

LIVED EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS' DRIVE FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract:

Achieving academic success is an essential part of the learning process for students in all grade levels. Educators, parents, school administrators, and researchers must comprehend students' lived experiences and the elements that motivate them to succeed academically. This study used qualitative methods and the Husserlian phenomenological framework to explore students' motivation for academic success in their daily experiences. In order to understand what motivates students to excel in their academics, this study examined the individual narratives of several students. The study showed that the majority of participants from different backgrounds described how their family's financial situation, work under pressure and diverse learning strategies influenced their drive for academic success. For educational practices and policies, it is important to comprehend students' lived experiences in connection to their pursuit of academic success. Teachers could establish more inclusive and supportive learning environments that enhance student motivation, engagement, and achievement by acknowledging and addressing the varied needs and viewpoints of their students. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the significance of resilience, as students frequently share stories of how they have overcome challenges through determination and effort. Achieving good grades leads to rewarding jobs, allowing people to follow their interests and make significant impacts. With the ultimate goal of allowing educators to more effectively assist students' academic performance, this study contributes to the existing study by offering a comprehensive knowledge of the factors influencing students' drive for success in the educational setting.

Keywords: Academic Success, Drive, Motivational Plan, Social Exclusion, Work Under Pressure, Diverse Learning Strategies.

Introduction:

According to Ryun (2021), it is motivation that gets things started, what sustains the person is habit. Motivation is crucial for starting a new life. Seeing failures as a source of frustration can lead to negative thoughts and a desire to give up. However, a glimpse of light can dispel these negative thoughts, replacing them with positive ones, providing motivation to try again, improve, and gain courage to start over. A student's quest for academic success defines their experience. In

this journey, students from diverse backgrounds and aspirations take part. In pursuit of academic success, students rely on the desire to learn, the energy to expend on challenges, and the guidance from someone through their challenges. A person with resilience and grit will overcome challenges. A student's ability to bounce back from mistakes, learn from them, and persevere through difficulties becomes a cornerstone of academic success.

Academic success rarely happens by chance. Individuals who have a successful learning experience tend to share strategies and habits. Pomodoro Technique, for example, helps students structure their schedules efficiently through time management skills (Cirillo, 2013). Recognizing that the concept-mapping approach might support students' meaningful learning, Bilik et al. (2020). The collaborative nature of many breakthrough scientific discoveries is also evidence of the importance of seeking mentorship, advice, and support from teachers, peers, and parents. There are a number of factors that affect academic performance. According to Flavell (1979, as cited in Sapani, 2010), people can improve their performance by thinking back on the learning strategies that have worked best for them in terms of comprehending and remembering information. It's important to evaluate and modify study methods based on what has worked in the past. This kind of metacognitive awareness allows people to take charge of their learning process and ask for help. Other strategies that have been recommended in the literature include setting up a comfortable study space, reducing distractions, and asking teachers, mentors, or peers for assistance (Wubbels et al., 2018). Academic success depends on a supportive environment. Effective time management. An effective plan and prioritization of tasks is essential. Use planning and calendar tools to schedule time for studying, assignments, leisure activities, and adequate sleep (Blunt & Kenning, 2016).

The purpose of this study is to help the researchers identify any gaps that need to be addressed in this study. The following are the gaps of the study: To start with, the researchers want to know the lived experiences of students' drive to strive for academic success. Secondly, identify and analyze which motivational practices help them to be motivated academically. Lastly, the factors that affect the students' motivation. These gaps aimed to explore the lived experience of student's drive and analyze the factors that influence the academic performance of the students and formulate an effective strategy for students. Researchers will be able to strengthen their research and information-gathering skills as students. The knowledge or data gathered from this study will aid researchers in their understanding of the lived experiences of students' drive.

