



Impediments of the Working Students: A Phenomenological Study

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Abstract:

Time management played a vital role in improving student's academic performance and achievements. Each and every student should have time management ability which includes setting goals & priorities, using time management mechanisms, and being organized in using time. This study explored the challenges of working students in a local City College. It is used a qualitative approach applying Husserlian Descriptive Phenomenology in data gathering utilizing Individual Interviews. The instruments used were checked, reviewed, and validated by the three (3) experts to ensure the validity and quality of the questions formulated. The research involved six working students who worked off-campus for 4-6 hours a day over 1-2 years. They were purposively chosen and interviewed to know the challenges they encountered. After the thematic analysis and coding, the themes that were created were checked by the counter checker. The findings revealed that while working and studying posed challenges, it was financially beneficial. Students worked due to financial constraints, unstable parental employment, and a desire for independence, holding jobs like service crews, house helpers, and call center agents. Challenges included time management and sleep deprivation, but students saw this experience as motivating and skill-enhancing. The study recommended improved time management for working students and greater school flexibility, leading to the creation of a time management booklet for working students in terms of time management. These challenges include recognizing emotional and physical limitations, experiencing a lack of in-person connection and mobilization, and struggling to balance work and study commitments. Financial constraints can pose a significant challenge for these students. Additionally, having a strong support system from family, friends, and significant others, as well as maintaining high hopes and determination, are important coping mechanisms for working students.

Keywords: Impediments, Working Students, Phenomenology, Time Management

Introduction

In the digital era, college education is crucial for a competitive global workforce. According to Chickering (1999, referenced by Casinillo 2015), However, many less fortunate students face challenges in academic, social, and emotional adjustment due to economic constraints (Velasco, 2014). Working while studying has become a common phenomenon among students (Jewell, 2014; Tumin & Faizuddin, 2017), allowing them to balance their academic pursuits with their personal goals. These students are known as fighters and persistent (Tus et al., 2022).

Additionally, according to Camavale (2015), individuals are most likely to work simultaneously being enrolled in school or preferred to work while studying to sustain or support their educational needs. Working hard to achieve their academic dreams while also supporting their families. Working students also build character, learn transferable skills, and improve time management, which were essential for the labor market (Jewell, 2014). Thus, being a working student can help them gain independence for they will be responsible for their schedule, money, and duties.

This study explored the challenges faced by working students pursuing a college degree. It aimed to determine if working while studying can be a beneficial way to achieve stability and long-term goals in life Abenoja et al. (2019). The study's findings can help students manage their time effectively and inspire them to continue their studies despite various challenges.

Hence, this study was conducted to ascertain that working while studying can be a great way to achieve stability and long-term goals in life. From the study's result, the enhancement plan was expected to help students manage or balance their time towards the duties and responsibilities of being a student and an employee. Therefore, this study may serve as a motivation and inspiration for all working students to pursue and continue their studies despite the different challenges they have encountered.

Atheoretical Stance

The study was not grounded in any theory to prevent biases. Though challenging, separating oneself from knowing bias was not impossible. To minimize inductive data contamination and to support the emergence of themes from the phenomena, which is the essence of qualitative research investigations, the researcher purposefully did not identify a theory in this section. This was done to suspend prior assumptions. Considering the study's results cannot be predicted by nature, it also suspends all potential assumptions that would be thought to be true. Due to practical considerations, the untested hypothesis was just as likely to be discounted as the study's eventual findings. Additionally, the evaluation of relevant literature and research has been put on hold because the goal was to obtain a first-hand result without the assistance of earlier dissertations and articles.

The study's descriptive Husserlian phenomenology was used to establish reliable philosophical and scientific knowledge. It was qualitative by nature. It was the custom of an inquest, which tries to investigate the difficulties faced by college students who are also employed. Since it is





inextricably linked to the real-life struggles and experiences of working college students, it was said to be qualitative. Descriptive phenomenology will be used in the study. As a result, themes will be developed near the conclusion of the study process (Goddard & Melville, 2004).

Philosophical Stance

The philosophical perspective informed the essential decisions that are made when responding to research questions that seek to analyze the philosophical underpinnings of this study to avoid preconceived notions. The difficulties that working students face are based on the following axiological, ontological, epistemological, and epistemological perspectives.

