

Difficulties Encountered by Master of Arts in Education Students in Pursuing Professional Growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University - Sulu

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Abstract: This study was conducted during first and second semester of Academic year 2018-2019 particularly a school in Mindanao State University Sulu Campus Since the study focused on Graduate School the Difficulties Encountered by Maed Students in Pursuing Educational growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu, the author was selected twenty (20) percent from the total population of Maed students and served as the respondents through the use of stratified sampling procedure. Questionnaires were the means instruments used to gather information from the target respondents, its contented list of questions addressed to the problems formulated therein. The questionnaires checklist form provided with the rating scales to show how a particular difficulty affects Maed Students in pursuing educational growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University Sulu. And also, the strategies used by MAED students to overcome the sad difficulties being encountered. The following statistical tool was being utilized in the interpretation of data: the weighted mean and standard deviation are for the problem number 1 and 2. Whereas T-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for problem number 3, the significant difference between the difficulties when group according Gender Sex, Year Level and Nature of Work. Generally, the following difficulties: Financing the study, Pressure from additional work assignments, Working and studying, Anxieties related to studying at the graduate level, Uses of modern technology in education (E-library) and Support of people from work place are the items that MAED Students are fairly encountered in Pursuing Educational Growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu. This was through their strong determination and motivation from family, Design Plan study habits, observe school calendar and determination to finish the course for future promotions and management as well. And, based from the result of the Calculated T value compared to the Tabular Critical Value at .05 level of significant, the null hypothesis "There is no significant difference between difficulties when group according to gender or sex" is accepted. Whereas, "There is no significant difference between the difficulties when group according to year level and nature of work" is rejected. Meaning, male and female have equal interest to pursue professional growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu either from teaching or non-teaching profession. But in terms of Year Level and Nature of Work of the respondents, there is significant difference when group according to difficulties.

Keywords: Difficulties, Graduate School, Master of Arts in Education, Professional Growth, Students.

1. Introduction

This study attempts to know the difficulties encountered by Master of Arts in Education (MAED) students in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu. It is first of its kind in Graduate School. Typically, continuous education is not an easy task, it requires enthusiastic and focus to achieve the goal which is to finish the course. There are some difficulties might encounter in pursuing educational growth, but consider it as a challenges and motivations to study hard in any course requirements and assured to overcome it in any level of competencies.

Views from some personalities, there are unexpected difficulties and problems (Joseph F. Trimmer, 1992) and they may lead to academic failures. Hence, this study is conducted to investigate the difficulties encountered by MAED students in pursuing educational growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu. According to Frank A. Logan in his manuscript College Learning, Ways and Whys, any time personal problems could occupy some of the cognitive capacity and interfere academic pursuits Occasionally, the best solution to problems depends on what causes it, in which case, one has to discover why the problems arise. In most cases, the best approach is simply to deal with the problems.

To overcome difficulties here are some remedies, Mintzberg argues that strategy emerges over time as intentions collide with and accommodate a changing reality. Thus, one might start with a perspective and conclude that it calls for a certain position, which is to be achieved by way of a carefully crafted plan, with the eventual outcome and strategy reflected in a pattern evident in decisions and actions over time. From the Find University Ph. Philippines Universities & College Guide, give us the important of Master's degree. A master's degree in Education enables education graduates to qualify for higher positions in academic institutions and education agencies. It is a credential that is often demanded from applicants who wish to teach in the

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tertiary level and even for managerial, supervisory or professional positions in some elementary and secondary schools.

According to Dr. Abdurahman (MSU-Sulu VC for academic affairs), girding education towards the context of the Province of Sulu in term of needs, situations, socio- economic development, MSU- Sulu offers new courses. Such as Master of Arts in Nursing, Master of Arts in Agriculture and Doctor of Philosophy Major in School Administration.

The offering of Master of Arts in Nursing is a response to the dense supply of nursing graduates from three schools to include Notre Dame of Jolo College (NDJC), Sulu State College (SSC) and MSU- Sulu. This aims to provide advance education to makes graduates globally competitive in terms of competencies but also to provide them the review of earning units in their continuing professional development.

Moreover, with the proliferation of hiring of nurses in the rural health Units, there is a due need to supply a long list of competent nurses capable of handling jobs beyond routinely. For master of Agriculture, this aims to provide graduates of Agriculture working in the different offices the advance knowledge and technical know-how in engaging farmers to increase productivity, yields and income. Making Sulu responsive to the needs especially foods for the people is a challenge of not also the government but the university as well. MSU- Sulu is playing its hale in order to enhance the farming system of Tausug so that Sulu will become agriculturally viable and sustainable

The revival of Ph.D. in Education is a major turning point of the University in response to the educational development in Sulu. It is established to three major reasons. first, it provides educators in the Department of Education a venue for their advance development with minimum cost without sacrificing its quality, second, it is also an opportunity for the faculty members of MSU- Sulu to pursue their doctoral degree without going to adjacent schools or neighboring city like Zamboanga, and third, it is a potential educational development in making the University globally competitive

Another program which is soon to be offered is professional diploma in Physical Education. This provides the opportunity to all teachers working in the government and non-government schools to avail their education subjects, coaches and trainers in the different sports management aspects. Consequently, this is expected to elevate the performance especially Tausug players in whatever sports competition. These courses will make also MSU- Sulu very responsive to the needs of the community in Sulu in general.

