

Management of Education For All (EFA) and the Multidimensional Development of the 21st Century Learners for K-12 Enhancement Program in Region XII

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Publication Date: May 23, 2025

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15779126

Abstract

This study investigated the Management of Education for All (EFA) and the Multidimensional Development of 21st century learners for K-12 Enhancement Program in Region XII. Findings revealed that EFA was highly implemented. Strongest areas included Parental and Community Partnerships, Dropout Mitigation Programs, and Teacher Digital Proficiency. However, challenges emerged in Resource Allocation and Facility Modernization, notably in limited budget provisions for teacher training, learner gadgets, and classroom upgrades. The extent of learners' multidimensional development, spanning health, cultural, technological, socioeconomic, and geographical aspects was rated to a great extent. Health and Cultural Development scored the highest, while areas such as technology and socioeconomic dimensions require further

enhancement. Quantitative analyses included ANOVA and regression. ANOVA showed no significant differences in EFA implementation or learner development across schools' respondents, indicating uniformity of practices. A significant positive relationship was established between EFA implementation and learner development, confirming that well-executed EFA programs contribute meaningfully to holistic learners' growth. Thematic findings emphasized economic constraints, infrastructural inadequacies, inconsistent stakeholder engagement, and policy contradictions as barriers. The study recommends integrating strategic, inclusive, and data-driven approaches to strengthen implementation, support stakeholder collaboration, and optimize learner outcomes.

Keywords: *Education For All (EFA), Multi-Dimensional Development, 21st century learners, K-12, Enhancement Program*

INTRODUCTION

Education For ALL (EFA) is a global advocacy that aims to provide equitable access to quality education. It is supported by the different international organizations such as the UNESCO, the UNICEF and the World Bank. These organizations help to ensure that all children regardless of their ages, gender and races are able to reach their full potentials in terms of academic achievement and social development (Samaj et al., 2023).

Globally, key obstacles to achieving Education For All (EFA) are evident. These include resource constraints, lack of educational materials, inequality and accessibility issues, quality of teachers and teacher training, curriculum and pedagogical challenges, the technological divide, political and policy challenges, cultural and societal attitudes, and monitoring and evaluation (Sain et al., 2024; Euroschoolindia, 2024).

In the Philippines, ensuring learners' educational access remains a top priority (DBM Press Release, 2024). The Philippine government recognizes the significance of education in national development and social progress (Mirasol et al., 2021). However, despite efforts to improve educational systems and policies, issues such as a lack of resources, disparities in educational quality between urban and rural areas, and barriers to school attendance persist (Bustamante, 2023).

Mindanao, a Philippine region with students known for their cultural diversity, faces unique local challenges in terms of education access (Magdadaro & Sacramento, 2022), geographical remoteness, cultural differences, socioeconomic, political vulnerability (Espinosa et al., 2024), security concerns and academic challenges. These local issues highlight the need for targeted interventions to meet the diverse educational needs of Mindanao's population with regards to their multidimensional aspects of development.

This research entitled Management of Education For All (EFA) and the Multidimensional Development of the 21st Century Learners for K-12 Enhancement Program aims to find out the extent of implementation of Education For All (EFA) which could have potential impact in the Multidimensional Development of 21st century learners in Region XII.

Statements of the Problem:

1. What is the extent of implementation of Education for All (EFA) among the DepEd Central Schools in Region XII with focus on:
 - 1.1. resource allocation,
 - 1.2. facility modernization,
 - 1.3. teachers' subject area and digital proficiency building,
 - 1.4. school drop-out mitigation/ eradication and
 - 1.5. parental, community/ LGU partnership?
2. To what extent is the Multidimensional Development of 21st century learners in DepEd Central Schools in Region XII in terms of:
 - 2.1. technology,
 - 2.2. geographical,
 - 2.3. socioeconomic,
 - 2.4. health, and
 - 2.5. cultural development?
3. Is there a significant difference on the extent of implementation of Education for All (EFA) among the DepEd Central Schools in Region XII?

