

THE PROBLEMS OF UNP COLLEGE FRESHMEN STUDENT BOARDERS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Concepcion B. Azares
Gertrudes C. Cabebe

ABSTRACT

The study investigated on the common problems of the UNP College student boarders in terms of conditions like: physical/environmental, social and psychological, as well as economic, and all those relative to their living quarters away from home. Focusing on College Freshmen student boarders, it attempted to assess the impact of their problems to their academic performance.

House facilities and location of boarding houses significantly affected the students' academic achievement while structure and cleanliness/sanitation had no significant effect to the same. The relationship between boarders and landlady/landlord together with problems relative to policies and regulations of boarding houses significantly affected their academic achievement. Other conditions with significant effects were good services which were not usually satisfactory. Hopefully, this study assists the university administration in its formulation of student services for their welfare and development as well as owners/proprietors of boarding houses and dormitories for the improvement of conditions in these living quarters for the betterment of students' academic performance.

INTRODUCTION

Today's pattern of life and society confronts the youth with confusion. A picture of life presented on the radio, television, movies and other mass media is distorted and the young minds do not know which to believe and do for even seemingly improved living conditions increase their difficulties of adjustment leading to conflicts and frustrations resulting to inconsistent and unstable behavior often caused by conflicting values and standards. Oftentimes, the student is faced by a multiplicity of circumstances to make strenuous efforts to adjust to many complex experiences of life offering more anxiety producing situations. Though problems are ingredients of daily living, they can become disturbing causing delay in attaining goals because they can be roadblocks to objective learning and living (Apostol, 1979).

Education contributes a lot to the optimum development of the student. Every institution of learning has for its major goal to produce responsible and effectively contributing citizens through an adequate and efficient program of learning. To fulfill this task, educational institutions should stimulate individual students to work to their utmost and aim for excellence through researches and other techniques to gain

insights into the existing needs and problems of said adolescents particularly college students which may mean serious difficulties and complications which will not only influence their academic life but also their general adjustment and personality as a whole.

Life in a dormitory/boarding house can be very different from life in one's own home. A student's chosen living quarter is a social structure which is complex with transgressing barriers of culture, different values and socio-economic status and where there is always something happening in the interaction between and among boarders. Most college students living in dormitories/boarding houses are future oriented and are conditioned by their hopes and goals, which if threatened, will lead to anxieties and frustrations. One of the essential functions of an institution of learning is to arrange the students' living environment to be adequate through a full awareness of their living conditions.

The UNP has been insufficiently providing enough living quarters for students because of the rapidly increasing student population. It is at this context that this study was conceived. Hopefully results will be beneficial to:

1. The UNP administration, particularly in its students' services program;
2. Dormitory/Boarding House owners and proprietors in the improvement of their services and management;
3. Parents who would really bother to choose where their children would stay for more safety and security;
4. The student boarders themselves to learn coping with inevitable life circumstances and to uphold to their utmost their efforts toward their academic welfare & success.
5. Classroom instructors and teachers in becoming more skillful in formulating learning activities based on the findings of this study.

OBJECTIVES

In the investigation of the common problems of the UNP College student boarders, the study attempted to answer the following:

- I. What is the level of perception of the situations bothering student boarders in terms of:
 - a. Physical/Environmental conditions
 - b. Social/Psychological conditions
 - c. Economic conditions?
2. What is the profile of the IJNP student boarders in terms of their academic performance?
3. Is there a significant effect of each of the problem areas in No. 1 to the academic performance of the IJNP student boarders?

SCOPE AND DELIMITATION

. Focused on student boarders in the University of Northern Philippines, the study investigated on problems relative to their boarding houses and the effects of the same to their academic performance. Although it initially aimed to focus on all students staying in donnitories and boarding houses, it was found out that most were from the first year college students because very few among the higher years stayed in these living quarters. Respondents totalling *to* 496 out of 998 boarders were randomly chosen.

