework, which highlighted that malleable teaching approaches and flexible learning spaces are capable of meeting students' varying readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles in such a way that they have equal access to academic achievement based on their cognitive or social strengths. Although previous work by Means et al. (2010) set up principles demonstrating that students in online and blended learning environments learned as well as or better than those in traditional classrooms, they cautioned that instructional design and instructor assistance were more important to their success than learners' initial social or cognitive differences. This initial evidence warranted the inference of the present study that the strength of OHSP lay in its inclusive course design rather than in the individual cognitive or social traits of its students.

Conclusion

The research concluded that the Open High School Program (OHSP) in Ochando National High School was effective, whether the students have high cognitive and social skills or not. Although the students' cognitive abilities were "Approaching Proficiency" and thus in need of additional academic assistance, their social skills were "High", evidencing a strong interpersonal skill despite being under a non-traditional learning environment. No significant relationships were found among the effectiveness of OHSP, cognitive skills, and social skills, suggesting that the program functions well across varying student profiles.

Recommendation

According to the findings of the study, it was recommended that supplementary learning materials that further improve the cognitive abilities of the students through real-life problem-solving and critical thinking activities be provided by the Open High School Program (OHSP). School administrators, in coordination with DepEd policymakers, should take the lead in ensuring that these materials are developed and distributed. To promote



social skills, the students ought to be involved in activities within school and the community that reinforce positive interaction, with teachers facilitating them in appropriate behavior. These initiatives may be prioritized immediately through school-based programs, while community partnerships can be strengthened over the long term. Constant training for OHSP teacher-advisers was also important to make them aware of new and effective strategies of teaching. This type of training has to be regularly performed, with proximal capacity development activities and ongoing professional development opportunities being part of the schools' annual plans. Additionally, curriculum planners need to construct a well-balanced program that supports both cognitive and social development in an equal manner. In the process, immediate recipients—OHSP students—will not only benefit from improved academics but also improved social and emotional well-being, enabling them to thrive both in school and in their communities. Educators and administrators will also gain through enhanced instruction and professional development, while policymakers are provided with evidence-based information to enhance alternative learning initiatives. Finally, subsequent studies could examine other variables to identify greater insights and enhance the program further. This can be done as a long-term goal through DepEd's curriculum review cycles.

REFERENCES

Abenojar, M. B., Dones, V. T., Tiquis, M. V. V., Velasco, J. B., Sanchez, R. D., Pangilinan, A. M., Sanchez, A. M. P., Belgica, J. K. P., & Sanchez, J. J. D. (2025). Exploring Perceptions on Play-Based Kindergarten Classrooms: Benefits and Challenges from Parents, Pupils, and Teachers. *International Journal of Open-access, Interdisciplinary and New Educational Discoveries of ETCOR Educational Research Center (iJOINED ETCOR)*, 4(2), 1676-1683. <https://doi.org/10.63498/etcor396>

Alipio, M. (2020). Education during COVID-19 era: Are learners in a less-economically developed country ready for e-learning? *SSRN Electronic Journal*.

Alvarez, A. (2021). The phenomenon of learning at a distance through emergency remote teaching amid the pandemic crisis. *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, 16(1), 144–153.

Amihan, S. R., & Sanchez, R. D. (2023). Connecting Workplace Literacy Gaps through Innovative Academe-Industry Collaboration. *International Journal of Open-access, Interdisciplinary and New Educational Discoveries of ETCOR Educational Research Center (iJOINED ETCOR)*, 2(2), 515-528.

Amihan, S. R., Sanchez, R. D., & Carvajal, A. L. P. (2023). Sustained quality assurance: Future-proofing the teachers for an ASEAN higher education common space. *International Journal of Open-access, Interdisciplinary and New Educational Discoveries of ETCOR Educational Research Center (iJOINED ETCOR)*, 2(4), 276-286. [https://etcor.org/storage/iJOINED/Vol.%20II\(4\),%2020276-286.pdf](https://etcor.org/storage/iJOINED/Vol.%20II(4),%2020276-286.pdf)

Ausubel, D. P. (1968). *Educational psychology: A cognitive view*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Balorran, E. (2020). Knowledge, attitudes, anxiety, and coping strategies of students during COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 25(8), 635–642.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bao, W. (2020). COVID-19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2(2), 113–115.

