

SCHOLARSHIP GRANTEES' SATISFACTION ON STUDENT FINANCIAL AID UNIT AND ITS EFFECTS ON SCHOLARS' FINANCIAL STRESS

*Rosalyn Galvez

**Roel Ignacio

Paper Received: 16.08.2023 / **Paper Accepted:** 12.09.2023 / **Paper Published:** 17.09.2023

Corresponding Author: Rosalyn Galvez; doi:10.46360/cosmos.ah.520232003

Abstract

Student financial aid (SFA) is a unit under the jurisdiction of the student affairs and services department. It is financial support given to individuals who are furthering their education. SFA may be seen in a number of forms, including scholarships, grants, student loans, and work-study programs. Financial stress has been defined as difficulty in meeting one's financial obligations, with given economic behaviors being best understood in light of individuals' attitudes and beliefs related to resource availability and management (Northern et al., as cited by Robb, 2017). Scholarship grantees' who are satisfied with the services provided by the SFA tend to reduce financial stress and in the long run achieve their academic goals (Montalto, et al, 2019).

The study determines the scholarship grantees' satisfaction on financial aid services and its effects on students' financial stress. Student aid financial grantees from one HEI in Bulacan were the respondents of the study. The study was conducted during SY 2021-2022. The descriptive-correlational method of research was utilized in the study. The study adopted two validated instruments: (1) Satisfaction on student financial aid: this instrument was devised by Galvez (2018). A 12-item instrument with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.85. (2) Financial Stress scale: Each of the items included in the scale, identifies how often they had thought about the listed financial events, using a scale from 1 (never) to 4 (all of the time). The 14-item scale demonstrated high reliability as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha of 0.897 (Northern, et al, as cited on Radwin, 2018). According Herbaut and Geven (2020) to Need-based grants consistently helps improve completion rates of disadvantaged students.

The Study revealed that student's satisfaction on SFA was Excellent (4.62), the excellent mean was manifested by the following indicators namely: (1) personnel - Excellent (4.88), (2) Facilities - 4.33 (Very satisfactory), and (3) services - 4.78 (excellent). Moreover, the overall student grantees' financial stress weighted mean was 1.23 (never). Likewise, regression analysis revealed that F-value is equal to 26.450 while the p-value of .000 is lower than the alpha value of .05. This indicates that SFA satisfaction bears significant effects on financial stress when considering the joint effects of all variables of SFA satisfaction. On a similar note, according to the study conducted by Montalto (2019), Scholarship grantees' who are satisfied with the services provided by the SFA tend to reduce financial stress and in the long run achieve their academic goal.

Keywords: Student Financial Aid, Satisfaction, Scholarship, Financial Stress.

Introduction (TIOC Approach)

The high cost of education in leading academic institutions of the country underscores the importance of ensuring the academic success of admitted students to avoid the waste of limited public resources and guarantee a steady supply of the needed labor force (Laus, 2021). Hence, students who belong to the low-income families tend to look for scholarship grants, either provided by the government or the institutions themselves, to continue and progress toward their academic goals. Students in the lower-income family can't own equal education resources as higher-income family students, and the graduation rate remains to be standstill since the number of people educated is mostly higher-income students, but lower-income family students need education as well (Renz, 2023).

Student financial aid (SFA) is a unit under the jurisdiction of the student affairs and services department. It is financial support given to individuals who are furthering their education. SFA

may be seen in a number of forms, including scholarships, grants, student loans, and work-study programs. Moreover, on a study conducted by According Herbaut and Geven (2020) revealed that need-based grants consistently help improve completion rates of disadvantaged students.

Scholarship grantees' satisfaction is an important component of quality assurance in the increasingly competitive market. Satisfaction is important to institutional success and is seen as effective if satisfaction supports the enrolment of additional students or 'customers'.

According to Swanson and Hsu (2019), Customer satisfaction is essential for firms in the service sector in the present consumer market and it will receive a great deal of attention from scholars over the coming years. This is because customers are considered a real asset to service firms, the majority of which are facing consumer base losses to a considerable degree. In Service marketing in both profitable and

*-**Student Affairs and Services, Admission Services Unit, La Consolacion University, Philippines.

non-profitable organizations, customer satisfaction with an organization's products or services is often seen as the key to an organization's success. Thus, this study pays particular attention to one of the main services that students use as a standard on which to assess a variety of education institutions.

Financial stress has been defined as difficulty in meeting one's financial obligations, with given economic behaviors being best understood in light of individuals' attitudes and beliefs related to resource availability and management (Northern et al., as cited by Robb, 2017). Scholarship grantees' who are satisfied with the services provided by the SFA tend to reduce financial stress and in the long run achieve their academic goals (Montalto, et al, 2019).