RELATED STUDIES AND LITERATURE

The framework of this study anchors on the following theories:

1. Students' housing or residence has a substantial educational role. A definite relationship exists between proper performance of academic functions and the place of dwelling of students (Walker: 1935).
2. The students' adjustment *to* society, his attitudes, physical and mental health are as a whole largely determined by where and how he lives (Marzonia: 1977).
3. Good faculty housing is equally necessary to the proper performance of educational functions (Burgoyne: 1976).

The students' housing and living conditions which exist in donnitories, boarding/lodging houses or residence halls depend largely upon their management, which is viewed as a set of internal elements such as: people, techniques, information, purpose and structure functioning through planning, organizing, actuating and controlling.

An awareness of such existing problems in dormitories/boarding/lodging houses and residence halls and their detrimental effects *to* boarders or lodgers will keep people concerned in their solution or at least minimizing them. Joint efforts of agencies like the home, school and community, together with the cooperation of boarding/lodging house and residence hall management and the boarders/lodgers themselves are hoped to alleviate the plight of the boarders and lodgers as well as that of the boarding/lodging house management. An improved management will promote wholesome living conditions that will eventually lead *to* the benefit of the boarders/lodgers.

Several studies related or allied to the present research work have also been surveyed which can give light to the various aspects of this ongoing study.

A study made by Sr. Jardin, RVM on "Problems of College Women Boarders in Dormitories Run by RVM Sisters and Their Implications for a Guidance Program", revealed that most common problems included: crowdedness, accident prone lighting system, noise from other rooms, lack of privacy, relationship between sisters and boarders; sisters are always serious, unvaried meals, lack of sanitation; old facilities,

lack of social activities; unreasonable fees, and seemingly untrained staff. Such problems are suspectedly causing difficulties in adjustment to college work on the part of the boarders.

Because the boarders belong to the "restless" generations which is revolting against adult sex values and traditions, they exhibit different behavior patterns when they are outside their home and school. They are also reluctant to open up important or touchy areas about boy-girl relationship Jardin: 1972).

Gazmen (1982) in her study on adjustment problems of student boarders and non-boarders of Baguio City High School, SY 1981-1982 which tried to find out the difference on the adjustment, personality scores and academic achievement of the respondents found out that there are significant differences between adjustment scores of boarders and non-boarders in the adjustment variables, and significant positive relationships among boarders and non-boarders in academic achievement variables. It was also found out that adjustment is positively associated with personality & academic achievement.

Gervise, in her study on the common problems encountered by the UNO-R teacher and student boarders and lodgers towards the management of their boarding and lodging houses grouped according to selected personal variables such as sex, age, civil status and educational status found out that: both male and female subjects encountered the same common problems on environmental conditions with variation only on the category of problems related to the relationship between or among boarders/lodgers. The male subjects considered their roommates taking of visitors into their room as their common problem while female subjects considered their co-boarders or co-lodgers being noisy as their common problem. And for educational status, student subjects encountered more environmental problems than the teacher subjects.

Ferrer (1973), found out in her study that problems which beset students are: personal environmental and problems in curriculum; that these problems in general affected the students though unevenly; and that they are rated as: so much affect students, somewhat affect the students and not so much affecting them and the problems which affect students so much are on school work especially on problem solving.

Cariazo's (1980) findings revealed that 50% on his respondents indicated serious problems on the existence of stealing, frequent visitors and laxity in the enforcement of regulations. The least felt problems were the existence of poor lighting facilities. On financial problem, 78% felt shortage of money to buy personal needs and class activities as serious according to 63% of the students. On social relation problems, the feeling of losing one's girl or boy friend ranked first.

Genciano's (1976) findings indicated that there was a significant relationship between college environment and academic adjustment. She concluded that a conducive academic atmosphere should be established in the college environment to meet the intellectual dependency and emotional expression of all the students.

Dimas (1975) in his study of the status of high school students found out that 74% of the students had temporary dormitories as congested.