In accordance with the researcher's ontology, difficulties that working students face can create new realities. Additionally, letting children talk about their experiences helps organize and build reality. The researcher anticipates that the informants will speak both their mother tongue and English during the interview. As a result, since this is the real world and how the working students acclimate themselves to these experiences, reality may be built systematically in the research.

As with epistemology, the researcher is of the opinion that they can interact with the informants, hear their perspectives, and adapt to their level of understanding in order to calm their feelings of anger and dread throughout the interview. In order to achieve "objective separateness," the researchers believe it is necessary to immerse oneself in the sources of the data. The researchers will also put aside any personal prejudices they may have regarding the informants' comments. The researchers maintained their epistemological premise that they are so knowledgeable about the subject.

In terms of axiology, it asks, "What is the role of values in research?" Frequently, the research has a value-laden purpose that focuses on what is fundamental to nature or what makes a thing (Heron, 1997), which essentially means that people are being studied for just who and what they are. Additionally, the researchers respect the informant's personal background so as not to color their responses, and most importantly, the researchers adhere to the ethical standards that have been established.

The fundamental premise of this study's methodology is that the meanings of social actors can only be ascertained through dialogue between researchers and informants. The goal is to arrive at a truthful evaluation of the informants' responses that is congruent with their personal experiences. Interviews and data analysis with Collaizi's method are used as methods. In addition, English is translated or transcribed from Cebuano-Bisaya

Understanding, experience, and emotion are ingrained in action; meaning can only be uncovered and communicated to the researchers through conversation. From this perspective, phenomenology offers a technique that enables us to arrive at genuine insight and meaning.

Research Method:

The Husserlian Descriptive Phenomenology was applied in this study's qualitative methodology. Descriptive phenomenology also regularly infuses the process of acquiring and interpreting data with ideas, involvements, morals, values, and identities (Lee, Landy, Wahoush, et al. 2014). With Husserlian Descriptive Phenomenology, the researcher, therefore, has a complete grasp of how this design might have an impact and could deliver reliable results later in the study.

The locale of this study was in Mandaue City College (MCC) located at Don Andres Soriano Avenue in Mandaue City Barangay Centro. The informants of the study were the working students of Mandaue City College officially enrolled in the School of Education during the School Year 2022-2023. The informants were purposefully chosen by the researchers from those who were available, and those who were not available were not coerced into taking part in the study. The researcher also considered the following inclusion criteria: must be (1) a working student who is officially enrolled in 2nd semester; (2) must be working between 4-6 hours, (3) must have in 1 to 2 years in work; (3) must be currently working on-site, and are willing to participate in the study.

The instrument used in the study was a semi-structured interview guide wherein the guide questions were pretested on a population that is not included in the study and were evaluated, reviewed, and validated by the three experts. The study started with a selection of a research title which should be approved by the Research Instructor, to obtain permission to conduct a research interview at Mandaue City College, the researcher wrote a transmittal letter that would be given to the dean of the school of education, and after collecting the data, the researchers transcribed the recorded audio then translated the responses to English and carefully analyzed the responses for interpretation.

Findings and Discussion:

The statement below shows how the formulated meanings are created. They are taken from the significant statements of the informants. The significant statements with closer meanings were clustered and given formulated meanings afterward.

Theme 1: Financial Problem as a Propeller of the Working Students: The Reason Behind:

A theme described in the present set of interviews highlights the reasons why some students opted into working while they were in the midst of their studies. Working while studying is progressively common among Mandaue City College students due to financial problems. The fact that working students often saw part-time jobs as necessary to thrive in the modern higher education environment has several good implications. The money that working students make from part-time jobs is typically used to pay for necessities, particularly for their education.

"It's because of financial problem which is I need to support myself, my needs specifically the needs while I'm studying" - Aphrodite (Line no.1)

The results of a study by Williams (2014), which Nico Accion et al. (2019) quoted, indicate that students labor mostly for financial reasons, to fulfill an immediate or basic need, and to support their fellow students' long-term goals. This was supported by the study conducted by Furr and Elling in 2002, which discovered that students who work part-time do so due to financial issues.





