

## Teaching that Listens: Exploring the Heart of Learner-Centered Pedagogy through Senior High School Teachers' Voices

Jinalyn B. Alvizo

Palompon Institute of Technology, Palompon Leyte, Philippines

**Corresponding Author:** Jinalyn B. Alvizo [jinalynalvizo99@gmail.com](mailto:jinalynalvizo99@gmail.com)

---

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Differentiated Instruction, Instructional Challenges, Learner-Centered Approach, Pedagogical Strategies, Student Engagement

*Received :* 10, July

*Revised :* 28, July

*Accepted:* 29, August

©2025 Alvizo : This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Atribusi 4.0 Internasional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



### ABSTRACT

This study explored the implementation of the learner-centered approach in Senior High School classrooms in Leyte during the academic year 2025–2026 using a qualitative phenomenological design. Six purposively selected teachers who regularly applied learner-centered practices participated through validated semi-structured interviews, with data analyzed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework. Results showed that teachers employed strategies such as collaborative learning, inquiry-based tasks, and differentiated instruction, which enhanced student motivation, autonomy, critical thinking, and classroom interaction. Despite these benefits, challenges persisted, including limited instructional time, inadequate resources, overcrowded classes, and resistance to change. The study concludes that learner-centered teaching is a transformative pedagogical mindset requiring sustained teacher training, institutional support, and curricular flexibility for effective and sustainable practice.

---

## INTRODUCTION

In the evolving landscape of 21st-century education, the responsibility of teachers as the providers of facts has dramatically changed to be participants in the learning process. This transformation reflects the growing demand for teaching strategies that facilitate the overall growth of learners. As education becomes more inclusive and diversified, teachers must develop teaching strategies where students' learning and cognitive development are encouraged. This shift has brought great expectations on teachers to implement and modify their teaching strategies to meet learners' needs, interests, and learning styles.

Learner-centered teaching is one such approach that has received massive attention in the educational discourse. Unlike the traditional approach, in which learning is highly based on lecture, recitation, and assessment, learner-centered approaches enable students to embrace active learning by taking a more participatory role in the learning process. This student-led environment encourages critical thinking, meaningful interaction, and the development of lifelong learning skills. Darsih (2018) emphasized that learner-centered teaching does not depend on a single instructional method. Instead, its primary aim is to fully involve students in their learning, making them active constructors of knowledge rather than passive recipients of information.

Grounded in the belief that education should empower learners, LCT equips students with the skills necessary for academic and real-world success. Madani (2019) noted that the overarching goal of education is to produce engaged and responsible citizens, which can be achieved when learners are given agency in their education. Similarly, Darsih (2018) affirmed that learner-centered pedagogy prepares students to thrive in academic settings and beyond, while Dunbar and Yadav (2022) and Dada et al. (2023) stressed the need for higher-order thinking, collaboration, communication, and independent learning.

In the study conducted by Che Mat et al. Al (2024), entitled *Effectiveness of Practices and Applications of Student-Centered Teaching and Learning in Primary Schools: A Systematic Literature Review*, the findings highlighted the significant impact of Learner-Centered teaching on improving the academic performance of the learners. This conclusion is supported by various studies cited by the authors like Dunbar and Yadav (2022), who emphasized that learner-centered supports differentiated instruction and promote learning experiences tailored to students' interests, styles, and cognitive abilities. Inquiry-based exploration, practical activities, and group work are some of the methods that enable the students to construct their knowledge through active and meaningful interactions. Similarly, Dada et al. (2023) affirmed that these approaches support cognitive development and promote higher levels of understanding as students can think critically and solve problems in real-life learning situations. In addition, the efficacy of student-centered learning is reflected in measurable outcomes, as it allows for flexible pacing, personalized content, and the development of self-directed learning strategies (National Conference of State Legislatures & Nellie Mae Education Foundation, 2020). Also, it enhances communication and collaboration skills and promotes better teacher-student relationships due to the mutual learning experience.

This shift also brings notable advantages for educators. Based on the study by Olugbenga (2021) entitled *The Learner Centered Method and Their Needs in Teaching*, the findings demonstrated that in Learner Centered teaching, educators are seen as facilitators whose role is to support and academically challenge the students instead of dominating the pedagogy process. This minimizes the work involved in direct content delivery and focuses more on the guidance of students. It also enhances lifelong professional learning, whereby the teacher makes reflections, adjustments, and advancements to their strategies. With more engaged learners, teachers receive timely and constructive feedback, allowing them to enhance both their teaching practices and their professional development.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite its numerous benefits, implementing learner-centered teaching presents many practical challenges that hinder its consistent and effective application. Donkoh and Amoakwah (2024) identified resource shortages, rigid schedules, and insufficient teacher training as barriers to effective student-led learning. Fufa et al. (2023) similarly pointed to overcrowded classrooms, limited teaching materials, and extensive curricular demands as significant obstacles. Earlier studies by Temesgen (2017) and Ejigu & Tesemma (2017) also highlighted resource limitations and excessive workloads. Baeten et al. (2010) added that shifting from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction is especially difficult in contexts with limited professional training or resistance to pedagogical change.

While international literature has extensively documented these issues, Philippine-based research remains lacking, particularly in rural or semi-urban contexts such as Leyte. In the Philippine context, the Department of Education (DepEd) has consistently emphasized the role of learner-centered pedagogy in the K-12 curriculum, particularly in Senior High School (SHS), where students are expected to develop 21st-century skills that prepare them for college, employment, and entrepreneurship (DepEd, 2016). However, there remains a limited understanding of how teachers in local contexts implement these approaches while contending with resource limitations, overcrowded classrooms, and institutional challenges. This gap underscores the significance of the present study, as it seeks to provide a grounded understanding of how LCT is interpreted and applied in Philippine classrooms.