Atheoretical Stance:

No theory was used in this study to avoid biases. This study may never be bias-free, but they can strive for mindful inquiry. To safeguard against biased interpretation, the researcher deliberately avoided adopting a specific theory in this section. And to validate the themes identified as organically rooted in the phenomenon, adhering to a core principle of qualitative research. The study set aside preconceived expectations about specific outcomes, allowing for a neutral exploration of the phenomenon's unfolding processes. The unexamined belief was something as disregarded due to lived experiences as the future results of the study. Furthermore, the planned literature review has been placed on hold because the research aims to gather first-hand data without relying on existing studies. Collaizi's descriptive phenomenology was used in qualitative research to create reliable philosophical and scientific information.

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Philosophical Stance

This study's philosophical perspective shapes the decisions made in answering research questions, ensuring a grounded exploration of its inherent philosophical underpinnings. The lived experiences of students' drive for academic success are grounded in the following positions: ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodological assumption.

The ontological principle of research involves the beliefs about reality and existence that shape a researcher's investigation. It deals with questions about what kinds of entities exist, how they can be classified, and how these entities relate to one another. In research, ontology affects the design, methods, and interpretation of results by determining what is accepted as valid knowledge. From an ontological perspective, our research posits that student drive for academic success arises from various external and internal factors influencing students' lived experiences. Students' journeys and experiences form the foundation for understanding what drives them to pursue academic success. Students' first-hand

accounts provided the foundation for this research to make significant progress in understanding and potentially resolving complex issues for student motivation, offering promising avenues for future interventions. During the interview, the researchers anticipated that the informants might respond in either English or (Mother-tongue-based language).

In line with epistemological principles, the researcher believes that a back-and-forth conversation with participants and their viewpoints, based on principles of knowledge development, can lead to a richer understanding. By adjusting the interview approach to address their emotional state, we strive to create a safe and collaborative research experience. In employing the term "objective separateness," the researchers likely emphasize the importance of a neutral and unbiased stance toward the data. This approach guarantees that their analysis reflects only the inherent meaning within the data, preventing undue influence from external factors. Aware that their perspectives could affect their results, the researchers used strict methods to guarantee fairness and objectivity in interpreting the participants' responses. Throughout the research, the researchers will set aside their initial ideas or predictions about the findings to prevent bias from influencing how they interpret the data.

The researcher guides this research to focus on ethical principles (Axiology), where the researcher actively identifies and addresses potential dilemmas like participant privacy, informed consent, and responsible data use. This inquiry delves into the philosophical perspectives surrounding decision-making, exploring how different schools of thought define and approach questions of value and morality. This research design is to give more weight to the opinions and experiences of the students themselves because their direct stories are essential for understanding why they want to succeed in school. The researchers prioritize respecting the informants' backgrounds and experiences to avoid introducing preconceived biases into the study or influencing their interpretation of the informants' feedback. Confidentiality safeguards the respondents' privacy and minimizes the risk of bias in data interpretation, allowing the researchers to analyze the research findings objectively and draw accurate conclusions.

The methodological principle of research is a structured approach that helps researchers plan, carry out, and evaluate their studies. This principle emphasizes the importance of selecting appropriate research methods that align with the study's objectives and questions. By following this principle, data is collected and analyzed carefully, thus improving their accuracy and reliability. A high standard of ethical conduct is fundamental to this principle. It ensures that research is conducted responsibly and transparently. By following these methodological principles, researchers can generate reliable findings that significantly add to knowledge in their fields. The underlying methodological principle of this research highlights the need for conversation between researchers and informants to elucidate the meanings of the social actors. With the informants' experiences in mind, the goal is to strive for an impartial, reliable assessment of their truthful responses. The techniques used are Collaizi's technique, data analysis and in-depth interviews. It is also transcribed or translated from our native tongue to English as a second language.