Sub-theme 1: Jobless parents

One of the reasons why students engage in part-time jobs is because their parents do not have permanent and stable jobs. They do not have enough budget to support their needs, especially in their school expenses. Their parents do not have another source of income to sustain their necessities, especially the valuable price of education. This was illustrated by Informants 4 and 5 who said:

"Wala silay trabaho" (They do not have work.) – Athena (Line no. 71)

The research study led by C. It was confirmed by Balacuit. In the year 2022, it was discovered that university students were working while they were still in school to support their impoverished families and pay for their education to pursue their aspirations of living a better life, make up for their families' lost financial support due to unemployment, death, and health issues, and show others that overcoming poverty is possible through education. According to Zhen Zhou and Wei Chen (2021), the vast majority of students understand the value of part-time employment and think that it cannot only help them exercise and develop their social skills but also provide for their families.

Sub-theme 2: Independence

One reason why many students engaged in part-time jobs is that they want to become independent. They want to have their own income for them to sustain their needs, especially their educational needs. They want to fend for themselves, become responsible for their own schedule, money, and duties and to be less reliant on those people around them. Paid employment can provide working students with the money they need to stay enrolled.

"Para maka kwarta ug para ma sustain akong mga needs sa school." (To earn money and to sustain my needs, especially my school needs) – Artemis (Line no. 19)

The findings show that the main motivation for students to work is financial gain. These employed students have acquired the financial independence, spending money, and self-help skills necessary to help with household expenses. To meet their fundamental necessities, kids take on responsibility for their spending, and they stop often requesting financial assistance from their parents (Caldwell, 2022). Many students, according to Yanbarisova (2015), work while they are in school. To supplement their income or fill their leisure time, students chose to work while they were in school.

Due to the fact that it gives them an income and may enable them to fulfill their ambitions for consumption, working while attending school is a common practice among students (Baert et al., 2016). Due to their own income, working students are not dependent on their parents for financial support. Additionally, individuals are most likely to work while enrolled in school or prefer to work while studying in order to sustain or support their educational needs, according to Camavale (2015).

Sub-theme 3: Poor Family

Students living in poor families motivate them to venture as working student because they believe that being a working student helps them to achieve their goals in life. Students from low-income families are more likely to do part-time jobs or hold on-campus and major-related jobs. Some informants described the situation in the following terms:

"Kay ganahan ko mahimong independent kay maluoy kos akong mama ug papa kay dili man me kwartahan" (Because I feel pity for my parents because they are poor, that's why I wanted to support myself and become an independent person) – Hestia (Line no. 36)

This was supported by the study of Ivy Panda (2023), which found that because students who work part-time are paid for their services, they can use the money they make to help lessen some of the potential financial burdens they may face. This is due to the fact that the cost of school has recently skyrocketed, making students from low-income households unable to afford it while simultaneously being denied a loan by the banking system. As a result, a lot of students need to take on part-time jobs to pay for their tuition. Additionally, children who work part-time earn pocket money that they can use independently without bothering their parents. Additionally, because of poverty and the need to meet their necessities as students, college students decide to work while they study (Dias, 2021).

Theme 2: Nature of Job

A. Service Crew,

"Service Crew ko sa Fastfood chain." (Fast-food service crew) - Aphrodite (Line no. 6)

B. Call Center Agent, and

"Call Center Agent" – Hera (Line no. 91 and 108)

C. House Helper

"Katabang ko sa balay sa mga Madre." (House Helper) - Demeter (Line no. 57)

However, no study conducted that focuses on the nature of jobs that working students are engaged to. As we conducted the interview, most of the informants' responses are that they undergo part-time jobs because their parents' source of income is not enough or cannot sustain them in sending to college. Most of our informants are having part-time jobs as service crew and by greatly communicating with the customer just "Good morning ma'am/sir. Can I take your order?" helps them boost their confidence. For the helper informants saying "Good morning ma'am/sir, what do you want for breakfast?" can help them gain their motivation and hard work. Some informants working as call center agents, taking calls every day and dealing





with different kinds of people have also helped them boost their communication and social skills. This study aims to let the students know that being in a part-time job will never be a hindrance to achieving their goals, setting up their plans, and academic achievements.

Sub-theme 2.1: Intended hours for part-time job / 6 hours

Part-time work schedules can vary depending on the industry or company working students in. The hours intended for a part-time job depends on the time availability or class schedule of the working students. Most of our informants are working part-time 6 hours per day.

