



Assessing the Relationship Between Learning Conditions and Academic Performance of ESGP-PA Grantees in the University of Eastern Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the correlation between academic performance and learning conditions, focusing on academic, social, and personal factors. Additionally, the study sought to determine the profile of the respondents, including demographic information, and identify the challenges they faced in terms of learning conditions.

The research employed a descriptive-correlational research design, collecting data from 374 ESGP-PA grantees at the University of Eastern Philippines. A validated questionnaire was used, which underwent rigorous cross-checking, validation, and approval by a panel of examiners.

The findings indicated that ESGP-PA grantees exhibited high levels of behavioral academic engagement, cognitive engagement, and emotional engagement. Furthermore, the participants rated the teacher-related aspects of learning conditions relatively high. However, their preferred learning style was predominantly visual. Overall, the study revealed positive perceptions of learning conditions, and a significant number of respondents achieved good grades, demonstrating their persistence in their studies.

Multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the relationship among variables. The results revealed no significant correlation between learning conditions and academic performance. However, a significant relationship was found between the profile of the respondents and learning conditions, although only a few variables showed positive correlations.

Specifically, negative correlations were observed between year level and twenty-first century skills, number of siblings and school environment, father's occupation and emotional environment, and father's occupation and school environment. In terms of social conditions, negative correlations were found between sex and involvement in clubs and organizations, father's occupation and home-related aspects, and monthly family income and involvement in clubs and organizations. Furthermore, in personal conditions, inverse relationships were identified between the respondents' course and tactile learning preference. The occupation of the respondents' fathers showed inverse relationships with all learning preferences, except for auditory learning preference.

However, the strength of the relationship between the profile of the respondents and academic performance was found to be very low. Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge that there are other variables or factors that may potentially influence students' academic performance.

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the intricate relationship between learning conditions and academic performance among ESGP-PA grantees. It underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the various factors that impact academic achievement beyond learning conditions alone.

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INTRODUCTION

In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has addressed the issue of a significant number of high school graduates not pursuing college by providing scholarships and educational grants to deserving students. One such program is the Expanded Students Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA), which targets recipients of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). Implemented by CHED, the Department of Budget and Management, Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), ESGP-PA aims to break the cycle of poverty by enabling capable but economically disadvantaged Filipino youth to complete higher education.

Since its implementation in the academic year 2012-2013, ESGP-PA has provided scholarships to 4,041 beneficiaries from identified poor households in 609 focus municipalities covered by the DSWD's Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program. By the academic year 2014-2015, the number of recipients increased to 36,412, reaching a total of 40,453 beneficiaries. Although ESGP-PA has been instrumental in assisting poor Filipinos, it is important to recognize that poverty is not the sole factor affecting educational outcomes. Various reasons, as highlighted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), contribute to students' inability to continue or complete their studies, including unpreparedness for tertiary education, personal circumstances (such as work preference, lack of interest, termination, academic difficulties, pregnancy, health issues, and familial obligations), and adjustment to new cultural settings in urbanized universities.

Research data reveals that 39% of grantees cited work preference, lack of interest, termination, and academic difficulties as reasons for dropping out. Additionally, 12% dropped out due to pregnancy, 9% due to familial obligations, 9% due to financial difficulties, 5% due to health conditions, and 21% made a personal decision to discontinue their studies. These issues, including a dropout rate of 11.58% among ESGP-PA grantees at the University of Eastern Philippines, prompted the present study, which aims to explore the learning conditions and academic performance of the grantees.

Learning conditions significantly impact student learning and performance. State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) have identified academic difficulties among grantees, particularly those who have been out of school for an extended period. Many grantees require additional academic support and refresher courses, especially in subjects like Math, Science, and English. Despite the challenges, the grantees display determination to pursue higher education and complete their studies.