Action carries knowledge, experience, and emotion ingrained in it. The action principle in research emphasizes the importance of actively involving participants in the research process. This method aims to solve real-world issues through teamwork and a repetitive approach. Participants are not just subjects; they act as co-researchers by sharing their insights and experiences. The process usually includes planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, allowing ongoing improvement and adjustment. This principle empowers participants and seeks practical results that can lead to significant social change. The researchers can only uncover meaning and communicate it through discussion. From this angle, phenomenology offers a technique that helps us to derive real meaning and comprehension.

Research Method:

The researchers utilized Phenomenological design. Merriam and Creswell (2013) define qualitative research as an inquiry procedure wherein the researcher directly and inductively studies the experiences of participants to ascertain the meaning that individuals or groups attribute to a phenomenon. Researchers selected Mandaue City College located at Don Andres Soriano Ave., Centro, Mandaue City, Philippines, to uncover hidden insights about students' drive and success that may not be present in more general studies. The informants of the study are the BEED General Content officially enrolled in the education program at Mandaue City College. A sample of 6 BEED – General Content 3rd- year students randomly

picked by the researchers to explore the lived experiences of students' drive to academic success. Purposive random sampling was chosen to be used in selecting informants. The researchers employed semi-structured interviews guided by specific questions designed to elicit insightful responses pertaining to the study's core themes. To facilitate thorough data analysis and ensure accurate capture of the participants' unique experiences, the researchers sought their permission to record the interviews. This study used Colaizzi Phenomenological Data Analysis. The Colaizzi Phenomenological Data Analysis is a qualitative method renowned for its strength and rigor, according to Wirihana et al. (2018). Colaizzi's (1978) method of data analysis offers academics a thorough and dependable way to find themes in intricate interactions. Trust is key when getting information from people (informants). For qualitative research to be trustworthy, there are four important things to consider: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Following ethical standards improves the reliability of research results and builds trust between researchers and participants, which ultimately helps advance knowledge while protecting human privacy.

Findings and Discussion:

This study discussed the lived experiences of students' drive for academic success studying at Mandaue City College is an in-depth interview of the lived experiences of students' drive to succeed academically. With the informants' cooperation, the study collects information and unbiased data on the lived experiences of students' drive for academic success. All students possess an individual set of talents and skills that enable them to overcome obstacles and achieve the goals they have set. This is also true for the students who participated in our study about the lived experiences of student's drive for academic success. To maintain confidentiality and protect their privacy, we have decided to refer to them as "The Six Time Strategists," and each of them has a unique nickname that corresponds with their personality towards motivation. They are Eisenhower Matrix (Informant 1), Parkinson's Law (Informant 2), Time Blocking Method (Informant 3), Pareto Analysis (Informant 4), GTD METHOD (Informant 5), and RPM Method (Informant 6) who have courageously discussed their personal experiences with academic success. This study explores the origins of these nicknames and reveals the distinctive abilities and perspectives that have inspired these individuals to work further in their academic pursuits.

This chapter provides and analyzes the findings of the study with regard to the lived experiences of student's drive for academic success. With the use of the analysis technique called thematic analysis, the researchers were also able to identify the overall themes as well as the sub-themes that emerged from the information acquired.

From the thirty-two (32) significant statements given by the informants, six (6) formulated meanings were created. The following are Financial Problem (FM1), Peer Problem (FM2), Cramming (FM3), Individual Learning (FM4), and Group Learning (FM5). From these six (6) formulated meanings, six (6) clustered themes are created. The following are Lack of Financial Security (CT1), Conformity (CT2), Time Pressure (CT3), Self-paced (CT4), Collaboration (CT5), and Shared Learning (CT6).

Theme 1

Social Exclusion

Social exclusion means denying individuals and groups access to the rights, services, and resources available to others. If someone is excluded from or unable to participate in processes that promote development, progress, and enhanced well-being, this is known as social exclusion. The primary goal of the researchers is to understand students' actual experiences with academic success. Furthermore, the researchers noted how the informants expressed emotion in their answers. Through focus group discussions, the researchers observed and recorded the informants' facial expressions and hand gestures during the interview.