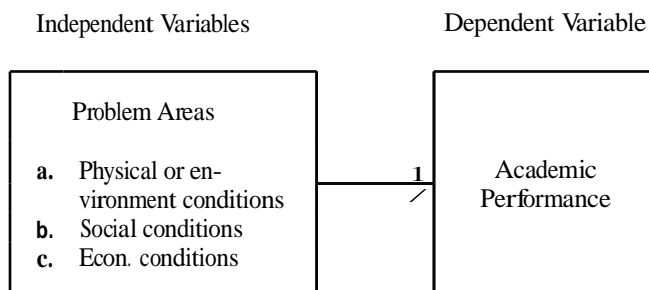
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the foregoing review of literature and related studies, many problems associated with the developing youth are normal phenomena in the life of every man and woman. Young people encounter many problems which are often detrimental to the course of their growth and development. These fall under categories such as: environmental, social, academic, economic and personal/psychological.

These problems in some aspects can affect the success or failure of students' academic achievement. Their success and happiness will depend much on their ability to resolve these problems and also to adjust to the kind of environment they live in. It is really difficult to be happy when one is burdened with several problems at the time of academic pursuit.

This study is premised on the hypothetical conviction that several problems on various categories are related to the academic achievement/performance of the UNP student boarders/lodgers.

A schematic figure showing the relationship between such problems and the students' academic performance is shown below.



Conceptual Paradigm

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The study tested the following hypothesis:

There is no significant effect of the following problem areas: physical or enviromental conditions; social conditions; and economic conditions to the academic performance of the student boarders.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study made use of the descriptive method of research. According to Good and Scates, the descriptive method of research is one which includes all types of studies that purport to present facts concerning the nature and status of anything whether it be a group of persons, a number of objects, a set of conditions, a class of

events, a system of thoughts, or any kind of phenomena which one may wish to study. It also used the questionnaire as the primary tool in gathering necessary data.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

All first year students of the UNP in the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business Administration and Accountancy, Institute of Criminology, Institute of Social Work and Institute of Nursing who were staying in either the in-campus dormitories or the boarding/lodging houses outside the campus composed the population of the study but only 496 out of 998 student boarders or almost 50% were used as samples which were chosen at random.

DATA GATHERING TOOLS/TECHNIQUES

Data on the problem areas of the student boarders of the UNP were gathered through the questionnaire/checklist.

The researchers made use also of secondary sources of data which gave light to other details needed in the study like the Information Sheets of student subjects at the Student Services Office.

The academic achievement of the student boarders was taken from the Office of the Registrar.

STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF DATA

The study made use of the following statistical treatments:

1. Frequency count was used to note the responses of the students along each problem areas.
2. Mean was used to describe the academic performance of the students.
3. Chi-square (X^1) was used to test the relationship between the academic performance and the problem areas encountered by the UNP student boarders.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This portion presents the findings of the investigation.

L ON PROBLEMS OF STUDENT BOARDERS

Table 1. Summary of the Levels of Perception of Situations Bothering Student Boarders

Problem Areas	Mean	Level
A. Physical or Environmental Conditions of the Living Quarter in terms of:		
1. House Structure _____	2.24	Little
2. House Facilities _____	2.16	Little
3. Location of Boarding House/Dormitory _____	2.23	Little
4. Sanitation and Cleanliness _____	2.34	Little
B. Social Conditions in Terms of:		
1. Relationship Between Boarders and landlady/landlord _____	2.40	Little
2. Relationship Among Boarders _____	2.19	Little
3. Policies or Regulations of the Boarding House/Dormitory _____	2.18	Little
C. Economic Conditions in Terms of:		
1. Cost of Boarding/Lodging fee & Dormitory fee -----	2.09	Little
2. Food Services — — —	1.94	Not at all
3. Facilities -----	2.12	Little

Table I shows that student boarders had a little concern about physical/ environmental conditions in terms of house structure with a mean of 2.24; house facilities with a mean of 2.16; location of boarding house with a mean of 2.23; and sanitation and cleanliness with a mean of 2.34. In the same manner, respondents had a little concern about the social conditions in their boarding houses in terms of:

relationship with landlady/landlord with a mean of 2.40; relationship among boarders with a mean of 2.19; and policies or regulations of the dormitory/boarding house with a mean of 2.18. With regards to economic conditions, respondents also had a little concern on cost of dormitory/boarding/lodging fee with a mean of 2.09; facilities with a mean of 2.12 and not at all concerned about food services with a mean of 1.94. This means further that the problems mentioned are of little concern to the student boarders except for food services which they were not at all concerned about, which means that they were not being served by their landladies/landlords. It was because they cooked their own food.

