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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENGLISH OF THIRD YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS IN ESSU – SALCEDO CAMPUS

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship between attitude towards English and academic performance among third year college students in ESSU -Salcedo Campus during the school year 2013 - 2014. This study is a descriptive- correlation research wherein a survey questionnaire was used to gather the needed data. It is descriptive since it described the attitudes of the students toward English language. The respondents of the study were third year college students enrolled at Eastern Samar State University - Salcedo campus during the school year 2013 - 2014. These students were from the different colleges of the campus enrolled in the different programs and have already taken all English subjects in their first and second years. The data collected were summarized, categorized, tabulated and analyzed using frequency counts, percentage and mean. The Cramer's V correlation coefficient was computed to determine the correlation between the independent and dependent variables set at 0.05 level of significance. On the bases of the information and outcomes presented and discussed, the study revealed the following findings: Majority of the third year COED students were 18 to 19 years old (60%), female (67.5%), single (96%), with a monthly family income of Php4,999 and below (56.5%) and have attended in public schools (89.5%). Most of the respondents' fathers attained elementary level (29.5%) while respondents' mothers attained high school level (25.5%). As regards to teachers' performance, outstanding ratings were given to: commitment to teaching ($m = 4.68$); knowledge of subjects ($m = 4.67$); teaching independent learning ($m = 4.76$) and community responsibility ($m = 4.73$). Third year college students obtained satisfactory academic performance ranging from 1.9 - 2.2. (51%) and exhibited a highly favorable attitude with a mean value of 2.47. Consequently, attitudes toward English were found to have no significant bearing to academic performance of third year college students ($r = 0.320$; $p = 0.993$).

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INTRODUCTION

Learning English in school has been a critical issue to almost all teachers handling the subject. It is alarming to teachers because of the fact that many of the students, if not all, are evidently low performers in the English subject. Moreover, these students do not exhibit adequate learning outcome especially when they are tasked to use the language. Many attempts have been made to work on this concern trying to extract the factors or causes of the low proficiency level of students in English. Many conducted studies have been supplementing wise and effective remediation with the problem of students who are poor learners in the language. Also, the curriculum makers and experts of English subjects have implemented many refresher courses, remedial instructions, and other add-on activities to enable the students hurdle the needed competencies in English.

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Tormes (2008) mentioned in the 'Health and Home' magazine that there are many reflective cases of the declining English proficiency among Filipinos. In her article, a study was cited which was conducted by the European Chamber of Commerce. According to the study, 75 percent of the Philippines' annual 400,000 college graduates have sub-standard English skills. Furthermore, Tormes (2008), in the same article, cited the observation of Dr. Edilberto de Jesus, former secretary of the Department of Education, that the ability to understand and speak English is a Waterloo among Filipino nurses.

Undeniably, they perform satisfactorily on required technical and patient-care skills but fail in language, particularly in the Test of Spoken English (TSE) where only 16 percent of the examinees pass. Would-be teachers also display very poor English language skills scoring lowest in English of all tested areas in the licensure examinations. According to Tormes (2008), Gullas, a Cebu representative, mentioned in one of his interviews that Filipino engineers in the Middle East are in risk being dislodged by Indian and Chinese engineers who do not only speak better English, but analyze and write reports in English better.

Business processing and call centers are booming industries these days. However, according to the Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPAP), only less than five percent out of 100 applicants for call center positions are hired because of inadequate English skills. These and more alarming facts are the concrete images of the deterioration of the English proficiency among students as well as graduates. If we talk of possible factors, many of these have been slated down already such as the English teacher, poor teaching methods, inadequate teaching material, the implemented curriculum, and even error-filled books. All of these factors considerably affect learning English.

But have we asked ourselves whether the students like to learn English or not? Do they consider English essential in the totality of its use in life? Why is it that after all the series of remediation and interventions offered to students still they do not learn how to use the language correctly?