Barbour, M., & Reeves, T. (2009). The reality of virtual schools: A review of the literature. *Computers & Education*, 52(2), 402–416. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2008.09.009>

Barrot, J., Llenares, I., & Del Rosario, L. (2021). Students' online learning challenges during the pandemic and how they cope with them: The case of the Philippines. *Education and Information Technologies*, 26(6), 7321–7338.

Bontuyan, J. O. (2025). Multi-Dimensional Reflective Practices of Non-SPED Teachers: Toward Inclusive, Responsive, and Growth-Oriented Teaching. *International Journal of Open-access, Interdisciplinary and New Educational Discoveries of ETCOR Educational Research Center (iJOINED ETCOR)*, 4(2), 1432-1443.



<https://doi.org/10.63498/etcor376>

Borup, J., Chambers, C., & Stimson, R. (2019). Online teacher and on-site facilitator perceptions of parental engagement at a supplemental virtual high school. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 20(2), 79–95.

Cahapay, M. B. (2020). Rethinking education in the new normal post-COVID-19 era: A curriculum studies perspective. *Aquademia*, 4(2), ep20018. <https://doi.org/10.29333/aquademia/8315>

Carvajal, A. L. P., Fernandez, T. M., Pangilinan, A. M., Obod, M. M., Amihan, S. R., Sanchez, R. D., Sanchez, A. M. P., Sanchez, J. J. D. (2025). Future-Proofing Teachers in Reframing Teacher Education Curriculum in the Philippines: Basis for Policy Recommendations. *International Journal of Open-access, Interdisciplinary and New Educational Discoveries of ETCOR Educational Research Center (iJOINED ETCOR)*, 4(2), 235-252. <https://doi.org/10.63498/nxz2st271>

Dangle, Y., & Sumaoang, J., (2020). The implementation of modular distance learning in the Philippine secondary public schools. 3rd International Conference on Advanced Research in Teaching and Education, Dublin, Ireland.

Dignath, C., & Veenman, M. (2021). The role of direct strategy instruction and indirect activation of self-regulated learning—Evidence from classroom intervention studies. *Educational Psychology Review*, 33, 489–533.

Greenberg, M., Demotrovich, C, Weissberg, R., Durlak, J., (2017). Social and Emotional Learning as a Public Health Approach to Education.

Jones, S., & Kahn, J. (2017). *The evidence base for how we learn: Supporting students' social, emotional, and academic development*. The Aspen Institute.

Lowenthal, P., Borup, J., West, R., & Archambault, L. (2020). Thinking beyond Zoom: Using asynchronous video to maintain connection and engagement during COVID-19. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 28(2), 383–391.

Martin, F., Polly, D., & Ritzhaupt, A. (2022). Bichronous online learning: Blending asynchronous and synchronous online learning. *EDUCAUSE Review*, 57(1), 30–40.

Means, B., Toyama, Y., Murphy, R., Bakia, M., & Jones, K. (2010). *Evaluation of evidence-based practices in online learning: A meta-analysis and review of online learning studies*. U.S. Department of Education. <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/tech/evidence-based-practices/finalreport.pdf>

Osher, D., Cantor, P., Berg, J., Steyer, L., & Rose, T. (2020). *Drivers of human development: How relationships and context shape learning and development*. Applied Developmental Science, 24(1), 6–36.

Pangilinan, A. M. (2025). Challenges and Commitment to Teaching: A Quantitative Descriptive-Correlational Study of Filipino Teachers in Select Coastal Villages. *International Journal of Open-access, Interdisciplinary and New Educational Discoveries of ETCOR Educational Research Center (iJOINED ETCOR)*, 4(2), 1684-1692. <https://doi.org/10.63498/etcor397>

Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners* (2nd ed.). ASCD.

Tria, J. Z. (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic through the lens of education in the Philippines: The new normal. *International Journal of Pedagogical Development and Lifelong Learning*, 1(1), ep2001.

UNESCO. (2022). Reimagining our futures together: A new social contract for education. Paris: UNESCO