II. ON LEVEL OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The level of academic achievement expressed in terms of average of the 496 student boarders under study during the first semester, SY 1994-1995 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Level of Academic Performance

Academic Performance	No.	%
1.5-1.99	12	2.42
2.0-2.49	67	13.51
2.5-2.99	284	57.26
3.0 - 3.49	108	21.77
3.5 & below	25	5.04
Total	496	100.00

The result of the investigation shows that 284 or 57.26% of the respondents obtained an average of between 2.5 and 2.99; 108 or 21.77% obtained a level of between 3.0 and 3.49; while 67 or 13.51% obtained also a level between 2.0 and 2.49. Only 12 or 2.42% obtained a level of between 1.5 and 1.99 while 25 or 5.04% obtained a level of 3.5 and below.

This further implies that most of the student boarders belonged to the average level of academic achievement.

III. ON THE EFFECT OF THEIR PROBLEMS TO THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The effects of the different problem areas to their academic performance are presented in table 3.

Table 3. Summary of the Chi-Square Value of the Effects of the Different Problem Areas to Their Academic Performance

Problem Areas	X	Decision	Interpretation
A. Physical/Environmental Prob.			
1. House Structure	5.924	Accepted	Not Significant
2. House Facilities	15.42	Rejected	Significant
3. Location of Boarding House	28.77	Rejected	Significant
4. Sanitation & Cleanliness	5.917	Accepted	Not Significant
B. Problems on Social Conditions			
1. Relationship Bel. Boarders & Landlady/Landlord	30.4203	Rejected	Significant
2. Relationship Among Boarders	10.57	Accepted	Not Significant
3. Policies or Regulations of the Dorm. Boarding House	15.81	Rejected	Significant
C. Problems on Econ. Condition			
1. Rate of Dorm. Boarding House	5.81	Accepted	Not Significant
2. Food Services	13.808	Rejected	Significant
3. Facilities	3.569	Accepted	Not Significant

$$tv = 12.59$$

A, On Physical/Environmental Problems

There was no significant relationship between the academic performance of the Student boarders and house structure of the boarding house/dormitory as evidenced by the chi-square value of 5.924. This means that the grades of the boarders were not so much affected by the structure of their boarding house/dormitory, which implies further that whether or not they stay in a condominium/palacial home or in a nipa hut, their academic performance is not at all affected.

The academic performance of the student boarders had a significant relationship with house facilities as shown by the chi-square value of 15.42. This implies that the grades during the first semester were so much affected by the kind of facilities that the boarding houses/dormitories had. That according to them, they were more inclined to study and strive harder if their boarding house/dormitory had complete facilities.

Another physical/environmental problem which had a significant effect with their academic performance was the location of boarding house/dormitory- which has a chi-

square value of 28.77. This means that the location of their boarding house/dormitory had so much to do with their academic performance implying that if they stay in a boarding which is free from noise or other disturbances like vehicles passing by, they might have better academic performance.

Sanitation and cleanliness had significant effect to their academic performance as shown by the chi-square value of 9.917. This implies that their studies were not affected by the cleanliness in their surroundings or in the boarding house itself.

B. Problems on Social Conditions

Relationship between boarders and landlady/landlord had a significant effect to their academic performance as evidenced by the value of chi-square which is 30.4203. This shows that the treatment they got/received from their landlady/landlord had something to do with their studies which may affect their academic performance or grades. Maybe if their landlady/landlord was good to them, they would be inspired to study hard, they were ashamed to get low grades. But if the attitude of their landlady/landlord is negative, they might be emotionally disturbed and this may affect their studies which can result to poor academic performance.

