
Majestic Road to the Bright Future: A Lived Experience of Stem Students from Esperanza, Agusan Del Sur Who Schooled in Bayugan National Comprehensive High School

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Abstract: *There is evidence to suggest that commuter students had poorer outcomes from their higher education and will be unsatisfied with their academic experiences compared to residential students. This study investigates the actual experiences of commuter students from Esperanza, Agusan del Sur, who attended Bayugan National Comprehensive High School. This study employs a qualitative approach using phenomenological research and a thematic design to evaluate students' perceptions of their lived experiences.*

It was found out that living far from school presents both benefits and disadvantages for students. Their participation in school activities and relationships with peers may suffer because of physical separation due to feelings of isolation. Getting access to required materials, such as books and labs, could be difficult, which would hinder their whole educational process. On the other hand, overcoming these obstacles promotes independence and adaptability, which are important life skills.

With the seen result, it is recommended that if a student lives far away from the school, think about setting up a support system for them, such an online study group or study materials, so they may stay connected to their friends and have access to educational resources.

Collaborations with community resources and mentorship initiatives provide additional assistance, making education more inclusive for those facing geographic barriers.

Keywords: *Student Commuter, Independence, Adaptability, Collaboration, Community Resources.*



1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

For student commuters, the phrase "Majestic Road to the Bright Future" serves as a motivating symbol and is meant to reassure them that despite their many challenges, there are ways to overcome them. For educators' exceptional results for all students, this article discusses ways to increase student achievement and commitment. It is based on the author's research on student engagement, belonging, and success, with a particular focus on commuter students who face inter sectional disadvantage, as well as the creation of a Whole Institution Approach (WIA) to increasing widening participation and improving student success. (Liz Thomas, 2020)

Due to the proximity to their homes, some students choose to walk to school. These students don't stress out too much about getting to school because they can do it quickly and easily; they don't have far to travel. Other students, however, experience tiring daily because of living far from their school. They must travel farther than the other students before they can get to school. To put it another way, these are the students who struggle just to get to school each day. Living far from school can result in challenges and inconveniences related to long-distance travel, particularly when there is a time- sensitive commitment involved. It emphasizes the case of students who must get up early to go to morning classes, implying that this can be a difficult part of their daily schedule. (Gimena et al,2019)

The article from *The Road to School*, a 2018 Urban Institute report, emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend the difficulties associated with student mobility and educational access. It emphasizes how important it is for regulations that take into consideration the circumstances of various communities to guarantee that all students, regardless of where they live or their socioeconomic status, have access to great educational opportunities. I learned that the average student's commute seemed to be possible at most 20 minutes. Some students, however, must travel incredibly far every day just to get to school (Blagg et al. 2018).

Article of *Inquirer*, Philippines Star in 2019, posits that students must deal with the physical impacts of the traffic crisis in the nation, much like regular employees who commute to work. Long commutes always end in fatigued muscles in addition to the mental stress of the ride. Both together will result in an overall heavy feeling of exhaustion. Students who have a long travel to school have a higher risk of accidents. When Chicago schools had to close, for instance, pupils had to cross gang lines, raising safety concerns. The probability of being involved in auto accidents is reduced for students who drive themselves to school. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NCSA 2018), 1,908 15 to 20-year-old drivers and 654 young adults respectively died in crashes in 2016.

There is evidence to suggest that commuter students had poorer outcomes from their higher education and will be unsatisfied with their academic experiences compared to residential students. However, many students who commute will benefit from living at home while studying. It allows close family, religious and community-support networks to be maintained. Despite the expense of commuting, it may be less expensive to live at home and commuters can remain in local employment. (Maguire & Morris, 2018) This study investigates the relationship between commute satisfaction and students' views of the commute as a hindrance to campus involvement and academic success. Using information gathered from 10 post-