There is also a noticeable absence of qualitative research that captures the lived experiences of Senior High School teachers as they implement LCT. Exploring their strategies, challenges, and contextual adaptations is essential, especially in under-resourced environments where successful implementation remains challenging. These insights are crucial in informing systemic reforms in teacher training, curriculum design, and institutional support to strengthen LCT practices.

This study sought to explore the lived experiences of Senior High School teachers in implementing learner-centered teaching strategies. Specifically, it examined the instructional practices they adopt, the challenges they encounter,

and the adaptive strategies they employ to navigate diverse classroom contexts. By doing so, the research aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of learner-centered pedagogy (LCT) within contemporary Philippine classrooms.

The findings are expected to enrich the growing literature on effective pedagogy by offering empirical insights grounded in real teaching experiences. Such insights serve as a foundation for teacher training programs, curriculum development, and educational policies that foster more student-centered learning environments.

Guided by the theoretical perspectives and practical challenges discussed above, the study focused on Senior High School teachers' experiences, challenges, and adaptive strategies during the School Year 2025–2026. The overarching goal was to identify contextual factors that facilitate or hinder the application of LCT, thereby contributing evidence that can inform instructional practices and policy development in diverse educational settings.

## **METHODOLOGY**

*The research methodology was presented in full, using a narrative format and to ensure clarity, transparency, and completeness.*

A phenomenological research design was used in this study. It is commonly considered an efficient methodology that strives to achieve a description that helps reveal the essence of the common experience of other people around a particular phenomenon. (Creswell, 2013). This makes phenomenology particularly suitable for education research, where understanding teachers' experiences, strategies, and interpretations of pedagogical practices is essential.

The study participants were purposively selected senior high school teachers handling academic subjects such as English, Science, and Social Studies. A total of six teachers were selected according to the following criteria: (1) at least one year of experience teaching at a senior high school; (2) application of the learner-centered teaching strategies in the classroom; (3) the readiness to take part in an interview administered through an online survey. The interviews were conducted using Google Forms, which allowed participants to provide open-ended written responses at their convenience. Purposeful sampling was employed to ensure the participants possessed relevant experiences and insights essential to the study. This sampling technique enabled the researcher to purposely pick participants who are more intimately aware of or familiar with the phenomenon of interest and thus can add more depth and value to the information gathered.

The researcher had a total of six participants, and five of them utilized the same method in their classes. They are from various schools in Leyte and are currently teaching Senior High School students in the school year 2025-2026. The saturation point was reached after the fifth participant, thus the needed data were saturated and fully completed.

Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained informed consent from all participants. The data were collected through a Google Form containing the validated semi-structured interview questions. Participants were invited via Messenger to complete the form at their convenience, allowing them adequate

time (2–3 days) to reflect and provide thoughtful responses. Anonymity and confidentiality were upheld by removing personally identifiable information from the responses. As the data were submitted asynchronously and in written form, audio recordings and field notes were unnecessary.

The responses were subjected to qualitative thematic analysis, guided by the phenomenological approach. Data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework: (1) familiarization with the data by reading and rereading the responses; (2) generating initial codes by highlighting meaningful statements that reflected learner-centered teaching practices; (3) clustering codes into categories; (4) reviewing and refining overlapping or ambiguous categories; (5) defining and naming themes to capture the essence of teachers' shared experiences; and (6) producing the final thematic map that summarized the dominant strategies used by Senior High School teachers.

To facilitate this process, the researcher used ChatGPT as an organizing tool for coding. Interview questions and responses were presented in a tabular format, and preliminary codes, sub-themes, and themes were generated. These outputs were not adopted automatically; instead, they served as a guide for analysis. The researcher carefully reviewed, revised, and validated all codes and themes to ensure accuracy and contextual alignment with the study's objectives.

Additionally, environmental scanning was conducted to determine the most commonly used teaching methods among participants. Once these methods were identified, follow-up questioning was carried out with participants employing similar approaches, using the three primary questions derived from the study objectives to deepen the analysis. Through this structured and iterative approach, the study identified dominant strategies and contextualized them within the broader experiences of senior high school teachers.

## RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study. The participants expressed and elaborated on their experiences, challenges, and adaptations regarding the teaching strategies they utilized in their classes to foster learner engagement and support cognitive development.

### *Teachers' Experiences*

Certain themes are discovered in this study based on the information and data gathered from the participants about what teaching strategies they usually utilize in teaching their students. Below is the list of positive experiences the participants have encountered in their implementation.

Table 1. Thematic Analysis of Teachers' Experiences in the Implementation of Teaching Strategies

Main Theme	Sub-Themes	Codes
	Enhanced learner engagement	Increased student engagement and participation
		Students are eager to learn.
		Better classroom behavior
		Improved communication and language skills

<b>Positive Outcomes of Student-Centered Strategies</b>	Development of communication and collaboration	Students feel more confident expressing themselves.
	Relevance and authenticity of learning	Interactive and real-life-based lessons
		Lessons connected to real-life situations
		Use of meaningful tasks like interviews and planning trips
<b>Effective Instructional Approaches</b>	Active learning strategies	Use of Think-Pair-Share
		Use of project-based learning
		Role-plays and group discussions
		Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)
	Responsive teaching	Use of formative assessments
		Providing timely and constructive feedback
<b>Supportive Classroom Environment</b>	Structured classroom management	Setting clear routines and expectations
		Use of positive discipline
	Safe and respectful learning space	Emphasis on mutual respect
		Students feel safe and motivated to learn
	Shared responsibility and teamwork	Encouragement of peer interaction
		Collaborative and student-centered classroom style

Theme 1. Positive Outcomes of Student-Centered Strategies. The implementation of student-centered teaching strategies has yielded substantial improvements in the classroom. Teachers emphasized the importance of providing students with greater levels of opportunities to make them feel more engaged, motivated, and responsible for their learning. This approach encourages active learning, and students have a more active role in the process of learning. This way, students will not merely be recipients of information but will be challenged to take on an active role in examining materials, discussing in groups, and solving real-life related problems (Sholeh & Muzakki, 2024).