This study investigates the scholarship grantees' satisfaction on student financial aid services and looks at the effects on it on students' financial stress.

The result of the study may contribute to the improvement of the admission services given to the student applicant clientele.

Theoretical / Conceptual Framework (SEC Approach)

The study is based on the theoretical underpinnings of the Roy Adaptation Model (RAM), under this framework, an individual is viewed as an adaptive system that is able to manage external or even internal stimuli through control processes and effectors (coping mechanism) and the output factors (external stimuli).

The abovementioned theory is deemed relevant to the present study since the general objective of this research was to determine if scholarship grantees' satisfaction with the services provided by the SFA unit helps them manage their financial stress.

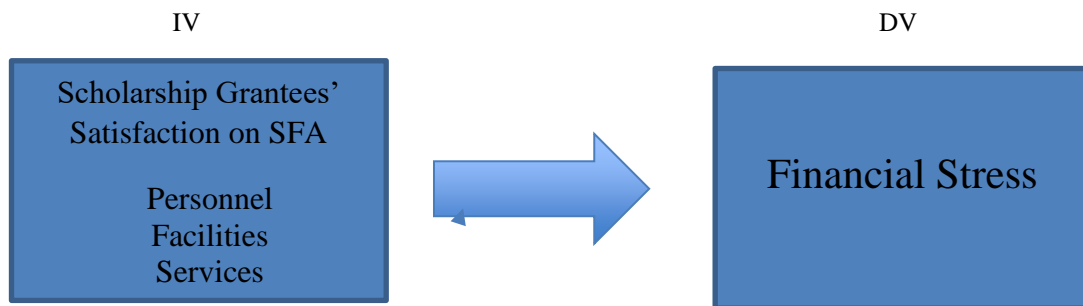


Figure 1: Conceptual Paradigm of the Study

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of the study. IV-DV was used as the paradigm of the study. The independent variable of the study was the scholarship grantees' satisfaction on SFA with the following indicators: (1) personnel, (2) Facilities, (3) Services. Whilst, financial stress serves as the dependent variable of the study.

Statement of the Problem

The major problem of the study was to determine the scholarship grantees' satisfaction on financial aid services and its effects on students' financial stress. Specifically, the study sought answers to the following problems:

1. How may the satisfaction of respondents be described in terms of the following parameters?
 - 1.1 Personnel
 - 1.2 Facilities
 - 1.3 Services
2. How may the respondents' financial stress be described?
3. Does scholarship grantees' satisfaction on SFA exert significant effects on financial stress?
4. Based on the findings of the study, what implications may be drawn?

Scope and Delimitation

The study determines the scholarship grantees' satisfaction on financial aid services and its effects on students' financial stress. Student aid financial grantees from one HEI in Bulacan were the respondents of the study. The study was conducted during SY 2021-2022. 55.5% of the respondents were grantees of LCUP-financial assistance program, while 28.5% were scholarship grantees from CHED – Tertiary education scholarship, 15% were from CHED-Tulong-Dunong program and the remaining 6% were grantees from CHED- Private Education Student Financial Assistance.

Ethical Consideration/s

The following ethical considerations was considered during the conduct of the study:

1. The dignity and wellbeing of learners was protected. The researcher ensured that there was no harm in any form nor anyone placed in an uncomfortable position.
2. The researcher obtained from the respondents an informed consent that includes essential information, i.e., who the researcher is, the intent of the study, the data to be collected, level of commitments, etc. Respondents were also

informed that participating in the study is voluntary, ensuring no coercion or deception in participation.

- The research data remained confidential throughout the study. The researcher obtained the respondents' permission to write their real names on the survey to navigate their performance more conveniently. Respondents were also informed that their names will not appear in the final paper.
- In the Conduct of the Study, "No Conflict of Interest" was declared by the researcher.

Methodology

Methods and Techniques

The descriptive-correlational method of research was utilized in this study to determine the scholarship grantees' satisfaction on financial aid services and its effects on students' financial stress. Correlational research is a systematic investigation of the relationship present between two or more variables. The study used a quantitative research approach to analyze and understand the predictor and criterion variables.

Descriptive. The study made use of a survey instrument to assess the scholarship grantees' satisfaction on SFA and Financial Stress

Correlation. A regression analysis was used to determine the Effects of scholarship grantees' satisfaction on financial aid services on financial stress

Data Collection and Analysis

Upon approval from LCUP- RPL department and LCUP -REC, permission was sought and data collection commenced. A survey questionnaire with a consent form was distributed electronically via google forms. Means and frequency counts were used in tabulating the results. Regression analysis was used to determine the effects of Scholarship Grantees' Satisfaction on Student Financial Aid Unit on Scholars' Financial Stress.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were scholarship grantees' from college and graduate studies from one higher educational Institution from Malolos City enrolled in SY 2021-2022. As seen on table 1, 55.5% of the respondents were grantees of LCUP-

financial assistance program, while 28.5% were scholarship grantees from CHED – Tertiary education scholarship, 15% were from CHED-Tulong-Dunong program and the remaining 6% were grantees from CHED- Private Education Student Financial Assistance.