"6 hours" – Artemis (Line nos. 8,25,42,76,93 and 110)

According to Derik Gallimore (2023), eight hours a day is the average and permitted amount of time to labor in the Philippines. The employer must pay additional job pay rates for the hours provided if employees are compelled to work beyond those hours. Although the law permits businesses to hire part-time employees, who often work fewer than eight hours per day, the maximum number of hours per week is 40. Accion (2019) and Furr and Elling (2000)'s studies, which found that students who worked between 30 and 39 hours a week and those who worked more than 40 hours a week believed that their employment hurt their academic progress, support this as well. Others found that students who worked fewer hours per week had somewhat higher GPAs than those who worked more than 15 hours. Each student who had a job had a total of 36 hours per week, or 6 hours per day multiplied by 6 days.

Sub-theme 2.2: Years for engaging part-time

Most of our informants are working part time jobs for one to two years.

"1 year" - Aphrodite (Line no.9)

"6 hours ug usahay mo 8 hours ug week-ends" (6 hours but sometimes it becomes hours during weekends.) - Artemis (Line no. 25)

"Almost 1 year" – Hera (Line no. 94)

"Almost 2 years nako sa work." (I've been working for almost 2 years) – Demeter (Line no. 60)

"2 years" – Athena (Line no. 77)

However, no study was conducted that focused on the length of the year engaged in a part-time job that is quite relevant in the significant relation to their academic performance. Based on the interview conducted ranging from first-year to fourth-year Education informants, most of them are working part-time jobs for one to two years. This study aims to explore how student creates ways to maximize their time in working and studying. This study can help working students improve their academic performance. This study aims to reveal that after one to two years of being a working student or for more than a year students can still balance their schedule from work to school despite how many challenges they encounter which are essential in enhancing academic performance.

Sub-theme 2.3: Financial Support: A Benefit

A student may decide to work to gain access to more revenue that will help pay for education, books, and other costs associated with being a student. Working while in school can help students who want to make money for their families or themselves. It allows them to be more independent financially and helps lessen the financial burden of their loved ones.

"First and foremost, I was able to support my studies financially. Second, naa pud siya'y mga benefits which is ma enhance akong skills ug magamit sad sa umaabot." (First and foremost, the salary that I get from my work can support my study financially. Second, it benefits me in the sense that I am able to enhance my skills and my work experience can be used as my reference in the future.)- Aphrodite (Line no. 12)

It is supported by a study by Joseph Dave Pregoner et al. (2020), which discovered that internal motivation to integrate theory and practice with financial help, self-improvement, and other aspects are some of the things that encourage people to work while they are in school. The advantage of making money is maybe the most evident. Galleto (2022), who claimed that one of the main reasons students labor is to earn money, whether for themselves or their families, also supports it. They are able to become more financially independent and contribute to easing the financial load on their loved ones.

Sub-theme 2.4: Good Time Management as a Benefit

Working while studying helps working students develop their time management skills. It helps them spend their time wisely getting the tasks done well and on time. It helps them develop a stronger work ethic, puts duties into perspective, and shows them how to accomplish less time. They understand the value of time, planning, and recognizing when to put an end to procrastination. Given the fact that most employers want their employees to follow a strict schedule and appear at work promptly, taking on part-time employment aids informants in establishing and developing time management skills.

"Nakahibaw ko kung unsa jud ang kalisod, nakatabang siya both sa akong kaugalingon og sa akong family og na develop akong time management skill." (I realize how hard life is. It helps me especially in my studies and also in my family. It also developed my time management skills.)- Athena (Line no. 80)

This was affirmed in the study of Galleto (2022) who stated that juggling work and studies can help improve time management skills. It's a great way to learn how to prioritize tasks much more efficiently and find time for both responsibilities each day. In addition to the fact that it teaches them how to effectively manage their time and budget, working students may gain from this (College Life, 2022). This was further supported by a study by Gupta (1990), which Vencess Cyril (2019) quoted that time management is crucial for a student's busy schedule. It ensures that students be well-





prepared, organized, and focused in order to manage their daily lives and complete their academic projects on time. As a result, one will be better prepared to face the outer world when they venture outdoors. Unquestionably a substantial benefit of a part-time job.