Considering the coherent relationship between learning conditions and academic outcomes, it is essential to examine how these conditions influence students' academic performance. This study will assess various aspects of learning conditions, benefiting students, educators, and the project management team at the University of Eastern Philippines. The findings will serve as an evaluation of the ESGP-PA program's performance and the overall quality of education received by the grantees. Increased awareness of this matter will enhance the institution's readiness and enthusiasm in analyzing the study's results to promote and maintain favorable learning conditions for the students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study were to investigate the learning conditions and academic performance of the grantees of the Expanded Students' Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA) at the University of Eastern Philippines. Specifically, the study aimed to achieve the following:

1. Establish the profile of the respondents based on various factors such as age, sex, civil status, course, year level, number of siblings, municipality, educational attainment of parents, occupation of the parents, and monthly income.
2. Assess the learning conditions of the respondents across three dimensions:
 - 2.1 Academic Conditions
 - Behavioral Academic Engagement
 - Emotional Engagement
 - Cognitive Engagement
 - Twenty-first Century Skills

- School Environment

2.2 Social Conditions

- Social Engagement
- Home-related Aspect
- Teacher-related Aspect
- Involvement in Clubs and Organizations

2.3 Personal Conditions

- Study habits
- Health
- Learning preference

3. Identify the problems encountered by the respondents in their academic journey.
4. Evaluate the academic performance of the respondents.
5. Investigate the potential relationship between the respondents' profile and their learning conditions.
6. Explore the possible relationship between the respondents' profile and their academic performance.
7. Examine the potential relationship between the learning conditions of the respondents and their academic performance.

The aim was to gain insights into the learning conditions and academic performance of the ESGP-PA grantees, considering the diverse aspects of their profiles and the influence of various factors on their educational experiences.

METHODOLOGY

Location of the Study

This study was conducted at the University of Eastern Philippines - Main Campus in Catarman, Northern Samar. It is the only comprehensive state university in Region Eight (8) and one of the largest state universities in the country. The university was established under Republic Act 4126, converting the Samar Institute of Technology into the University of Eastern Philippines. The campus covers an area of 419 hectares and is situated along the national highway between the towns of Catarman and Mondragon. It offers various undergraduate and graduate programs through its nine colleges.

Research Design

A descriptive-correlational research design was employed for this study. It is descriptive because it describes the profile of the respondents, their learning conditions, and academic performance. It is also correlational because it investigates the relationships between the respondents' profile and their learning conditions, the profile and academic performance, and the learning conditions and academic performance.

Research Variables

The independent variables in this study include the profile of the grantees, such as age, sex, course, year level, municipality, number of siblings, educational attainment and occupation of parents, and family monthly income. The learning conditions encompass academic conditions, social conditions, and personal conditions. The dependent variable is the academic performance of the respondents.

Population and Sampling

The population of this study consisted of all continuing grantees (380) of the Expanded Students' Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA) at the University of Eastern Philippines during the 2017-2018 school year. The study

employed a complete enumeration sampling method, where all the continuing grantees were included as respondents. The identification of respondents was facilitated with the assistance of the Project Management Team at the university.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were the 380 continuing grantees of the ESGP-PA at the University of Eastern Philippines in the 2017-2018 school year, representing various priority courses across different year levels.

Research Instruments

The primary research instrument used in this study was a survey questionnaire that collected data on the respondents' demographic information, academic conditions, social conditions, personal conditions, and problems encountered. The learning conditions section of the questionnaire was developed by the researcher, underwent cross-checking, and validation at NorthWest Samar State University - Calbayog City.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to the study, the survey questionnaire underwent cross-checking and validation. The researcher obtained formal approval from NorthWest Samar State University - Calbayog City, where the validation took place. Subsequently, the researcher administered the survey questionnaires to respondents at NorthWest Samar State University.

To ensure courtesy and coordination, the researcher notified the Project Management Team at the University of Eastern Philippines before administering the survey questionnaires to the respondents. The researcher personally distributed and conducted the study with the respondents.

Upon completion of the survey questionnaires by the respondents, all the copies were retrieved by the researcher. The collected data from the respondents' answers were meticulously tallied and tabulated.

Statistical Treatment

The collected data were subjected to statistical analysis using various tools. Frequency counts and percentages were utilized to analyze the profile of the ESGP-PA grantees. Weighted mean was employed to assess the learning conditions and academic performance of the grantees. Multiple regression analysis was employed to investigate the relationship between the grantees' learning conditions and their academic performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Problems Encountered by Respondents

The problems encountered by the respondents were categorized into three main areas: academic conditions, social conditions, and personal conditions. It is worth noting that the experiences and problems varied between original grantees and replacement grantees, as some of the respondents were replacements who joined the program at different points in time.

Academic Conditions

Under academic conditions, problems were identified in five categories: school environment, academic engagement, 21st-century skills, subject-related aspects, and learning resources. Some grantees reported issues with classrooms, such as inadequate space, poor ventilation, and insufficient lighting. A significant number also expressed a lack of facilities and books, which hindered their learning. Academic engagement problems included a lack of interest in school activities.