Another problem which had a significant effect to their academic performance as evidenced by the chi-square value of 15.81 was on policies or regulations of the boarding house/dormitory. According to the responses of the boarders, implementation of policies and regulations of the boarding house/dormitory affected their studies so much which could result to either good or poor academic performance.

Another problem on social condition which had no significant effect to their academic performance was the relationship among boarders with a chi-square value of 10.57. This means that how they get along with their co-boarders did not at all affect their grades or their academic performance.

C. On Economic Condition Problems

On the rate of boarding house/dormitory, there was no significant effect shown by the value of chi-square which is 5.81. This means that their studies were not affected by the high or low payment of their boarding house/dormitory.

Another problem with no significant effect with their academic performance was on facilities like study area, telephone, light, water supply and laundry materials evidenced again by the chi-square value of 3.569. This further means that with existence or no existence of these facilities, their grades were not affected.

The last problem on economic condition is food services. This had a significant effect to their academic achievement. This means that for those who were on boarding and lodging, the kind of food served affected their studies or their academic achievement especially if they were paying very high costs for food services.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

L ON PROBLEMS

A. Physical/Environmental

The most common physical/environmental problems of student boarders were lack of fire escape in their boarding houses; lack of privacy; boarding house not being safe from burglars; small and dark rooms; boarding house materials are fire hazards and not strong; and boarding houses were usually flooded.

Relative to house facilities, the most common problems of student boarders were restricted use of light; lack of appliances for boarders; fetching of water from a distance; unsanitary cooking and dining facilities; their not being allowed to use appliances; water pump was always out of order; no definite study area and common toilet and bathroom for boys and girls.

Problems on location of boarding house were noisy location due to vehicles passing by and noise from nearby factories; boarding house was near rivers/creeks making it vulnerable to floods; location was unsafe; and was near a dumping site making it unsanitary.

On sanitation and cleanliness, the most common problems were overcrowdedness; unsanitary dining and kitchen area; frequent clogging of toilet and bathroom; inadequate water supply and poor ventilation.

B. Social Problems

Relative to their relationship with their landlady, the most common problems were: being scolded in front of others; being threatened; not being allowed to receive visitors; lack of activities to enhance closer and better understanding among boarders and with landlady; no care attitude of landlady as long as she got due payments of boarders; landlady was cranky and strict; landlady ignored suggestions and complaints of boarders and boarders did not feel free to confide their problems to landlady.

On relationship with boardmates, their most common problems were: boardmates scattered their things all around, they did not arrange or fix their things; boardmates were very noisy and did not maintain cleanliness; boardmates used personal things without permission which result to frequent occurrence of losses; boardmates monopolized facilities; and boardmates are fond of "tsismis" and intrigues and in forming cliques.

Relative to problems on boarding house policies and regulations, the most common were on: strict policies depriving boarders of engaging in co-curricular activities; lack of individual inventory record of each boarder; implementation of rules and policies without consulting boarders and too strict policies.

C. Economic Conditions

The most common problems on rate of dormitory/boarding fee were: boarders who were delayed in paying were threatened; increase of rate in boarding/dormitory fee; prices of goods sold in the store of boarding houses were very dear and boarders were not allowed to use electric appliances.

The most common problems related to food services were: no variation of food served; better food service was only for better payment; unsanitary plates and dining utensils and food was usually served cold.

The problems on facilities also included lack of telephone; restricted use of light, inadequate water supply and lack of laundry materials and no definite study area.

II. ON RESPONDENT'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Most of the student boarders had achieved a grade level of 2.5 to 3.0; very few achieved a level of 1.5 to 1.99 while there were those who were conditioned during the first semester of SY 1994-1995.

III. ON EFFECT OF THE DIFFERENT PROBLEM AREAS TO THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

A. Physical/Environmental Problems

House facilities and location of boarding house significantly affected their academic achievement while house structure and sanitation and cleanliness did not significantly affect their academic achievement.