Sub-theme 1.1

Lack of Financial Security

"Parents pay nagkuan like if mangayo ko nila kay naa koy gastuhon kay advance na lang jud kay para like Makahatag sila kay prepared na gani ang money." (I'm dependent on my parents. If I have expenses in school I ask my parents in advance so that the money is prepared.) - Eisenhower Matrix

“Personal problem, usahay manggud kay wala nay kwarta akong mama og papa niya usahay ka makaana ko nga dili nalang ko muari sa eskwelahan kay lagi wala lagi ikaplete.” (In personal, financial support. There are times that I think of not attending the class tomorrow because my parents do not have enough money to give me for allowance.) - Time Blocking Method

“Yes, specific one is financial problem and then I overcome it through magtigum everytime nga I have allowance mag lain ko mga 10% nga ako.a ni isave para in case of emergency or in case nga naa koy kanang need nako gamiton para sa akong klase ako ra siyang kwuon.” (Yes, one was a financial problem and then I overcame it by saving money so every time I have an allowance I set aside 10% of my allowance to save in case of an emergency or if I have something important it will be used in the times I need it.) - Pareto Analysis

The given statements show that lack of security affects the student’s academic success. All informants highlight their lived experiences of being financially struggling as evidenced by the struggle to manage daily expenses and emergencies, leading to decreased focus on studies and increased reliance on parents for financial support. According to Norazlan, N., et al. (2020), financial challenges significantly influence students' academic achievements. Serious financial difficulties can result in a cascade of issues, including health problems and decreased academic performance. As Dang and Bulus (2015) argue, education is a costly social service, and inadequate financial backing can hinder students from advancing academically, ultimately leading to subpar academic outcomes.

Sub-Theme 1.2

Conformity

Second katung peer na problem—classmates na problem so kana dili man jud nato na maiwasan na problem kay diversity of students. Lahi lahi man jud ta, lahi lahi tag culture, ginikanan, ug lahi lahi tag perspective.” (Second, In the peers (classmates) we can't avoid it because we're diverse students— differences in culture, parents, backgrounds and perspectives.) - Eisenhower Matrix

“Also Friends, kay if you're a busy person tas imo mga friends kay dili, so maka feel kag neglected, tas maka feel kag you're alone. And when the incomes of friends they must understand your busyness.” (I can also tell that my academic challenges are friends. Because if you're a busy person and your friends are not, I feel neglected and alone. And when it comes to friends, it's important to understand your busyness.) - RPM Method

Based on the statements above the peer problem only leads to distractions, poor study habits, and a lack of motivation, all of which can detract from a student's ability to focus on their studies. Both informants shared their own experiences that they feel that having friends only makes them uncomfortable due to different perspectives and also there are some possibilities of destruction in their academic performance. Peer pressure, though not always obvious, can greatly affect how people act. It can lead to both good and bad outcomes. On the good side, it's a common thing among college students of the same age, often leading to intense competition in learning. On the bad side, it can cause people to stop learning, feel inferior, follow others without thinking, lose confidence in themselves, and show other negative behaviors. When a person stays in a peer group, the different kinds of people will put a lot of pressure on each person (Chen, Z., & Deng, Y. (2022, January). Additionally, peer pressure among students in school can impact their academic success in different subjects. Also, how parents raise their children and how much students feel connected to their social groups can influence their academic performance. Instead, how students interact with their peers is what matters (Moldes, V. M., et al., 2019).

Theme 2

Work Under Pressure

With homework, projects, and exams to manage, students also struggle with socializing. Occasionally, college students put off finishing their coursework and getting ready for final exams. When students deliberately put off assignments they need to complete and lack the motivation to do so within the allocated time, it is considered that they are procrastinating. The informants use cramming as a study technique. Despite its negative reputation, there are some situations where cramming can be an effective study technique. Working under pressure, such as during cramming sessions, can be

particularly effective because it forces the brain to focus intensely on the material, potentially leading to better retention and understanding. This is because the stress and urgency of the situation can trigger the brain's survival mode, enhancing its ability to process and retain information. Students need productive time management and coping strategies to face challenges. Effective stress management is crucial for achieving academic success and fostering personal growth.