Table 1: Table of Respondents

SFA programs	Percentage
CHED- TES	28.5%
CHED - TDP	15%
CHED-Pesfa	6%
LCUP-FAP	55.5%
Total	100%

Instruments of the Study

The study adopted two validated instruments:

Satisfaction on student financial aid: this instrument was devised by Galvez (2018). The 12-item instrument has 3 subcategories namely: (1) Personnel, (2) Online Facilities, and (3) Online Services with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.85.

Financial Stress scale: Each of the items included in the scale, identifies how often they had thought about the listed financial events, using a scale from 1 (never) to 4 (all of the time). The 14-item scale demonstrated high reliability as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha of 0.897 (Northern, et al, 2010).

Results and Discussions

Scholarship Grantees' Satisfaction on Student Financial Aid Services

Customer satisfaction is essential for firms in the service sector in the present consumer market and it will receive a great deal of attention from scholars over the coming years. Customer satisfaction as the favorable affective response of customers who find the cumulative service interactions worthwhile, pleasing, and motivating. The measurement of student satisfaction can be useful for identifying areas in need of improvement. Students' satisfaction does not always come from the level of education they receive; sometimes, providing a variety of supplementary services will add more value and contribute essentially to students' satisfaction (Sanchez-Franco et al., 2009)

Table 2: Scholarship Grantees' Satisfaction on Student Financial Aid Services in Terms of Personnel

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. being reflective in ways that express generosity, compassion and religiosity in dealing with their individual customer/client	4.97	Excellent
2. being firm and dependable in securing relevant information needed by their individual customer/client	4.88	Excellent
3. being simple and patient in attending to the individual unique needs of their respective clients and customers	4.95	Excellent

4. being friendly, helpful, understanding, accommodating to everybody	4.90	Excellent
5. shows loving and caring personality who ensures satisfaction of individual customer/client and willingness to volunteer one's self if needed to ensure the safety of others	4.98	Excellent
6. capable of securing extended time/service if needed	4.60	Excellent

Weighted mean	4.88	Excellent
----------------------	-------------	------------------

Table 2 depicts the overall scholarship grantees' satisfaction on SFA services in terms of personnel with a weighted mean of 4.88 (Excellent). The excellent mean was manifested by the following indicators: the highest among the rating was (1) being reflective in ways that express generosity,

compassion and religiosity in dealing with their individual customer/client – with a rating of 4.97 (Excellent), while the lowest among the indicators was (6) capable of securing extended time/service if needed – with a rating of 4.60 (Excellent).

Table 3: Scholarship Grantees' Satisfaction on Student Financial Aid Services in Terms of Facilities

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. The unit utilizes online platform to render suitable services	4.30	Very satisfactory
2. The unit is readily accessible when needed by the students	4.36	Very satisfactory
Weighted mean	4.33	Very satisfactory

As seen on table 3, the weighted mean for online facilities was 4.33 (Very satisfactory). Among the two indicators, the highest was (2) the unit is readily accessible when needed by the students – garnering

a rating of 4.36 (Very satisfactory) and the lowest was (1) the unit utilizes online platform to render suitable services – with a rating of 4.30 (Very satisfactory).

Table 4: Scholarship Grantees' Satisfaction on Student Financial Aid Services in Terms of Services

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Proper attention is provided at all times	4.90	Excellent
2. There is an efficient / working system of transaction procedures.	4.70	Excellent
3. Customers' concerns get appropriate / accurate results.	4.79	Excellent
4. Relevant activities to the students' needs are conducted by the unit staff.	4.73	Excellent
Weighted mean	4.78	Excellent

It can be gleaned on table 4, that the weighted mean of online services was 4.78 (Excellent). The Excellent mean was manifested by the following indicators: the highest among the indicators was (1) Proper attention is provided at all times – with a rating of 4.90 (Excellent), while the lowest among the indicators was (2) There is an efficient / working system of transaction procedures – with a rating of 4.70 (Excellent).

According to Galvez (2018), In order to allocate university resources more effectively, student affairs units the mother department of admission services, need to be informed about what types of information and services students need, to what extent the information and services are available or insufficient, as well as what types of students need particular types of services. It is important to gauge the students' and student-applicants' satisfaction to understand the needs of the students and design appropriate programs and services for the students.