The trend in state university today is making facilities be available to all students. These facilities may differ depending on the context and depending on courses. However, for several purposes, many think that internet connectivity through the use of computer is an aspect that brings university a globally competitive for two reasons, first, the students and teachers can source out relevant dot and insights from the different researchers published in the net to be used in the classroom discussion; thus, it enhance the level of discussion and understanding to both as a result, it does not only add facts to

discussion but also develops creativity and critical thinking. It trains students and teachers to relate the topic to the trends in a specific subject and aligning the topic also to the context of the topic, and second, internet connectivity speed digitization of data. Big data, if readily available, can help the performance of the university in sourcing out funding, in crafting research, in and bringing MSU- Sulu very visible in global community of prestigious schools.

Through there are many aspects of facilities that make university globally competitive will surely raise the free flow of thought and discussion of topics thus improve the performance of the university academically through effective students-teachers engagement with the help of the net.

2. Methodology

A. Research Design

The purpose of the study is to find auspicious answers to the Difficulties Encountered by MAED students in Graduate School in Mindanao State University-Sulu This study was conducted during the first and second semester of academic year 2018- 2019 in Mindanao State University- Sulu for the fulfillment of the requirements of the course Master of Arts in Education, Major in School Administration.

B. Research Locale

This study was conducted during first and second semester of Academic year 2018-2019 particularly at Graduate School in Mindanao State University-Sulu Campus.

C. Respondents of the Study

Since the study focused on the Difficulties Encountered by MAED Students in Pursuing Educational growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu, the author was selected twenty (20) percent from the total population of MAED students and served as the respondents through the use of stratified sampling procedure. The author was also conducted personal interviews to the people in the position about the academic programs of Mindanao State University-Sulu.

D. Research Instruments

Questionnaires were the means instruments used to gather information from the target respondents, its contented lists of questions addressed to the problems formulated therein.

The questionnaires is in a checklist form provided with the rating scales to show how a particular difficulties affects MAED Students in pursuing educational growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu. And also the strategies used by MAED students to overcome the said difficulties being encountered.

Table 1

Scales	Difficulties Encountered	Strategies used
1	Not at all Difficult	Not at all equipped
2	Fairly Difficult	Fairly equipped
3	Difficult	equipped
4	Very Difficult	Very equipped
5	Extremely Difficult	Extremely equipped

E. Sampling Procedure

The author of the study was used stratified sampling procedure for MAED Students from 1st year, 2nd year and graduating students to have equal percentage in serving as respondents. The sample size of each stratum in this technique is proportionate to the population size of the stratum when viewed against the entire population. This means that each stratum has the same sampling fraction.

Based from the data gathered from the office of (ICTC) Information and Communication Technology Center of MSU-Sulu, there are 170 MAED students comprised, 50 students for first year, 77 students for second year and 43 students who are thesis writers.

Stratum A (50 students-1st Year)	B (77 students 2nd Year)		
C (43-Graduating Students)			
Year Level	= 1st	2nd	graduating
Population Size	= 50	77	43
Sampling.	= 1/5	1/5	1/5
Final Sample Size	= 10	+ 15	+ 9 =
Total =	34		

F. Data Gathering Procedure

In data gathering procedure, the author prepared questionnaires through the use of Stratified Sampling Procedure. The questionnaires were been delivered randomly to the target respondents and were collected at the following day. The author was also conducted personal interviews to people who are in the position to give reliable information about the programs of Mindanao State University-Sulu.

G. Statistical Treatment

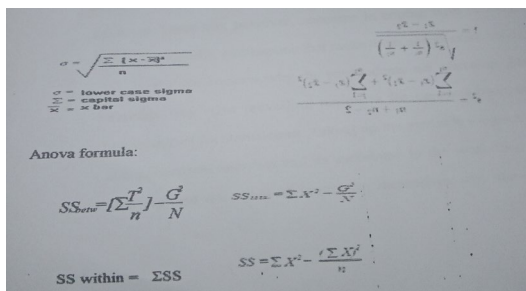
The following statistical tool was being utilized in the interpretation of data: the weighted mean and standard deviation are for the problem number 1 and 2. Whereas T- test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for problem number 3, the significant difference between the difficulties when group according to gender/sex, year level and nature of service.