Sub-theme 3.5: Acquire Necessary Skills: A Benefit

Part-time work allows working students to acquire skills and self-confidence which can help them. The individuals we interviewed believed that working while they were in school would motivate them to advance personally and learn the skills required for better employment. It provides individuals the chance to develop new talents by taking on new duties or working in a field they haven't explored before. The professional expertise they gain while simultaneously obtaining their degree is one of the advantages of working while in school.

"Aside sa salary, makaingon ko nga insightful sad kaayu ang work kay like karon BSEd ko, sa Call Center kay more on English Only Policy. Mao ti ma develop akong communication og speaking skills." (Aside from my salary, my work helped me develop my speaking skills, which are advantage to my course.) – Zeus (Line no. 114)

This was supported by a study done by Faizuddin (2020), who claimed that working students face a number of difficulties, including time restraints and dedication to their studies. Despite the difficulties, the informants saw working while they were in school as a motivator to advance personally and pick up the skills required for better jobs. This was supported by the study done by Darolia (2014), which found that working while enrolled in classes can improve students' outcomes on the job market through the development of soft skills (like time management, communication skills, and problem-solving) and the accumulation of work experience. An employee must be able to express themselves clearly to coworkers. By working part-time while still in school, one have the opportunity to improve communication skills, which is a much-needed perk.

Theme 3: Time Management and Sleep Deprivation as Challenges

Stress might result from trying to juggle work and school. The inevitability of time conflicts and the weariness of little sleep go hand in hand. Due to the demand for extra time, working students put off critical schoolwork. Some students who are employed find it difficult to balance employment and school, according to Balderrama et al. (2021). Students need to have time management skills and priority setting in order to work and attend school. The informants experience difficulties when balancing work and school, just like other working students do. The results showed that working while studying can have some drawbacks. Time management is one of the difficulties and obstacles that a working student faces. Since time management is not typically taught in schools, developing an organized study routine offers a chance to learn how to work more effectively. This was illustrated by the 4 informants who said:

"Sa tinuod lang no, usahay kay maka absent ko, usahay naa koy ma missed na klase kay pang Gabie man akong trabaho, usahay kapoy kaayu especially one subject nalang ang klase sa Gabie, maka absent jud ko if dina madala sa lawas." (To be honest, sometimes, I can't attend or I missed my one subject during night class because of tiredness brought by work.) – Zeus (Line no. 107)

This was supported by Logsdon (2020), who claimed that balancing employment and education can make time management difficult. Whether working students going back to school to advance their career or are working to pay for their college education, juggling professional and academic obligations is not an easy undertaking. This is especially true if one have other obligations that compete for their time. Lack of time is not the issue; rather, it is how people use their time that counts.

Stress and sleep deprivation are most common among students who go to take part-time jobs while attending classes. They do not get enough sleep. Some informants described the situation in the following terms:

"Kulang sa tulog" (Lack of Sleep) – Aphrodite (Line no. 65)

According to the study by Jogaratnam and Buchanan (2004), which was mentioned by Abenoja et al. (2019), students who opt to work a part-time job while balancing a full-time academic load are more likely to experience stress and sleep deprivation. The study by Lumugdan (2022), which found that working college students don't get enough sleep, supports this as well. Nights are long, and mornings are dreaded. Only on weekends can working students receive a break, and even then they might have an early shift. Students who are employed still have schoolwork to complete when they come home; but, if it does not take as much time as anticipated, they may be able to go out with friends later that evening. The choice then is between having fun and seeing how long they can survive their sleepless day and catch up on some much-needed sleep. This is further supported by research by Tus et al. (2022), which found that many of the participants had trouble getting enough sleep as a result of their nighttime jobs.

Sub-theme 3.1: Time is of the essence

Six out of 7 participants reported that in the world of working students "time is of the essence". Time is important, and when time is involved in their everyday routine, they have to make things done on time, accomplish things by all means, and not to wait for tomorrow as tomorrow may bring another task to be completed.

