

Academic Performance of DOST Scholars of Laguna State Polytechnic University: Basis for Intervention Program Formulation

Cheerobie B. Aranas¹ and Rina J. Arcigal²

^{1,2}Laguna State Polytechnic University, University in Santa Cruz, Laguna, Philippines

Corresponding Author's Email: rina.arcigal0110@gmail.com

Abstract— This study was done in order to determine the academic performance of the DOST scholars of Laguna State Polytechnic University. Quantitative approach was used in this study, respondents answered the questions “1. How would you describe your academic performance in the program that you are enrolled in? and 2. What do you think are the factors that affect your academic performance?” Based on the results of the online survey, the scholars were able to identify themselves as still coping up with the changes and challenges on the changes they are experiencing, from the traditional face to face learning to online learning type. They were able to adapt to the change of environment and manage to perform good to their academic performances in order to achieve their goal, they might be somehow exhausted due to the current situation and different restrictions.

Keywords— DOST scholars, performance, learning environment.

INTRODUCTION

Academic performance is the measurement of student achievement across various academic subjects. Typically, it is measure by using classroom performance and standardized test results by teachers. Being a student scholar comes with great privilege, but everything that requires work, there are undoubtedly challenges as well. Though millennials often express that grades do not defines them, but being a Department of Science and Technology (DOST) scholars this will always be a factor. It is stipulated in the Science and Technology scholar handbook of DOST that their scholarship obligation is to maintain a good academic standing such as for First Year:

An annual weighted average (2 semesters/3 or 4 terms) of 2.75 or better if you are enrolled in the UP System; 2.5 or 85% or better if you are enrolled in another college/ university and no failing grade in any academic subject for all semesters/trimesters/quarter terms or summer term. Second Year: A semestral weighted average of 2.75 or better if you are enrolled in the UP System; 2.5 or 85% or better if you are enrolled in another college/university and no failing grade in any academic subject for the semester/trimester/quarter term or summer term. Third, Fourth & Fifth Years: Passing grades in all academic subjects provided that you take the regular load per semester and complete the course within its prescribed period.

Students have a lot on their plate today, balancing a social life, taking care of their physical and mental health, some maybe balancing work, studies and even

raising a family. With all this, there is a pressure to do well in school while maintaining all other responsibilities.

This study will determine the academic performance of the DOST scholars that will be the basis in creating the intervention program needed in able to guide and help the scholars cope with those factors. Based on the data coming from the Scholarship and Financial Assistance Unit of the Laguna State Polytechnic University there are one hundred and ten (110) DOST scholars who are currently enrolled in the institution. Sixty-seven DOST (67) scholars enrolled from the College of engineering, twenty-seven (27) from the College of Arts and Sciences, eleven (11) from College of Computer Science and five (5) from the College of Teacher Education and based from the monitoring report from the Scholarship Unit the general weighted average of the DOST scholars from the College of Engineering were from 1.32 to 2.10, from the College of Arts and Science were from 1.14 to 1.79, 1.38 to 2.71 were the weighted average of scholars from the College of Computer Science and 1.14 to 1.70 were the range of weighted average of scholars from the College of Teacher Education.

METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative research design, a method that focuses on obtaining data through open-ended and conversational communication. The researchers used focus group in method in order to find answers to why, what and how questions. It was done through online survey through google form with the following questions: 1. How would you describe your academic

performance in the program that you are enrolled in? and
2. What do you think are the factors that affect your academic performance?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Question 1. How would you describe your academic performance in the program that you are enrolled in?

