

Factors Affecting Academic Performance of Students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus, Philippines

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Abstract

The study sought to identify the factors influencing the academic performance of BS Criminology students at Batangas State University–Pablo Borbon Campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also considered the respondents' profile variables, including sex, year level, internet connectivity, student classification, and general weighted average. In addition, the study aimed to determine whether significant differences existed in the factors affecting academic performance when students were grouped according to these profile variables. A descriptive research method was employed, and self-constructed survey questionnaires were administered to selected second-, third-, and fourth-year BS Criminology students, totaling 230 participants. Findings showed that most respondents were female second-year regular students with limited data access and a general weighted average ranging from 1.51 to 1.75. The respondents agreed that the learning environment, teaching strategies, and students' attitudes were the primary factors influencing academic performance. Lastly, the researchers recommended activities designed to address these factors by enhancing student engagement, supporting instructors, and improving institutional online learning quality.

Keywords—academic performance, learning environment, teaching strategies, students' attitude, pandemic

I. INTRODUCTION

Academic performance is a crucial factor in the success of students in higher education. It is widely acknowledged that students' academic performance is influenced by a range of factors such as the learning environment, teaching strategies, and students' attitudes towards learning (Huang et al., 2020). In recent years, there has been growing concern about the academic performance of criminology students in higher education institutions. The low passing rate in the Criminology Licensure Exam highlights the need to identify the factors that affect the academic performance of criminology students to develop effective solutions to improve student learning outcomes.

In recent years, there has been growing concern about the academic performance of criminology students in higher education institutions. A study by Park et al., (2020) found that criminology students had lower academic performance than students in other social science disciplines. Learning environment and teaching strategies significantly impact the academic performance of students (Zhou et al., 2019). A positive learning environment that fosters collaboration, communication, and critical thinking can enhance student engagement and improve academic performance. Similarly, innovative and student-centered teaching strategies that cater to the diverse learning needs of students can enhance their motivation and learning outcomes.

According to a report by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), only 42.96 percent of BS Criminology

students in the Philippines passed the Criminology Licensure Exam in 2020 (CHED, 2021). The low passing rate highlights the need to identify the factors that affect the academic performance of BS Criminology students to develop effective solutions to improve student learning outcomes.

The challenges faced by criminology students are multifaceted and complex. These challenges may include poor internet connectivity, lack of devices, financial problems, and psychological stress (Aljarrah et al., 2021). Criminology students according to Espino (2020) have demanding schedules due to their internship requirements, which affect their academic performance.

In addition, Naser et al., (2020) stated that the challenges faced by criminology students, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about unprecedented disruptions to the education system, which have affected students across all levels of education worldwide. The sudden shift to remote learning as explained by Lai et al., (2020) has posed significant challenges to educators and students alike, as they navigate a new digital landscape that demands new skills and strategies for effective teaching and learning. The pandemic has also exacerbated pre-existing inequalities in education, with students from low-income backgrounds and marginalized communities disproportionately affected by the shift to online learning (UNESCO, 2020). As a result, the pandemic has highlighted the urgent need for educators and policymakers to address these issues and develop innovative solutions to ensure that all students have access to quality education in the face of future crises.

One of the most significant challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic is the digital divide, which refers to the gap between individuals and communities that have access to digital technologies and those that do not. The sudden shift to remote learning has exposed the stark reality of this divide, as students from low-income backgrounds and marginalized communities struggle to access online resources and participate in virtual classes.

Moreover, the lack of access to digital devices and reliable internet connection has exacerbated existing inequalities in education, as students who are unable to attend online classes may fall behind their peers and experience academic setbacks (Chen & Sun, 2020). To address this issue, educators and policymakers must develop strategies to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all students have access to the necessary technologies and resources to support their learning. This may include providing students with devices and internet connectivity, as well as developing innovative solutions such as mobile learning and community-based learning centers to support students who are unable to attend online classes.