*"...I have observed that the class is more interactive and students are more eager to learn the ideas, concepts, and real-life lessons." (P2)*

*"... students become more engaged when lessons are interactive and connected to real life." (P3)*

*"...I've observed that students become more enthusiastic and involved when they're given meaningful tasks that relate to real-life situations" (P5)*

Consistent with the findings of Tzenios (2022), this study confirms that learner-centered teaching enhances student engagement by fostering intrinsic motivation and encouraging more meaningful participation in classroom activities. This is evident in the use of authentic tasks such as simulations, role-plays, and collaborative projects that make learning relevant, practical, and intellectually challenging. The effectiveness of this approach is rooted in constructivist and social constructivist theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Aljohani, 2017), which views learning as a social and contextual process where interaction, discussion, and problem-solving develop higher-order thinking skills. Social

constructivism also underscores the importance of interactive instructional strategies such as group decision-making, peer collaboration, and real-life activities (Svinicki, 2004), which shift instruction away from rigid, teacher-centered models toward more participatory and empowering environments. In line with Deci and Ryan (2010), this shift supports learner autonomy and allows students to take greater control of their learning process, thereby strengthening intrinsic motivation and sustaining academic growth. The participating teachers further emphasized that combining multiple approaches enhances classroom effectiveness. Strategies such as Think-Pair-Share, group discussions, and role-playing were found to create more dynamic and responsive learning environments, enabling teachers to assess student understanding in real time and adapt instruction as needed. Overall, learner-centered teaching not only enriches the learning experience but also strengthens interaction, motivation, and academic achievement.

*“Regular use of formative assessments has made my teaching more responsive, allowing me to adjust lessons based on students’ needs and provide timely feedback.” (P4)*

The findings of this study are consistent with Sharma and Saarsar (2018), who showed that the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) strategy enhances both individual comprehension and collaborative learning. Similarly, participants reported that TPS encouraged students to articulate ideas confidently while gaining insights from peers, highlighting its effectiveness as a cooperative learning tool. These results also align with Chi and Wylie’s (2014) ICAP framework, which emphasizes that constructive and interactive engagement—through reasoning, dialogue, and joint problem-solving—leads to deeper learning than passive listening. In the present study, strategies such as role-plays and simulations elicited higher-order reasoning and active participation, reinforcing ICAP’s assertion that engagement quality shapes learning outcomes.

In terms of assessment, participants’ emphasis on formative assessment resonates with Black and Wiliam’s (1998) review, which showed that actionable feedback improves student outcomes. This study extends that insight by demonstrating how feedback, when integrated with learner-centered strategies, not only supports individual progress but also enhances classroom interaction. This is consistent with Hattie and Timperley’s (2007) findings on feedback as a powerful driver of achievement, but the present results highlight how feedback also fosters student self-regulation and peer support.

Taken together, the findings show that while earlier research stressed the theoretical benefits of cooperative learning and feedback, this study demonstrates how such practices are concretely adapted in classrooms. Student-centered approaches not only motivate learners but also cultivate collaboration, responsiveness to feedback, and authentic engagement. Grounded in educational psychology, these practices draw from social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), guided discovery (Bruner, 1960), and constructionism (Papert & Harel, 1991), which underpin collaborative, inquiry-based, and project-based learning. Overall, learner-centered strategies significantly enhance motivation, deepen understanding, link learning to real-life contexts, and strengthen critical thinking and communication skills essential for lifelong learning.

Theme 3. Supportive Classroom Environment. In student-centered classrooms, creating a positive, respectful, and well-managed learning environment is essential to fostering autonomy, collaboration, and sustained engagement. Teachers shared that creating a firm system inside the classroom from day one encourages discipline and flexibility in the learning environment.

*“... Setting clear routines and expectations from day one has created a structured yet flexible environment. Students become more responsible, and transitions between activities are smoother” (P1)*

*“... By setting clear expectations and encouraging peer interaction, students learn to take responsibility for their behavior and learning.” (P5)*

The findings of this study highlight that establishing clear routines and expectations fosters discipline, smooth transitions, and student responsibility, enabling autonomy and sustained engagement. This supports Bondy et al. (2007), who emphasized that effective classroom management in student-centered settings requires balancing structure with care, where predictability creates a safe and supportive environment. Both accounts agree that routines are not restrictive but empowering, as they help students take ownership of their behavior and learning. The study also underscores the importance of mutual respect, shared responsibility, and positive teacher-student relationships, echoing Bondy et al.’s view that harmony arises from reciprocal efforts—teachers modeling positive behavior and high expectations, and students responding with empathy, cooperation, and accountability. Together, these findings affirm that supportive classrooms nurture both academic achievement and socio-emotional growth through a balance of structure, care, and mutual trust.

### *Teachers’ Challenges*

The research discovered that there are several themes regarding the complexities the participants have encountered in the implementation of the student-centered approach in their classes. Below is a list of trials the participants have observed in the implementation of the student-centered approach.

Table 2. Thematic Analysis of Challenges in Implementing Teaching Strategies

Main Theme	Sub-Theme	Codes
<b>Student Engagement and Participation</b>	Unequal Participation	Passive students in group work, dominant peers; reliance on more engaged classmates
	Low Motivation and Hesitation	Varying student motivation levels, initial shyness in speaking, and reluctance in CLT activities
	Engagement in Activities	Difficulty sustaining interest in task-based or project-based learning
<b>Instructional and Curriculum Demands</b>	Differentiated Instruction Challenges	Time-consuming planning; tailoring to diverse needs; balancing support and challenge
	Time Constraints	Limited instructional time; need for more time to process student responses
	Managing Group Dynamics	Group work complaints; coordination issues among group members

<b>Classroom Management and Routines</b>	Consistency in Routines	Difficulty maintaining regular classroom procedures
	Emotional and Behavioral Management	Building student trust; addressing emotional or behavioral challenges
<b>Resource and Technology Limitations</b>	Limited Materials and Tools	Insufficient resources; need for creative use of tools
	Technology Integration Issues	Technical glitches, unequal access to digital tools, need for flexible planning.

