



# Students' Attitudes toward Learning English among Senior High School Stem Students in Siocon District, Division of Zamboanga Del Norte: Basis for Proposed Intervention Program

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**Abstract**— *This study aimed to assess the level attitude towards learning English of the Senior High School STEM students in Siocon District, Division of Zamboanga del Norte during the school year 2022-2023. Frequency count and percent, weighted mean, Mann-Whitney U Test, and Kruskal-Wallis H Test were the statistical tools used in the study. There were two hundred forty (240) respondents involved in the survey. The study revealed that most of the respondents were females, 18 years and above, most of them were grade 12 and majority of them were Bisaya/Cebuano. The study revealed that behavioral attitudes level toward learning English was high, cognitive attitudes level toward learning English was high, and affective attitudes level toward learning English was high. There was no significant difference in the perceived of level students' attitudes toward learning English in terms of sex, age, grade level and ethnic group. Based on the findings, it is recommended that teachers should elevate the students' attitudes, and their interest in English should increase because of the teachers' provision of worthwhile activities, such as but not limited to remedial instruction, extracurricular English activities, and language-related programs.*



**Keywords**— *Attitude Towards Learning English, Philippines*

## I. INTRODUCTION

English is taken as the common language in all parts of the world. English is spoken everywhere, but most Asian countries observe it as a foreign language, and it is considered a second language in some places, like the Philippines. As a result, English is taught as a course from elementary school to college in the Philippines and as the language of instruction (Ong, 2020). On the other hand, teachers' poor English language proficiency, lack of subject knowledge, lack of resources and qualified teachers, lack of teacher training, and low expenditure on education make their students lack interest in learning English and lead to

poor students' academic performance (Kirkpatrick, 2016). DepEd students in Senior High School Sto. Tomas National High School have positive attitude towards speaking in English and that speaking in English is important to them in general. Interestingly, however, these students admitted that they do not speak English well, are worried about making mistakes when they speak English and are afraid of being laughed at when they make mistakes in speaking. The students also believe that they need to learn in speaking English because they might need it in their future job and that practicing it will make them better speakers of English (Canceran & Malenab-Temporal, 2018).

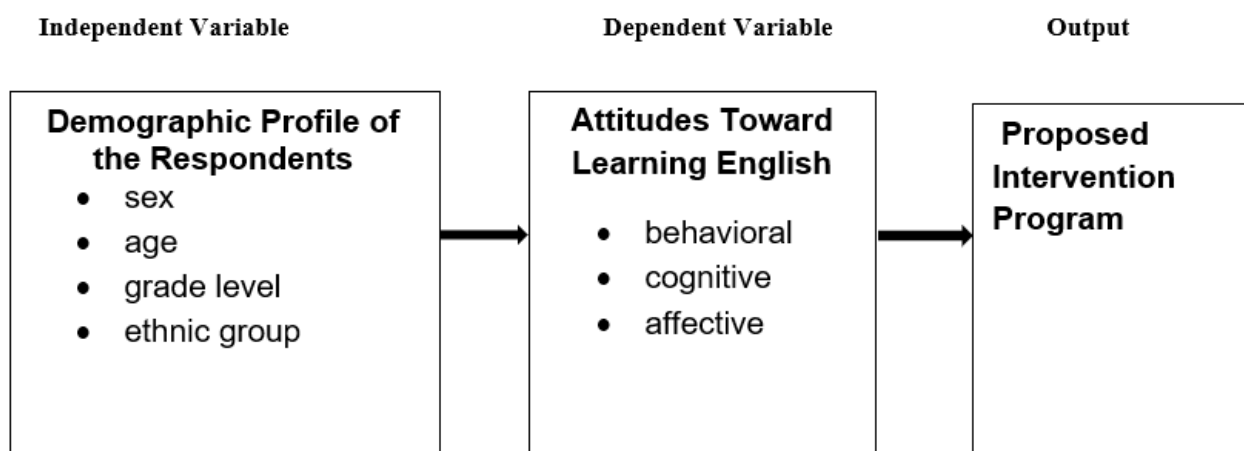
The significance of attitude and cognition as constructs influencing English language use, acceptance, and support has become the rationale for contextualized studies. Several studies have investigated the importance of attitudes toward learning English (Somblino & Alieto, 2019). In addition, Khastgir and Neogi (2017) pointed out that the importance of being educated in English cannot be denied. This is true especially in the Philippines where English is used as a means of communication in the schools and in the workplace. Moreover, Alam (2017) stated that to be successful in language learning and teaching, it is important to understand the learners' attitudes toward learning the English language. Thus, English is used as a second language in the country, attitudes of learners toward learning English play an important role in the success of learning the language (Tanni, 2015). Arda and Doylan (2017) stated that the learners' attitudes influence their academic performance since "attitudes affect how much they become interested in learning the English language.

