

Factors Affecting Students' Willingness to Participate in the National Learning Camp

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Abstract— This research investigated the factors affecting students' willingness to participate in the National Learning Camp (NLC) at Lumil Integrated National High School. The study employed quantitative research design. This utilized a survey questionnaire administered to a randomly selected sample of 304 students. The data analysis methods were frequency, percentage, t-Test, and ANOVA to explore the relationships between students' demographic profiles and their willingness level, as well as potential factors such as sex, age, grade level, academic performance, economic status, parental support, peer influence, and motivation. The findings revealed that socioeconomic status significantly affects their willingness to join the NLC, with middle-class students showing the highest interest. In contrast, sex, grade level, and previous academic performance did not significantly affect the participation. Lack of awareness about the NLC was a primary reason for students' indecision. The study concluded with recommendations for raising awareness of the National Learning Camp (NLC), offering incentives, promoting parental support, and encouraging students to seek information about the program. Future studies could improve the research instrument by adding more factors in the undecided category, use larger samples, and examine other factors like mental health, school type, and time management affecting participation.

Keywords— academic performance, economic status, motivation, National Learning Camp, parental support, participation, peer influence, summer camp, willingness.

INTRODUCTION

Education is an essential part of any nation. However, Philippines is still struggling in improving its quality of education. It was found out that Filipino students scored low in subjects such as Math and Science. They were also identified to have a low reading comprehension level. These are reflected in assessments done by Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Locally, students also performed poorly as shown in the National Achievement Test for the past several years. Moreover, the Philippines' educational sector encountered several difficulties due to the previous Coronavirus-19 pandemic, resulting in students' poor academic performances. Due to these circumstances, the Department of Education (DepEd) created the MATATAG curriculum. It aims to hone the kindergarten to Grade 10 students in terms of reading, mathematics, and life skills that are essential for their practical and future lives a (Singh, 2024).

To bridge gaps pertaining to the students' low academic performance and the effects of the pandemic in education, the Department of Education (DepEd) launched the National Learning Camp (NLC). This supports the MATATAG Basic Education Agenda and

is under the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP). It was first implemented in the school year 2023-2024. This integrates fun and stimulating activities to foster student interests, socio-emotional skills, personal growth, and character development that is evocative of a camp atmosphere. The three-week activity was first facilitated from July 24 to August 25, 2023, during school break (DepEd, 2023).

Furthermore, the NLC is subdivided into four categories to cater for the specific needs of the learners. First, the Enhancement Camp is designed for the students who are classified to have advanced learning. This aims to challenge these learners by deepening what they have known. Second, the Consolidation Camp provides the learners with more opportunities and practices to harness their knowledge and skill about the previous lessons. This can equip them for the next stage of their educational journey. Third, the learners who had been classified as struggling students in terms of reading and numerical skills were recommended to join the Intervention Class. This offers them a closer teaching approach for them to attain the skills they need for the next grade level. Fourth, the Remedial Class is intended for the students who did not acquire the necessary skills at a particular grade level. Their needs are attended

through remediation and close monitoring of the teachers (DepEd, 2023).

Based on the stated objectives and program flow of the NLC, it is perceived to be very helpful. The National Learning Camp can be compared to a summer camp because of its benefits that they can give to their projected clients.

Joining a summer camp opens doors for the students to know, to explore, and enhance their abilities through different exercises and workshops. Through active participation, this can lead to good results such as personal growth. This also becomes an avenue for a collaboration wherein the students can gain friends and learn to solve problems together in a win-win situation (Sakal NIE, 2024). The National Learning Camp is like this in which it promotes collaboration among learners for them to achieve higher academic progress. Moreover, students were given the opportunity to navigate new things to discover and learn during the summer camps. The participants become more prepared for their future endeavors, especially in college as they gain more confidence and independence (Walsh, 2019).

Furthermore, participants in camps also obtain physiological benefits. As the program incorporates games and sports, students get to perform physical activities that are helpful for their health and physique. In addition, it cultivates the students' ability to juggle multiple tasks in proper and efficient time and task designation. This valuable training of time management leads them to develop self-discipline (Winaukee, 2024).

Despite the good objectives of the NLC, it was observed that only a small portion of the total population of students joined, comprising only 10% of the students who needed intervention. This alarming condition was relayed to the Senate of the Philippines (EDCOM, 2024).