Zuki (2008) emphasized in her blog that English is not a foreign language at all. It has been existing for a long time and is being used in almost all kinds of communication like English songs aired through radio stations, English television programs, movies, computer programs, magazines, advertisements, story books, newspapers, etc. However, what makes English still a foreign language to some of us is the attitude toward English language. He also stressed that a learner's attitude toward learning the language and to the language teacher affect one's learning of English. With this note, the researchers are prompted to determine the attitudes of the college students of Eastern Samar State University - Salcedo towards English subjects and its corresponding upshot to their academic performance. Moreover, the researchers believe that, with the findings of this study, this will embark a renewed philosophy to all English teachers to fasten more efforts in teaching the language as well as for students to come up with a cross-check assessment of their reasons why they have to learn English far better.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used survey questionnaires to gather data to 200 randomly selected third year COED students in ESSU Salcedo Campus during the school year 2013-2014. These students were from the different colleges of the campus enrolled in the different programs and have already taken all English subjects in their first and second years. The researchers utilized the stratified sampling procedure in determining the respondents of the study. The researchers ensured all programs offered in undergraduate level of the University were fairly given adequate number of respondents. The study made use of a three part questionnaire. The first part focused on the demographic profile of the students. Part II dealt on the attitude toward English adapted from Shaw and Wright (1967) on "Attitude toward Any School Subject Scale" with a reliability coefficient(r) of 0.81 to 0.90. In addition, Part III centered on the teachers' teaching performance as to their commitment to teaching, knowledge of the subject, teaching independent learning, and their community responsibility. This was based from the institutionalized instrument in evaluating teaching performance.

Prior to the conduct of the study, the researchers conducted a dry run of the questionnaire during the third week of April 2013 at ESSU - Salcedo campus. The data collected were analyzed using percentage, mean, frequency and Cramer's V correlation coefficient.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

It can be noted in Figure 1 that 120 or 60 percent of 200 respondents belonged to the age bracket ranging from 18 to 19 years old. Likewise, there were 56 or 28 percent who were aged 20 to 21 years old and about 24 or 12 percent fell on the age range from 22 years old and above.

Age of Third Year College Students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus during the School Year 2013 - 2014

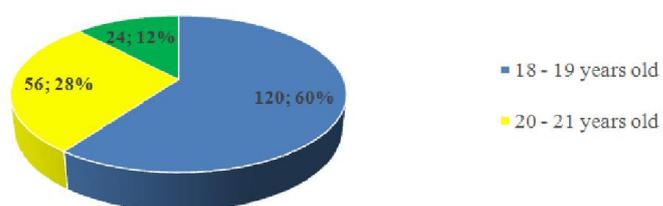


Figure 1.

This implies that majority of the students were adolescents based from Gaylon, *et al.* (2009) and Sadongdong, *et al.* (2010) who categorized 15 to 20 years old as adolescents.

Most of the students were female comprising about 68 percent and about 32 percent were male.

Gender of Third Year College Students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus during the School Year 2013 - 2014

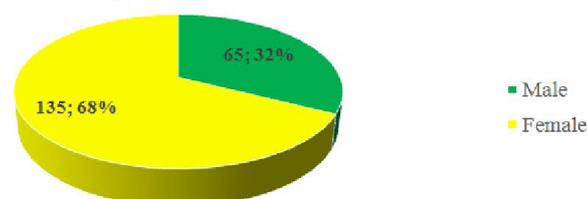


Figure 2.

Figure 3 shows that 96 percent were single students and 4 percent were married students. The result entails that majority of the students enrolled in the university was single.

Figure 4 presents the monthly family income of the respondents. As reflected, majority of the respondents have a monthly family income of Php4, 999 and below comprising 56 percent. Likewise, 26 percent have Php5,000 to Php9,999 monthly family income. Meanwhile, 10 percent of the respondents have an income of Php10,000 to Php14,999. About 4 percent of the students belonged to a family with monthly family income of Php15,000 to Php19,999 and Php20,000 and above.

