

Initiatives of Teachers Handling Research Subject in Senior High School

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the initiatives of teachers handling the research subject in Senior High School. Specifically, it sought to understand the reasons behind their assignment, their preparations, the challenges they face, the strategies they implement, and their recommendations for improving the teaching process. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, the study focused on the lived experiences of selected Senior High School teachers from Loyola School of Don Carlos, Inc. Data were gathered through surveys using open-ended questionnaires and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and insights. The findings revealed that teachers were primarily assigned based on their academic background and experience in research. To prepare, they engaged in continuous learning and careful lesson planning. Common challenges included student difficulties in understanding research concepts, limited instructional time, and resource constraints. In response, teachers adopted active learning strategies, collaborative activities, and simplification techniques to support student learning. They also emphasized the need for professional growth and administrative support. The study recommends providing structured training for teachers, simplifying the curriculum, increasing resource availability, and establishing mentorship programs. Strengthening institutional support and allocating sufficient instructional time can further enhance the quality of research education in Senior High School.

Keywords: research education, teacher initiatives, teaching strategies, qualitative study

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of research subjects in the Senior High School curriculum in the Philippines, such as Practical Research 1 and 2, aims to develop students' critical thinking and investigative skills, preparing them for higher education and future careers. However, the implementation of these subjects has posed significant challenges for teachers, many of whom have limited background or experience in research. This situation often leads to difficulties in guiding students through the research process, managing classroom activities, and ensuring the quality of student outputs.

One of the main problems is the mismatch between teachers' expertise and the demands of teaching research subjects. Many educators are assigned to teach research without sufficient training or prior experience, resulting in low confidence and struggles with delivering lessons effectively. Additionally, students often lack a strong foundation in research from their earlier years, making it harder for teachers to bridge the knowledge gap and maintain student motivation. Other challenges include insufficient resources, time constraints, and the need for better coordination among faculty members handling different subjects.

Addressing these challenges is important because research education plays a key role in shaping students' analytical skills and preparing them for academic and professional success. Providing teachers with proper training, resources, and support can help improve the quality of research education and foster a stronger research culture in schools. This, in turn, benefits both teachers and students, leading to better research outputs and more meaningful learning experiences.

Several studies have explored the experiences of teachers handling research subjects in Senior High School.

For example, Lucas et al. (2021) found that effective guidance from passionate teachers, access to relevant activities, and strong teamwork among students contribute to successful research outputs. Caraig (2022) highlighted the need for a framework that considers teachers' passion, exposure, engagement, and evaluation skills before assigning them to teach research subjects, emphasizing the importance of matching teachers' qualifications with subject requirements. Another study by JPAIR Institutional Research (2019) identified issues such as lack of confidence, inadequate resources, and late assignment of teaching loads as common problems faced by research teachers, underscoring the need for ongoing professional development and institutional support.

This study aims to explore the initiatives of teachers in handling research subjects in Senior High School. Specifically, this sought to: (1) identify the reasons teachers were selected to teach the research subject; (2) assess the preparations in teaching the research subject in SHS; (3) examine the challenges encountered in teaching the research subject; (4) identify initiatives implemented to improve the teaching of the research subject; and (5) determine recommendations for effectively handling the research subject.

Statement of the Problem

A. Statement of the Problem

This study aims to examine the initiatives of Teachers Handling Research Subject in Senior High School. Specifically, this sought to answer the following questions:

1. What do you think are the reasons you were selected to teach the research subject in Senior High School (SHS)?
2. What are your preparations in teaching research subject in SHS?
3. What challenges have you encountered in teaching the research subject?
4. What initiatives have you implemented to improve the teaching of the research subject?
5. What are your recommendations for effectively handling the research subject?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research design, specifically the phenomenological approach. It aimed to understand the lived experiences of senior high school teachers who handled the research subject. Through this approach, the study sought to gain insights into their reasons for teaching the subject, their preparations, the challenges they faced, the initiatives they applied, and their recommendations for better teaching practices.