In addition to the challenges of remote learning, the Covid-19 pandemic has also had a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of students. The pandemic has caused widespread anxiety and stress, which has had a negative impact on students' ability to learn and perform academically. According to Loades et al., (2020) pandemic has had a significant impact on the mental health of students, with many reporting higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also brought about significant changes in teaching and learning strategies, as educators adapt to the new digital landscape and explore new ways of engaging students in online environments. While online learning has the potential to enhance flexibility and accessibility in education. Zhang et al., (2020) stated that it also poses significant challenges, particularly in terms of maintaining student engagement and motivation. Moreover, the sudden shift to online learning has highlighted the need for educators to develop new skills and competencies to effectively deliver online instruction, such as digital literacy and online pedagogy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a massive disruption to the education sector worldwide. Higher education institutions have had to rapidly adjust to remote learning to ensure the continuity of learning for students. BS Criminology students have not been spared from these changes, as they have had to adjust to new teaching and learning strategies during the pandemic. The sudden shift to remote learning has raised concerns about the quality of education received by students, especially in programs such as criminology that require hands-on training.

The changes brought about by the pandemic have highlighted the need for educators to re-evaluate their teaching strategies and explore new ways of engaging students in online environments. This need is particularly crucial in BS Criminology programs, where practical and hands-on training is essential. Criminology students are expected to develop skills in crime scene investigation, evidence collection, and forensic analysis, among others, which require access to specialized equipment and facilities (National Crime Agency,

2021). The transition to remote learning has made it challenging to provide students with access to these resources, which could potentially affect the quality of their learning experience.

Based on the UNESCO report in 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities in the education sector, with disadvantaged students being disproportionately affected. This has been particularly evident in the case of BS Criminology students, where the challenges of online learning have been compounded by limited access to technology and internet connectivity, financial problems, and psychological stress. These factors have negatively impacted the academic performance of criminology students during the pandemic (Aljarrah et al., 2021).

In addition, the pandemic has disrupted the internship requirements for BS Criminology students, which is a crucial component of their training. The internship provides students with the opportunity to gain practical experience in the field and develop essential skills that cannot be obtained through theoretical learning alone. Espino (2020) expounded that due to the pandemic, many internships have been canceled or postponed, leaving students without the opportunity to gain practical experience. This disruption could potentially affect the employability of criminology graduates, as practical experience is highly valued by employers in the criminal justice sector.

The aim of this study is to investigate the factors that impact the academic performance of BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus. The study will focus on the learning environment, teaching strategies, and students' attitudes towards learning. While classroom-based teaching and learning is the most conventional approach, students today face a range of challenges that can negatively impact their academic performance, such as poor internet connection, lack of devices, financial problems, and psychological stress. By identifying and analyzing these challenges, the study aims to develop effective solutions that can improve student learning outcomes.

In addition, this research can help teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching methods and make necessary improvements to support the students' learning. Ultimately, the study aims to provide BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus with a better understanding of their academic status and to encourage them to actively participate in class, which can lead to improved academic performance. Additionally, the study aims to provide quality education for BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus and maintain a positive teacher-student relationship.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study is mainly focused on the factors affecting academic performance of BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus amid COVID-19 pandemic.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:

1.1 sex;

- 1.2 year level;
- 1.3 internet connectivity;
- 1.4 type of students; and
- 1.5 GWA?
2. How may the factors affecting the academic performance of students be described in terms of:
 - 2.1 learning environment;
 - 2.2 teaching strategies; and
 - 2.3 students' attitude;
3. Is there a significant difference on the factors affecting the academic performance of BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus when grouped according to profile variables?
4. What activity may be proposed to address the factors affecting the academic performance of BS Criminology students?

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The main purpose of this study is to determine the factors affecting the academic performance of BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus.

As defined by Calderon (2006), descriptive research is a purposive process of gathering, analyzing, classifying, and tabulating data about prevailing conditions, practices, processes, trends, and cause-effect relationships and then making adequate and accurate interpretation about such data with or without or sometimes minimal aid of statistical methods. Also, this method ascertains prevailing conditions of facts in a group under study that gives either qualitative or quantitative, or both, descriptions of the general characteristics of the group as results. According to Aggarwal (2008), descriptive research is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation. This type of research method is not simply amassing and tabulating facts but includes proper analyses, interpretation, comparisons, identification of trends and relationships.

The researchers utilized the descriptive method of research to describe certain and present conditions, involving adequate and accurate interpretation of findings and explore the cause and effect of a particular condition. Relatively, the method of research is appropriate in the present study since it aims to determine the factors affecting the academic performance of BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus. In terms of approach, the researchers used a quantitative approach, as it focused on obtaining numerical findings using self-constructed questionnaire. The researchers opted to use this kind of research method considering that the data may provide rational conclusions and recommendations for the study.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study are the BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus, totaling 230 students. The researchers chose this group because they represent the population of interest for the study. The study aims to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, year level, internet connectivity, type of students, and GWA. This information helped in understanding how the

different factors affect academic performance in relation to the students' characteristics and learning environment.

