Dumagat Pupils' Individual Characteristics on Scholastic Achievements

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A B S T R A C T

The study determined the factors affecting scholastic achievement of indigenous pupils particularly the Dumagats in Doña Remedios Trinidad during the last quarter of School Year 2016-2017. Using the mixed methods of research with 295 Dumagat pupils as respondents of the study, findings showed that Dumagat pupil respondents agreed that they had locus of control in terms of internal, powerful, and chance factors. The self-esteem of Dumagat pupils in terms of performance self-esteem, social self-esteem and appearance self-esteem was described as "frequent". The pupils' engagement in school in terms of affective, behavioral and cognitive engagements was described as "frequent". The pupil respondents' levels of self-efficacy in terms of academic, social and emotional self-efficacies were described as "agree". The scholastic achievement of Dumagat pupil respondents was described as "satisfactory". Locus of control was found no significant effect on pupil respondents' scholastic achievement. Pupils' self-esteem, school engagement and self-efficacy have significant effect on their scholastic achievement. Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusion was drawn: The Dumagat pupils' self-esteem, school engagement, and self-efficacy have significant effect on their scholastic achievement. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Keywords: Locus of Control, Self Esteem, Dumagat Pupils, Scholastic Achievement

Introduction

Every child has the capacity to succeed in school and in life. Yet far too many children, especially those from poor and minority families, are placed at risk by school practices that are based on a sorting paradigm in which some students receive high expectations instruction while the rest are relegated to lower quality education and lower quality futures. The sorting perspective must be replaced by a "talent development" model that asserts that all children are capable of succeeding in a rich and demanding curriculum with appropriate assistance and support.

Bulacan is a place where ethnic groups like the Dumagat Tribe, still exist. These indigenous groups reside in the towns of Norzagaray, San Jose del Monte and Doña Remedios Trinidad (DRT).

Although the government gives the Dumagat tribe an access in education at DRT, the children have very limited opportunities for basic education. Most of them cannot go to school but instead work in order to contribute to the family income and ration. This is yet another indication of how poverty affects access to basic needs. While knowledge is one of the very important things that a person should have, poverty obstructs their way to gain knowledge.

This study adds to the academic debate concerning models of school effects and it also adds to practical discussions of how to improve schools and the scholastic achievement of the pupils who belong to minority groups. Specifically, the study will have important implications for both theoretical and practical models for improving schools for poor and minority students.

According to Wing (2007), attentiveness to the psychosocial adjustment and school engagement of academically at-risk students are the keys to academic success.

Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) found that school-based initiatives that actively shield disadvantaged children from the risks and adversities within their homes, schools, and communities are more likely to foster successful academic outcomes than are several other school-based efforts.

According to Fan (2012), individual characteristics such as locus of control, self-esteem, student engagement and self-efficacy contributed to students' academic achievement.

Determinants of student performance have attracted the attention of academic researchers from many areas. They have tried to determine which variables impact student performance in positive and negative directions. Research studies about this subject have been conducted by various academicians in various countries and areas (Cheesman et al., 2006).

Barrow et al. (2009) asserted that determining the factors that affect the student performance is important especially those who belong to the minority groups because, primarily institutions and lecturers have to find out ways to increase student performance, and to motivate students for better performance. In order to do this, they need to determine which factors play significant role in student performance.

Based on the literature cited above, the researcher was motivated to undertake this study which aimed to investigate factors associated with scholastic achievement of Dumagat pupils.

Statement of the Problem

The study determined the factors affecting scholastic achievement of indigenous pupils particularly the Dumagats in Doṅa Remedios Trinidad during the fourth quarter of School Year 2016-2017.

Specifically, this sought answers to the following problems.

1. How may the pupil respondents' locus of control be described in terms of the following factors:

1.1 internal;

1.2 powerful others; and

1.3 chance?

