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Physical, Social And Economic Conditions Of Off-Campus Student Residences: A Home Away From Home?

Matilde L. Malana, Billy S. Javier

Abstract—The safety and welfare of the University students of Cagayan State University is the primary concern of the Office of the Student Development and Welfare (OSDW). The need to determine the profile and status of the boarding houses was the main objective of this study including the profile of the student-boarders as well as the status on the physical, social and environmental condition of the private student residences in Aparri Cagayan Philippines. Descriptive-survey method was employed involving 1,503 Filipino university student-boarders enrolled for the school year 2015-2016. Secondary data were taken through document reviews and interviews to residence owners. In general, student-boarders come to an agreement that the private boarding houses or student residences in terms of physical, social, and economic are in good condition. Basic amenities were provided, but in a limited extent. On social conditions, harmonious relationship among boarders, and with homeowners is practiced. Economically, boarding houses in Aparri were found affordable and additional charges are reasonable. Hence, the private boarding houses or student residences in Aparri proved to be a home away from home. It is recommended that the relevant student affairs office should regularly monitor all boarding houses in coordination with the Local Government Units for stronger alliance and legal support.

Index Terms— boarding house, economic condition, Filipino, student-boarders, student services, student residences, student welfare, university students.

1 INTRODUCTION

College students from far place usually resort to stay in temporary dwellings or housing facilities known as boarding houses (Arana, n.d.), (Navarez, 2017). In the Philippines, the national policy and program guidelines for the operation and maintenance of dormitories and boarding houses has been enunciated in senate bill no. 1113 by Sen. Manny Villar (Villar, 2012) (Arana, n.d.). Like any other higher education institutions in the Philippines, Cagayan State University at Aparri caters students not only from municipality of Aparri, but also nearby municipalities, nearby provinces of Kalinga, Apayao, Isabela, and Batanes. The campus student population has enormously increased, home to a population of more than 5,000, and about 43 percent of the total population stays in boarding house near the campus (Cagayan State University, 2014). These students necessarily seek second home, boarding house for them to stay during school days and even weekends for those who cannot go home because of weekend classes and those who had difficulty on providing their fare back and forth. Students who are from nearby municipalities and even from Aparri, especially those from the other side of the river, having night classes also resort of boarding in the campus dormitory or private boarding houses nearby the campus. The municipality of Aparri requires permit to these private boarding houses to ensure the safety of student boarders. As per record of the municipality, only few boarding houses are duly registered. The barangay officials of Maura also conducted meetings for boarding house owners to discuss health, sanitation and safety measures as their way of monitoring boarding houses in the barangay.

According to (Brilantes, et al., 2012), (Reyes II, 2016), most boarding house operators agree that the requirements set by the Business Bureau, Engineering Department and the Fire Department are not reasonable, requiring expensive equipment and high fees aside from the alleged misdemeanors of some fire department officers. Reports in the Philippines reveal that, as temporary dwellings to most students, these boarding houses or dormitories or residence halls most of the time fail to consider the provisions of the basic and other facilities that will meet the various needs of the occupants (Villar, 2008). The physical and environmental attributes of these temporary shelters could influence the holistic well-beings of the students. According to the study of Sagarino, et. al. (2000), student boarders reveal that their stay in a boarding house has significant contributions to students' personal, social, academic and emotional growth, but has nothing to do with the development of his/her spirituality. The location and condition of these boarding houses vary according to availability, capacity of parents to pay and choice of parents and students. In most cases, students choose the boarding house they prefer to stay. Although neither schools have control over these places nor have influence to the choices of the students for these boarding houses, it is necessary that school administrators must be informed of the conditions so that they can anticipate problems that may possibly occur. As a result, preventive and proactive measures may be addressed. The study aimed at determining the status of private boarding houses or student residences in Aparri Philippine taking into considerations the socio-economic profile of the student-boarders, the profile of the private boarding houses in Aparri and the social, economic, and physical conditions of these housing facilities for the students of CSU Aparri (Figure 1.0) It is the concern of the Office of the Student Services and Welfare to monitor whether the student boarding houses are sanitary, safe and secured as to their physical, social and economic conditions making sure that the boarding houses of CSU-Aparri students should be a home, and not just a place to stay at.