For that reason, the researchers noticed the need to have a better grasp of the grounds that may have resulted in learners' lack of partaking in the camp. This study focused on determining the key factors for the students' willingness to participate in the National Learning Camp.

This also explored if their demographic profile such as sex, grade level, average grade, and economic status were significant factors for their decision. The result of this study could be a basis for the improvement of the

schools' implementation plan and recruitment for the National Learning Camp.

METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The researchers utilized quantitative research design for this study to analyze the numerical collected through survey questionnaire. Through the said research design, the research would be able to look for patterns to prove or to disprove the formulated hypothesis (Bhandari, 2023).

The significant difference between the students' level of willingness to participate in the National Learning Camp according to their demographic profile was analyzed and compared, then possible factors were determined. Thus, the researchers particularly used comparative research design to compare the gathered data based on specific variables. According to Miri (2019), this design seeks to define and clarify how certain circumstances or results are similar or different

B. Respondents

There were 1,391 junior high school students in Lumil Integrated National High School. To get the sample size, the researchers used checkmarket.com, assigning 95% as the confidence level and 5% as the margin of error. In result, there were 304 projected respondents from Grades 7-10 from this school.

This study used both stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Stratified sampling was the first one done wherein the population was split into homogeneous subpopulations called strata based on specific features like race, gender identity, locality, etc. (Thomas, 2023).

Each population under investigation should be a member of exactly one stratum. Next, after assigning a number to each participant in the sample, the sample was randomly selected.

Using the simple random sampling technique, every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected via a fair selection process (Simkus, 2023). The researchers used these as this study aimed to determine the factors affecting the willingness of students to join the NLC in general. In this manner, the answers of various students were all analyzed and measured.

Table 1 presents the projected number of respondents based on their demographic profile.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

Grade Level	Male	Female	Total
7	38	38	76
8	38	38	76
9	38	38	76
10	38	38	76
Total	152	152	304

The number of students from Grades 7-10 was 1391. Through stratified sampling, it had been narrowed down to 304. Having the same number of respondents based on their sex resulted to unbiased results as the researchers aimed to study the factors affecting students' participation in the National Learning Camp according to their demographic profile.

C. Research Instrument

The researchers developed a self-made questionnaire to measure the students' level of willingness to participate in NLC. This was validated by a high school head teacher in terms of content as well as by a grammarian for technical editing.

The questionnaire was composed of five (5) parts. The respondent's sex, grade level, average grade and

economic status were listed in the first section of their demographic profile. The second part was intended to gauge the students' willingness to participate in the National Learning Camp. The third part was designated for students who identified themselves as very willing or willing to join. The fourth was allotted to those who replied not willing or not very willing. The final section was for those who were not sure if they wanted to participate or not. The purpose of this questionnaire was to assess and identify the factors affecting students' willingness to participate in the NLC. The respondents checked the factors for their answers.

Table 2 displays the Likert Scale used in the survey questionnaire with corresponding description in determining the willingness of the students on participating in the NLC.

Table 2. Rating and Description for Students' Willingness on Participating in the National Learning Camp

Rating	Description
5	Very Willing
4	Willing
3	Undecided
2	Not Willing
1	Not Very Willing

D. Research Procedure

The research study was an attempt to identify the factors that affected the students' willingness to participate in the National Learning Camp at Lumil Integrated National High School. This also considered the differences in terms of sex, grade level, final average, and economic status of the students.

To initiate the process of conducting the research study, the researchers sent a formal letter addressed to the school principal requesting permission to conduct the study in this school.

Afterwards, the researchers requested a list of students from Grades 7 to 10 from the grade level coordinators. Letters asking for consent were sent to the respondents, together with letters of assent to their parents or

guardians before allowing them to participate in the research.

The sample selected from the grade level received printed survey questionnaires. According to the total population and an appropriate sampling method, the respondents were identified. The probability distribution was properly computed to represent students at all grade levels and demographics. There were questions in the surveys that measured various factors of influence on their willingness to participate in the National Learning Camp. The researchers explained the reasons for the survey and how to answer the questions to the students. The survey was conducted from November to December 2024.

Then, the data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentage for determining the factors that affected the willingness of the students to participate in the camp. The appropriate statistical tests were utilized in comparing the mean differences within groups as considered by the demographic factors.