4. Is there a significant difference on the extent of Multidimensional Development of 21st century learners among the DepEd Central schools in Region XII?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of implementation of Education `for All (EFA) and the Multidimensional Development of 21st century learners in DepEd Central Schools in Region XII?
6. What are the issues and concerns in the implementation of Education for All (EFA) among DepEd Central Schools in Region XII?

Hypotheses of the Study

These were the null hypotheses of the study:

1. There is no significant difference on the extent of implementation of Education for All (EFA) among the DepEd Central Schools in Region XII.
2. There is no significant difference on the extent of Multidimensional Development of 21st century learners among the DepEd Central Schools in Region XII.
3. There is no significant relationship between the extent of implementation of Education `for All (EFA) and the Multi-Dimensional Development of 21st century learners in DepEd central schools in Region XII.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a Mixed-methods Research Design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively assess the extent of implementation of Education for All (EFA) and the extent of the multidimensional development of 21st-century learners in DepEd Central Schools in Region XII.

Quantitatively, descriptive statistics, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and Simple Linear Regression were utilized to measure the extent of EFA implementation and its relationship with learners' development. Qualitatively, thematic analysis was conducted to explore issues and concerns in EFA implementation, allowing for a nuanced understanding of contextual factors.

The study was conducted in four central schools with the highest enrollment in Region XII: Romana C. Acharon Central Elementary School (General Santos City), Kidapawan City Pilot Elementary School, Koronadal Central 1 Elementary School, and Tacurong Pilot Central School. Participants and respondents included 4 district supervisors, 4 principals, 58 Grade Six teachers, and 340 Grade Six learners, selected through total enumeration and systematic random sampling, with sample sizes determined using Slovin's formula and proportional allocation.

Validated researcher-made survey questionnaires assessed EFA implementation across five domains and learners' development across five dimensions, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale. A test-retest reliability method confirmed high reliability ($r = 0.90$ for teachers; $r = 0.88$ for learners). Qualitative data were gathered through written interviews, focusing on challenges in EFA implementation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Extent of Management of Philippine Education for All (EFA) among DepEd Central Schools in Region XII

Indicators	S1 Mean	S2 Mean	S3 Mean	S4 Mean	Grand Mean	Description
1. Resource Allocation	4.34	4.13	4.04	4.07	4.15	High Implementation
2. Facility Modernization	3.52	3.33	3.09	3.75	3.42	High Implementation
3. Teachers' Subject Area and Digital Proficiency Building	4.49	4.05	4.21	4.26	4.25	Very High Implementation
4. School Drop-out Mitigation/Eradication Program	4.61	4.16	4.62	4.55	4.49	Very High Implementation
5. Parental, community/LGU Partnerships	4.66	4.35	4.63	4.50	4.54	Very High Implementation
Grand Mean	4.32	4.00	4.12	4.23	4.17	High Implementation

Table 1 presents the extent of implementation of Education for All (EFA) among DepEd Central Schools in Region XII. Among the EFA indicators, parental, community, and LGU partnerships scored the highest with a mean of 4.54, reflecting very high implementation. Such partnerships demonstrate shared responsibility and reciprocal support crucial for advancing educational equity (American Institute for Research, 2025). The School Dropout Mitigation/Eradication Program follows closely with a mean of 4.49, emphasizing the importance of retaining learners to secure a brighter future for individuals and communities (Raoult, 2023).

Teachers' Subject Area and Digital Proficiency Building also received very high implementation with a mean score of 4.25, highlighting the need for continuous professional development to keep teachers adept in both content and technology. This upskilling contributes to improved learning outcomes and a thriving school culture (Kilag et al., 2023). Meanwhile, resource allocation and facility modernization received lower but still high ratings, suggesting these areas require more focused attention, as inequitable funding can create opportunity gaps that hinder both teachers and learners (Worth et al., 2022).