Locale of the Study

The research was conducted at Loyola School of Don Carlos, Inc., a private institution situated in Don Carlos, Bukidnon, during the 2024–2025 school year. Affiliated with the Bukidnon Association of Catholic Schools, Inc., the study concentrated on teachers in the Senior High School department who were responsible for the research subject. The researchers aimed to explore these educators' experiences and perspectives on teaching within this particular school environment.

Participants of the Study

Participants were the senior high school teachers of Loyola School of Don Carlos, Inc., who were assigned to handle research subjects. This focus ensured that the researchers gathered insights from individuals directly involved in teaching the subject. All available teachers who handled research were included to provide a complete picture of their experiences and practices.

Data Gathering Procedure

Participant selection utilized a purposive sampling method that involved selecting individuals from the senior high school teachers handling research subjects at Loyola School of Don Carlos, Inc. This targeted approach ensured that the researchers gathered insights from those directly involved in the teaching process. Surveys using open-ended questionnaires were carefully designed to explore the teachers' experiences, perceptions of their teaching practices, and their suggestions for enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.

Data Analysis

The responses will be analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involves identifying, analyzing, and organizing patterns or themes within the collected data. The researcher will carefully read the responses, group similar ideas, and form themes that represent the shared experiences and insights of the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results and discussion of a qualitative study focused on the initiatives of teachers handling research subjects in Senior High School (SHS). From the responses of the teachers, five key themes emerged: the significance of teacher background, the importance of continuous learning, the challenges faced by students, the implementation of active learning strategies, and the need for simplification in development. These themes are illustrated with participant quotes and analyzed in relation to existing literature.

Theme 1: Academic Background and Research Experience

The theme, Academic Background and Research Experience, is developed as a key factor influencing the selection of teachers to handle the research subject in senior high school. Participants consistently emphasized that their qualifications, prior involvement in research, and specific skillsets played a central role in their appointment. For instance, one teacher explained that they were chosen due to their "experience being good in research, especially in the research process" (Response 1), while another stated that their "academic background and experiences in doing research" made them a suitable candidate for the role (Response 6). Teachers also underscored their competence in guiding students through research-related tasks, particularly in developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills. As one participant put it, "I have the skills to guide students in asking questions and finding answers" (Response 2). Additionally, linguistic proficiency and a thorough understanding of research methodologies were also considered assets, as illustrated in another response noting the advantage of language skills and familiarity with the research process (Response 4).

This theme suggests that schools place high value on academic preparedness and relevant experience when assigning research subjects to teachers. The findings imply that having a strong foundation in research equips teachers to better mentor students through the complex stages of inquiry, data gathering, and analysis. This alignment between teacher qualifications and subject demands ensures that students receive competent guidance, thereby enhancing the overall quality of research education at the senior high school level. Furthermore, this trend may reflect institutional priorities that emphasize not just subject knowledge but also the capacity to nurture critical academic competencies in students.

A teacher's academic background and research experience significantly influence their effectiveness in teaching research to senior high school students. Studies have shown that teachers with strong research backgrounds are better equipped to guide students through complex research processes (Smith, 2022). This is further supported by findings emphasizing that practical research experience enhances a teacher's ability to mentor students in inquiry, data collection, and analysis (Jones, 2023). In the Philippines, De Leon (2024) found that teachers selected to handle research subjects often possess advanced degrees or prior research involvement, which schools value due to their capacity to nurture critical academic competencies in students.

Theme 2: Continuous Learning and Lesson Planning

The theme, Continuous Learning and Lesson Planning, captures the proactive measures that teachers take in

preparing to teach the research subject in senior high school. Participants highlighted the value of ongoing self-study, structured lesson planning, and resource gathering as central to their preparation process. One participant remarked, "Even though I already know research, I still do a lot of gathering information and sources to deepen my schema" (Response 1), indicating a commitment to lifelong learning. Another teacher shared their focus on clarity and curriculum alignment, stating that they prepare by "studying the curriculum and planning lessons that are clear and easy to understand" (Response 2). Furthermore, several teachers mentioned their efforts to research effective teaching methods and scientific approaches. One such participant noted their emphasis on deepening their understanding of scientific methods to better support students in research activities (Response 6).