Theme 1. Student Engagement and Participation. Student engagement and participation are central to effective learner-centered pedagogy, particularly in approaches such as group work and project-based learning. However, the findings of this study revealed that ensuring active and equal participation remains a significant challenge. Some students were reported as hesitant or shy to speak in front of others, while others tended to dominate group discussions, leaving their peers passive or disengaged. These challenges mirror the observations of Russell and Topham (2012), who found that students' low psychological comfort often discourages participation, and Coplan and Rudasill (2016), who noted that shyness reduces opportunities for verbal interaction and negatively impacts academic performance.

*"...It's sometimes difficult to ensure every student is actively participating and not just relying on more engaged peers during group work" (P1)*

*"...Some students are hesitant or shy to speak, especially in front of others." (P2)*

*"...Maintaining student engagement, especially in group or project-based learning, is tricky – some students tend to dominate while others remain passive." (P3)*

This problem of unequal participation in group activities aligns with earlier research showing that collaborative learning may unintentionally foster imbalances. Fassinger (1995) and Rocca (2010) similarly documented how classroom participation is often dominated by a few students, undermining inclusivity and collaborative learning outcomes. The present study also resonates with the ICAP framework proposed by Chi and Wylie (2014), which posits that student engagement can be categorized into four hierarchical modes: Passive, Active, Constructive, and Interactive. When some students dominate while others remain silent, the group functions at lower levels of engagement, limiting the effectiveness of the entire learning process.

Recognizing these barriers, the findings underscore the importance of teacher strategies that foster gradual and inclusive participation. Approaches such as pair-sharing before whole-class discussions, assigning specific group roles, and cultivating psychological safety can help address gaps between passive and active involvement. These suggestions are consistent with Finn and Zimmer (2012), who argued that fostering engagement directly contributes to long-term academic success, and with UNESCO's (2015) call to advance Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which emphasizes equity in educational opportunities. In this context, equitable participation is not only a matter of pedagogy but also of social justice, ensuring that all learners—

regardless of confidence, learning style, or socio-emotional background—are provided with meaningful opportunities to engage fully in the learning process. Theme 2. Instructional and Curriculum Demands. The use of effective teaching strategies under the pressure of limited time, curriculum requirements, and the diversity of students is a significant challenge to any educator. Educators mentioned that differentiated instruction also requires a lot of preparation since they need to personalize activities that cater to learners who are struggling, as well as challenge those who learn faster. This effort, while necessary for inclusion and deeper learning, is frequently overshadowed by the pressure to achieve curricular deadlines and assessment schedules.

*“...It would be the time management. Since it is more on questioning and sharing of ideas, we really need ample time to process their answers and their explanation.” (P2)*

*“...At times, limited resources or time constraints also make it difficult to fully implement certain strategies.” (P3)*

*“...Differentiating instruction in a diverse classroom can be time-consuming, as it requires tailoring activities to support and challenge each student appropriately.” (P4)*

Based on these responses, it becomes evident that time constraints are a major barrier to effective teaching, especially when implementing learner-centered approaches. The recurring mention of time constraints across responses underscores that this is not an isolated issue, but a systemic challenge that affects lesson planning, resource preparation, and student engagement. The participants' collective experiences suggest that unless adjustments are made, such as allowing more flexible pacing or providing support for differentiated planning, the goal of personalized and meaningful learning will remain difficult to achieve.

This study aligns with the findings by Shareefa et al. (2019), who identified time as a major concern in implementing differentiated instruction. Although authors like Dhawan (2020) and Rahman (2020) focus on the problems in time management during online teaching, the fact is that time constraints are also apparent in the case of classroom teaching. This indicates that time will continue to be a systemic concern towards the implementation of a learner-centered and differentiated practice, regardless of the mode of delivery.

Theme 3. Classroom Management and Routines. Effective classroom management was found to be a crucial foundation for any learner-centered approach, particularly when dealing with group-based or interactive strategies. Teachers reported that it was often challenging to manage group dynamics, especially when students were unable to contribute equally or experienced difficulties coordinating their actions with peers. Such challenges hindered the cooperative objectives of group work and reduced its potential contribution to student learning.

*“...Maintaining student engagement, especially in group or project-based learning, is also tricky—some students tend to dominate while others remain*

*passive, as I've experienced in a task-based activity where group work complaints arose." (P4)*

*"Some challenges I encountered include... maintaining consistency in classroom routines." (P3)*

The findings highlighted the importance of establishing structured group work protocols and predictable classroom routines to ensure equitable participation. The students' struggles to coordinate with their group members, coupled with the inconsistency in implementing routines, not only disrupted the flow of activities but also affected their sense of responsibility and engagement. In addition, managing emotional and behavioral dynamics was necessary to sustain a positive classroom atmosphere. Without intentional strategies to build group cohesion and maintain order, even well-designed learner-centered activities often failed to achieve their instructional goals. Hence, teachers needed to balance flexibility with structure by deliberately planning and reinforcing routines and group processes.

This result supported the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO, 2022), which emphasized that productive classroom management should not focus on punishment but rather on teaching and reteaching positive, clearly stated rules framed in a constructive manner. Once expectations were consistently modeled, practiced, and maintained, an atmosphere of order and mutual respect was established, allowing smoother transitions and more productive group cooperation.