Marital Status of Third Year College Students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus during the School Year 2013 - 2014

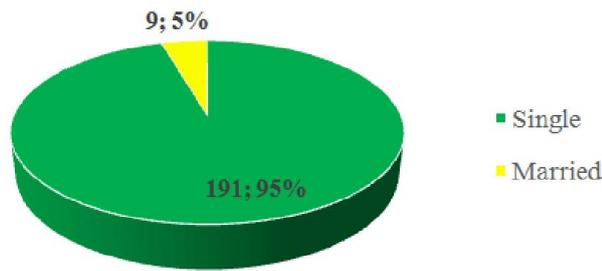


Figure 3.

The result affirms that majority of the third year college students belonged to families below poverty level of economic condition (Philippine Poverty Statistics, 2006 as cited by Cruzos, *et. al.*, 2012).

Monthly Family Income of Third Year College Students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus during the School Year 2013 - 2014

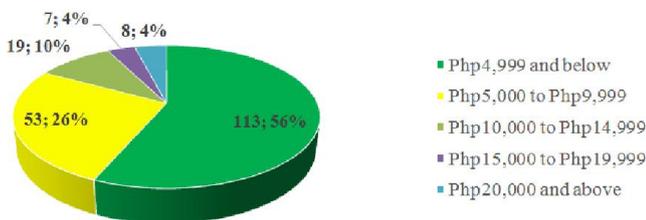


Figure 4.

Figure 5 shows the highest educational attainment of the respondents' fathers. It can be gleaned that 29 percent of the fathers were able to attend elementary level. Moreover, 20 percent reached high school level while 14 percent graduated in the secondary level. About 13 percent of the fathers were able to attain collegiate level while another 13 percent have graduated their baccalaureate degree. Subsequently, 10 percent were said to be elementary graduates and only one percent started studying master's degree.

Highest Educational Attainment of the Fathers of Third Year College Students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus during the School Year 2013 - 2014

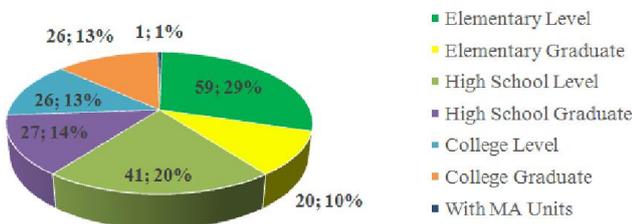


Figure 5.

This suggests that most of the respondents' fathers have just attained elementary level hence, they cannot give sufficient knowledge and proper guidance because of their limited education.

Figure 6 shows the highest educational attainment of the respondents' mothers.

Result shows that 25 percent of the mothers attained high school level and 20 percent have attended elementary level of education. Meanwhile, about 16 percent have completed their secondary level and 13 percent have reached college level. About 13 percent were college graduates and 20 percent achieved elementary level. Likewise, 2 percent have masteral units and 1 percent was a master's degree holder.

Highest Educational Attainment of the Mothers of Third Year College Students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus during the School Year 2013 - 2014

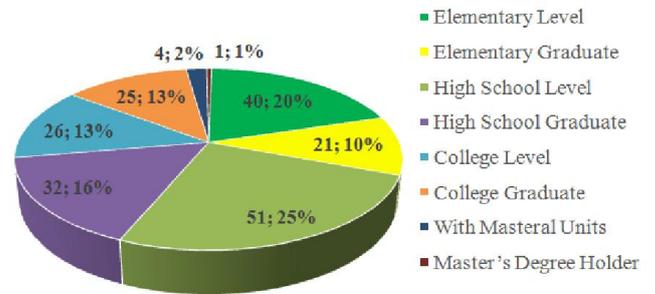


Figure 6.