The overall grand mean of 4.17 indicates a high level of EFA implementation, reflecting effective collaboration among school leaders, teachers, parents, communities, and local government units. This collaborative approach positively impacts educational equity and quality. The implication is that continued assessment and strategic resource management are essential to sustain and enhance these programs, ensuring all learners receive comprehensive support to reach their full potential.

Table 2. The Extent of Multidimensional Development Among 21st Century Learners in DepEd Central Schools in Region XI

Indicators	S1 Mean	S2 Mean	S3 Mean	S4 Mean	Grand Mean	Description
1. Technology Development	3.68	4.05	3.58	3.79	3.77	To a Great Extent of Development
2. Geographical Development	4.09	3.99	3.93	4.01	4.01	To a Great Extent of Development
3. Socioeconomic Development	3.51	3.54	3.46	3.55	3.52	To a Great Extent of Development
4. Health Development	4.32	4.23	4.52	4.34	4.35	To the Greatest Extent of Development
5. Cultural Development	4.26	4.27	4.33	4.17	4.26	To the Greatest Extent of Development
Grand Mean	3.97	4.02	3.96	3.97	3.98	To the Great Extent of Development

Table 2 shows the extent of Multidimensional Development among Grade 6 learners in DepEd Central Schools in Region XII, focusing on health, cultural, geographical, technological, and socioeconomic aspects. Health Development had the highest mean of 4.35, indicating that learners are well-supported physically, emotionally, and mentally through access to healthcare, nutrition, and a nurturing environment that fosters self-worth. Hayes (2024) affirmed that children have the right to live healthy lives and receive adequate health services to support their well-being.

Cultural Development followed closely with a mean of 4.26, reflecting learners' respect and inclusivity toward diverse backgrounds and individual differences. This suggests a culturally responsive environment where diversity is celebrated and learners develop a strong national identity. Pale et al. (2024) highlighted the importance of fostering respect for cultural diversity and intercultural understanding to enhance learners' development and educational interactions. Geographical Development scored 4.01, showing that learners can overcome location barriers through various learning modalities and consistent teacher support.

The overall grand mean of 3.98 signifies substantial growth across all components, with learners adapting and thriving in multiple areas. Although Socioeconomic Development had the lowest mean of 3.52, most learners receive stable family support that provides for basic needs, enabling consistent attendance and active participation. Darling-Hammond et al. (2022) emphasized that ensuring holistic support and positive outlooks helps remove learning barriers and promotes academic and social success, implying a continuous need to sustain and strengthen these developmental areas.

Table 3. Result on Testing the Differences on the Extent of Implementation of Education For All (EFA) among the DepEd Central Schools in Region XII

SV	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	Fc	F-Values Ftab
Schools	3	0.29	0.097		0.05
Error	16	3.50	0.219	0.44	3.24
Total	19	3.79			5.29

CV=11.22%

**Not Significant at the .05 level.*

Table 3's ANOVA results indicate no significant differences in Education for All (EFA) implementation across DepEd Central Schools in Region XII, with a low coefficient of variation (11.22%) suggesting uniformity. This consistency may stem from the Department of Education's centralized reforms, such as the MATATAG Curriculum, which standardizes strategies across public schools.

However, as Castro (2023) notes, while such uniformity promotes consistency, it may also limit local innovation. Therefore, while centralized policies ensure baseline equity, there's a need for context-sensitive evaluations to address unique challenges faced by individual schools.

Table 4. Result on Testing the Differences on the Extent of the Multidimensional Development of 21st Century learners in DepEd Central Schools in Region XII

SV	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	Fc	F-Values	Ftab
Schools	3	0.01	0.0033		0.05	0.01
Error	16	2.08	0.13	0.25	3.24	5.29
Total	19	2.09				

 $CV=9.05\%$

**Not Significant at the .05 level.*

The ANOVA results in Table 4 indicated no significant differences in the multidimensional development of 21st-century learners among DepEd Central Schools in Region XII, suggesting uniformity in learner outcomes across schools. This consistency may reflect the standardized implementation of national education policies like the K to 12 curriculum and the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BELCP), which aim to provide equitable learning opportunities.