Concerning 21st-century skills, grantees faced challenges in collaborating due to shyness and poor socialization skills. Difficulties in understanding and grasping concepts were also mentioned. Subject-related problems encompassed complex requirements and scheduling conflicts. In terms of learning resources, a few grantees highlighted a lack of studying resources and modern technologies, which made it difficult for them to complete assignments.

Social Conditions

Social conditions encompassed five categories: teacher-related aspects, family-related aspects, peer-related aspects, personal relationships, and involvement in clubs and organizations. Grantees reported problems with teachers' strategies and attitudes, noting inadequate teaching and unclear instructions. Family-related issues included high expectations and pressure from family members, which caused mental and emotional strain. Peer-related challenges involved peer pressure and bullying, leading to conflicts and discrimination. Problems within personal relationships and a lack of interest in extracurricular activities were also mentioned.

Personal Conditions

Personal conditions were divided into four categories: health status, study habits, attitudes, and personal limitations. Health-related problems included stress, physical weakness, tiredness, and common illnesses. Some grantees admitted to skipping meals and lacking adequate sleep. Study habits were affected by time management difficulties and distractions from peers, social media, and gadgets. Attitude problems encompassed low self-confidence, disinterest, and lack of self-discipline. Financial issues were also reported, indicating a need for guidance in budgeting.

Overall, the findings highlight the diverse challenges faced by the grantees in terms of academic, social, and personal aspects. Addressing these problems can contribute to creating a more conducive learning environment and supporting the academic success of the grantees.

Tests of Relationships

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the relationships between the respondents' profile variables, such as age, sex, civil status, course, year level, number of siblings, municipality, educational attainment and occupation of parents, and monthly income, and their academic conditions, including academic engagement (behavioral, emotional, cognitive), 21st century skills, and school environment.

To examine the relationship between the respondents' profile and their academic conditions, regression analysis was employed. The findings indicate that out of the twelve profile variables, only five were found to have a significant relationship with academic engagement.

The results reveal an inverse relationship between the respondents' year level and their 21st century skills ($\beta = -.114$, $\text{sig} = .027$). This suggests that as the year level of the grantees increases, their 21st century skills decline. On the other hand, lower year level students demonstrate more developed 21st century skills. This discrepancy may be attributed to the implementation of the K to 12 transition program by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). The new K to 12 curriculum has impacted the development of necessary skills for students entering higher education. Students in lower year levels are likely to have experienced senior high school, which provides an upgraded curriculum to develop their 21st century skills. In contrast, students in higher year levels may not have had the same exposure to the new educational system. The shift to the K to 12 curriculum was driven by the need to improve the quality of education in the Philippines, as evidenced by below-average scores obtained by schools in the National Achievement Test. Therefore, lower year level grantees are more likely to possess better 21st century skills due to their exposure to the updated curriculum.

The educational attainment of the grantees' fathers was found to be significantly related to their 21st century skills ($\beta = .137$, $\text{sig} = .008$). This finding aligns with previous research by Ermisch and Francesconi (2001) that children of highly educated parents tend to achieve higher educational attainments. Additionally, an international survey conducted by the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) revealed that parental educational attainment is strongly associated with skills development. Individuals with parents who have higher levels of education tend to have greater socio-economic advantages and better skill outcomes. In the case of the grantees, most of their fathers serve as the primary wage earners for the family. Higher educational attainment enables these parents to provide more learning resources and spend more quality time interacting with their children, which positively influences their educational achievements. Conversely, lower educational attainment limits job opportunities and income, resulting in fewer resources available for the

child's skill development. Therefore, the educational attainment of grantees' fathers plays a significant role in their 21st century skills.

The number of siblings among the grantees was found to have an inverse correlation with their school environment ($\beta = -.104$, $\text{sig} = .044$). This suggests that family size can impact the school environment experienced by the grantees. A study by McHale et al. (2007) revealed that larger family sizes can lead to financial pressures and problems, affecting the allocation of resources among siblings. Grantees with fewer siblings have a higher likelihood of attending schools that offer more favorable learning environments.