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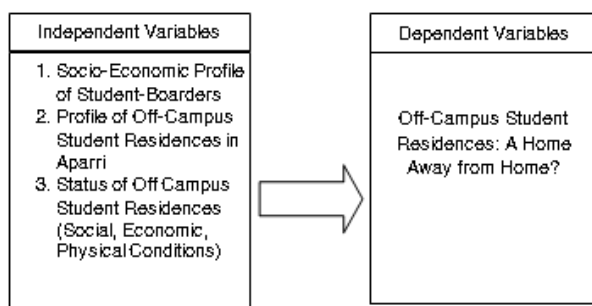


Fig. 1.0 Conceptual Framework of the Study

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

The study made use of descriptive-survey design integrating qualitative information to quantitative analysis of the data. This study was conducted at Cagayan State University Aparri Campus.

2.2 Research Participants

Participants to the study were Filipino University students who were enrolled during the school year 2015-2016 from the seven colleges of the Campus offering undergraduate programs. A prior basic survey among all the students consented during the first semester 2015-2016 was done towards the identification of final participants living in private boarding houses. Total enumeration of 1503 student-boarders was then considered in this study excluding those students who were living with their relatives as well as those in the dormitories.

2.3 Data Collection Tools and Procedure

The modified survey-questionnaire based from related literatures and employing a 5-point Likert scale was the main tool used in gathering the data needed. The questionnaire was content validated and undergone a test-retest reliability test with computer Cronbach alpha values of 0.88. After prior written consent from the office of the Campus Executive Officer and the Office of the College Deans, the questionnaires were personally administered by the researchers with the assistance of Campus Student Government leaders to ensure 100 percent retrieval. Before filling out the questionnaires, the objectives of the study were presented and consequently, the respondents' consent to be participants was solicited. Responses elicited through the survey were validated with casual interviews to some respondents. More so, ocular visits and documentary reviews to purposively selected boarding houses were also conducted to validate some claims of the student boarders with the assistance of local officials.

2.4 Data Analysis

Using applicable tool, data were tabulated, analyzed and presented through frequency counts, percentages, standard deviation, and weighted means. The 5-point Likert scale to interpret the physical, social, and environmental conditions of the student residences or private boarding houses has been used with 5 as "Strongly Agree" to 1 as "Strongly Disagree".

3 RESULTS

3.1. Socio-Economic Profile of the Student-Boarders

Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of student boarders as to sex. Male student boarders (57.42 percent) predominates female boarders. Colleges with night classes include College of Criminal Justice Administration and College of Business Entrepreneurship and Accountancy. There are more males than females in the Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Bachelor of Science in Police Administration having night classes with their part time teachers, the practitioners, who are mostly lawyers that come from their respective offices after office hours.

TABLE 1. DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO SEX

Sex	Frequency n=1,503	Percentage
Male	863	57.42%
Female	640	42.58%

Student-boarders come from different municipalities. Those who come from Buguey (13.04 percent) and Lal-lo (12.97 percent) comprise the greatest number of student boarders. Upon looking at the list coming from the registrar, these students come from inner barangays of those municipalities and are taking courses with night classes. Respondents from the farthest municipalities, Solana and Alcala, though so near to CSU Andrews and Carig, are those enrolled in Bachelor of Science in Fisheries (BSF) with only CSU-Aparri offering said courses. Majority of participants' parents (45.38%) earn meager amount of Php 10,000 and below. Most of the students were recipients of financial assistance because their parents could hardly send them to school and provide their school needs. However, 33.37 percent parents were earning an income above 25,000. A substantial number of CSU Aparri students are also sons and daughters of government employees, OFWs and

TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO PARENTS' MONTHLY INCOME

Parents' Income	Frequency n=1,503	%
below Php 10,000	682	45.38
Php 10,001 - 15,000	116	7.72
Php 15,001 - 20,000	109	7.52
Php 20,001 - 25,000	89	5.92
Above Php 25,000	507	33.73
Mean	Php 16,246.00	
SD	1,095	

businessman in which their income could suffice the needs of their children in school. This results jives with a high mean of 16,246 with standard deviation of 1,095. Criminology students occupy the outnumbered other participants (24.42 %), followed by the Accounting Technology/ Business and Accountancy students (21.96%). This result is attributed to the fact that said courses offer night classes with the practitioners coming from outside agencies like lawyers and accountants. Hence, those who could hardly travel home resorting to stay in boarding houses. The short one-hour afternoon break results to most participants (53.09 %) not to cook their food but instead they eat outside. A substantial percentage (55.14 %) of the participants eat in food stalls in and outside the Campus premises other than the school canteen. Upon interview to some student-boarders, they opt to eat in the food stalls and not from the school canteen because they avoid the very long queue during

peak hour for lunch as they fear being late for the afternoon session. Upon casual interview, student-boarders (46.91%) cooked in group with their board mates and they consider it cheaper and can eat their unlimited viands of their own preference.