This study explored the different factors that might influence the attitudes toward learning English and students' academic performance. Ahmeed (2015) discovered that attitude toward learning English positively influence academic performance in the English course. In addition, Mamun et al. (2012) stated that the learners have positive

attitudes toward learning the English language, and their motivational orientation was instrumental. Moreover, Eshghinejad (2016) stated that there is a significant relationship between attitude and students' academic achievement. However, Colaste (2018) stated that there is no significant relationship between attitude level on academic performance. It implies that whether the attitude level is high or low, the academic performance of the learners is not affected.

Many studies have been conducted on attitudes toward English and academic performance (Colaste, 2018; Ong, 2020; Somblino & Alieto, 2019). They explored the different factors that affect the learners' attitudes toward learning English, such as sex, age, and type of school in Junior High School and Senior High School in STEM. The current study is intended to assess the level of attitude towards learning English in Siocon District, Division of Zamboanga del Norte.

The conceptual framework is presented in Figure 3. First, the profile of the respondents is categorized into sex, age, grade level, and ethnic group. Second, the independent variables which is attitudes toward learning English is categorized into behavioral, cognitive, and affective. Lastly, the output of the study is the proposed intervention program.



## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This presents the research design, research environment, respondents of the study, data gathering procedure, research instrument, ethical consideration, and statistical treatment of the data in this study.

### Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive method of research in determining the assess the level of attitude towards learning English of the Senior High School STEM students in terms of behavioral, cognitive and affective as well as the significant difference in the extent of their

attitude towards learning English when data are analyzed according to their profile.

### Population

The respondents are a complete numeration of the two hundred forty (240) grade 11 and 12 STEM students in Julian Soriano Memorial Comprehensive High School and Siocon National Science High School in Siocon District, Division of Zamboanga del Norte during the school year 2022-2023. Table 1 below shows the distribution of respondents by grade level.

### Data Gathering Procedure

A letter of request, signed by the adviser, was sent to the Dean's office, College of Arts and Sciences, Andres Bonifacio College, Inc., Dipolog City, requesting approval to field the study's instrument outside the vicinity of the campus. Next, the researchers' letter, along with the Dean's endorsement letter, were forwarded to the Research and Ethics Committee of the said institution and thereafter, approved the study's instrument to be field out.

### Statistical Treatment of the Data

#### Attitudes Towards Learning English

Scale	Range Value	Description	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	High
3	2.61-3.40	Somewhat Agree	Moderate
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Low
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

**Standard Deviation.** This is used to determine the homogeneity and heterogeneity of the respondents scores where  $SD \leq 3$  is homogenous and  $SD > 3$  is heterogeneous (Aiken & Susane, 2001; Refugio, Galleto, & Torres, 2019).

**Mann-Whitney U Test.** This is used to test the difference in attitudes towards learning English when respondents are grouped in terms of age, sex and grade level.

**Kruskal-Wallis H Test.** This is used to test the difference in attitudes towards learning English when respondents were analyzed as to ethic group.