Responses

- Respondent 1: "Taking this program, in my opinion, is never simple, but the electrical engineering instructors are extremely responsible in delivering us the lectures that are outlined in the curriculum. Although studying online is difficult, we are learning due of their urgency. They keep a close eye on their students' progress in their classes".
- Respondent 2: "Electrical engineering instructors, in my opinion, are all accountable for providing us the lectures stated in the curriculum. They ensure that we all have access to the internet in order to participate in synchronous classes. They keep a close eye on their students' progress in their classes. That's why, I can honestly assert that the EE program at LSPU is quite resilient."
- Respondent 3: "Way too complicated such that the education system is in still "Polo y Servicio". In my own perspective, my performance has been decreasing by lots of factors including this setup of learning in the new normal. I am also worried of my flaws in academics right now. I am still trying to extend my learning, even that it is exhausting somehow."
- Respondent 4: " Hoping that we can go back to normal physical classes since we are shocked into a sudden setup of classes."
- Respondent 5: "I'd say it's not the same as the face-to-face classes but still trying to cope up to flexible learning".
- Respondent 6: "Great yet challenging"
- Respondent 7: "This semester I do think that I did good despite all of the restrictions while studying at home. Even with all the negative, I think I did well."
- Respondent 8: "I do not have the same drive as compared to when it was still face to face class."
- Respondent 9: "I can say that my academic performance now is not as good as when there is a face-to-face class. Though my grades are all passing, I know that I am not getting the knowledge that a 3rd year student must get."
- Respondent 10: "Average performance"
- Respondent 11: "I could say that my academic performance this semester was quite good. Though

I experienced some struggles to the new learning setup, I am able to comply on the requirements of the program I am enrolled in".

- Respondent 12: "I'm just an average person and I can't say that my course is easy but I'm trying my best to understand the lectures".
- Respondent 13: "Academic performance in this course is somewhat good because most of the scholars I know who are enrolled in this course are passionate about it, but things have slowed a little since the pandemic".
- Respondent 14: "It is a good performance but not in the best form because of the situation."
- Respondent 15: "I can say that I am doing good academically for I have reach my 3rd year of my course, things does not become easy surviving every semester especially when the pandemic hits and the new normal on education system was introduced, on this situation I still passed my course requirements but I think the knowledge I have learned was not enough."
- Respondent 16: "I think it's doing well."
- Respondent 17: "I would describe my performance as average. There are some subjects that I have learned a lot, on the other side, there are also some subjects that i need to grasp more. But because of the mode of learning, I have the chance to refresh all the past lessons given and study it alone".
- Respondent 18: "I would describe my academic performance as being average. I tend to have a variation of level of understanding regarding my subjects. There are some which I'm able to understand very well, but some takes a significant amount of time and effort to comprehend. These differences are quite evident especially during this time since, aside from the effort to learn, we are forced to adjust to the new normal. Nevertheless, I find my performance satisfactory though I believe that I have a lot to improve".
- Respondent 19: "I was not that active in terms of subject recitation but I still manage to submit my modules".

Question 2: What do you think are the factors that affect your academic performance?

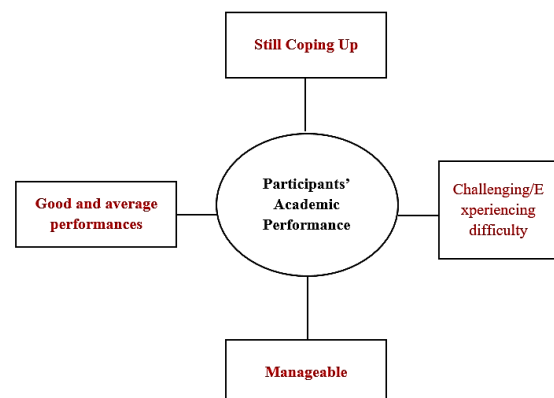
- Respondent 1: "Studying at home is one of the factor at this stage. Home isn't a classroom. We, as students, require enough study area. Another aspect is internet access; as we all know, we all have different internet service providers, and some of us do not".
- Respondent 2: "Studying at home is one of the factor at this stage. Home isn't a classroom. We, as

students, require enough study area. Another aspect is internet access; as we all know, we all have different internet service providers, and some of us do not”.