Sub-Theme 2.1

Time Pressure

“Due date practice, mas the more ko mamotivate if hapit na sa due dates. Every day nako gibuhang ang due date practice.” (Due date practice, I get more motivated if it is near the due dates. I used due date practice every day.) - Parkinson's Law

“Mas mo gana man gud akong utok kaysa mag study ko ahead of time, pero ug pugson nako ako kaugalingon na magtuon ahead of time makaya man kay ara sad mo gawas akong mga ideas. It's like cramming.” (My brain functions so well than studying ahead of time, but if I force myself to study ahead of time I can do it because my ideas come out. It's like cramming.) - RPM Method

Based on the statements provided, the informants mentioned that cramming makes them more motivated to get things done like doing their activities and studying for exams. Also, cramming can offer substantial benefits for students, such as freeing up time for other activities, alleviating the monotony of studying by concentrating in a short period, helping students catch up when behind, stimulating the study of difficult material with large blocks of concentrated time, allowing rebellion from the enforced discipline and control of teachers, and still achieving good grades. These benefits are highlighted in studies of (R. Sommer in 1968 and W. G. Sommer in 1990).

Theme 3

Diverse Learning Strategies

Each student has a difference when it comes to learning. Diverse learning strategies include different methods to meet the individual needs of students. Diverse learning strategies is a wide range of techniques designed to meet the needs of many learning styles—visual, aural, kinesthetic, and more. This method creates a welcoming atmosphere where all students feel appreciated and recognized, resulting in better academic performance. The informants stated what they preferred more as they answered the interview. This helps the researchers to understand and examine what is the most effective learning strategy for the informants.

Sub-Theme 3.1

Self-paced

“Honestly I prefer individual kay mas makaexpress kos akong self kay kana ganing idk para sa akong kay burden man jud nako ang group kay maka feel ka nga naay nagsalig gani.”(SS5) (Honestly, I prefer individual learning because I can express myself more. For me, it's a burden in the group learning because someone will “magsalig”and for me I don't like groupings.) - Eisenhower Matrix

“Individual kay hapsay. Kung by group ba kay inyong utok kay magsagol.”(SS14) (I prefer individual study because it is peaceful. Because of the group, I cannot concentrate properly since we do have a lot of opinions.) - Time Blocking Method

“Individual, if in group study of course adto kos akong barkada so more on madistract man jud mo imbes na mag tabi mo ani nga topic chismis jud inyong mabuhang so individual.” (Individual, if I'm in a group studying with my friends, we will be distracted instead of talking about the topic. We are going to gossip instead of studying.) - RPM Method

In the statements above, it's stated that self-paced learning is an effective technique for those students who prefer individual learning to group learning. With self-paced learning, students may concentrate better at their speed and work through tasks at a pace suitable for their level of proficiency. Students who have particular learning requirements and preferences or who might find it difficult to learn using traditional methods would especially benefit from it. Self-paced learning has been shown to improve memory function and knowledge retention. This higher achievement rate contributed

to students taking on more roles, like self-pacing, than in a traditional classroom. Cho and Heron (2015) go more in-depth with this idea by demonstrating that students who are more engaged in the process will also enhance their self-efficacy.