Furthermore, collaborative learning environments were made more functional through deliberate efforts to enhance group cohesiveness. These included establishing shared goals, rotating duties and responsibilities, and fostering peer accountability. In this sense, effective classroom management required a balance between flexibility and structure: flexibility addressed the diverse needs of students, while well-established routines and group norms provided the stability necessary for continuity and successful learning.

Theme 4. Resource and Technology Limitations. The successful implementation of teaching strategies, especially learner-centered strategies, often hinges on the availability of adequate resources and reliable technology. However, educators shared that limited access to instructional tools and technology among students creates barriers that hinder the full execution of their intended teaching methods. These limitations require teachers to improvise, adjust learning plans, and remain flexible despite disruptions.

*"...integrating technology brings its issues, such as technical difficulties or unequal access, requiring flexibility and backup plans." (P4)*

*"At times, limited resources...also make it difficult to fully implement certain strategies." (P3)*

Based on these responses, it is evident that limited resources and technology can become significant sources of disruption, particularly when students lack equitable access or when systems fail. This finding aligned closely with Ranbar's (2024) study on Educational Technology Integration: Challenges and Opportunities, which highlighted that inadequate internet connectivity, unstable devices, and weak software infrastructure significantly limited the effective integration of technology in schools. Similar to the teachers in the

present study, Ranbar (2024) emphasized that such technological barriers often forced educators to improvise, redesign lesson plans, and prepare alternative offline activities to ensure learning continuity. Both studies underscored that while technology offers great potential for enhancing learner-centered strategies, its success is largely dependent on the reliability of available infrastructure and equitable access to digital resources.

The present findings further reinforced Ranbar's conclusion that technological limitations not only disrupt instructional flow but also heighten teacher workload, demanding flexibility, resilience, and creativity in addressing challenges. Teachers in this study described how resource constraints required them to frequently adjust their methods, echoing Ranbar's assertion that improvisation and adaptability are essential competencies in technology-driven education. Moreover, both studies pointed to the risk of widening educational inequalities, particularly for students from low-resource households who lack consistent access to devices or stable connectivity.

Hence, the current findings complemented and extended Ranbar's (2024) observations by showing how resource and technology limitations directly affected the implementation of learner-centered strategies. Addressing these barriers through investment in infrastructure, equitable device distribution, and teacher training remains critical for ensuring that technology integration supports student learning.

### *Teachers' Adaptations*

To present the pertinent data, the participants implemented practical solutions in response to the challenges they faced in the implementation of the student-centered approach in their classes. Below are the collapsed themes of the adaptations done after a thorough data saturation.

Table 3. Thematic Analysis of Adaptations in Implementing Teaching Strategies

Main Theme	Sub-Theme	Codes
Reflective and Adaptive Practice	Strategy Modification	Adjusting teaching methods, modifying strategies based on past experiences
	Responsive Teaching	Using formative assessments, to identify learning gaps.
	Reflection on Practice	Evaluating lessons, reflecting on student responses
	Flexibility	Adapting to students' needs, being open to new approaches
	Continuous Improvement	Seeking feedback, learning from past successes and failures
Professional Learning & Support	Peer Support	Collaborating with colleagues, sharing experiences
	Professional Development	Attending workshops, refining strategies through training
	Collegial Exchange	Learning from other teachers' strategies and shared reflections
	Differentiation	Using differentiated tasks, pairing students of varying proficiency
	Inclusive Group Management	Rotating group roles, assigning roles to ensure equal participation

Learner-Centered Strategies	Learner Support	Providing scaffolding, sentence starters, and vocabulary support
	Safe Learning Environment	Starting with low-pressure activities, encouraging shy learners
	Student-Teacher Relationship	Building rapport, maintaining open communication
	Active Facilitation	Monitoring group work, redirecting students as needed

**THEME 1. REFLECTIVE AND ADAPTIVE PRACTICE.** Reflective and adaptive practice is an important part of successful teaching. It comprises the skills of the teacher to analyze, manipulate, and refine the methods of teaching as per the varying needs of the students and changing classroom scenarios. This theme points out that teachers demonstrate flexibility, responsiveness and commitment to engage in constant improvement of approaches in response to diverse experiences.

*“I addressed these challenges by continuously assessing and adjusting my strategies.” (P1)*

*“I dealt with my varied experiences by being flexible and reflective. I adjusted my strategies based on students' needs, sought feedback, and tried different approaches...” (P3)*

*“Dealing with both successes and challenges... has helped shape me into a more flexible and reflective educator. I make it a habit to evaluate each lesson...” (P4)*

These responses show that reflection is not simply an afterthought following instruction but rather a mindset that consistently informs classroom decisions. Teachers employ reflection to help them establish effective strategies, areas that require changes, and how to best react to the needs of the students. This process mirrors Dewey’s (1933) foundational idea of reflective practice as a systematic and evidence-based approach to problem-solving in teaching. Rather than relying on routine or habit, teachers deliberately analyze past experiences to make thoughtful and informed instructional choices.

Furthermore, the ideas of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action of Schon (1983) are also reflected in the responses of the participants, referring to the adjustments that a teacher can make in the moment of teaching and to the evaluation and modifications that he/she makes after teaching. These cycles of reflection enable educators to be both responsive in the moment and intentional in their long-term professional development.

Despite their theoretical basis in reflective teaching models by Dewey and Schon, newer thoughts have been added to the literature by modern authors. Korthagen (2017) criticizes traditional models because of their excessive attention to techniques and behavior and emphasizes that these models distract attention from the inner world of the teacher, including his emotions, values, and identity.