secondary institutions in Canada's Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), the correlates of commute satisfaction were also investigated. 30% of students believed their travel was a hindrance to academic progress, while 61% of students said it prevented them from participating in campus life. Positive correlations between commute satisfaction and reported barriers to on-campus attendance, involvement in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, course choice, and academic success were found through binomial logistic regressions. Levels of commute satisfaction were statistically associated with commute mode, trip duration, travel attitudes, and campus type. (Ryan Taylor, Raktim Mitra, 2021). In addition, recent studies indicate that a long commute limits options for campus participation in general, such as attending classes and participating in extracurricular or co-curricular activities. (Coutts et al., 2018).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the actual experiences of commuter students from Esperanza, Agusan del Sur, who attended Bayugan National Comprehensive High School.

Statement of the Problem

This study attempts to determine the lived experiences of students that lived in Esperanza, Agusan del Sur who schooled in Bayugan National Comprehensive High School. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' profile in terms of:
 - a) Gender.
 - b) Address.
 - c) Waking time; and
 - d) Class schedule?
2. Why do the participants choose to enroll in a school far from their home?
3. How do the participants manage to travel a lengthy time every day?
4. How do the participants overcome the hindrances that occur when travelling to school?
5. How does the participants' health respond to the harsh environment while traveling?

Significance of the Study

This study aimed to provide valuable information about the live experience of the STEM students at Esperanza, Agusan Del Sur and its relevance in the field of education. The following will be beneficiaries of the study:

Students.

this journey and challenges will be used to reflect on their personal growth throughout the field of education.

Parents.

their involvement, support and understanding can help their child to sail the challenges and opportunities of their education.

Teachers.

the teachers will demonstrate how study's findings can directly inform and improve the education experiences and the outcomes.



Future Researchers.

this study will be the basis of reference of the researchers to conduct based on the data from the data gathered.

Scope and Delimitation

This study will focus on the lived experiences of STEM students from Esperanza, Agusan Del Sur who schooled in Bayugan National Comprehensive High School. The study will explore the students' motivations for attending BNCHS, the challenges they faced, and the support systems that helped them succeed. The study will also examine the students' perceptions of their own academic and personal growth during their time at BNCHS.

The study will be limited to STEM students from Esperanza, Agusan Del Sur, who are currently enrolled in Bayugan National Comprehensive High School. Data will be collected through questionnaires.

2. RELATED WORKS

Studying away from home presents a multitude of challenges, with financial concerns ranking high among them for many students. It's imperative to establish a robust financial plan to navigate expenses such as accommodation, transportation, and daily living costs effectively. While some students may have the means to cover these expenses comfortably, others may need to seek part-time employment or rely on student financial aid to bridge the gap. However, juggling work commitments alongside academic responsibilities can prove to be a challenging feat, and poor financial management may inadvertently lead to accumulating student debt, impacting both short-term and long-term financial well-being.

Furthermore, the emotional toll of studying abroad, away from familiar surroundings and support networks, can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and isolation among young people. This sentiment underscores the importance of developing effective coping mechanisms to navigate the complexities of foreign living situations, ultimately influencing how individuals experience and manage loneliness during their educational pursuits abroad.

Delving deeper into the intricacies of student life, those who commute on a weekly basis often encounter a myriad of challenges ranging from the financial burden of transportation costs to the logistical constraints of lengthy commutes. Daka Harrison's comprehensive study in 2020 shed light on the multifaceted nature of these challenges, identifying factors such as psychological and emotional distress, financial instability, lack of parental support, and inadequate school management involvement as significant contributors. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort to enhance communication channels between parents/guardians and school administrations, empowering parents to take a more active role in supporting their children's educational journey by providing necessary resources and fostering collaborative partnerships to tackle accommodation challenges effectively.

