

Students Crossing River to Get Education: Lived Experiences

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ABSTRACT

Students cross rivers in order to get education is not a common situation. With this, the study seeks to describe the lived experiences of students who cross rivers in order to get education and the benefits of living in this area. Phenomenological research design was employed in this study. The participants were interviewed using a semi-structure interview guide. Once the data were collected, the answers were analyzed into themes and were verified by the participants in order to have reliability. The results have shown that participants have experienced positive and negative things in living across, near or far a river. They have significantly stated the benefits of living in it as well as the challenges they have faced in going to school. They have also specified their coping means of overcoming these challenges. By this, the study suggests on teachers implementing CSDPA or Communicating Students in Danger Prone Areas. Moreover, the study also suggests on the assistance, monitoring and strict monitoring on the preservation of water in the river.

Keywords: Education, lived experiences, students crossing river, river

INTRODUCTION

Education is a valuable gift students need making them cross boundaries to achieve it. Parents send their children to school despite the challenges they would face for they believed that education is the only gift they could give to them. They also believed that education is the key to alleviate and solve poverty (United Nations, 2020). Schools may have provided safety to students but when they travel towards home, dangers could occur (National Institute of Justice, 2016). With this, natural calamity could occur which makes students susceptible to danger.

Rivers are important for they provide habitat to freshwater organisms leading them to diversify and propagate (Mendoza-Carranza, M., et. al, 2020). Rivers have also protected animals and plants together with the other freshwater bodies (Davies, et. al., 2007). Rivers are also used for transportation, livelihood and source of freshwater to humans. There are many benefits of living near the river however there could be danger such as the health impact when the water is polluted with heavy metals, fecal coliform and bacteria. There are also occurrences of flash floods and rapid currents making them dangerous to live beside, near, or even cross it especially during typhoons and thunderstorms.

Moreover, students have varying challenges they have met in order to have education. Some students struggle with education due to their low financial status or income and their skin color (Gray, 2013). Some struggle for their lack of food and poor health conditions (Bruening, 2017). In the Philippines, there are also cases in which students are verbally abused and who coped up through silence (Esteban, 2006). This is a sad reality however students make an effort to study hard despite the challenges may it be due to financial, cultural or due to natural calamity.

Along with these ideas, this study seeks to ask on what is the lived experiences of students who cross rivers in order to get education and the benefits of living in this area. More over the main goal of this study is to provide awareness on the students' struggles in order for the teachers to understand their students

better and the government to create policies and projects that would help these students with their struggles. Through this study, students will also be aware of the importance of freshwater bodies and their role in the balance of ecosystems. This could help students and the community to be awake and to be part of conservation efforts regarding freshwater and marine ecosystems.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study asked on what is the lived experiences of students who cross rivers in order to get education. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the challenges faced and solutions done by the students in crossing rivers to go to school?
2. What sanitary or health issues the students encountered
3. What are the advantages of living near a freshwater ecosystem?
4. What recommendations can be made?

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Research Design

This study will use qualitative research design specifically a phenomenological approach. Phenomenological approach focuses on the similarities of the lived experiences in a specific group or class in order to generate a description of the phenomenon's nature (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, this study will also use scientific inquiry that aims in coming up with a holistic view in understanding a socio-cultural phenomenon (Astalin, 2013).

Research Environment

This study will be done in Binaliw, Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines.

Research Respondents

Five students are purposely chosen and are research participants in this study. These participants must live across or beside a river.

Research Instrument

This study seeks to describe the lived experiences of students who cross rivers in order to go to school. With this, a semi-structured interview guide will be the main instrument in gathering and collecting data. Paper, ball pen, and voice recorder will also be used during the interview.

DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

A. Preliminary Procedure. A transmittal letter and assent forms are provided to the participants before conducting the study. They will be explained on the research objectives of the study and their role in it.

B. Actual Data Gathering Procedure. The respondents will be interviewed with the semi-structured interview guide during their free and available time in the span of two weeks. The researchers will take notes and record participants' responses with paper and a voice recorder. The data will be collected, gathered, consolidated, formulated into themes, analyzed and interpreted. Once the data is analyzed and interpreted it will be verified by the participants for the reliability of the data.

DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis will be used in analyzing and interpreting participants' responses. This is used in order to deliver a comprehensive and structured organization and analysis of data as it generates significant findings through coding and formulation of themes produced in this study.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The following ethical guidelines will be considered by putting into place these following considerations:

1. The dignity and wellbeing of research respondents will be protected all throughout the conduct of the study.
2. The research data will remain confidential throughout the study and the researcher would obtain the permission of the research respondents to use the data and present it as a whole.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Students have several challenges and experiences in going to school which made them do efforts in order to cope up with it. This study seeks to describe the lived experiences of the students who cross rivers in order to go to school. They have been interviewed and the following themes were found.

Crossing river means crossing flood

Most of the participants have stated that there are several times that they have experienced floods making it as one of the main challenges in going to school. These can be found on the statements below:

"Usahay mag uwan inig buntag unya magbaha unya padung ko eskerlahan." Sav
(This usually occurs in the morning when I go to school the rain falls then right after that flood follows)

"Magbaha, walay taytayan inig padung nako eskwelahan". Cha

(Flood, there is no bridge in going to school)

"Inig adto nako eskwelahan usahay magbaha, way taytayan". Che

(When I go to school sometimes flood occurs, there is no bridge)

“Magbaha, way kasakyan iniig adto nako eskwelahan.” Ash

(Flood, there is no vehicle or motorcycle that could bring us to school)

These statements signify that students are daily challenged due to the lack of bridge, flooding and transportation problem. This is supported in the study of Rashid (2000) specifying that women and children were considered to be the most vulnerable people during floods. His study also shown that these instances devastated their lives leading to illustrate their struggles and coping mechanisms done. (Rashid, 2000). This study recommends that students should consider their safety before crossing the river.

With the challenges faced, students have also done ways in order to avoid crossing river or cope up with it. These are found on the following statements below. This shows that students find means in order to be at school despite the challenges they have faced. This means could be in a form of humor. This agrees with the study of Cheung and Yue (2012) specifying that affiliative humor way of students are one of the most important means of adjusting and accomplishing resilience in any kinds of stress. This suggests that students should continue to develop a strong and smart mind as well as resilient body in facing challenges like crossing the river.

“Mabalik sa agi unya mag ilis. Kung magbaha adto mi agi lain dalan nga mas layo.” Sav

(If I slip, I go back to my house and change clothes. If flood occurs, I usually go to the other path which is farther)

“Huwaton motuang ang baha.” Ash

(I will wait until the flood stops.)

“Ako nalang ang mo adjust. Akong pagsikapan. Kung magbaha ako na lang mangita ug other way pero mao lagi gihapon lapok.” Cha

(I would be the one who will adjust. I will try my best. When flood occurs, I will be the one

to look for another way however it is still muddy.)

“Nay pisi sa mag-atbang nga kahoy kung molabang, nay lain nga agianan adto macv.”

Che

(There is a rope which is connected on an opposite tree which we use in crossing the river. There is also another way going to macv)

In addition, students have also memorable experiences in crossing river. These are shown on the statements below. It can be inferred that most of these experiences made them sad since they have something they have left. This possibly occurred due to geographical

challenges they had experienced making it more difficult if they have something left, slipped or washed away. These are most likely to be remembered due to the possible negative situations the students might have experienced. This aligns with the study of Campbell (2004) that social situations that are negative are most likely to be remembered than the negative physical memories or experiences.

“Mabasa sa ulan, pero magdala ko ug ilisan. Unya way masakyan taas kaau ug lakawan kay layo kaau”. Che

(When I get wet due to the rain but I usually bring extra clothes. Sometimes there is no vehicle or motorcycle who will bring me to school so I had to walk which is quite far.)

“Naanod akong sapatos. Usa na lang ka pair ang sapatos. Naguol.” Sav

(The worst experience I had was when my shoe got carried by the flood leaving me with only one shoe. This made me sad.)

“Nana ta ko sa eskwelahan unya nahabilin ang research. Unya nibalik na lang ko sa amoa para kaabot sa time sa research. Dako kaau ug effect nako ug sa ako members kay ako nya rason ngano gamay sila ug grado.”

Cha

(I was actually school then I remembered my research was left. So I had to go back to get it

so I will be back on time for research. There is a big effect to me and my members because I might be the reason that they won't have a grade.)

"Kanang padung eskwelahan unya mag uwan unya mabasa, kapoy kaau ug ilis. Unya ako way ilisan. Okay ra mi mabasa."

Ash

(When I go to school then I got wet due to it. I feel tired changing clothes and I also don't have clothes to change. It is okay for me to get wet.)