This evolving understanding aligns with Farrell’s (2019) framework and Mortari’s (2012) concept of mindfulness in teaching, both of which advocate for deep self-awareness as a foundation for professional reflection. According to this view, effective teaching requires not only pedagogical competence but also a conscious connection to one’s inner motivations, beliefs, and emotional states. Similarly, Wright (2010) supports the transition from action-oriented reflection –

focused on correcting techniques – to meaning-oriented reflection, which helps teachers make sense of their roles, relationships, and personal development within the teaching profession.

Ultimately, reflective and adaptive practice allows teachers to turn the difficulties into valuable opportunities to develop. It fosters an active and sensitive learning culture that helps teachers to develop as well as promotes the learning success of the students. The development of functional links between reflective thinking, emotional awareness, and professional identity will enable teachers to be more ready to accept the multifaceted condition of 21st-century classrooms.

THEME 2. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & SUPPORT. Professional learning and support play a crucial role in shaping effective and resilient educators. This theme highlights how teachers actively seek guidance, collaboration, and continued training to navigate the complexities of teaching. In facing varied classroom experiences, participants shared that they rely not only on self-reflection but also on external sources of support – such as colleagues, professional development opportunities, and shared best practices – to enhance their instructional strategies and maintain motivation.

*“I also maintain open communication with students to better understand their needs and motivations, and I attend professional development workshops to refine my methods.” (P1)*

*“I collaborated with colleagues, used available resources creatively, and stayed open to learning and improving my teaching practices.” (P3)*

*“I’ve found great value in collaborating with colleagues and sharing experiences, which reinforces that I’m not alone in this journey.” (P4)*

These responses underscored the importance of continuous learning and collegial support in the teaching profession. Rather than working in isolation, teachers actively engage with others in the learning community to improve their practice. Collaboration serves not only as a platform for idea-sharing but also as emotional reinforcement, reminding teachers that their challenges are not unique and that collective wisdom often leads to effective solutions.

Teacher collaboration plays a vital role in shaping students into proficient future collaborators, as educators model cooperative learning by working together as a unified team. This observation was reinforced by Coke (2005) that teachers can effectively teach collaborative skills when they embody and practice these principles. Moreover, the successful implementation of innovative, student-centered, and collaborative learning methods requires strong and sustained collaboration among teaching staff (Dochy, Segers, Van den Bossche, & Gijbels, 2003; Meirink, 2007; Shipley, 2009; Slavit, Kennedy, Lean, Nelson, & Deuel, 2011). When teachers engage in professional collaboration, they co-construct knowledge, expand their pedagogical strategies, and build confidence in adopting and sustaining innovative practices. Through these collaborative efforts, educators create a culture of continuous improvement and model the very skills they aim to develop in their students.

The role of professional development further emerged as a critical factor in strengthening teachers’ competence. Participants’ accounts of attending workshops and training programs resonated with the findings of DeMonte

(2013), who argued that professional development enhances teachers' subject knowledge and classroom practices. This is in tandem with the evidence put forward by Borko and Putnam (1995) and Yoon et al. (2007), who argued that the type of teacher professional development can be regarded as one of the most effective with regard to the enhancement of instruction and student outcomes.

Furthermore, Villegas-Reimers (2003) pointed out that professional development should be regarded as a key component of any education reform that aspires to augment student achievement. The ability to meet developing classroom needs is facilitated when educators in the field keep learning and expanding professionally. In the same vein, Soe (2018) reveals that more teachers who have experienced a structured professional development (i.e., training, induction, and mentoring programs) have been using better instructional strategies, compared to others who have not experienced such structured programs.

In the modern educational environment where change is the only constant, continuous professional development is required to ensure that teachers remain in line with 21st-century learning requirements. This perspective was supported by Chu et al. (2017), who emphasize that professional learning prepares teachers to develop student-centered learning and combine the skills of critical thinking and collaboration. Yue (2019) also implies that the effective professional development should include needs assessment, peer mentoring, collaborative culture-building, research-based, and ICT integration as the essential elements of preparing teachers to provide high-quality and future-ready education.

Therefore, content-rich and collaborative professional development is closely associated with desirable results in the learning process. When consistent and aligned with teachers' instructional needs, it empowers educators to deliver meaningful teaching experiences and to adapt with confidence to shifting classroom demands.

**THEME 3. LEARNER-CENTERED STRATEGIES.** Learner-centered strategies emerged as a significant theme in the responses of participants, highlighting a shift from traditional teacher-led instruction to approaches that prioritize student agency, engagement, and individualized learning. Teachers pointed to the necessity of individualized teaching that could help learners to have a more thorough understanding and engagement with the material by considering the needs, backgrounds, interests, and abilities of the learners.

*"I primarily use a student-centered teaching approach that incorporates differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and inquiry-based strategies."*  
(P2)

*"Most of the time, it's a student-led setting where students are encouraged to unleash their potential and skills related to our subject."* (P5)

This approach corresponded with the findings of Dano-Hinosolongo and Vedula-Dinagsao (2014), who found that the design and delivery of instruction strongly influence students' development of learning strategies. Their study demonstrated that learner-centered teaching bolsters academic skills, supports

independent learning, and cultivates lifelong learning habits, especially when teachers model such practices for their students.

Additionally, a systematic literature review by Kerimbayev, Umirzakova, Shadiev, and Jotsov (2023) examined the use of modern technologies in distance learning through a student-centered lens. They reported that adaptive tools, virtual environments, and interactive platforms facilitated personalized, engaging learning experiences. These technologies helped students take ownership of learning by allowing them to actively explore, inquire, and collaborate.

Thus, the findings of the present study alongside the abovementioned studies suggest that learner-centered instruction empowers students to become self-directed, reflective, and responsible learners. This underscores the enduring value of student-centered pedagogies across different learning environments.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

A dynamic approach to teaching reshapes the way learning is perceived, processed, and applied in the classroom. Learner-centered pedagogy is not merely a set of strategies but a mindset that values the voices, interests, and needs of students in the learning journey. This study explored the lived experiences of Senior High School teachers in implementing learner-centered teaching and uncovered how their deliberate actions and instructional decisions shaped the learning environment.