2. How may the pupil respondents' self-esteem be described in terms of:

2.1 performance self-esteem;

  2.2 social self-esteem; and

  2.3 appearance self-esteem?

3. How may the pupils' school engagement be described in terms of

3.1 affective;

3.2 behavioral; and

3.3 cognitive?

4. How may the pupil respondents' self-efficacy be described in terms of

4.1 academic self-efficacy;

4.2 social self-efficacy; and

4.3 emotional self-efficacy?

5. How may the Dumagat pupils' scholastic achievement be described in terms of their average grade in the fourth grading period?

6. Do the Dumagat pupils' locus of control, self-esteem, school engagement, and self-efficacy significantly affect their scholastic achievement?

7. How do the Dumagat pupils perceive the importance of locus of control, self-esteem, school engagement, and self-efficacy on their scholastic achievement?

Hypothesis

The hypothesis that follows was tested in the study:

The Dumagat pupils' locus of control, self-esteem, school engagement, and self-efficacy have no significant effect on their scholastic achievement.

Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this study was to find out what influence the locus of control, self-esteem, student engagement and self-efficacy has on the scholastic achievement of Dumagat pupils. In order to reach this goal, the study's theoretical frame was designed including the issues of the locus of control self-esteem, student engagement and self-efficacy under the framework of scholastic achievement.

There are a number of theories that have been postulated to explain the factors that affect students' scholastic achievement but for the purposes of this study, only three were discussed and these are 'The Triarchic Theory of Intellectual Abilities', 'Theory of Mental Self-Government' and the 'Self-determination Theory'.

According to the theory of Intellectual Abilities (Sternberg, 1997), three kinds of intellectual abilities exist, namely analytical, creative and practical abilities. Measures of abilities tend to focus mainly on analytical abilities, whereas all three types of abilities need to be regarded as equally important. Research done by Sternberg showed that: The more one teaches and assesses students based on a broader set of abilities, the more racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse achievers will be.

Furthermore, research by Sternberg emphasizes that students' learning and thinking styles (which are usually ignored), together with their ability levels, play an important role in student performance. The theory of Mental Self-Government refers to an inventory of different thinking styles that gives an indication of people's preference of thinking patterns. Where the Triarchic Theory focuses on the ability itself, the theory of Mental Self-Government refers to different thinking styles which constitutes preference in the use of abilities.

According to Deci and Ryan (2008) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is used to examine the psychological processes that occur within a social setting and then relate/predict how self-determined people interact within this social setting.

Vansteenkiste and Ryan (2013) argued that when self-determined, people in their various experiences exhibit a clear sense of freedom that allows them to do what is interesting, personally important, and most vitalizing. The basic assumptions of SDT are that (a) human beings are active (rather than passive) in their development, (b) human beings are naturally inclined toward growth and development, and (c) human beings have a set of basic psychological needs that are universal for all people. Two important parts of SDT that are useful in understanding development are motivation and support for the basic needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence.

Furthermore they indicated that SDT assumes that a propensity to be curious about a person's environment, interest in learning and developing an individual's knowledge is inherent and innate in human nature. All too often, however, educators introduce external controls into learning climates that can undermine the sense of relatedness between teacher and students, which in turn stifles the natural, volitional processes involved in high-quality learning. SDT differentiates between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, identifying two main intrinsic needs that involve self-determination: (a) need for competence, and (b) need for autonomy.

In the light of the above theories, this study adopted the theory of mental self-Government as the most appropriate one in enhancing students' scholastic achievement. The reason is that, the learning and thinking styles of students can either be reinforced leading to excellent scholastic achievement or hindered leading to poor scholastic achievement. This is heavily contingent upon the availability and provision of a number of essential facilities such as good study materials, accommodation, conducive learning environment, good water and sanitation facilities among others. These, being available and in provision, students' potential abilities of being analytical, creative and practical as described in triarchic theory also become reinforced.