Table 3 shows the scale and description that was used by the researchers to determine the students' level of willingness to participate in the National Learning Camp based on survey mean score.

Table 3. Scale and Descriptions for Students' Level of Willingness on Participating in the National Learning Camp based on Survey Mean Scores

Rating	Description
4.21 – 5.00	Very Willing
3.41 – 4.20	Willing
2.61 – 3.40	Undecided
1.81 – 2.60	Not Willing
1.00 – 1.80	Not Very Willing

E. Statistical Data Analysis

This study used the following statistical treatments to analyze and interpret the gathered data.

- **Frequency.** This was used to know the number of respondents in terms of their demographic profile and to determine the number of respondents who answered each survey indication.
- **Percentage.** It was used to measure the percentage of the respondents' demographic profile, their willingness level to join in the NLC, and the factors that affect it.

- **Mean.** This was used to determine the students' willingness level to participate in NLC.
- **T-test.** This was used to identify the differences in students' willingness to participate in the NLC based on their sex.
- **Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).** It was used to determine the differences in the students' willingness to engage in the NLC according to their grade level, general average, and economic status.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 4 shows the frequency and percentage of the actual respondents in terms of sex.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents by Sex

Sex	f	%
Male	152	50.00
Female	152	50.00
Total	304	100.00

There were 152 male and 152 female respondents, representing 50.00% each. This indicates a perfectly balanced sample in terms of sex.

Table 5 shows the frequency and percentage of the actual respondents in terms of grade level.

Table 5. Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents by Grade Level

Grade Level	f	%
Grade 7	76	25.00
Grade 8	76	25.00
Grade 9	76	25.00
Grade 10	76	25.00
Total	304	100.00

There were equal numbers of respondents (76 each) across four grade levels. Each group constitutes 25.00% of the total respondents. This shows that the respondents were also perfectly balanced in terms of their grade level.

Table 6 shows the frequency and percentage of the actual respondents in terms of general average.

Table 6. Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents by General Average

Average Grade	f	%
90 – 100	115	37.82
85 – 89	119	39.10
80 – 84	59	19.40
75 – 79	8	2.63
74 – below	3	1.00
Total	304	100.00

This implies that most of the respondents had an average of 85-89 from the previous school year. It is closely followed by those with 90-100.

Table 7 presents the frequency and percentage of the actual respondents based on their economic status.

Table 7. Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents by Economic Status

Economic Status	f	%
Higher Class	128	42.10
Middle Class	152	50.00
Lower Class	24	7.89
Total	304	100.00

There were 128 from the higher class, 152 from the middle class, and 24 from the lower class. This indicates that most of the respondents were from the middle classification in terms of economic status.

Table 8 presents the frequency and percentage of the respondents according to their level of willingness in joining in the NLC.

Table 8. Frequency and Percentage of the Respondents in terms of their Willingness to Participate in the NLC

Level	f	%
Very Willing	34	11.18
Willing	69	22.70
Undecided	156	51.32
Not Willing	40	13.16
Not Very Willing	5	1.64
Total	304	100.00

Most respondents (51.32%) were undecided about participating in the NLC. A significant portion (33.88%) expressed willingness, with 11.18% being very willing and 22.70% being willing. A smaller portion (14.80%) indicated unwillingness, with 13.16% not being willing and 1.64% being not very willing. This signifies that

most of the respondents were undecided in joining the NLC program.

Table 9 shows the frequency and percentage of students based on the factors as to why they were very willing or willing to join in the NLC.

Table 9. Factors Affecting Students (Very Willing or Willing) to Join in the NLC

Factors	f	%
Grades Improvement	78	75.72
Spending Vacation	37	35.92

Finding New Friends	30	29.12
Encouraged by Friends	26	25.24
Encouraged by Parents	14	13.59
Enjoy Socializing	25	24.27
Gaining Knowledge	30	29.12
Less Time on social media	29	28.15

The most influential factor was grades improvement, cited by 78 students (75.72%). Spending vacation productively motivated 37 students (35.92%), while finding new friends and gaining knowledge each influenced 30 students (29.12%). Friend encouragement was a factor for 26 students (25.24%), and 29 students (28.15%) viewed the NLC as an opportunity to reduce social media usage. Parental encouragement was the least influential factor, reported by only 14 students

(13.59%). This implies that the biggest factor for the students that were very willing or willing to join the National Learning Camp was grade improvement. On the other hand, encouragement from parents was the least factor.