The number of respondents was determined using a stratified random sampling method. The researchers divided the BS Criminology students into their respective year levels and selected a proportional number of respondents from each level. This ensured that the sample accurately represented the population of BS Criminology students at the Pablo Borbon Campus.

To determine the actual respondents, the researchers distributed a survey questionnaire to the selected students. The questionnaire was designed to collect data on the respondents' profile, learning environment, teaching strategies, and attitudes towards learning. The researchers collected the completed questionnaires and used the data to analyze the factors that affect academic performance among BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

Year Level	Population	Number of Respondents
Second Year	223	90
Third Year	197	80
Fourth Year	148	60
Total	568	230

Data Gathering Instruments

In connection with the descriptive method, the researchers used a self-constructed questionnaire as the major tool in gathering the necessary data.

Self-constructed Questionnaire. This data gathering instrument was used as the major tool to gather data from BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus. The questionnaire is composed of two (2) parts. The initial part of the questionnaire was composed of items which determined the profile variables of the respondents in terms of sex, year level, internet connectivity, type of students and GWA.

The second part of the questionnaire was composed of items that determined how may the factors affecting the academic performance of students be described in terms of learning environment, teaching strategies and students' attitude.

The questionnaire was validated by presenting it to the adviser, panel members, chairman, grammarian and statistician. To test its reliability, a dry run survey was facilitated to 30 respondents coming from first year to third year BS Criminology students of academic year 2021-2022 of Westmead International School. Using Cronbach's Alpha, the questionnaire had a reliability of 0.937 which indicates that the questionnaire is consistent and reliable.

Right after the reliability test, the researchers proceeded to conduct the actual survey in Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus with 230 respondents coming from second year to fourth year BS Criminology students. After the distribution, the researchers explained the content and the purpose of their study. Questions raised by the respondents

were politely addressed. Furthermore, respondents are informed that all of their responses are treated with utmost confidentiality and such treated for academic purposes only.

The following scale presented below was used to fulfill the objectives of this study. The researchers used the four-point scale where four (4) was considered as the highest and one (1) as the lowest. The appropriate range, together with the corresponding verbal interpretations was taken into consideration to interpret the data that was obtained.

Scale	Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.50 – 4.00	Strongly Agree
3	2.50 – 3.49	Agree
2	1.50 – 2.49	Disagree
1	1.00 – 1.49	Strongly Disagree

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Profile of the Respondents

1.1 Sex. The majority of the respondents are females with a frequency of 146 out of 230 or 63.48 percent of the total number of respondents. On the other hand, males have a frequency of 84 or 36.52 percent only of the respondents.

1.2 Year level. The majority of the respondents are first year students with a frequency of 90 out of 230 or 39.13 percent of the total number of respondents. Then, it was followed by the second-year students with a frequency of 80 or 34.78 percent of the respondents. Lastly, 60 or 26.09 percent of the respondents are third year students.

1.3 Internet connectivity. Most of the respondents have a limited data subscription with a frequency of 150 or 65.22 percent of the total numbers of respondents. It was followed by those who have adequate data subscription with a frequency of 73 or 31.74 percent. Then, it was followed by those who have inadequate data subscription having a frequency of 4 or 1.74 percent. Lastly, 3 or 1.30 percent of the respondents have other types of internet connectivity.

1.4 Type of student. Most of the respondents are regular in the distribution of respondents in terms of type of student with a frequency of 227 or 98.70 percent of the respondents. While the remaining respondents with a frequency of 3 or 1.30 percent belong to irregular types of students.

1.5 General weighted average. The majority of the of the respondents got a general weighted average of 1.51-1.75 with a highest frequency of 93 or 40.43 percent of the total number of respondents. Then, 2.01-2.25 general weighted average got a middle frequency of 8 or 3.48 percent. Lastly, there is no student who got 2.51-2.75 or 2.76-3.00 general weighted average among the respondents.