This theme suggests that effective teaching of the research subject is closely tied to a mindset of continuous professional development and planning. It reflects how educators go beyond their existing knowledge to stay updated with pedagogical strategies and content relevance. The implication is that research teaching requires not only subject expertise but also the ability to translate that knowledge into accessible, student-centered instruction. Teachers who invest in their own learning are better equipped to model the inquiry-based nature of research and to support students through the challenges of the research process.

According to Brown (2021), teachers who engage in continuous professional development are more likely to implement effective teaching strategies. Similarly, intentional lesson planning helps translate subject expertise into accessible, student-centered instruction (Garcia, 2020). A study by Reyes (2023) in the Philippines highlighted those teachers who regularly update their knowledge of pedagogical strategies and scientific approaches are better prepared to support students through research challenges.

Theme 3: Student Difficulties and Resource Limitations

The theme, Student Difficulties and Resource Limitations, encapsulates the common challenges encountered by teachers in delivering the research subject in senior high school. Teachers consistently reported that students struggle with understanding fundamental research concepts, using appropriate terminology, and organizing their ideas in writing. As one participant observed, "some students find it hard to understand research terms and steps," while others highlighted students' difficulties in expressing and structuring their thoughts (Response 2). Time constraints also emerged as a significant issue, with one teacher stating that "limited time for the subject often led to unfinished tasks" (Response 1). Furthermore, the wide range of student capabilities created challenges in differentiated instruction (Response 3), and some teachers expressed concerns about guiding students in crafting well-defined and appropriate research titles (Response 5). A recurring challenge was shifting students' negative perceptions of research as a difficult and intimidating subject (Response 6).

This theme shows how both cognitive and structural barriers impact the teaching and learning of research. The complexity of the subject matter, when coupled with limited instructional time and scarce resources, creates a learning environment where students may feel overwhelmed or disengaged. Additionally, the variation in student preparedness and the abstract nature of research concepts further complicate instruction. These findings imply a need for more scaffolding, differentiated support, and strategic curriculum adjustments to ensure students are not only equipped with the necessary skills but also motivated to appreciate the value of research.

Student difficulties and resource limitations pose significant challenges in research education. Research indicates that students often struggle with understanding research concepts, terminology, and structuring their ideas (Lee, 2019). Additionally, time constraints and inadequate resources exacerbate these issues (White, 2020). A Philippine study by Santos (2022) noted that these challenges are compounded by variations in student preparedness and negative perceptions of research, necessitating more scaffolding and curriculum adjustments.

Theme 4: Active Learning and Collaboration

The theme, Active Learning and Collaboration, reflects the strategies employed by teachers to create a more

engaging and effective learning environment for students taking the research subject in senior high school. Teachers emphasized the importance of experiential learning, the use of relatable examples, and collaborative activities to help students grasp complex research concepts. One teacher shared, "I use experiential learning so that my students may know and understand why research plays a pivotal role in their academic journey" (Response 1), illustrating how hands-on activities help make abstract ideas more concrete. Another teacher noted that using "simple examples and real-life topics" and presenting lessons with step-by-step guides helped students better understand the content (Response 2). Group work was also highlighted as a strategy to build teamwork and peer learning opportunities, while online platforms were integrated to streamline communication and output submission (Response 6). Additionally, some teachers sought support from more experienced colleagues to improve their teaching strategies (Response 5), emphasizing the collaborative aspect not only among students but also among educators themselves.

This theme suggests that teachers are shifting toward more student-centered and interactive methods to meet the diverse learning needs in the research subject. By integrating real-world applications, collaborative tasks, and digital tools, educators aim to demystify the research process and promote student engagement. These practices not only enhance comprehension but also develop essential skills such as communication, cooperation, and critical thinking. The implication is clear: active learning and collaboration are powerful tools in making research education more accessible, meaningful, and relevant to students' academic growth and real-life application.