Learner-centered instruction functions as an intentional and systematic design that amplifies student engagement and critical thinking. It is not only about delivering content but about creating space where learners are active participants in constructing their own knowledge. This pedagogical shift emphasizes that meaningful learning outcomes are not products of rote memorization but of reflective, interactive, and purposeful learning processes. As the findings suggest, when instruction is built around learners—what and how they need to learn—education becomes more transformative and enduring.

The learning process, then, must be guided by strategies that are both conscious and structured. Teachers must serve not only as facilitators but as co-learners and designers of learning experiences that empower students. With the continued implementation of learner-centered approaches, supported by professional development and institutional backing, education can fulfill its true mission: to develop independent, motivated, and critically minded individuals prepared for life beyond the classroom.

## **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

Based on the findings, this study recommends that teachers continue refining collaborative learning, inquiry-based tasks, and differentiated instruction, while embracing learner-centeredness as a mindset that positions students as active constructors of knowledge. School administrators and policymakers should provide sustained support through professional development, adequate resources, and curricular flexibility, while addressing systemic challenges such as large classes, limited time, and resource gaps. Future research may expand phenomenological inquiries with larger and more diverse

samples across Philippine regions, compare practices in resource-rich and resource-constrained schools, and employ classroom observations or mixed-methods designs for richer insights. Finally, longitudinal studies on the impact of learner-centered teaching on academic performance, life skills, and postsecondary readiness are encouraged to inform its institutionalization and sustainability in Philippine education.

## REFERENCES

- Aljohani, M. (2017). Principles of “constructivism” in foreign language teaching. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 7(1), 97-107. <https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5836/2017.01.013>
- Baeten, M., Kyndt, E., Struyven, K., & Dochy, F. (2010). Using student-centered learning environments to stimulate deep approaches to learning: Factors encouraging or discouraging their effectiveness. *Educational Research Review*, 5(3), 243-260. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2010.06.001>
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 5(1), 7-74. [https://assess.ucr.edu/sites/default/files/2019-02/blackwiliam\\_1998.pdf](https://assess.ucr.edu/sites/default/files/2019-02/blackwiliam_1998.pdf)
- Bondy, E., Ross, D. D., Gallingane, C., & Hambacher, E. (2007). Creating Environments of Success and Resilience. *Urban Education*, 42, 326-348. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085907303406>
- Borko, H.; Putnam, R.T. 1995. “Expanding a teacher’s knowledge base: a cognitive psychological perspective on professional development”. In: Guskey, T.R.; Huberman, M. (Eds.), *Professional development in education: new paradigms and practices*. New York: Teachers College Press
- Che Mat, N., & Jamaludin, K. A. (2024). Effectiveness of practices and applications of student-centered teaching and learning in primary schools: A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 13(3). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarped/v13-i3/21733>
- Chi, M. T., & Wylie, R. (2014). The ICAP framework: Linking cognitive engagement to active learning outcomes. *Educational Psychologist*, 49(4), 219-243. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2014.965823>
- Chu, S. K. W., Reynolds, R. B., Tavares, N. J., Notari, M., & Lee, C. W. Y. (2017). *21st Century skills development through inquiry-based learning*. Singapore: Springer Singapore. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-1007-1>
- Clarke, V. & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26(2), 120-123.
- Coke, P. K. (2005). Practicing what we preach: An argument for cooperative learning opportunities for elementary and secondary educators. *Education*, 126, 392-398. <<http://search.proquest.com/docview/1964414727accountid=17215>>.
- Coplan, R. J., & Rudasill, K. M. (2016). *Quiet at school: An educator's guide to shy children*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks.
- Dada, D., Laseinde, O. T., & Tartibu, L. (2023). Student-centered learning tool for cognitive enhancement in the learning environment. *Procedia Computer Science*, 217, 507-512. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2022.12.246>
- Dano-Hinosolango, M. A., & Vedula-Dinagsao, A. (2014). The Impact of Learner-Centered Teaching on Students’ Learning Skills and Strategies. *International*

- Journal for Cross-Disciplinary Subjects in Education (IJCDSE), 5(4).  
<https://infonomics-society.org/wp-content/uploads/ijcdse/published-papers/volume-5-2014/The-Impact-of-Learner-Centered-Teaching-on-Students-Learning-Skills-and-Strategies.pdf>
- Darsih, E. (2018). Learner-centered teaching: What makes it effective. *Indonesian EFL Journal*, 4(1), 33. <https://doi.org/10.25134/ieflj.v4i1.796>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2010). Self-Determination. In I.B. Weiner & W.E. Craighead (Eds.), *The Corsini encyclopedia of psychology*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470479216.corpsy0834>
- DeMonte, J. (2013). *High-quality professional development for teachers: supporting teacher training to improve student learning*. Washington: Center for American Progress.
- Dewey, J. (1933). *How We Think: A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Educative Process*. Boston, MA: D.C. Heath & Co Publishers.
- Dochy, F., Segers, M., Van den Bossche, P., & Gijbels, D. (2003). Effects of problem-based learning: A meta-analysis. *Learning and Instruction*, 13(5), 533-568. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0959-4752\(02\)00025-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0959-4752(02)00025-7)
- Donkoh, S., & Amoakwah, A. (2024). Use and challenges of learner-centered pedagogy: Basic School Teachers' perspective. *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 5(1), 66-71. <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejedu.2024.5.1.774>
- Dr. Ranbir. (2024). Educational Technology Integration: Challenges and opportunities. *Innovative Research Thoughts*, 10(2), 75-79. <https://doi.org/10.36676/irt.v10.i2.1406>
- Dunbar, K., & Yadav, A. (2022). Shifting to student-centered learning: Influences of teaching a summer service-learning program. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 110, 103578. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103578>
- Ejigu, O. & Tesemma, A. (2017). Factors affecting the implementation of student-centered learning methods. *Journal of humanities and cultures studies R&D*, 2(1), 1-10
- Establishing and maintaining rules: Their role in Classroom Management. *Australian Education Research Organisation*. (2023). <https://www.edresearch.edu.au/summaries-explainers/explainers/establishing-and-maintaining-rules-their-role-classroom-management>
- Farrell, T. (2019). Standing on the shoulders of giants: Interpreting reflective practice in TESOL. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 7)3(, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.30466/ijltr.2019.120733>
- Fassinger, P. A. (1995). Understanding classroom interaction: Students' and professors' contributions to students' silence. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 66, 82-96. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2943952>
- Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter? In S. L. Christenson, A. L. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Boston, MA: Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7_5)
- Fufa, F. S., Tulu, A. H., & Ensene, K. A. (2023). Examining the challenges of using student-centred teaching strategies in secondary schools: A qualitative approach. *Journal of Pedagogical Sociology and Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.33902/jpsp.202323181>
- Harel, I. & Papert, S. (1991). *Constructionism*. Ablex Publishing Corporation. Massachusetts, USA.

- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81-112. <https://www.scribd.com/document/142398477/The-Power-of-Feedback-Hattie-and-Timperley>
- Kerimbayev, N., Umirzakova, Z., Shadiev, R., & Jotsov, V. (2023). A student-centered approach using modern technologies in distance learning: A systematic review of the literature. *Smart Learning Environments*, 10(1), 61. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-023-00280-8>
- Korthagen, F. (2017). Inconvenient truths about teacher learning: Towards professional development 3.0. *Teachers and Teaching*, 23(4), 387-405. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2016.1211523>
- Madani, R. A. (2019). Analysis of Educational Quality, a goal of education for all policy. *Higher Education Studies*, 9(1), 100. <https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v9n1p100>
- Mortari, L. (2012). Learning thoughtful reflection in teacher education. *Teachers and Teaching*, 5, 525-545. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2012.709729>
- Olugbenga, M. (2021). The Learner Centered Method and Their Needs in Teaching. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Explorer*. <https://doi.org/https://doie.org/10.1016/IJMRE.2021831851>
- Rahman, M. M. (2020). Challenges and solutions of teaching English as a foreign language online during a global pandemic like covid-19: Saudi EFL teachers' perspectives. *Journal of Southwest Jiaotong University*, 55(6). <https://doi.org/10.35741/issn.0258-2724.55.6.10>
- Rocca, K. A. (2010). Student participation in the college classroom: An extended multidisciplinary literature review. *Communication Education*, 59, 185-213. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634520903505936>
- Russell, G., & Topham, P. (2012). The impact of social anxiety on student learning and well-being in higher education. *Journal of Mental Health*, 21, 375-385. <https://doi.org/10.3109/09638237.2012.694505>
- Schon, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York: Basic Books.
- Sholeh, M. I., & Muzakki, H. (2024). The Effectiveness of Principal Leadership in Managing a Tahfidz- based Curriculum. *Indonesian Research Journal in Education*, 8(2).
- Svinicki, M. D. (2004). *Learning and motivation in the postsecondary classroom*. Anker Publishing Company.
- Sharma, H. L., & Saarsar, P. (2018). TPS (Think-Pair-Share): An Effective Cooperative Learning Strategy for Unleashing Discussion in Classroom Interaction. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325545360\\_TPS\\_Think-Pair-Share\\_An\\_Effective\\_Cooperative\\_Learning\\_Strategy\\_for\\_Unleashing\\_Discussion\\_in\\_Classroom\\_Interaction](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325545360_TPS_Think-Pair-Share_An_Effective_Cooperative_Learning_Strategy_for_Unleashing_Discussion_in_Classroom_Interaction)
- Shareefa, M. (2020). Using differentiated instruction in multigrade classes: A case of a small school. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 41(1), 167-181. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2020.1749559>
- Shipley, W. W. (2009). *Examining teacher collaboration in a kindergarten building: A case study (Doctoral dissertation)*. Retrieved from <<http://digital.library.duq.edu>>.
- Slavit, D. Kennedy, A Lean, Z, Nelson, T., & Deuel, A. (2011). Support for professional collaboration in middle school mathematics: A complex web. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 38, 113-131. Retrieved from <<http://www.teqjournal.org>>.
- Soe. H.Y., (2018). "The Impact of Teachers' Professional Development on the Teachers' Instructional Practices: An Analysis of TALIS 2013 Teacher Questionnaire, Finland". *World Voices Nexus. The WCCES Chronicle*, Vol. 2 No. 3:

- <https://www.worldcces.org/article-7-by-soe/the-impact-of-teachers-professional-development-on-the-teachers-instructional-practices-an-analysis-of-talis-2013-teacher-questionnaire-finland>. (25. 01. 2021).
- Temesgen, S. (2017). Factors affecting the implementation of student-centered method in mathematics classes: the case of otona secondary school grade 10, Wolayta Zone, SNNPR Region. *International Educational Scientific Research Journal*, 3(8), Article 14.
- Tzenios, N. (2022). LEARNER-CENTERED TEACHING. *International Journal of Current Research in Science Engineering & Technology*. <https://doi.org/10.56726/IRJMETS32262>
- Villegas-Reimers, E. (2003). *Teacher professional development: an international review of the literature*. Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Yue, X. (2019). Exploring effective methods of teacher professional development in university for 21st century education. *International Journal of Innovation Education and Research*, 7(5), 248-257.
- Yoon, K. S., Duncan, T., Lee, S. W. Y., Scarloss, B., & Shapley, K. L. (2007). *Reviewing the evidence on how teacher professional development affects student achievement*. Institution of education science.