Presented are the statistical tools utilized in the treatment and analysis of the data gathered:

**Frequency Counting and Percent.** They are used to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age, and grade level and ethnic group.

**Weighted Mean.** This is used to quantify the respondents' ratings on the attitudes towards learning English. Presented below is the scoring guide in giving qualitative descriptions and interpretation of the responses of the items in attitudes towards learning English.

Zamboanga del Norte Division appears to be dominated by female students.

However, Bacaling, Macaoay, Taypin, Obedencio, and Rosales (2020), who claimed that there was no proportionate representation of participants by sex because senior high school students were overwhelmingly male, are contradicted by the current finding.

Similarly, the current finding also differs from Absari, Jalon, Samla, Abujen, Jagolino, Rivera, and Molina (2021), who found more male senior high school students than females.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the data that were gathered through research questionnaires. The presentation of data follows the statement of the problem of the study.

Table 1: Profile of the respondents in terms of sex

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	103	42.9
Female	137	57.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 shows the sex profile of the Senior High School STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) students in Zamboanga del Norte's Siocon District. The table demonstrates that more female students (57.1%) participated in the poll. It is evident that more Senior High School female students than male students took part in the survey. It follows that Siocon District in

Table 2: Profile of the respondents in terms of age

	Frequency	Percent
17 years old & below	89	37.1
18 years old & above	151	62.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2 distributes the age of students in Siocon District in Zamboanga del Norte Senior High School STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). According to the table, almost 63% of respondents were at least 18 years old, and just over 37% were no less than 17 years old. It shows that more survey respondents are on the verge of leaving the teenage category. That may indicate that these students are adequately confident in their worth and academic output.

The current finding complements Bacaling, Macaoay, Taypin, Obedencio, and Rosales's (2020) study, which found that roughly 60% of the respondents were at least 18 years old. However, the present result refutes Boateng, Baah, Boakye-Ansah, and Aboagye (2022), who found that the majority of the students in their study were within the age range of 16 to 18 years old (75.65%).

Table 3: Profile of the respondents in terms of grade level

	Frequency	Percent
Grade 11	111	46.3
Grade 12	129	53.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3 displays the distribution of grade levels among STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) students at the Siocon District Senior High School in Zamboanga del Norte. The data indicates that roughly 54% of respondents were in Grade 12. This number surpasses an 8% differential in favor of Grade 12 students. It demonstrates that more Grade 12 than Grade 11 students participated in the survey. It might suggest that more students are enrolling in Grade 12 than in Grade 11.

The results of the current study add to those of Bacaling, Macaoay, Taypin, Obedencio, and Rosales's (2020) investigation, which showed that 66% of Grade 12 students participated in that survey. Similar to the present finding, Absari, Jalon, Samla, Abujen, Jagolino, Rivera, and Molina

(2021) included 64% of the Grade 12 students as responders in their study.

Table 4: Profile of the respondents in terms of ethnic group

Ethnic Group	Frequency	Percent
Subanon/Subanen	15	6.3
Bisaya/Cebuano	152	63.3
Muslim	73	30.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4 lists the racial backgrounds of the senior high school STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) students. The findings show that the respondents were of various ethnic backgrounds, with a substantial portion [63.3%] being Bisaya/Cebuano. Further, it demonstrates that the Subanon/Subanen, Muslim, had a considerable presence in the Siocon District. It just goes to show how many distinct ethnic groups live in Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, with the majority being Bisaya/Cebuano. The current outcome confirms Cataliotti and Muscato's (2022) assertion that the people of the Philippines have a wide range of cultural and linguistic diversity due to the archipelago's many islands. As a result, many different ethnic groups make up Filipinos, or the people who dwell in the Philippines. As a result, several other ethnic groups live in Siocon and even the entire province of Zamboanga del Norte.