Sub-Theme 3.2

Collaboration

“Okay ra ko sa grupo, ok ra ko sa individual. Kay sa grupo manggud nas daghan ba makabrainstorm ka nya maka ask ka nila naglibog jud ko, individual like in between ra jud ko ana.” (I'm okay with the group, and I'm also okay with the individual. Because of the group, many people can brainstorm, and you can ask them questions. But I'm confused; I'm just like in between individual and group.) - Parkinson's Law

“Both individual and group study so sometimes mag study ko nga ako ra para maka focus ko kung unsay dapat nako ma studyhan, sometimes need ko ug within the group kanang makakuha sad ko ug ideas and learning gikan sa akong ka group.” (I prefer both individual and group study because there is time that I study by myself so that I can focus on what I need to study and sometimes I also do group study because I am able to get some learning from other people.) - RPM Method

The statements above highlight that students prefer to study within both individual and group learning. This method is thought to make learning easier, as stated by Slavin, R. E. (2014).

Sub-Theme 3.3

Shared Learning

“I prefer group study kay mas makasabot ko if nay person na mag discuss and maka gain sad ko sa ilang ideas and also mas ma remember nako ang topic if more explanations and examples.”

(I prefer group study because I can understand the topic better if there is someone to discuss it with; I can gain some ideas; and I can also remember the topic better if there are more explanations and examples.) - RPM Method

As mentioned above, shared learning is beneficial for students who prefer group learning or shared learning because it can help them develop higher-order thinking, oral communication, leadership, self-management, and other skills. It can also improve retention, self-esteem, and responsibility in students. In shared learning exercises, students are motivated to express their thoughts and pay attention to others. In addition to enhancing their speech and communication abilities, this helps students become more capable leaders by teaching them how to control group dynamics and reach choices as a group. It has been demonstrated that cooperative and collaborative learning improves students' academic performance. A study by Loes, Culver, and Trolan (2018) found that collaborative learning enhanced students' openness to diversity and critical thinking skills knowledge sharing and learning performance motivation.

Conclusion:

The motivation of students' academic success is to emphasize its importance of being able to fully understand each student's unique perspectives and lived experiences to help them achieve academic success. This study explores the lived experiences of students' drive for academic success using the researchers-made tool, focusing on the themes: of social exclusion, work under pressure and diverse learning strategies. Through exploring into these themes, the researchers obtained important things about the obstacles and challenges faced by students, as well as their motivational practices that contribute to academic success. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the significance of resilience, as students frequently share stories of how they have overcome challenges through determination and effort. Achieving good grades leads to rewarding jobs, allowing people to follow their interests and make significant impacts. The results of this study highlight the significance of organized time management and effective strategies toward successful academic performance. Teachers may create more effective techniques to encourage and support students by acknowledging and addressing their lived experiences, which will ultimately result in better academic performance. The significance of a comprehensive strategy for student motivation that takes responsibility for the social, emotional, and cognitive aspects of learning is highlighted by this study. This implication of the study, improves the understanding of the challenging factors influencing students' drive for academic success. More studies in this field may contribute to the development of more effective plans for fostering academic achievement and motivation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the implications highlighted in the conclusion, it seems that the students' drive has both positive and negative impacts on their academic performance. To improve the implementation of standardized tools for the students the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Implement diversity and inclusion programs to celebrate and value the unique backgrounds and perspectives of all students
2. Implement a feedback system that allows students to receive constructive feedback on their work, helping them improve their skills and performance.
3. Establish peer mentoring programs where older or more experienced students can guide and support younger or less confident students. This can help reduce feelings of social exclusion and provide additional academic support.
4. Develop a school environment that prioritizes mental health, encourages teamwork, and fosters a feeling of belonging. Students can manage academic pressures collectively by doing this.
5. Use methods for organized cooperative learning to help students collaborate in a variety of groupings. This enhances confidence and self-esteem while also fostering the growth of social, communicative, and intellectual skills.

The lived experiences of students' approach to academic success demonstrated the informants' continuous commitment, flexibility, and fortitude in the face of tremendous difficulties. Its outstanding contributions and the encouraging comments it has received highlight the potential of the students. This study can help students with academic challenges by identifying the implications discussed in this chapter and putting the suggested techniques into practice. It can also pave the way for improved educational practices in the future.

Limitations and Further Research:

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