The formula one uses to calculate weighted means was:

[(number of people who selected response 1)" (weighting of response 1) + (number of people who selected response 2)" (weighting of response 2) (number of people who selected response n)*(weighting of response n)]/(total number of respondents).

Standard Deviation Formula:

T test formula:



Perspectives on the graduate program and the experiences of their students in the analysis stage, feedback from the stakeholder groups was compared to determine arcs of agreement as well as divergence.

3. Result and Discussion

A total of 28 students participated in answering the self-administered questionnaire regarding their experiences as post graduate students. Half are MOS students and the other half are MS students. More than half are female, 75% are married. and with an average age of 21 years old. Majority graduated from state universities and without honors. The general weighted average in college is 1.87. Half are full-time students and majority have scholarship benefits.

The emergent themes were eagerness to learn, career advancement; time management; coping with obstacles, faculty competency, faculty advising, learning environment, and peer influence. The respondents cited that they are enjoying the learning they have been discovering in the program. The eagerness to know more about statistics motivate them to strive to manage their priorities, even if some are not full-time students. There are, however, concerns in coping with many priorities including school fees, assignments, and lessons that make them spend extra hours studying.

On the reasons why the respondents are pursuing graduate degree program in Statistics, the most prevailing reason is for career advancement given the increasing opportunities for statisticians. Taking up the graduate program enables them to appreciate and understand statistics and its usefulness to the work they do. Aside from these, they also realized the value of improving themselves with the statistical skills they gained while in the program. Pursuing higher studies is advantageous to most respondents, not only in terms of career advancements but also as a means of improving themselves.

The challenge of attending classes every day seemed difficult to overcome for most part-time students. They cited the need to properly manage their time schedule from work to school aside from attending to other concerns that are not school-related. For the financial requirement of the program, it is not so much of a burden since they can avail of scholarships.

Most of the students have strong mathematical skills and able to cope with the math requirements of the program. However, some mentioned that they needed some refresher or review of past courses like calculus and algebra. They find the curriculum not merely theoretical but also practical and applicable to everyday situations.

The respondents valued the interactions with competent teachers who share their ideas and knowledge in tackling requirements of the graduate program. They mentioned that such experiences make them understand their assigned tasks better and inspire them to excel in their studies. The school has been said to be conducive to learning, with involvement of students focusing mostly on classroom activities and discussions that they find healthy and fulfilling. The environment facilitates enjoyable learning in students. Even for those enrolled as part-time students, the distance from work to school is not so demanding as they are given some

consideration by faculty members.

Most of the respondents are not very much involved in research, publications, or any related scholarly activity, except during school related seminars, conferences and meetings where research papers are 'presented. In terms of academic and professional development, the respondents mentioned that classmates and peers played major inputs to enhancing these two. Many students did not suggest any major improvements in the way the graduate program is being conducted. However, they did mention the need for more reference materials or books in the library, accessibility to software, more electives or basic courses on major statistical subjects, and teachers that will guide the students

According to the Director for Graduate Studies of the School of Statistics, advancement is one of the main reasons that motivate students to pursue their masters degrees. With regards to specific difficulties encountered in the post graduate program, he cited that many MS students are not prepared in terms of theory approach especially if they graduated from courses outside Statistics or Mathematics. Students lacking mathematical background are advised take a refresher course in calculus during summer before they enroll in the major courses.

Another difficulty for both MS and MOS students is that they have not thought of their special problem for their thesis even after completion of course work. He also mentioned that the school can boast of its post graduate program because of its updated and exhaustive curriculum. Aside from that, teachers are experts in their field and are dedicated. Thus, the best benefit that students can obtain from the post graduate programs is quality education. However, he suggested that some facilities can be further improved

A professor for both the MOS and MS degree programs has the same position as the Graduate Director that career advancement is a major motivation among postgraduate students.

With regards to the benefits that students obtain from the post graduate programs, he cited the following courses being offered, non-academic interaction, networking, expertise of teachers, and mentor ship of teacher to students.

4. Conclusion

Based on the summary of findings, the following conclusions were drawn: As revealed by the average weighted mean of 2.39 and Standard Deviation of 1.68, the MAED Students fairly, encountered difficulties in pursuing educational growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu. But, the said MAED students are equipped with strategies to overcome difficulties in Pursuing Educational Growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu through their Design or Plan study habits, Strong Motivation from family, avoid absenteeism/observe Campus academic calendar and Self-determination for promotions/ management and, the null hypothesis "There is no significant difference between difficulties when group according to gender or sex" is accepted. Whereas, "There is no significant difference between the difficulties when group according to year level and nature of work" is rejected. Meaning, male and female have equal interest to pursue professional growth in Graduate School in Mindanao State University- Sulu either from teaching or non-teaching profession. But in terms of Year Level and Nature of Work of the respondents, there is significant difference when group according to difficulties.

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