Table 10 shows the frequency and percentage of students based on the factors as to why they were not very willing or not willing to join the NLC.

Table 10. Factors Affecting Students (Not Very Willing or Not Willing) to Join in the NLC

Factors	f	%
No Improvements	7	15.55
Lack of Resources	4	8.88
No Friends Joined	8	17.77
Prefer to Stay at Home	23	51.11
Prefer to go Somewhere Else	14	31.11
Have to Take Care of Siblings	7	15.55
Has a Job	1	2.22
Not Allowed by Parents	8	17.77

The most common reason was a preference to stay at home, reported by 23 students (51.11%). Other significant factors included wanting to go somewhere else (31.11%, 14 students), and no friends participating (17.77%, 8 students). Additional reasons included the perception of no improvement (15.55%, 7 students), the need to take care of siblings due to parental work commitments (15.55%, 7 students), and parental disapproval (17.77%, 8 students). Lack of resources was

cited by 4 students (8.88%), while only 1 student (2.22%) reported being unable to join due to having a job. This tells that most of the respondents prefer to stay at home during their vacation instead of participating in the NLC. This and all the aforementioned factors hinder the students to engage in the program. Table 11 shows the frequency and percentage of students based on the factors as to why they were undecided to join in the NLC.

Table 11. Factors Affecting Students (Undecided) to Join in the NLC

Factors	f	%
Does Not Know Much About NLC	155	99.35
Others	1	0.64

This clearly indicates that students' indecision to participate in the NLC is mostly due to a lack of knowledge. This category got a frequency of 155 and a percentage of 99.35%. This suggests that more

education about the National Learning Camp must be taken into consideration. Table 12 shows the students' level of willingness to participate in NLC based on the survey's mean score.

Table 12. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Interpretation for the Students' Level of Willingness to Participate in NLC

Mean	SD	Interpretation
3.28	0.89	Willing

This table shows that the overall survey mean score of 3.28 indicates that the students were willing to participate in NLC when they were considered as a whole group.

Table 13 presents the comparison of the students' willingness on participating in the NLC in terms of sex.

Table 13. Result of the t-Test of Independent Means for the Students' Willingness to Participate in the National Learning Camp in terms of Sex

Sex	Mean	SD	p-value ($\alpha=0.05$)	Decision
Male	3.25	0.97	0.52	Fail to reject
Female	3.32	0.80		

The t-Test result shows the p-value of 0.52 is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is failed to reject. This suggests that there is no significant difference in the willingness to participate in the National Leading Camp between male and female students. This finding indicates that both male and female students have similar levels of willingness to

participate in the camp. Consequently, the recruitment strategy does not need to differentiate based on sex. Efforts to encourage participation may instead focus on other factors that might have a greater effect on students' decisions. Table 14 presents the comparison for the students' willingness to join in the NLC according to their grade level.

Table 14. Result of ANOVA for Students' Willingness on Participating in the National Learning Camp in terms of Grade Level

Grade Level	Mean	SD	p-value ($\alpha=0.05$)	Decision
Grade 7	3.47	0.89	0.13	Fail to reject
Grade 8	3.29	1.04		
Grade 9	3.14	0.81		
Grade 10	3.22	0.78		

This shows that the computed p-value of 0.13 surpasses the alpha (0.05); Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the willingness to participate in the National Leading Camp among students from different grade levels. Aligned with the findings of the research of Maguate (2024), which highlighted improvements in various aspects among grade 7 students after participating in the National Learning Camp (NLC), the results of this study reveal that students across different grade levels exhibit similar willingness to participate.

This suggests that the benefits identified among grade 7 students may also be achievable for students in other levels. Moreover, since the participation willingness across grade levels is the same, recruitment strategies do not need to be adjusted based on that aspect. This means that efforts to promote the camp can target students from all grade levels in the same way, without needing to create separate campaigns for each other respectively. Table 15 shows a comparison between the students' willingness to participate in the NLC based on their general average.