Moreover, the detrimental effects of long commutes on students' overall well-being cannot be overstated. Dr. Dawood Jami's insightful research in 2022 highlighted the adverse impact of prolonged travel on various aspects of students' lives, including disrupted sleep patterns, decreased physical activity levels, heightened stress levels, and compromised academic performance. Richard Florida's in-depth analysis in 2019 further underscored the intricate



balance between commuting time and the allocation of time for essential activities such as studying, socializing, and leisure pursuits. The pervasive sentiment among students regarding the draining nature of long commutes underscores the need for proactive measures to mitigate their adverse effects.

Additionally, the stress and fatigue associated with extended travel, whether by train, bus, car, or plane, can significantly impact individuals' ability to maintain focus and productivity. As highlighted by Michael Hodson in 2019, the inherent challenges of long-distance travel, coupled with the inevitable disruptions to sleep and routine, pose significant obstacles for individuals striving to balance rest and productivity effectively. Consequently, arriving at their destination feeling fatigued and disoriented becomes a common experience, particularly for those traversing multiple time zones.

In essence, addressing the multifaceted challenges of studying away from home necessitates a holistic approach that encompasses financial planning, emotional support, logistical considerations, and proactive measures to mitigate the adverse effects of long commutes. By recognizing and addressing these challenges proactively, educational institutions and policymakers can foster an environment conducive to student success and well-being, ultimately enriching the educational experience for all.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains the study's methodology.

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach using phenomenological research and a thematic design to evaluate students' perceptions of their lived experiences. The objectives of this study are to determine the challenges they face every day. In a phenomenological design, the researcher aims to understand the lived experiences of the participants. In thematic design, the researcher aims to address the challenges and experiences of those students who live far away from school.

Research Instrument

Survey questionnaires will be the instrument of the research we conduct, which consists of 10 items of questions that will be asked when participants participate in this research. This question will be an open-ended one. The information and data that will be gathered will be analyzed and translated into a more precise research problem.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher will use a questionnaire to gather data on the lived experiences of BNCHS (STEM) students. The survey questions consist of open-ended questions. To recruit a student to participate in our research, we will first write a letter and send it to each adviser in each section that will have participants. The letter will be signed by the senior high school coordinator. The researcher will request permission from the section advisory of the participants to perform a survey questionnaire to gather information and data. The researcher will use thematic analysis once we've gathered all the data to analyze it.



Data Analysis

Thematic analysis will be employed to examine the data, involving transcription, translation, coding, and theming techniques that enable researchers to uncover students' live experiences.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Result and Discussion

Narrative Analysis

RQ1: Can You Describe Your Daily Routine, Considering the Time Spent Commuting to and From School?

The statement primarily addresses how much time is spent traveling to and from school. It starts out by highlighting how subjective time is and how the 30- to 40-minute drive from home to school is a result of the distance. The fact that it mentions that the actual time spent leaving for school is shorter—between 25 and 30 minutes—adds an intriguing twist. This variation implies that situations or expectations may have an impact on how much time people perceive themselves to be spending. In general, the remark invites contemplation regarding how people view and feel the time constraints of their everyday schedules, especially when it comes to traveling.

The following are some direct quotations from the participants:

[1] “It is time consuming.”

[2] “It takes more than 30 to 40 minutes to get to BNCHS from my hometown due to the distance.”

[3] “When I am about to travel away to go to school, usually takes about 25-30 minutes for me to arrive at my school.”

RQ2: Can You Describe any Difficulties You Face in Terms of Punctuality Due to the Distance?

The persistent problem of delayed transportation and having to wait for extended periods of time with other passengers is a significant obstacle that will probably affect your daily routine and patience. A more productive and stress-free experience might result from looking for ways to reduce these interruptions.

The following are some direct quotations from the participants:

[1] “It's very difficult considering that it's really far, and it's very tiring as a student because I don't only have to think about going to school if I don't have homework, which is one of the reasons why I have a hard time managing time.”

[2] “For me, one notable difficulty arises from transportation delays and keeping on waiting with my co-"passenger.”

[3] “The thing that bothers me the most is that when I commute to school, the tricycle usually waits for more passengers in order for us to start going to school.”