This implies that most of the respondents' mothers have just achieved high school level. This was supported by Ba-adham (2012) that the role of parents becomes vital to help students overcome apprehensions in learning English. Reflected in Figure 7 is the type of secondary school attended by the respondents. About 90 percent students have attended public schools and 10 percent have studied in private schools.

Type of Secondary School Attended of Third Year College Students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus during the School Year 2013 - 2014

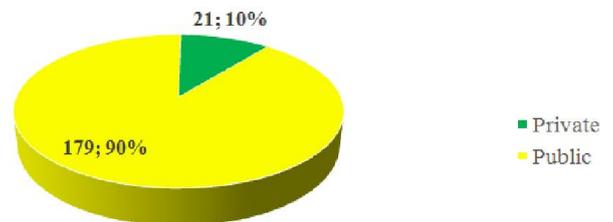


Figure 7.

This explains that majority of the student respondents graduated their secondary level in public schools. This can be justified by their low monthly family income as well as their parent's educational level which then brought realizations of not being able to afford in attending private schools.

Teachers' Teaching Performance

Results suggest that teachers have outstanding commitment to teaching. They are passionate and highly committed to teach in their field. They have outstanding knowledge of subject they are teaching, are experts in their respective discipline and are focused in their specialization. The teachers utilize student centered approach in the teaching learning process.

Moreover, it would be assessed that the faculty in the university are constructivist teachers imposing independent learning to students. This conforms to the latest mandate of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) that all higher education institutions (HEIs) should implement the Outcomes Based Education (OBE).

Likewise, this affirms the constructivist nature of the faculty in this university.

Ba-adham (2012) stressed that teachers can strengthen the rapport among the students and thereby create a comfortable classroom atmosphere wherein meaningful learning can take place.

Table 1. Teachers' Teaching Performance in ESSU - Salcedo Campus, School Year 2013 – 2014

Teachers' Teaching Performance	Mean	Interpretation
Commitment to Teaching	4.68	Outstanding
Knowledge of Subjects	4.67	Outstanding
Teaching Independent Learning	4.76	Outstanding
Community Responsibility	4.73	Outstanding
Grand Mean	4.71	Outstanding

Table 2. Attitudes toward English of Third Year College Students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus, School Year 2013 - 2014

Statement	Mean	Interpretation
1.No matter what happens, English always comes first.	1.77	Favorable
2. I would rather study English than eat.	1.77	Favorable
3. I love to study English subject.	2.71	Highly Favorable
4. English is of great value.	2.80	Highly Favorable
5. English has an irresistible attraction for me.	2.27	Favorable
6. I really enjoy this subject.	2.73	Highly Favorable
7. English is profitable to everybody who takes it.	2.76	Highly Favorable
8. English develops good reasoning ability.	2.86	Highly Favorable
9. English is very practical.	2.66	Highly Favorable
10. Any student who takes English is bound to be benefitted.	2.67	Highly Favorable
11. English teaches me to be accurate.	2.65	Highly Favorable
12. English is a universal subject.	2.92	Highly Favorable
13. English is a good subject.	2.84	Highly Favorable
14. All of our great men studied English.	2.35	Highly Favorable
15. English is a cultural subject.	2.38	Highly Favorable
16. All lessons and all methods used in English are clear and definite.	2.34	Highly Favorable
17. This subject is okay.	2.79	Highly Favorable
18. I am willing to spend my time studying English.	1.61	Less Favorable
19. English is not receiving its due in public high schools	1.92	Favorable
20. English saves time.	1.98	Favorable
21. English is not a bore.	2.66	Highly Favorable
22. English is a good pastime.	2.37	Highly Favorable
23. I do not believe English will do anybody any harm.	1.94	Favorable
24. I am careless in my attitude toward English, but I would like to see this attitude become general.	2.16	Favorable
25. I have not any definite like or dislike for English.	1.97	Favorable
26. English will benefit only the brighter students.	1.43	Less Favorable
27. My parents never had English as a subject; so I see no merit in it.	1.30	Less Favorable
28. I could do very well without English.	2.43	Highly Favorable
29. Mediocre students never take English; so it should be eliminated from schools.	2.67	Highly Favorable
30. The minds of students are not kept active in this subject.	2.60	Highly Favorable
31. I am not interested in this subject.	2.82	Highly Favorable
32. English does not teach you to think.	2.84	Highly Favorable
33. English is very dry.	2.79	Highly Favorable
34. English reminds me of Shakespeare's play – "Much Ado About Nothing."	2.31	Favorable
35. I have no desire for this subject.	2.76	Highly Favorable
36. I have seen no value in this subject.	2.87	Highly Favorable
37. I would not advise anyone to take English as a subject.	2.77	Highly Favorable
38. English is based on "foggy" ideas.	2.36	Highly Favorable
39. English is a waste of time.	2.90	Highly Favorable
40. It is a punishment for anybody to take English	2.89	Highly Favorable
41. English is disliked by all students.	2.83	Highly Favorable
42. I look forward to this subject with horror.	2.71	Highly Favorable
43. I detest English.	2.61	Highly Favorable
44. English is the most undesirable subject taught.	2.60	Highly Favorable
45. I hate English as a subject.	2.87	Highly Favorable
Grand Mean	2.47	Highly Favorable