Table 15. Result of the for the Students' Willingness on Participating in the National Learning Camp in terms of General Average

Average Grade	Mean	SD	p-value ($\alpha=0.05$)	Decision
90 – 100	3.23	0.87	0.86	Fail to reject
85 – 89	3.32	0.88		
80 – 84	3.29	0.93		
75 – 79	3.28	1.19		
74 - below	3.67	0.58		

The ANOVA test result indicates that the p-value of 0.86 is more than the alpha of 0.05; hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This suggests that there is no significant difference in students' willingness to participate in the National Leading Camp based on their general average.

These findings suggest that students' previous academic performance, as reflected in their general average, does not affect their willingness to participate in the camp.

Regardless of their grades, students show similar levels of interest in the program. Hence, academic performance from previous grade levels does not have to be a key consideration in assessing students' potential interest in the camp.

Table 16 shows the result of the ANOVA as reflected by the survey for students' willingness on engaging in the NLC in terms of economic status.

Table 16. Result of the ANOVA for the Students' Willingness on Participating in the National Learning Camp in terms of Economic Status

Class	Mean	SD	p-value ($\alpha=0.05$)	Decision
Higher	3.11	0.80	0.01	Reject
Middle	3.43	0.90		
Lower	3.29	1.16		

This presents that the computed p-value of 0.01 is less than the 0.05 alpha; then, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a statistically significant difference in students' willingness to participate in the National Leading Camp based on economic status.

This significant variation suggests that economic status affects students' likelihood of participating in the camp. Specifically, middle-class students demonstrate the highest willingness level, while students from higher-income backgrounds show the least interest.

These findings align with Dickerson's (2024) study, which highlighted the role of socioeconomic status and the opportunity gap in summer camp participation.

On the other hand, Jones (2018) found that students from higher-income households were more likely to attend summer camps, with 38 percent of students from wealthier families participating in day camps, compared to 13 percent of students from lower-middle-income families and 7 percent of students from lower-income households.

Moreover, the study of Richmond (2022) found that families with lower income levels face challenges in sending their children to summer camps, even though they desire similar benefits from camp experiences as wealthier families. Financial constraints were a significant factor preventing lower-income families from participating.

Thus, while economic status clearly influences camp participation, the findings of this study reveal a more

complex relationship, particularly the unexpected lower interest among students from higher-income families. This suggests the need for further research to explore the specific factors affecting participation across different income groups and to develop targeted strategies that promote equal access to camp opportunities for all students.

CONCLUSION

This is the summary of the key findings from the study, highlighting their significance and contributions to the research topic.

The study revealed no significant differences in students' willingness to participate in the camp based on sex, grade level, or general average, suggesting that these factors do not affect their decision to join. However, economic status emerged as a significant variable, with students' willingness differing according to their socioeconomic classification.

Moreover, most respondents expressed uncertainty about participating in the NLC. Among those willing to join, the desire to improve grades and gain knowledge were primary reasons, highlighting the importance placed on academic benefits. Additional motivators included the productive use of holidays and reducing time spent on social media, whereas social opportunities, such as making new friends, were less influential.

For students unwilling to join, key barriers included a preference to remain at home, prior commitments, and a lack of support from peers or parents. Among undecided

students, limited awareness of the NLC was the predominant factor contributing to their hesitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The researchers suggest that the Department of Education can further improve their awareness campaign for National Learning Camp (NLC). This can be done through rigorous onsite (school) meetings with the parents and through social media information dissemination. Since there were many undecided students to join NLC, this is the avenue for clarifications. This approach would help encourage participation from students across all socioeconomic backgrounds, particularly targeting both lower and higher-income groups, as middle-class students are already generally inclined to participate.
2. The researchers recommend that school principals consider offering incentives for students who participate in the NLC. This may include meal allowance and school supplies.
3. The researchers suggest that teachers may create more creative ways of promoting NLC to their students such as promotional videos or brochures explaining the benefits of productive summer vacation.
4. The researchers encourage the parents to actively guide their children in decision-making to join summer camps or the NLC. They may explain that joining such activities will benefit their children academically, physically, socially, mentally, and emotionally.
5. The researchers advise students to have an initiative to know what NLC or summer camp is and its potential benefits for them. They may also encourage one another, especially their peers, to join; thus, they will not be shy and alone.
6. The researchers encourage the future researchers to enhance the research instrument by including additional factors in the "undecided" category. It is also suggested to use a larger sample size and explore other variables that could affect students' willingness to participate in the National Learning Camp, such as their social skills, interests, types of talents, intelligence, and learning styles, mental health, school type, and time management.

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