The occupation of the grantees' fathers was found to have an inverse relationship with their emotional engagement ($\beta = .113$, $\text{sig} = .029$). Grantees whose fathers are engaged in blue-collar jobs, such as farming and fishing, often work long hours, leading to less involvement in their parental duties and limited interaction with their children. Research on maternal employment and child socio-emotional behavior suggests that increased involvement from both parents strengthens family life and provides additional emotional and instrumental support for children. When both parents are actively involved in parenting, it enhances the emotional engagement of children in social interactions and academic pursuits.

Furthermore, the occupation of the grantees' fathers was also found to be inversely related to the school environment ($\beta = -.128$, $\text{sig} = .013$). Typically, the fathers of ESGP-PA grantees work in blue-collar jobs, while their mothers stay at home and take care of the household. Since the fathers are the primary income earners for the family, their low-income levels can hinder providing optimal learning conditions for their children. A study by Corpuz et al. (2014) found that the fathers of ESGP-PA grantees often have low incomes, which are insufficient to support their children's education and other needs. As a result, parents tend to choose public schools that offer free education in their hometowns, sometimes neglecting the importance of the school environment.

Overall, these findings demonstrate the complex relationships between the respondents' profile variables and their academic conditions. Factors such as year level, educational attainment of fathers, number of siblings, and occupation of fathers significantly influence the grantees' academic engagement, 21st century skills, emotional engagement, and the school environment they experience. Understanding these relationships can inform educational institutions and policymakers in developing targeted interventions and support systems to enhance the academic conditions and overall educational outcomes of the grantees.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The study revealed that the grantees' ages ranged from 18 to 27 years old, with the majority being 19 years old. Most of them were female, single, and in their fourth year of study. The College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Natural Resources had the highest number of grantees, and most of them had 4-5 siblings. The majority of grantees were from Catarman. Regarding their parents' educational attainment, most grantees' fathers had completed elementary education, while their mothers had completed secondary education. The fathers' occupations were mainly farmers and fishermen, while the mothers were predominantly housewives. The family's monthly income ranged from 5,000 to 9,999 pesos.

The problems encountered by the grantees were categorized into three areas: academic conditions, social conditions, and personal conditions. In terms of academic conditions, issues related to lighting, classroom size, ventilation, and lack of facilities were the most commonly reported. Some grantees expressed difficulties in collaborating with others due to a lack of socialization skills. Communication challenges and problems understanding concepts were also mentioned. Complex subject requirements were identified as a source of difficulty. In terms of social conditions, the grantees highlighted problems with teaching strategies and teachers' attitudes toward teaching and students. Family relationships, expectations, and pressures were also mentioned as significant concerns. Peer pressure and bullying were additional social challenges faced by the grantees. Financial problems were the most prominent issue in personal conditions. Health problems, time-management difficulties, and struggles with maintaining good study habits were also reported.

When evaluating the grantees' academic conditions, behavioral academic engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement were rated as "most favorable." However, school environment and 21st century skills were rated as "more favorable." In terms of social conditions, the teacher-related aspect received the highest rating from the grantees, while social engagement, home-related aspect, and involvement in clubs and organizations were rated as "more favorable." In personal conditions, most variables were rated as "more favorable," except for visual learning preference, which was rated as "most preferred" by the grantees.

Regarding the relationship between the grantees' profile variables and their academic conditions, several negative relationships were identified. These included the grantees' year level and their 21st century skills, the number of siblings and their school environment, father's occupation and emotional engagement, and father's occupation and school environment. However, a positive relationship was found between father's educational attainment and 21st century skills.

In terms of the relationship between the grantees' profile variables and their social conditions, negative relationships were observed between grantees' sex and their involvement in clubs and organizations, occupation of the grantees' father and home-related aspect, and family monthly income and involvement in clubs and organizations.

In the analysis of the relationship between the grantees' profile variables and their personal conditions, a negative relationship was found between the course and tactile learning preference, family monthly income and auditory preference, and occupation of the grantees' father and all learning preferences except tactile preference. A positive correlation was identified between the number of siblings and tactile preference, as well as between the educational attainment of the grantees' father and their health.

Regarding academic performance, there was no significant relationship found between the grantees' learning conditions and their academic performance. However, a significant relationship was found between age and academic performance.

In summary, the study provided insights into the demographic profile, problems encountered, and learning conditions of the grantees. It also examined the relationships between various profile variables and academic, social, and personal conditions. These findings can contribute to a better understanding of the challenges faced by the grantees and inform targeted interventions to support their academic success.

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