2. Descriptions of Factors Affecting the Academic Performance of Students

2.1 Learning environment. The study found that the respondents generally perceived the learning environment in

the online classes as satisfactory. Specifically, they found the following aspects of the learning environment to be agreeable: availability of learning resources, ease of access to online learning materials, and adequacy of support from instructors. However, the respondents also identified several challenges in the online learning environment, including internet connectivity issues, difficulty in staying focused during online classes, and limited opportunities for interaction with instructors and peers.

2.2 Teaching strategies. The study revealed that the teaching strategies utilized by the instructors were perceived by the respondents to be generally effective in facilitating their academic performance in online classes. Specifically, the respondents agreed on the following teaching strategies: the use of virtual classrooms for synchronous classes and dissemination of learning materials; utilization of other social media platforms for convenient and fast communication with students; incorporation of highly interactive strategies such as game-based activities, open chat box, jam board, and opening of the camera and microphone for class participation; and providing timely, specific, and concrete feedback on learning tasks and assignments.

On the other hand, the respondents also suggested areas for improvement, such as the need for the integration of multiple modalities in teaching and the use of online quiz websites to further enhance their learning experience.

2.3 Students' attitude. The study revealed that the respondents generally had a positive attitude towards online learning, with most aspects of their attitudes towards online learning being perceived as agreeable. Specifically, the respondents agreed that they develop time management and self-discipline in completing their assignments, review their lessons at least once a week, are motivated to attend and listen attentively in online classes, ask questions to their instructors for clarification during discussions, believe that learning with others is more effective than learning on their own, participate actively in online classes, answer major examinations with honesty and integrity, pay attention in class in order to take any important notes, and review the next lessons prior to the time they are to be discussed. However, the respondents disagreed that they don't feel shy to share their insight during class discussion although they are sure of their answer.

3. Difference on the Factors Affecting the Academic Performance of BS Criminology students of Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus when Grouped according to their Profile Variables.

The following are the results of the study: Female students perceived the use of virtual classroom, use of other social media platforms, provision of pre- and post-session learning resources, and employment of different online quiz websites to be more significant compared to their male counterparts. This implies that gender plays a role in how students perceive certain factors that impact their academic performance.

Further, the study found a significant difference in the factors affecting academic performance of students across different year levels. Students in the third- and fourth-year

levels perceived the use of virtual classroom, provision of pre- and post-session learning resources, and integration of multiple modalities to be more significant compared to students in the first- and second-year levels. This suggests that as students' progress to higher year levels, they may have higher expectations and preferences for certain factors in their learning environment that could impact their academic performance.

Moreover, there was no significant difference in the factors affecting academic performance based on age. This implies that regardless of age, students in the BS Criminology program at Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus may have similar perceptions and preferences for factors that impact their academic performance.

There was no significant difference in the factors affecting academic performance based on civil status. This implies that regardless of their civil status, students in the program may have similar perceptions and preferences for factors that impact their academic performance.

There was no significant difference in the factors affecting academic performance based on employment status. This implies that whether students are employed or not, they may have similar perceptions and preferences for factors that impact their academic performance.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the given findings, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Majority of the respondents were female- second year students, regular type of student having limited data subscription who obtained 1.51-1.75 general weighted average.

2. The factors affecting academic performance of BS Criminology students at Batangas State University - Pablo Borbon Campus include preparedness for online learning, access to resources, self-discipline and time management skills, motivation and engagement in online classes, and attitudes towards learning. Interventions such as technical support, access to resources, time management strategies, and fostering positive attitudes towards learning can help improve students' academic performance in online learning environments. The study also found that gender and year level affect academic performance, while age, civil status, and employment status doesn't have significant differences on academic performance.

3. There is a significant difference in the learning environment and teaching strategies of BS Criminology students when grouped according to their year level.

4. The proposed activities aimed to address the identified factors affecting the academic performance of BS Criminology students by promoting student engagement, providing support for instructors, and improving the quality of online learning at the institutional level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions generated from the study:
The study's findings lead to the following recommendations:

1. Implement the proposed activities in collaboration with Batangas State University-Pablo Borbon Campus to help improve BS Criminology students' academic performance.
2. Educators should foster a supportive, student-centered learning environment and use varied online teaching strategies to encourage active participation.
3. Instructors need proper training and support to effectively handle technology and resolve online-related issues.
4. Schools should enhance their technical resources and help underprivileged students access digital tools, such as by partnering with telecom companies to provide E-sim cards.
5. Students should communicate any major difficulties they experience during online classes so instructors can address them appropriately.

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