Table 5: Students' behavioral attitudes level toward learning English

Descriptors	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Speaking in English anywhere makes me feel happy.	3.46	0.802	Agree	High
2. Studying English helps me to have good relationships with friends.	3.55	0.876	Agree	High
3. When I hear a student in my class speaking in English well, I like to practice speaking with him/her.	4.03	0.914	Agree	High
4. Studying English helps me improve my personality.	4.04	0.881	Agree	High
5. I put off my English homework as much as possible.	3.18	0.852	Somewhat Agree	Moderate
6. I am relaxed whenever I have to speak in my English class.	3.01	0.826	Somewhat Agree	Moderate
7. I don't feel embarrassed to speak in English in front of other students.	3.02	0.981	Somewhat Agree	Moderate
8. I like to practice English the way native speakers do.	4.20	0.888	Agree	High
9. When I miss the class, I ask my friends or teachers for the homework on what has been taught.	4.23	0.910	Strongly Agree	Very High

10. I do not feel enthusiastic to come to class when English is being taught.	2.63	1.120	Somewhat Agree	Moderate
<b>Mean &amp; SD</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>0.450</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>High</b>

AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation

Table 5 shows the behavioral attitudes level toward learning English among seniors at Siocon District high schools in Zamboanga del Norte division. The table shows that students' behavioral attitudes were high for some items and moderate for others. However, overall results showed that students had high levels of behavioral attitudes. It implies that particular acts directly influenced how students' perspectives were formed. It suggests that the

respondents' behavioral views about English were favorable. As a result, theoretically, students' linguistic attitudes ought to affect how they act. Furthermore, students who behave well in class immerse themselves in the material and make an effort to learn more. Ong's study in 2021, which found that respondents had favorable behavioral attitudes toward English, is supported by the current data.

Table 6: Students' cognitive attitudes level toward learning English

Descriptors	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Being good at English will help me study other subjects well.	4.28	0.820	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. I have more knowledge and more understanding when studying English.	3.80	0.859	Agree	High
3. Frankly, I study English just to pass the exams.	3.00	1.159	Somewhat Agree	Moderate
4. In my opinion, people who speak more than one language are very knowledgeable.	4.06	0.990	Agree	High
5. Studying English helps me communicate in English effectively.	4.33	0.790	Strongly Agree	Very High
6. I can apply the knowledge from English subjects in my real life.	4.18	0.884	Agree	High
7. Studying English makes me able to create new thoughts	4.17	0.783	Agree	High
8. I am satisfied with my performance in the English subject.	3.42	0.869	Agree	High
9. In my opinion, English language is not difficult and not complicated to learn.	3.59	0.896	Agree	High
10. English subject has content that covers many fields of knowledge.	4.08	0.892	Agree	High
<b>Mean &amp; SD</b>	<b>3.89</b>	<b>0.484</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>High</b>

AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation

Table 6 displays the cognitive attitudes level about learning English among seniors at high schools in the Siocon District in the Zamboanga del Norte division. The table demonstrates that students' cognitive attitudes were moderate for one item and very high and high for others. However, overall findings revealed that students' cognitive attitudes were at a high level. It indicates that Siocon senior high students can relate new information to their prior knowledge. It could imply that individuals have the

cognitive skills to generate, verify, and apply new knowledge in various contexts. The current finding concurs with Ong's study in 2021, which found that respondents had favorable cognitive attitudes regarding English. According to the study, attitudes formed from the cognitive component may obstruct or hamper the current learning process. Therefore, having an excellent cognitive attitude may affect how well children learn.