Meece et al., (2006) opined that the need for competence is similar to self-efficacy, which is defined as internal feelings that an individual has regarding his/her competence to complete a task. The need for autonomy is similar to locus of control in that students with an internal locus of control are more likely to accept responsibility for their success and failure. Students with high self-efficacy and an internal locus of control have been shown to have higher levels of academic achievement than students with low self-efficacy and an external locus of control.

Locus of control is defined as one's thoughts of his/her belief that his/her own power or forces out of his/her control are influential in any positive or negative situation occurring during his/her life (Sardogan, 2006). The belief of locus of control is related to what reinforcements have happened throughout the individuals' lives, namely the results, prizes, their success or failures, refer to. These attributions refer not only to chance, fate, and powerful people out of one's control, but also to the results of his/her own attitudes. While one's control on his/her own life dependent on chance, fate and powerful people is explained as external control, maintaining the individual control over one's life on his/her own is described as the internal control. When environmental conditions are not sufficient to explain individuals' success or failures, locus of control can facilitate in making these situations clear. For instance, individuals may sometimes perceive good and bad events in different ways. These different ways are based on external and internal forces (Taylor, 2006).

The individuals, who have the internal locus of control, think that they have a big role in affecting the events which influence their lives. Furthermore, they assess themselves as possessing the power for the attitude they want to display by having the positive ego concept, and they believe that they can direct their lives whatever way they desire (Gulveren, 2008). The individuals with external locus of control relate the events affecting their lives to perceptions such as chance, fate, and fortune which are out of their control. Additionally, they believe that the events affecting their lives cannot be predicted and controlled. Individuals with internal locus of control are careful, alert, dominant, focused on success, self-confident, and ingenious. On the other hand, the individuals with external locus of control are less careful, affected by the group members, easily influenced by external forces, less self-confident, and they display unsteady performances. Individuals lay out two control attitudes as internal and external by considering that the reinforcements they have from their previous experiences result from their own attitudes or external forces (Cetin, 2008).

Self-efficacy and locus of control have been linked to academic achievement (Tella et al., 2008).

According to him, self-efficacy describes a belief in one's capability to produce at their level of attainment (i.e., to perform in a certain manner to reach a certain goal). Self-efficacy differs from efficacy in that one is the power to produce an effect (efficacy) and the other is the belief in the power to produce that effect. In general, self-efficacy beliefs, behavior changes, and outcomes are highly correlated, with self-efficacy an excellent predictor of behavior patterns. Ultimately, self-efficacy is not a matter of how capable one is, but how capable one believes oneself to be. Self-efficacy research has been conducted in many disciplines, such as medicine, athletics, media studies, business, social and political changes, psychology, psychiatry, and education. Most importantly, psychological research has focused on studies of clinical problems, such as phobias, depression, social skills, assertiveness, smoking behavior, and moral development.

Curtis-Fields (2010) reported that students who self-reported higher grades were more likely to have higher levels of self-efficacy and more academic responsibility.

Motiagh et al., (2011) asserted that self-efficacy is one of the numerous psychosocial variables that can be coupled with academic performance. This academic performance in connection to self-efficacy has been studied at all levels from kindergarten through college. Because self-efficacy is within the affective domain, it can be used to understand many emotional attributes displayed by children in schools. Attention, cognitive, and psychosocial dysfunction can be explained to some degree by studying self-efficacy in children. Children's beliefs about their efficacy contribute to variance in developmental outcomes within the multifaceted interplay of socioeconomic, familial, educational, and peer influences.

Same author added that self-efficacy beliefs are developed and reinforced by mastery, modeling, and encouragement during socialization, and reduction of stress reactions. These contributors to student achievement can happen with reliability in an educational setting. Students gain proficiency when they experience success through repetitious events. For instance, students who experience greater frequencies of complimentary outcomes are less likely to give in to failure. Students with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to try new experiences and less likely to be unenthusiastic by failure. Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to attribute academic failure to lack of effort than to external sources.