3.2. Profile of the Student-Boarders' Boarding House

Proximity and location were two of the major reasons why respondents chose their current boarding house/dormitory (Lindsey, 2008). More than half of the student boarders or 59.41 percent are homing near the campus. Such choice of boarding eases students financially as they just walk to and from their boarding house to the campus.

TABLE 3 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO PROXIMATE DISTANCE TO SCHOOL

Boarding house if walking distance to the school	Frequency n=1,503	%
Yes	893	59.41
No	610	40.59

Majority of the student-boarders (97.21 percent) occupy a room with board mates. This means that students just afford to be a bed spacer than occupying the whole room which entails higher boarding fee.

TABLE 4 DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS' BOARDING HOUSE AS TO THE MODE OF OCCUPANCY

Are you occupying the whole room?	Frequency n=1,503	%
Yes	42	2.79
No	1,461	97.21

The size of the student boarder's room mostly measures 4.0 x 3.0 meters, that is 54.36 percent. Based from interviews, their room is big but is composed of many beds which are oftentimes double decker. Some are occupying small rooms (15.65 percent) and 14.97 percent occupy 1.5 x 2.5 m and 2.5 x 2.5 m respectively. This is true to houses in which they spare their small rooms for boarders, converting their dwellings into a boarding house. As shown in table 5, bedrooms of 5 to 6 boarders has the greatest percentage, 31.94 percent. This further supports the size of most bedrooms in the preceding table, 4.0 x 3.0 meters contains 5 to 6 beds in a room.

TABLE 5 DISTRIBUTION OF BOARDING HOUSE AS NO. OF BEDS IN A ROOM

Number of beds in a room	Frequency n=1,503	Percent Distribution
1 – 2	261	17.37
3 – 4	346	23.02
5 – 6	480	31.94
7 – 8	295	19.63
9 – 10	121	8.05

Although some student boarders occupy a bed with companion, majority of student boarders (82.17 percent) occupy a single bed.

TABLE 6 DISTRIBUTION OF BOARDING HOUSE AS TO NO. OF OCCUPANCY IN A BED

Number of occupant/s in a bed	Frequency n=1,503	%
1	1,235	82.17
2	186	12.38
3	82	5.45

The boarding houses charged boarding fee depending on the type of the boarding house. The prevailing boarding fee nearby the campus is 550 to 650 pesos, which is 64.07percent of the student boarders' responses. The average boarding fee under study is 617 pesos with standard deviation of 17.61. It is affordable compared to boarding fee of students who are enrolled in Andrews, Carig and Sanchez Mira.

TABLE 7 DISTRIBUTION OF BOARDING HOUSE AS TO MONTHLY BOARDING FEE

Monthly Boarding Fee	Frequency	%
450-550	230	15.30
551-650	963	64.07
651-750	179	11.91
751 and above	121	8.05
Mean	617	
SD	17.61	

Majority of student boarders (93.01 percent) are paying add-ons on their available gadgets in the boarding house. Most students now own technology gadgets to aid learning (Javier, Anxiety, Computer Self-Efficacy, and Attitudes towards the Internet among Cagayan State University Students, 2015). Appliances such as electric fans, television, electric stove, etc. consume so much current, therefore student-boarders have to pay additional charge. Even laptops are included in the add-ons because students usually used them not only for their studies but also for watching movies and playing their favorite games. Most boarding houses (91.62 percent) charge 50-74 pesos add-ons per gadget per month. Only 571 or 37.99 percent of the student boarders had accomplished a written contract with the boarding house owners. This means that the policies and regulations that student boarders are bound to are only given to few student boarders. Most student boarders (62.01 percent) only received regulations and policies orally as they enter in the boarding house including constant reminders from the boarding house owners.

TABLE 8 DISTRIBUTION OF BOARDING HOUSE AS TO PRESENCE OF WRITTEN TERMS/CONTRACT

Presence of Written Terms/Contract	Frequency n=1,503	Percent Distribution
Yes	571	37.00
No	932	62.01

3.3. Perceptions of the Current Status of Boarding Houses

Generally, student boarders agree that their boarding house is in good condition (4.17). They strongly agree (4.3) that their boarding house is convenient and safe for living. They agree (4.07) that their comfort rooms, kitchen, laundry and living area are also in good condition, being the lowest because they share the area with their board mates.