Table 7: Students' affective attitudes level toward learning English



Descriptors	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. I prefer studying in my mother tongue (e.g. Tagalog) rather than any other language.	2.93	1.133	Somewhat Agree	Moderate
2. To be honest, I really have an interest in my English class.	4.01	0.880	Agree	High
3. Studying English is enjoyable.	4.15	0.792	Agree	High
4. I feel proud when I can express myself in writing and speaking in English.	4.31	0.791	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. Studying English subject makes me feel more confident.	4.08	0.827	Agree	High
6. Ask questions to my teacher for further clarification.	3.92	0.904	Agree	High
7. Studying English is important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a job.	4.68	0.661	Strongly Agree	Very High
8. I look forward to the time I spend in English class.	3.85	0.789	Agree	High
9. Studying English makes me have good emotions (feelings).	3.87	0.877	Agree	High
<b>Mean &amp; SD</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>0.492</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>High</b>

AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation

Table 7 shows the affective attitudes toward learning English among Senior High School in the Siocon District of the Zamboanga del Norte division. The table shows that while students' affective attitudes were high and extremely high for some items, they were moderate for one thing. However, the results as a whole showed that students' affective attitudes were high. It can mean that the students expressed their sentiments and feelings in English. It might imply that students were learning English in a way that included feeling good (like joyful, thrilled, comfortable, and proud), being confident, and having fun. Additionally, the students' awareness of the value of English in the future

may be the cause of their favorable affective attitudes about the subject.

The latest result supports Ong's study dated 2021, which found that respondents had a high level of positive affective attitudes. Thus, the findings of the present study and that of Ong (2021) concurred that learners' affective attitudes support their perspectives on the target language. Furthermore, the two studies recognized that the affective aspect of attitude is crucial since it links learners' present behavior to their future behavior. As a result, having an excellent affective attitude encourages students to do well on their coursework.

Table 8: Summary of students' attitude level towards learning English

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Behavioral Attitude	3.53	0.450	Agree	High
Cognitive Attitude	3.89	0.484	Agree	High
Affective Attitude	3.98	0.492	Agree	High
<b>Mean &amp; SD</b>	<b>3.80</b>	<b>0.401</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>High</b>

SD-Standard Deviation

Table 8 shows the summary of attitudes about learning English among senior high school students in the Siocon District of the Zamboanga del Norte division. The affective dimension got the highest mean score out of the three dimensions, followed by the cognitive and behavioral

aspects. Although the three categories' mean scores varied, the students' views about studying English were high overall. Despite the fact that students gave high ratings in all aspects of attitude, none of the aspects received

exceptionally high ratings. It means that there is still space for improvement in all aspects of attitude.

The high degree of views toward studying English among senior high school students in the Siocon District of Zamboanga del Norte division proves that these students held learning English in high regard. The students may also think that speaking English is something they should become proficient in because it may be necessary for their future employment. To spark their interest in the language and motivate them to learn more, the students may also believe that learning English is crucial.

The result of this study corroborates Ong's research in 2021, which revealed that senior high school students had a high or favorable attitude in each component of attitudes (behavioral, cognitive, and affective) towards English. In a similar vein, the present outcome supports Canceran and Malenab-Temporal's (2018) study findings, which indicated that both HumSS and ABM strand students had high/positive attitudes toward speaking in English and that speaking in English is essential to them in general.

#### **Difference in the Students' Attitude Level towards Learning English**

*Table 9: Test of Difference in the Students' Attitudes Level toward Learning English in terms of sex*

Variables	Sex			
		U-Value	p-value @ 0.05	Interpretation
Behavioral Attitude		6972.00	0.875	Not Significant
Cognitive Attitude		6885.00	0.748	Not Significant
Affective Attitude		6815.00	0.651	Not Significant
Overall Attitude		6782.50	0.608	Not Significant

Table 9 displays the test for sex-based variations in the intensity of attitudes among senior high school students in the Siocon District of the Zamboanga del Norte division. In terms of behavioral, cognitive, affective, and overall attitudes, there was no discernible difference between the sexes of students, according to the data in the table. Additionally, it shows that students of any sex are capable of having high levels of attitude.

The current outcome is consistent with the study result of Ong (2021), which showed no statistically significant difference in each attitude dimension when categorized according to sex. The results of the current study also corroborate Canceran and Malenab-Temporal's (2018) study, which indicated no appreciable differences in the students' attitudes toward speaking English when they were divided into sex groups.