"Dapat well-planned, for example nay activities sa school assignment, buhatun jud na dayon." (It should be well-planned. if there are working activities in school, it should be done during vacant time) - Aphrodite (Line no. 5)

This is supported by the study done by Dula (2020), which found that time is a valuable resource that everyone has in equal amounts but doesn't use to its full potential for several reasons. Only "time" itself is an asset that cannot be altered, bought, or saved. Success in life depends on controlling this resource, to which everyone has access, and paying enough attention to planning. Everyone has to learn how to manage their time well, but college students, especially so, because their schedules are frequently jam-packed with events and classes. Setting goals and priorities, monitoring time usage, and controlling stress can all help you be more productive and take on less work while still achieving academic success and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. This also has been supported by a study done in 2014 by Triventi, who claimed that the key to success for a working student is realizing the value of time management to continue with their studies even when their schedules are hectic at work. It is important to manage one's time effectively and to use it wisely.





Sub-theme 3.2: Time Management: Personified Coping Strategy or Method

Students who work while attending school can learn how to manage their duties and plan their time to accommodate all of their interests and commitments. While it might seem that juggling work and school could harm their grades, balancing different goals can help students develop smart time management methods that will help them thrive in both their academic and professional endeavors. Most of the informants use time management as their coping strategy in balancing between study and work. Many informants described the situation in the following terms:

"Self-discipline, dapat jud nana a siya kay diha man masulod ang time management which is needed kaayu sa mga working student sama nako." (Self-discipline should be present among working students because that's the time you realize the importance of time management in handling both studying and working) – Aphrodite (Line no.17)

This is supported by the research done by Ikhwan (2017), as mentioned by Faizuddin (2020), which found that managing one's time properly is crucial for balancing work and school while in college. The capacity to balance events in one's life is known as time management. It significantly affects students' life, particularly those who work (Astudillo et al. 2019). By incorporating time management strategies into everyday plans, everyone can become more adept at it. As a result, the stress would have decreased, enabling people to better manage their lives, particularly their school and job schedules.

This is also reinforced by Chansaengsee's (2020) study, which found that efficient time management is crucial for completing all duties on schedule. People who are motivated to develop these skills are likely to be successful. Effective time management includes establishing priorities, assigning tasks, making decisions, and delegating. It makes use of to-do lists, activity schedules, time management techniques, and time management techniques include time management and future planning. Every employer wants to have workers that efficiently use their time to generate the most output. Without including goal-setting procedures within its framework, the subject of time management cannot be successfully addressed. Setting objectives, acting daily to achieve them, prioritizing which tasks must be completed first or are of the utmost importance, reevaluating your priorities when productivity decreases, and reconsidering your goals are all components of time management.

This was supported by Childress (2014), who was quoted by Payusan et al (2022) and claimed that students who worked while attending school had a positive outlook as well as excellent time management abilities, necessary job skills, and the ability to reflect on their own actions. Working students were able to prioritize, build self-confidence, and be optimistic, according to Magno & Magno (2022). Additionally, it was found that students profited from having jobs and being students at the same time (Burgos et al., 2020).

Conclusion:

This study concluded that one of the salient reasons that were extracted based on the analysis of the transcript was due to financial problems and due to the fact that their parents do not have stable and permanent jobs. Moreover most of the informants wanted to become independent and find self-worth in being a working student. Working students work as service crews, house helpers, and call center agents. They wanted to prove that being financially incapacitated is not a hindrance to fulfilling their dreams. Being a working student does not only enable them to suffice the financial needs of their studies and help their parents, but also they find a deeper meaning into it. They also developed necessary skills that are necessary in the courses they are taking that will help them in the real working world after their college life.

Limitations and Further Research:

The informants of the study were the working students of Mandaue City College officially enrolled in the School of Education during the School Year 2022-2023. The focus of this study was to explore the impediments of the working students. The researchers chose identified working students from 1st year to 4th year of Mandaue City College.

The researchers used purposive sampling in selecting the informants. In purposive sampling, the researchers deliberately chose a sample that is most likely to provide information that will answer the research questions. This type of sampling technique is often used in qualitative research, as it allows the researchers to select informants who have first-hand experiences of the phenomenon being studied.

The informants were purposefully chosen by the researchers from those who were available, and those who was not available were not coerced into taking part in the study. The following inclusion and exclusion criteria were taken into account by the researcher:

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This is to certify that the study entitled “Impediments of the Working Students : A Phenomenological Study” , Cecille B. Walog, Michelle E. Dignos, Angeline C. Heyrana, Hyacinth Blaize R. Augusto, Bachelor of Elementary Education students of Mandaue City College has been checked by Melojie R. Lauron as Grammarian.

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