According to Mruk (2013) self-efficacy and self-esteem are inextricably linked. With varying definitions of self-esteem, clarity over meaning must be considered, especially when considering the prevalence of this concept, which Miller et al., (2010) described as coexisting 'in everyday language and academic psychology'. Together, with questions concerning just how important self-esteem is, the three major schools of thought on self-esteem were evaluated. These comprised self-esteem firstly, as competence; secondly, as worthiness; and thirdly, as a two-fold approach of competence and worthiness.

To contextualize the origins of self-esteem, it was over a century ago that William James initially defined the term, in the first American textbook on psychology in 1890 (Can 2011). He implied that comparing what one is to how he/she aspires to be developed a sense of self-worth, which in turn denotes self-esteem. This came to be described as understanding self-esteem as competence, whereby the relationship between success and aspirations signifies self-esteem. Development of this explanation has been achieved, recognizing that while seeking success and avoiding failure, there could be additional issues of cost to the individual in terms of taking risks, or using aggression to achieve this success. At this point, it is believed that defining self-esteem solely in terms of competence does not take into account broader factors such as the individual's overall opinion of themselves and the kind of personal values they hold such as their beliefs and principles.

Persons with high self-esteem accept themselves as they are with their strengths and weaknesses. 'The more individuals come to terms with their limitations, the more they are willing to listen to other people's criticism and learn from it, even to the extent of risking change. High self-esteem also manifests itself in a feeling of confidence about personal value. Such individuals are unrestricted towards love and acceptance from others. However, if they experience rejection they are not undermined because their self- esteem helps them to cope with that rejection and subsequent disappointment. If individuals are not accepted, they can stand back and objectively balance the desirability of obtaining the approval of others against the importance of doing what they want to do.' Similarly, persons who are assertive will be aware and convinced that not only do other individuals have needs, rights and something to contribute but that they themselves have, too.

On the other hand, despite its apparent utility, student engagement remains a nebulous construct with researchers using ambiguous or inconsistent definitions resulting to equally nebulous measures. Several recent reviews have focused on defining this meta-construct and setting the stage for future scholarship (Appleton et al., 2008). These scholars suggest that student engagement in school is multi-dimensional and appears to overlap with several similar constructs (e.g., school connectedness, school bonding). The proposed definition includes both indicators (i.e., affective, behavioral, and cognitive) and facilitators (i.e., both personal and contextual factors that influence engagement) of engagement. Each component is vital to a complete understanding of student engagement. They have suggested that indicators are proposed to "... convey a student's degree or level of connection with learning"; while facilitators are "... factors that influence the strength of the connection"

The current study was focused primarily on the indicators of student engagement, and therefore, each indicator was discussed. Affective engagement refers to a student's feelings toward his school, learning, teachers, and peers (e.g., the student has positive feelings toward his teachers). The terms psychological and emotional engagement were also used in the current literature to describe this construct (Reschly et al., 2007). Behavioral engagement includes observable student actions or participation while at school and is investigated through a student's positive conduct, effort, and participation (e.g., participation in extracurricular activities, attendance, and work habits). Historically, research has been focused primarily on this aspect of student engagement. Cognitive engagement includes a student's perceptions and beliefs associated to school and learning. It refers to the cognitive processing a student brings to academic tasks as well as the amount and type of strategies a student utilizes (Reschly et al., 2007).

Students who experience failing grades may exhibit emotional, behavioral, or cognitive problems. Students "who fail in school may feel stupid, displaying emotional and/or mental health problems and hidden learning disorders. Low intelligence is often considered a root cause of their inability to meet the standards of a school" (Human Diseases and Conditions, 2010). Understanding how locus of control, self-esteem, student engagement and self-efficacy contribute to scholastic achievements can help stakeholders develop strategies and programs that can help students stay motivated to achieve goals and objectives.