TABLE 9 SELF-PERCEIVED ASSESSMENT ON THE PHYSICAL CONDITIONS OF PRIVATE BOARDING HOUSE

Status	Weighted Mean	Description
1. The house structure is convenient and safe for living.	4.33	Strongly Agree
2. The house has good comfort rooms, kitchen, laundry and living area.	4.07	Agree
3. The house is not easily flooded during heavy rain and the location is accessible.	4.12	Agree
4. There is strict implementation and observation of proper sanitation.	4.12	Agree
5. The house is provided with enough water supply.	4.22	Strongly Agree
Over-all Weighted Mean	4.17	Agree

On the social condition of Filipino students in their boarding house, they strongly agree that there is pleasant and harmonious relationship between them and the boarding house owners (4.26) and also among student boarders (4.21). There is close monitoring of boarding house owners to the student boarders, especially those living in the house type of boarding house. They fairly agree (3.38) on the conduct of meeting or consultation among boarders. The informal communication is most practice than the formal meeting to all boarders.

TABLE 10 PERCEIVED ASSESSMENT OF THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF BOARDING HOUSE

Status	W. Mean	Description
1. Relationship between the owner and the boarders is pleasant.	4.26	Strongly Agree
2. There is good/harmonious relationship among boarders	4.21	Strongly Agree
3. The policies and regulations of the boarding house are clear and acceptable.	4.19	Agree
4. Meeting and/or consultations among boarders are done periodically.	3.38	Fairly Agree
5. There is social networking or bonding activities among student boarders.	3.98	Agree
Over-all Weighted Mean	4.00	Agree

Student boarders agree that the cost of payment on the rental/dorm fee of their boarding house is affordable (4.13). This is much lower than the boarding fee of students in other CSU campuses in Tuguegarao City, wherein they charge one thousand and above boarding fee per head. Only few, boarding house serve meals to student boarders, so they fairly agree (3.35) on the accessibility and the availability of food service in their boarding house. However, they avail their food in the nearby canteen or "carinderia". They also agree (3.93) that payment for additional gadget is reasonable, that is they pay not more than seventy pesos per gadget.

TABLE 11 PERCEIVED ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE BOARDING HOUSE

Status	Weighted Mean	Description
1. Cost of payment on rental/dorm fee is affordable.	4.13	Agree
2. Food services are available/accessible to boarders.	3.35	Fairly Agree
3. Payment for additional charges/gadget is reasonable.	3.93	Agree
4. Facilities for studying are conveniently available.	3.97	Agree
5. Proper maintenance schedule is observed.	3.84	Agree
Over-all Weighted Mean	3.84	Agree

4 DISCUSSIONS

Student-boarders boarding in Aparri from different municipalities were mostly male and were enrolled in Criminology and Business and Accounting Technology courses especially offered as night classes. Majority were boarding near the school and were occupying a single bed in a room of 5 to 6 board mates. With the minimal earnings of their parents, respondents view their boarding fee and add-ons equitable to pay. In general, the physical status of boarding houses is in good condition, convenient, and safe for living. There exists a pleasant and harmonious relationship between and among the student-boarders as well as the owners and among student-boarders. On the economic side, the cost of payment on the rental fee of their boarding house is affordable and reasonable including add-ons. In this study, more male students stay in private boarding houses than females. This is attributed with the greater number of criminology students enrolled in the Campus (Javier, 2019). The findings contradict with (Reyes II, 2016) were females dominate staying in boarding. Students from far flung areas board in the area due to distance and convenience as mentioned in the findings of Arana, n.d. Meanwhile, the findings reveal similar to (Brilantes, et al., 2012) of the proximity and location as major reasons why students prefer to stay in boarding houses or dormitories. Saving cost of rentals, most student prefer to share rented room with co-boarders rather than occupying the whole room alone. While the current findings presents the appreciation of having a good physical conditions of their boarding houses, the findings contradict with the level of satisfaction mentioned by (Navarez, 2017). The appreciation of the respondents on the good physical conditions was found similar in the findings of Brilantes, et al., recognizing the good basic housing facilities in Davao City.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The private boarding houses in the area were generally valued to be in good conditions physically, economically, and along social aspects. Hence, considering affordability, convenience, and safety, it is concluded that the private boarding houses at Aparri proved to be a home away from home.

6. RECOMMENDATION

From the findings, it is recommended that the local government unit should continually conduct monitoring and regulating private boarding houses as to the implementation of the provisions stipulated in the Building Code of the Philippines. Likewise, the student-boarders must consider the responsibilities and liabilities accompanying their freedom as boarders. In addition, parents or guardians should regularly monitor their children's situation in the boarding houses. More so, a study may look after the relationship between academic performances of

students vis-à-vis living conditions in the boarding houses. Finally, with the administration of Cagayan State University, it is recommended that the office of the student services and welfare should regularly monitor all boarding houses in coordination with the Local Government Unit of Aparri for stronger alliance and legal support.

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