*Table 10: Test of Difference in the Students' Attitudes Level toward Learning English in terms of age*

Variables	Age			
		U-Value	p-value @ 0.05	Interpretation
Behavioral Attitude		6119.50	0.247	Not Significant
Cognitive Attitude		5926.50	0.126	Not Significant
Affective Attitude		5720.50	0.054	Not Significant
Overall Attitude		5853.00	0.095	Not Significant

Table 10 shows the test for age-based differences in the strength of attitudes among senior high school students in the Siocon District of the Zamboanga del Norte division. According to the data in the table, when respondents were divided into groups according to student age ranges, there was no noticeable difference in behavioral, cognitive, affective, and overall attitudes. Additionally, it demonstrates that students of any age can have excellent

attitudes. The current finding confirms Orfan's (2020) study, which found no statistically significant age-related differences in students' opinions on their attitudes. In another study, Akay and Toraman (2015) divided the participants into three age groups: 17–19, 20–22, and 23+. The results demonstrated that opinions among various age groups on their attitudes did not differ significantly.

Table 11 Test of Difference in the Students' Attitudes Level toward Learning English in terms of grade level

Variables	Grade Level			
		U-Value	p-value @ 0.05	Interpretation
Behavioral Attitude		6574.00	0.274	Not Significant
Cognitive Attitude		6119.50	0.052	Not Significant
Affective Attitude		6248.50	0.088	Not Significant
Overall Attitude		6256.50	0.092	Not Significant

Table 11 shows the grade levels of senior high school students in the Siocon District of the Zamboanga del Norte division were tested for variances in the strength of their attitudes. The statistics in the table show no appreciable differences in behavioral, cognitive, affective, and overall attitudes when respondents were separated into groups based on student grade levels. It demonstrates that students can have positive attitudes at any grade level. The

new research adds to that of Sicam and Lucas (2016), who discovered that the general attitudes of English language learners had not altered over time. However, Coşkun and Taşgin (2018) found that first-year university students scored better on attitudes toward English than students in higher year levels, which is the opposite of the current study's findings.

Table 12: Test of Difference in the Students' Attitudes Level toward Learning English in terms of ethnic group

Variables	Ethnic Group			
		H-Value	p-value @ 0.05	Interpretation
Behavioral Attitude		1.656	0.799	Not Significant
Cognitive Attitude		11.953	0.118	Not Significant
Affective Attitude		6.341	0.175	Not Significant
Overall Attitude		7.765	0.101	Not Significant

Table 12 presents the outcomes of Senior high school students in the Siocon District of the Zamboanga del Norte division were assessed for differences in the tenacity of their attitudes according to ethnic groupings. The figures in the table indicate that when respondents were divided into groups based on student ethnic affiliations, there were no discernible variations in behavioral, cognitive, affective, or overall attitudes. It means students' attitudes about learning English does not significantly differ based on ethnicity. It proves that students can be optimistic about their attitude level no matter to which ethnic group they belong. In support, there are many reasons why it is crucial to learn English. One, and possibly the most important, is that it is the primary language used in school to teach other topics. As a result, poor language acquisition would result in academic failure for students. Thus, English learning is crucial for all students, independent of ethnic grouping, as they strive to pass and even thrive academically. The present study finding supports Parangan and Buslon (2020) when they revealed no attitude difference toward English

Language (LP) learning among secondary school students based on ethnicity grouping.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study's findings, Senior High School students in the Siocon District of Zamboanga del Norte division have positive behavioral, cognitive, affective, and overall attitudes regarding studying English, proving they value it highly. The students can also believe learning English is essential because it might be required for their future employment. The students may also think learning English is necessary to pique their interest in the language and inspire them to learn more. Although all facets of attitude obtained high evaluations from students, none of the aspects received exceptionally high ratings. It can be concluded that there is clear room for development in all attitude elements. Moreover, it is deduced that students can be optimistic about their attitude level regardless of their sex, age, grade level, or ethnicity.



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