B. Problems on Social Conditions

Relationship between boarders and landlady/landlord and policies or regulations of the dormitory/boarding house significantly affected their academic achievement while relationship among boarders did not significantly affect their academic achievement.

C. Economic Condition Problems

Food services significantly affected their academic achievement while the rate of dormitory/boarding house fee and facilities did not significantly affect their academic achievement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To minimize problems of student boarders and to extend real assistance/help to them the following recommendations are addressed to:

1. The school administration, particularly the Student Services Unit. which must try to coordinate with owners/managers/ proprietors of dormitories and boarding houses for the improvement of dormitory/boarding house services especially on facilities and other distracting/bothering conditions of these student quarters.
2. The owners/managers of dormitories and boarding houses, to improve their house facilities, their food services, their relationships with student boarders **and** also rules and policies in the management of these student houses, bearing in mind that these are the students' "home" away from home.
3. The owners/managers of dormitories and boarding houses, to discuss policies **or** regulations of the dormitory/boarding house to student boarders and if possible in the presence of their parents.
4. The prospective owners/managers of boarding houses to consider the location of these houses which should be free from noise and other distracting situations.
5. Student boarders must also try to cooperate with the management of these student quarters for their improvement by trying to do their part in the formulation of policies and their implementation and observe such policies strictly for their own convenience.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Books

- Burgoyne, J.M. *Residence Halls Guidelines at the University of Hawaii*, (American School and University, 1964).
- Cowby, W. H. "The History of Student Residential Housing," *School and Society*, XI (Dec. 1934).
- Packwood, William T. *College Student Personnel Services*, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1977).
- Shaftel, G.A. Henry and Daniel M. *Guidance in the Modern School*. (The Dryden Press, New York, 1956).

B. Published Materials/Journals/Periodicals

- Adriano, Paz. "Housing Those Away From Home," *Sunday Times Magazine*, XVI, No. 3, June 1964.
- Alday, Ireneo G. "Depicrable Dormitories," *Philippine Free Press*, October 1963.
- Ashby, Mary Check. "Reorganized Residence Hall," *Journal of Higher Education*, VII (October - mer 1936).
- BuenaÉ, Alex J. "Of Bed, Board and Lodging," *Action Now*, I, No. 3, July 5, 1969.
- Lindahl, Charles. "Impact of Living Arrangements in Student Environment Perceptions," *The Journal of College Student Personnel*, January 1967.

C. Unpublished Materials

- Apostol, Mario. "Problems of PSU College of Education Graduate Students: Implications to Student Services Program," College of Education Research Staff, PSU, 1979.
- Ayuyao, Maria L. "The Physical Conditions of Twenty Dormitories Where Centro Escolar University Female Live," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, CEU, Manila, April 1969).
- Cariazo, Flaviano C. "Problems of College Students of the Isabcla State University, Main Campus and Their Implications to Student Governance," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, ISU, Echague, Isabela, 1980).

- Decalos, Portia D. "The Problems of Students in the Nursing School in Cebu City and Their Implication to Guidance," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, U.P., March 1976).
- Dimas, Alberto B. "The Status of Secondary Students at the Ifugao Agricultural and Technical College, 1974-1975," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, MSAC, La Trinidad, Benguet, 1975).
- Ferrer, Consuelo A. "Problems of Students in College of Commerce, Mabini Colleges, 1972-1973," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Mabini, College, 1973).
- Gervise, Amelia A. "The Common Problems Encountered by the UNO-R Teacher and Student Boarders and Lodgers Towards the Management of Their Boarding and Lodging Houses," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, 1981, University of Negros Occidental, Recoletos).
- Jardin, Rufita. "Problem of College Women Boarders in Dormitories Run By RVM Sisters and Their Implications for a Proposed Guidance Program." (Unpublished Master's Thesis, La Consolacion College, Bacolod City, 1965).
- Ponce, Benjamin de Jesus, "A Study of the Personal Problems of College Students in St. Paul School in View of Improving the Guidance Services." (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Sto. Tomas, Manila, 1962).