- Respondent 3: “First of all is my personal issue. This is inevitable but manageable if someone can and if someone is being supported. Things are not predictable when it comes to home as environment for Online Classes, for me it does not bring me into comfortable way of learning since home and school responsibility/ies intervene at same time. Second is resources and technology availability. I lack of some of devices and mobile data are my virtual weapons. Considering area also affects the network strength of ours. We don't have strong internet connection. The speed of connection does affect the flow of one student's learning. Therefore, if I have slow or interrupting connection, then I might have obstructed or slow flow of engagement into Online Learning. Third and last is "mental fatigue". In my opinion, I cannot make myself to endure from the exposure of technology, along with the new setup where I along with my siblings share the same struggle when it comes by online learning. In short, I am not used into full tech method of learning. This does affect my motivation in college life”.
- Respondent 4: “I experience more stresses, tiredness, and too much pressure than before.”
- Respondent 5: “for this time pandemic, my internet connection matters”
- Respondent 6: “I think the first and foremost would be the environment I am in, for me, this is not really the place where I should study because of distractions and very limited working space for me.”
- Respondent 7: “Lack of laboratory and field exposures”.
- Respondent 8: “Loss of motivation to continue in studying, the stress experienced both in the household and school requirements”
- Respondent 9: “The biggest factor is our situation right now. This pandemic affected my focus on studying. I am not a fan of self-teaching hence this online class setup”.
- Respondent 10: “Online learning and self-motivation”
- Respondent 11: “I think one of the factors that affect my academic performance is having lack of time management. I am having difficulty on maximizing the time on making activities and doing household chores. In addition, maybe because I have a short attention span. I am easily distracted from different noises created from different sources”.

- Respondent 12: “Maybe the method of learning. I guess it will not be this hard if the classes are face to face”.
- Respondent 13: “The way in which professors teach their students, the manner in which they deliver the lesson, and the form in which they communicate all have a significant impact on the students' academic performance. However, at the moment, the most significant factor is the setup; online classes contribute to students' academic performance, causing them to perform slightly worse than in face-to-face classes”.
- Respondent 14: “The lack of proper space in studying and sometimes loss of internet connection”.
- Respondent 15: “Some factors affecting my academic performance is our situation, it is difficult to study some lesson when the internet connection is slow, also the lock or good space to study, there are also times that I become lazy to study at home due to the household task and noise that distracted me while studying”.
- Respondent 16: “The factors affecting my academic performance are technology and interface characteristics, content-area experience, student roles and instructional tasks, and information overload”.
- Respondent 17: “As for me, the primary factor that affects my performance is adjusting to the new way of learning. I am not used of being dependent from using gadgets as a learning tool. But then, I am trying to adapt from the new learning system”.
- Respondent 18: “The current setup for learning is one of the main factors that definitely affect my performance”.
- Respondent 19: “I think it's the environment and this online class. Since I don't have laptop and just using data, I tend to not focus in some discussion because I'm distracted”.

Thematic Map 1: Participants' Academic Performance



Still Coping Up

The participants described themselves as still coping up in online studying. Despite of the duration that the students engaged in, participants is still involved in coping. Students' open-ended responses revealed that many struggled with establishing a new routine, felt lethargic or lacked motivation, and faced logistical problems with online learning. Moreover, students used proactive and creative coping strategies, such as trying to establish a new daily routine in the absence of their usual structure, focusing on physical exercise, cooking and eating well (Logel, Oreopoulos & Petronijevic, 2021).

"It is a good performance but not in the best form because of the situation"

"I'm just an average person and I can't say that my course is easy but I'm trying my best to understand the lectures"

Challenging/Experiencing Difficulties

Not all participants have equal means to absorb all the abrupt changes and adaptation they make to survive the online classes. Some students still find it challenging due to their circumstances they face in their routine. According to the study conducted by Riastuti and colleagues (2021), the existence of various obstacles faced by students makes students feel difficult and hampered in participating in the online lecture process. This is what causes the emergence of various perceptions of students who are different from one another. Perception is a process of organizing, grouping the stimulus received by an individual so that it becomes something meaningful.