However, as Alinsunurin (2021) emphasizes, factors such as socioeconomic background and learning mindsets significantly influence academic achievement, indicating that quantitative analyses may not capture subtle differences in practices and outcomes. Therefore, further qualitative investigations are necessary to uncover these nuances and ensure that educational strategies effectively address the diverse needs of learners.

Table 5. Regression Analysis Between the Extent of Implementation of Education for All (EFA) and the Extent of Multidimensional Development of 21st Century learners in DepEd Central Schools in Region XII.

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	75.79	7.48	10.14	0.00
EFA Scores	0.14	0.02	5.86	0.00

Notes: $R^2=0.3805$, $F(1,56)=34.39$, $p=0.00$

*Significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5 indicates a significant positive relationship between the extent of Education for All (EFA) implementation and the multidimensional development of 21st-century learners in DepEd Central Schools across Region XII. The regression analysis revealed that approximately 38.05% of the variance in learner development can be attributed to EFA implementation scores, with a significant positive coefficient ($B = 0.14$, $p < .001$). This suggests that as EFA initiatives are more effectively implemented, learner development correspondingly improves.

These findings align with the assertion by Escarlos, Abellana, and Salon (2023) that equitable access, teacher quality, and learner support mechanisms are pivotal contributors to academic success in basic education. Therefore, enhancing EFA implementation could lead to measurable improvements in student outcomes, particularly in competencies essential for 21st-century learning.

Table 6. Issues and Concerns in the Implementation of Education For All (EFA) in DepEd Central Schools in Region XII.

Code	Theme
limited budget, socioeconomic status, financial capacity, insufficient income of the parents, inconsistent support of the parents, community and the local government. lack of budget for the modernization of school facilities, Parents who have unstable jobs	1. Financial/Economic Challenges
overcrowded classrooms, lack of specialized teachers to teach and handles persons with disabilities, modernization of school facilities,	2. Teachers and School Facility
academic assistance, learners in frustration level, poor academic performances of the learners	3. Academic Challenges
Parents' attitude financial and material support of the community and the local government unit	4. Parental and Community/LGU Support
illnesses of learners, parents and teachers, bullying or name calling	5. Cultural and Health Challenges
Contradicting DepEd policies and laws	6. Contradicting Laws or Policies

Financial and economic challenges remain a primary barrier to Education for All (EFA) implementation in DepEd Central Elementary Schools in Region XII. Limited budgets, poverty, and inadequate support from local stakeholders constrain access to updated teaching materials, facilities, and teacher training. These deficits lead to stark inequalities in educational delivery, particularly in rural communities (Santos & Alvarez, 2022; De Guzman et al., 2023). The lack of modernization funds and stable parental income further restrict schools from maintaining basic quality standards essential for inclusive learning.

Compounding these financial constraints are gaps in teacher preparedness and outdated school facilities. Overcrowded classrooms, limited special education teachers, and worn infrastructure hinder effective and inclusive instruction, especially for learners with disabilities (Garcia & Mendoza, 2022; Reyes & Domingo, 2023). These findings imply that without strategic investment in financial support, specialized teacher training, and facility upgrades, the equitable and sustainable implementation of EFA in elementary

schools will remain compromised, limiting efforts to achieve inclusive and quality education for all (Delos Santos & Navarro, 2021).

Conclusion

Drawing upon the key findings of this study, the following conclusions have been formulated:

1. The grand mean of 4.17 suggests that the overall EFA implementation is high, driven by effective collaboration among educational leaders, teachers, parents, and community partners. These results indicate a healthy education ecosystem that supports learners through shared leadership and strategic initiatives. However, the relatively lower scores in resource allocation and facility modernization signal areas that require more strategic focus to ensure that all schools are equipped equitably and effectively.
2. Grade 6 learners in Region XII have achieved considerable growth across multiple developmental dimensions essential for 21st-century learning. The strong foundation in health and cultural support contributes significantly to their holistic development, while innovative educational approaches effectively address geographical challenges. Despite socioeconomic disparities, family support plays a vital role in sustaining learners' academic and social participation. These results underscore the importance of comprehensive development initiatives that encompass physical, emotional, cultural, and contextual factors for learner success.
3. The uniform implementation of EFA across Region XII's central schools reflects the effectiveness of centralized educational reforms in promoting consistency. However, this uniformity may inadvertently suppress local innovation and fail to address unique contextual challenges faced by individual schools. Therefore, while centralized policies ensure baseline equity, there is a need for more nuanced, context-sensitive evaluations to enhance the effectiveness of educational programs.
4. The uniformity in learner development across schools suggests effective implementation of standardized educational policies. Nevertheless, underlying factors like socioeconomic status and student mindsets play a crucial role in academic achievement. Addressing these nuances is essential to ensure that educational strategies effectively cater to the diverse needs of learners.
5. The study underscores the critical role of effective EFA implementation in fostering the multidimensional development of learners. The significant positive relationship between EFA initiatives and learner outcomes highlights the importance of systemic educational reforms and inclusive access to quality education. By addressing key factors such as equitable access, teacher quality, and learner support mechanisms, educational institutions can enhance student competencies vital for success in the 21st century.
6. Issues and concern of EFA implementation included the lack of adequate financial support and specialized training opportunities which hinder the inclusive and quality delivery of education under the EFA framework. These systemic issues disproportionately affect vulnerable learners, particularly those in underprivileged and remote areas. Unless addressed through strategic planning and resource allocation, the vision of equitable education will remain unattainable in practice, continuing to limit the potential of countless learners.

Recommendations

Based on the significant findings and conclusions of this study, the following comprehensive recommendations are proposed to enhance the implementation of Education for All (EFA) and support the multidimensional development of 21st-century learners in DepEd Elementary Schools in Region XII:

1. It is recommended that schools continue to build strong community partnerships and intensify teacher training efforts. Moreover, targeted investments in modernizing facilities and ensuring equitable distribution of educational resources should be prioritized. Conducting regular evaluations and benchmarking can guide school leaders in addressing gaps and maximizing program effectiveness to fully realize the goals of Education for All.
2. It is recommended that education stakeholders continue to strengthen health services and promote culturally responsive education to support learners' holistic growth. Expanding access to flexible learning platforms should be prioritized to further address geographical barriers, ensuring equitable learning opportunities. Additionally, enhanced support programs targeting socioeconomic challenges are essential to provide all learners with the resources needed to succeed. Ongoing monitoring and context-sensitive evaluations will help tailor interventions to meet the unique needs of learners and promote sustained development.
3. To enhance the effectiveness of Education for All (EFA) initiatives, it is recommended that educational authorities implement context-sensitive evaluations to identify and address the unique challenges faced by individual schools. Empowering schools with the autonomy to innovate within the framework of centralized policies can lead to more responsive and effective educational practices. Additionally, providing targeted professional development programs will equip teachers with the necessary skills to adapt standardized curricula to their local contexts, thereby improving teaching and learning outcomes.
4. To gain a comprehensive understanding of learner development, it is recommended to conduct qualitative investigations that explore the interplay of socioeconomic factors and learning mindsets. Such studies can uncover subtle differences not captured by quantitative analyses, informing more targeted and effective educational interventions.
5. To capitalize on the positive impact of EFA implementation, it is recommended that policymakers and educational leaders intensify efforts to expand and deepen EFA initiatives, especially in public and rural schools. Higher education institutions should align their curricula and outreach programs with EFA goals to cultivate a workforce responsive to the needs of basic education. Furthermore, establishing robust monitoring and evaluation systems will ensure that EFA implementation is both effective and equitable, enabling stakeholders to make data-driven decisions that enhance educational outcomes.
6. It is recommended that education authorities prioritize increased investment in educational infrastructure, provide consistent financial support for learning materials, and implement targeted teacher development programs. Collaboration with local government units and private stakeholders should be strengthened to secure additional resources. Addressing these core challenges is vital to closing opportunity gaps and realizing the goals of Education for All.

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