No known sanitary and health concerns

Students were asked if they have experienced any health and sanitary issues and the following statements below showed their responses. These statements show that most of the students have not experienced any health issues but also stated that there are sanitary concerns like the urine of rat and feces of pig. This signifies that the water status at present is somewhat good however if sanitary concerns are not addressed this might lead to the downgrading of the water quality. This is supported in the study of Othman et. al (2012) highlighting on the improvements done on the policies with rigorous monitoring on possible waste discharges leading to pollution overtime. This study suggests that citizens living beside, near or across a river should implement rules that would protect their sanitary concerns.

"Wala. Pero usahay nay ihi sa ilaga. Naa sad tac sa baboy". Sav

(None. But there is urine of the rat. There are also feces of the pig.)

"Walay health issues. So limpyo ra ang river." Cha

(I don't have health issues. So the river is clean)

"Oh kasuway kalibanga tungod sa palabi kaon unya sagol2 pero dli tungod sa tubig sapa. Kasuway kagidkagid." Che

(I have experience LBM but it is due to the many foods that I have eaten which are mixed but it is not due to the water in the river. I have also experienced skin rash.)

"Wala ra." Ash

(None)

The Rich Source of Water

Students were asked on the benefits they have enjoyed in living near the river and responded the following statements. These statements shows that living near, beside or across a river gives you the privilege of the abundance of water, the beautiful scenery and the recreational activities that could be done with it. This signifies that living near, beside or across a river offers great benefits. This is shown in the study of Othman et. al (2012) highlighting on the important role of river as the source for ecosystem and human survival as well as health. USDA (2008) also added that water is the place where we can play and the nourishment for living. This suggest that people living near, beside or across the river should preserve the river and its ecosystem.

"Source of water, nindot sad among environment dli dali makuanan." Cha

(The source of water, there is a nice environment then I don't easily get sick)

"Daghan tubig, malingaw magduwa sa sapa (duwaduwa sa tubig)". Sav

(There are many water and I enjoyed playing in the river. I usually played with the water in it.)

"Duol sa tubig, duol liguanan, duol labhanan." Ash

(The water is near, the water for taking a bath is near, the water for laundry is also near.)

"Nindot view, nindot langoyanan." Che

(There is a nice view, nice for swimming)

PARTICIPANTS RECOMMENDATION

Students were also asked on the possible means the school and the government could help and stated that the school can help in providing the students significant amount of time and understanding especially during the rainy days and the government could possibly

provide bridge or a transport system that will ease of burden and stress in going to school.

With this the teachers could establish Communicating with Students in Danger Prone Areas or CSDPA. This program was established due to the concerns and suggestions of the students in this study. This program aims to help students living in geographically challenged location during natural hazard or calamity through communicating with the students before they have left their houses. This program should be employed especially during rainy days where the location of the students is geographically challenged. The program follows through different phases such as initiation, deliberation, activation and supplementation. This will be done through the coordination of the faculties and school heads.

CSDPA (Communicating with Students in Danger Prone Areas)

Objective	To help students living in geographically challenged location during natural hazard or calamity through communicating with the students before they have left their houses.
Persons' in charge	School Principal, Teachers, Advisers, DRRM coordinator
Initiation	The adviser will get the address of the students and the students should specify whether their place is prone to floods and landslides. The students should provide their parent or guardian contact information.
Deliberation	During the wet season, the DRRM coordinator (Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Coordinator) should assess the possible hazards that the students might be facing in going to school. Once the DRRM Coordinator thinks the students are in danger he/she should communicate with the school principal or school heads in order to ask permission for suspension or allowing students in danger prone areas to be given a considerable amount of time for them to be at school.
Activation	Once the principal or school head has given, his/her decision, the DRRM coordinator will disseminate the information to the advisers and the advisers will start on communicating the students.
Supplementation	If the students are given a considerable amount of time for them to be in school, then they are still considered present and will just ask supplementary activities for the missed lessons. In case, the class should be suspended then the students will be given activities that will be done at home

CONCLUSION

This study seeks to describe the lived experiences of students who cross rivers in order to get education and the benefits of living in this area. The students have expressed the good things they have enjoyed in living across the river as well as the challenges and experiences they have gone through in order to be at school. With this, the overall lived experiences of the students are a mixture of positive and negative as they lived across the river.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results and the conclusion of the study, this study recommends on the preservation of water quality as well as the monitoring of waste dumped to the river. This study also suggests on the use of CSDPA or Communicating with Student in Danger Prone Areas in order for the teachers to understand their students better leading to students learn better.

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