Moreover, the teachers are outstanding in their community responsibility. This point out that the teachers incorporate different techniques in teaching that promotes cooperation and intensive learning activities to the students.

Attitudes toward English of Third Year College Students

The table shows that the third year students exhibited a highly favorable attitude on the statement "English is a universal subject" with a mean value of 2.92. Meanwhile, a mean value

of 1.30 in the statement "My parents never had English as a subject; so I see no merit in it." signified a less favorable attitude toward English. Finally, a grand mean of 2.47 was manifested from the result which meant that the respondents' attitude toward English is highly favorable. This disproves the claim of Lafaye and Tsuda (2002) in their study that out of 515 students, 67 percent do not like learning English and half of the students who have chosen to take an intensive English course in the program did not like to study English.

Academic Performance

Academic Performance of Third Year College Students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus during the School Year 2013 - 2014

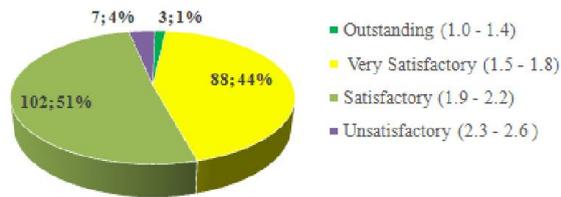


Figure 8.

Figure 8 reveals the academic performance of the college students. It shows that more than half of the respondents (102) or 51 percent obtained satisfactory academic performance ranging from 1.9 - 2.2. Consequently, 88 or 44 percent got a very satisfactory academic performance of 1.5 - 1.8. About 7 or 3.5 percent of the students have a grade point average in all English subjects of 2.3 - 2.6 which is unsatisfactory. Only 3 or 1.5 percent of the third year college students got an outstanding grade of 1.0 - 1.4. This means that the third year college students are average students.

Relationship between Attitudes toward English and Academic Performance

Result shows that attitudes toward English is not significantly correlated to the academic performance of the students with an index of correlation of 0.320 with p -value pegged at 0.993.

This led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between attitudes toward English and academic performance of the students.

This implies that the attitudes of the students have no bearing on their performance in school.

Conclusions

The third year college students in ESSU - Salcedo Campus were still adolescents, dominated by females, single, have attended public secondary schools, whose fathers have attended elementary level and mothers attained high school level and belong to families below poverty level of economic condition.

The faculty members of the university are good classroom performers because of their passion towards their work making themselves available beyond office working hours. They also have expertise in the subject they are teaching with appropriate teaching approach.

The third year college students are average students with high favorable attitude toward English.

Students' attitude towards English has no impact on their academic performance.

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