"I'm just an average person and I can't say that my course is easy but I'm trying my best to understand the lectures"

"Great yet challenging"

Manageable

For some reasons, participants were able to tolerate and manage their academic struggles of sudden shift from traditional learning to online classroom learning. They might tolerate these circumstances in intrinsic and extrinsic way. Students will control themselves in following the various stages of learning that are undertaken and manage themselves during the learning process or termed self-regulated learning abilities. Self-regulated learning is an active and constructive process in which learners determine goals for their learning

based on past experiences and contextual features of the current environment (Pintrich 2000).

"I could say that my academic performance this semester was quite good. Though I experienced some struggles to the new learning setup, I am able to comply on the requirements of the program I am enrolled in".

"I was not that active in terms of subject recitation but I still manage to submit my modules"

Furthermore, it has been shown that learners with effective self-regulated learning practices are better prepared to handle the problems of a fast-changing environment in the context of 21st-century learners (Cheng and Chau 2013).

Good and Average Performances

Lastly, participants also perceived their performances as good enough in the situation. Indeed, with unique perspective, individuals can motivate themselves intrinsically because of their drive and passion to finish a certain goal even there are obstacles that may buffer this motivation. Self-regulated learners can adjust their behavior to take the steps necessary to attain their learning goals and keep them going until they succeed. This behavior change is represented in a sequence of actions or strategies in which the learner sets goals, monitors, regulates, and controls them, and is guided and controlled by those goals and the learning environment's contextual features (Pintrich 2000).

"Academic performance in this course is somewhat good because most of the scholars I know who are enrolled in this course are passionate about it, but things have slowed a little since the pandemic"

"I could say that my academic performance this semester was quite good. Though I experienced some struggles to the new learning setup, I am able to comply on the requirements of the program I am enrolled in".

In addition, the capacity of learners to choose and adapt their learning strategies according to the learning context is the key to engaging in self-regulated learning (Winne 2015).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In this study most of the respondent shows a positive response on the sudden change of study environment. The data were gathered during the time of COVID 19,

were the respondents were shifted from face to face class to online classes. Most of the respondents were coping up with the current situation they are facing, though they are experiencing difficulties and challenges. The respondents were able to manage and tolerate the struggles that they are experiencing by facing their day to day activity. They were able to evaluate their performance as good or average despite with all the difficulties and challenges. Respondents were able to

motivate themselves to overcome the challenges because of the drive and passion to finish a certain goal. Based on the theory of Charles Darwin “adaptation” states that an organism that is able to adapt to the changing environment will survive, the rest will be eliminated. This is known as survival of the fittest. In order for the students to achieve their goal to finish their study learners choose and adapt their leaning strategies according to the learning context.

Table 1: Proposed Intervention Program

Strategies	Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline
1. Keeping academic performance of the scholars on track and motivated by incorporating student credit recovery.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create Virtual School credit recovery program. 2. Open school computer lab for this purpose. Promote the use of the e-bus to help the students who are in need of the facility. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic Counselors 2. Scholars and financial Assistance Unit 3. DOST organization 	Every end of Semester
2. Provide Academic support and academic opportunity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide enrichment seminar or activities for the students as well as their parents or guardian for them to support the current study environment. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic Counselors 2. Scholars and financial Assistance Unit 3. DOST organization 	First semester
3. Develop a mentoring program to support students that were struggling in their academic requirements.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruit staff to act as mentors. (alumni or higher student) 2. Have staff and Scholar and Financial Assistance Unit of the University collaborate to create the parameters for the program (frequency of meeting, activities, etc.). 3. Monitor the performance of the attendees. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic Counselors 2. Scholars and financial Assistance Unit 3. DOST organization 	Every semester

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