RQ3: Can You Share Any Specific Challenges You Face in Managing Your Time Due to the Commuting Distance?

The subject centers on how hard it is to find a balance between school and commute time,



highlighting how important it is to be alert. The expression implies that scheduling the time for commuting is difficult, pointing to possible difficulties or obstacles in the transportation system. The word "vigilant" suggests that one must be alert, emphasizing how crucial it is to keep an eye out to successfully negotiate potential obstacles. Overall, the synopsis effectively conveys the idea that, because of the inherent problems involved, striking a balance between school and commute time demands careful thought and increased awareness.

The following are some direct quotations from the participants:

- [1] "You can't wake up early due to assignments that need to be done because commuting long distances reduces your time spent doing what you want to do."
- [2] "My first subject started at 7:45 am. I can only say that "long distance" really challenges me."
- [3] "It's very difficult to balance the time to commute to school because you really need to be vigilant."

Rq4: Can You Discuss Any Strategies You Use to Stay Engaged and Focused During Class After A Long Commute?

Your methods for maintaining concentration and engagement following a drawn-out commute show initiative. Despite the difficulties of commuting, making rest a priority, staying organized, adhering to a daily schedule, and scheduling breaks show a comprehensive effort to maximize your classroom experience.

The following are some direct quotations from the participants:

- [1] "The only thing I do is that I come to school earlier because when I arrive, the class hasn't started yet, so I can relax."
- [2] "Strategies I use to stay engaged and focused during class after a long commute are that I ensure I get enough rest to maintain focus, stay organized, follow my daily routine, and take breaks when needed."
- [3] "While traveling, take a short nap to refresh your mind."

RQ5: How Do You Perceive the Safety of Your Daily Commute, and Have You Encountered Any Specific Concerns?

Your thoughtful consideration of the mode of transportation you use, and your awareness of your surroundings demonstrate your admirable dedication to making sure your everyday commute is safe. The fact that you haven't yet run into any threats or worries is evidence of your alertness and proactive approach to safely handling your commute.

The following are some direct quotations from the participants:

- [1] "I'm always careful when choosing a mode of transportation and am aware of my surroundings to ensure the safety of my daily commute. So far, I haven't encountered any dangers or concerns while commuting."
 - [2] "Before traveling, I always pray to God and keep in mind to stay vigilant. Yes, I was able to witness a motorcycle accident on our way home from school, which makes me concerned and nervous."
- "Always ride a tricycle in the right condition, and the speed of the tricycle should not exceed the speed limit. It is inevitable that there will be an accident while traveling."

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Therefore, living far from school presents both benefits and disadvantages for students. Their participation in school activities and relationships with peers may suffer because of the physical separation due to feelings of isolation. Getting access to required materials, such as books and labs, could be difficult, which would hinder their whole educational process. On the other hand, overcoming these obstacles promotes independence and adaptability, which are important life skills. Even though making friends can be more difficult, getting beyond these challenges builds resilience and gets pupils ready for a range of situations. In conclusion, children who attend school remotely must navigate social and academic obstacles, which eventually helps them become more resilient and adaptive people.

5.2 Recommendations

If a student lives far away from the school, think about setting up a support system for them, such an online study group or study materials, so they may stay connected to their friends and have access to educational resources.

To support kids living far from school, it's crucial to establish a comprehensive system considering both social and academic factors. Creating dedicated online study groups fosters cooperative learning, while providing resources like lecture recordings ensures fair access to educational content. To address social isolation, setting up online clubs and activities can help students stay connected. Regular check-ins and communication channels monitor their progress and well-being, allowing timely intervention. Collaborations with community resources and mentorship initiatives provide additional assistance, making education more inclusive for those facing geographic barriers.

In addition, the government should prioritize transportation for remote students. By removing accessibility obstacles through affordable and reliable transportation choices, all students can fully participate in a supportive learning environment. Combining virtual support and transportation subsidies creates a more inclusive educational experience for everyone.

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