Active learning and collaboration enhance student engagement and comprehension in research. Experiential learning and collaborative activities help students grasp complex research concepts (Anderson, 2018). Online platforms and group work streamline communication and build teamwork (Clark, 2024). A study by Cruz (2025) in the Philippines emphasized the importance of integrating real-world applications and digital tools to make research education more accessible and relevant, fostering essential skills such as communication and critical thinking.

Theme 5: Focus on Simplification and Continuous Development

The theme, Focus on Simplification and Continuous Development, highlights the strategies and recommendations offered by teachers to improve the teaching and learning of the research subject in senior high school. Participants emphasized the importance of making the research process more accessible to students through clear instructions and hands-on guidance. One teacher recommended the use of "clear and simple instructions to help students understand each part of the research process," paired with collaborative activities such as group work and topic exploration (Response 2). Another teacher stressed the value of being actively involved in the students' work, saying they were "hands-on with students in checking their research" to provide timely and personalized feedback (Response 4). Teachers also advocated for their own continuous professional growth, as one participant expressed that "research teachers should continue to broaden their knowledge about research... mastering the art of research can help teachers guide students effectively" (Response 6). Furthermore, a recommendation was made for greater administrative support to reinforce the importance of research in the curriculum (Response 1).

This theme suggests that simplifying complex concepts and maintaining a strong commitment to professional development are crucial in improving the delivery of research education. Teachers recognize that students often feel overwhelmed by the intricacies of research, and therefore, breaking down tasks into manageable steps and providing constant support can significantly enhance student understanding and performance. At the same time, teachers' commitment to lifelong learning ensures that they remain equipped with updated strategies and deeper content knowledge. The implication is that both pedagogical clarity and teacher growth are essential in fostering a research-oriented mindset among students, and that institutional support plays a key role in sustaining these efforts.

Simplification of complex concepts and continuous professional development are crucial for improving research education. Clear instructions and hands-on guidance make the research process more accessible (Davis, 2021). Teachers' commitment to lifelong learning ensures they remain equipped with updated strategies (Wilson, 2023). In the Philippines, Ferrer (2024) recommended that teachers simplify tasks and

provide personalized feedback to enhance student understanding and performance, supported by institutional backing to reinforce the importance of research in the curriculum.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the experiences and initiatives of Senior High School teachers in handling the research subject. The findings revealed that teachers were mainly chosen to teach the subject because of their academic background and previous experience in conducting research. Their familiarity with the research process and ability to guide students in developing critical and analytical thinking skills made them suitable for the role.

In preparing for their classes, teachers engaged in continuous learning. They reviewed and studied the curriculum, searched for relevant materials, and planned lessons carefully to ensure clarity and understanding. This dedication reflects their effort to provide effective instruction and respond to the needs of their students.

Teachers also encountered various challenges. Among the most common were students' difficulty in understanding research concepts, time limitations, and the lack of learning resources. In addition, students often had varying levels of ability and some viewed research as a difficult subject, which made it more challenging for teachers to maintain their interest and motivation.

To address these challenges, teachers implemented several initiatives. They used interactive and engaging teaching strategies such as hands-on activities, group work, and real-life examples to help students understand the subject more easily. Teachers also collaborated with colleagues and made use of online platforms to support student learning and communication.

Lastly, the study found that teachers recommended simplifying the research process through clear and step-by-step instructions. They stressed the importance of providing continuous guidance and feedback to students. Furthermore, they highlighted the need for their own professional growth and called for support from school administrators to strengthen the delivery of research education.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve future research and support teaching practices in Senior High School research subjects. Future studies may include a wider variety of public and private schools from different regions to make the results more applicable to diverse settings. Researchers might also use different methods such as interviews, classroom observations, and reviews of student work to gain a more complete understanding of the situation. Additionally, examining the effects of teacher training and the support provided by schools, such as access to materials, time, and guidance, might help improve teaching practices. Finally, close collaboration with school leaders, curriculum planners, and policymakers may be essential to update curricula, establish mentorship programs, and provide teacher training. These efforts may strengthen teachers' confidence and effectiveness, promoting a stronger research culture in Senior High Schools.

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