The following figure shows the paradigm of the study. It can be seen from the figure that the independent variables such as locus of control, self-esteem, student engagement and self-efficacy are indicated in separate circles pointing out to the dependent variable which is the scholastic achievement of Dumagat pupils. The arrowhead manifests the possible effect of the independent variables to the dependent variable.
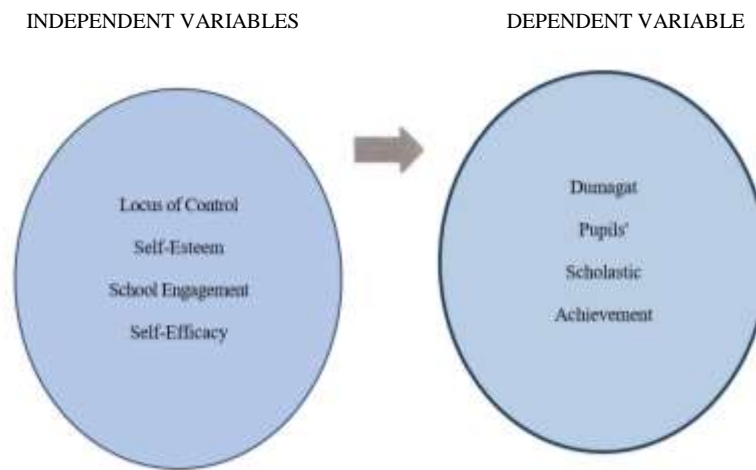
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES　　　　　　　　DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Figure 1. Paradigm of the Study

Results and Discussion

The study determined the factors affecting scholastic achievement of Dumagat pupils particularly the Dumagats in Dona Remedios Trinidad during the last quarter of School Year 2016-2017.

Using the procedures described in the preceding chapter, the answers to the problems raised in this study were ascertained and summarized.

Findings revealed that Dumagat pupil respondents agreed that they had locus of control in terms of internal, powerful, and chance.

The self-esteem of Dumagat pupils in terms of performance self-esteem, social self-esteem and appearance self-esteem was described as "frequent".

The pupils' engagement in school in terms of affective, behavioral and cognitive engagements was described as "frequent".

The pupil respondents' levels of self-efficacy in terms of academic, social and emotional self-efficacies were described as "agree".

Conclusions

1. Factors affecting scholastic achievement: The study likely identified factors that influence the academic performance of Dumagat students in Dona Remedios Trinidad during the school year mentioned. These factors could be related to the students themselves, their families, or their school environment. More research would be needed to determine the relative impact of each factor.

2. Locus of control: The Dumagat student respondents seemed to believe they have some control over their achievements (internal), can influence events (powerful), and that chance also plays a role (chance). This suggests an internal-external locus of control, which can be beneficial for learning.

3. Self-esteem: The study found that the Dumagat students reported "frequent" levels of self-esteem in various aspects (performance, social, and appearance). This suggests a generally positive self-image among the student population.

4. Engagement in school: The students reported "frequent" engagement in school activities (affective, behavioral, and cognitive). This indicates a positive level of involvement in their academic pursuits

5. Self-efficacy: The students agreed with statements about their self-efficacy in academic, social, and emotional areas. This suggests a belief in their ability to succeed in these domains.

Recommendations

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. Teachers may include in their lesson's topics about pupils' locus of control, self-esteem, school engagement and self-efficacy to make them aware of the importance of these factors on their scholastic achievement.

2. Teachers may provide activities such as role playing, debate, or can also use workbook or worksheet for the enrichment and development of pupils' locus of control, self-esteem, school engagement and self-efficacy.

3. Teachers may find ways and means to improve the scholastic achievements of Dumagat pupils.

4. For future researcher, further study along this line may be conducted. of some other variables not included in the study may be considered to further impro e the scholastic achievement of Dumagat pupils.

5. For future researchers, a peer qualitative research about Dumagat pupils may be conducted to dig deeper about their culture and traditions.

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