Student financial stress

Table 5: Scholarship Grantees' Financial Stress

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Being behind on payments	1.24	Never
2. Having a low credit score	1.45	Never
3. Not having any emergency money	1.03	Never
4. Living pay check to pay check	1.14	Never
5. Being in a job where work isn't steady/predictable	1.01	Never
6. Barely making enough money to cover expenses	1.00	Never
7. Not making enough money to be able to cover unexpected expenses	1.45	Never

8. Worrying about having enough money to retire	1.44	Never
9. Knowing you make less money than most of your peers	1.35	Never
10. Having large debt	1.23	Never
11. Having loans with high interest rates	1.25	Never
12. Christmas/holiday expenses	1.01	Never
13. having to borrow money from family/friends/financial institution	1.49	Never
14. Paying taxes	1.01	Never
Weighted mean	1.23	Never

Table 5 presents the financial stress of scholarship grantees. As can be gleaned from the table, the weighted mean was 1.23 (Never). The never mean was manifested by the following parameters, the highest among was indicator 13 - having to borrow

money from family/friends/financial institution – with a rating of 1.49 (never) and the lowest was indicator 6 - Barely making enough money to cover expenses with a rating of 1.00 (never).

Effects of Satisfaction on SFA on financial stress

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.206	.376		5.862	.000
Personnel	-.381	.118	-.351	-3.219	.001
Facilities	-.349	.120	-.316	-2.910	.004
Services	-.164	.102	-.160	-1.605	.110

R = .464
R-squared = .415
F-value = 26.450
p-value = .000
alpha = 0.05

The R value of .467 indicates that there is a negative linear relationship between SFA satisfaction and financial stress, this indicates that when SFA satisfaction increases, financial stress decreases. Moreover, the R squared value of .415 indicates a 41.5% variability of the response data around its Mean.

F-value is equal to 26.450 while the p-value of .000 is lower than the alpha value of .05. This indicates that SFA satisfaction bears significant effects on financial stress when considering the jointed effects of all variables of SFA satisfaction. On a similar note, Scholarship grantees' who are satisfied with the services provided by the SFA tend to reduce financial stress and in the long run achieve their academic goal (Montalto, et al, 2019).

Implications

The study reveals that the lowest among the indicators for SFA services satisfaction was the indicators for facilities namely: (1) The unit utilizes online platform to render suitable services and (2) The unit is readily accessible when needed by the students. Whilst, this area must be given emphasis

on SFA services operational plan to further improve the result of satisfaction.

The study also, revealed that having a good SFA services entails less financial stress to the scholars, educational institutions may look on possibilities on how to increase scholarship grantees to widen the clientele of the SFA unit.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In light of the findings of the study, the following conclusions are put forth.

The study indicates that students' satisfaction with the Student Financial Aid (SFA) program is excellent, with an overall satisfaction score of 4.62. This suggests that the SFA program is effectively meeting the needs and expectations of the students. The study identifies three key indicators contributing to the excellent satisfaction ratings: personnel, facilities, and services. Specifically, personnel received the highest satisfaction rating (4.88), followed by services (4.78), and facilities (4.33). This suggests that the quality of staff, the services provided, and the facilities available are

positively impacting students' satisfaction. The study also reveals that students' financial stress is remarkably low, with a weighted mean of 1.23, indicating that most students experience "never" or minimal financial stress. This suggests that the SFA program may be effectively alleviating financial burdens for its beneficiaries. The regression analysis demonstrates that there is a significant relationship between students' satisfaction with the SFA program and their level of financial stress. The F-value of 26.450 with a p-value of .000 (lower than the alpha value of .05) suggests that SFA satisfaction has a substantial effect on reducing financial stress when considering all variables jointly. In other words, higher satisfaction with SFA is associated with lower financial stress among students. The study's findings are consistent with a previous study conducted by Montalto in 2019, which also found that students who are satisfied with the services provided by the SFA tend to experience reduced financial stress. This reaffirms the importance of student satisfaction in achieving academic goals and financial well-being.

In conclusion, the study's results highlight the positive impact of the SFA program on students' satisfaction and financial stress levels. It suggests that universities and institutions should continue to prioritize and enhance the quality of personnel, facilities, and services within their SFA programs to support students in achieving their academic goals while minimizing financial stress.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study's findings, here are several recommendations for universities and institutions:

1. Allocate resources to recruit, train, and retain high-quality personnel within the SFA program. Personnel received the highest satisfaction rating, and this aspect plays a crucial role in student satisfaction.
2. Continuously improve and maintain the quality of facilities available to students. While facilities received a positive rating, there is room for improvement to further enhance student satisfaction.
3. Focus on enhancing the services provided to students within the SFA program. High satisfaction with services suggests that a strong emphasis on efficient and student-centered service delivery is essential.
4. Maintain a system for monitoring and assessing students' financial stress levels regularly. While the study shows low financial stress, it's crucial to continue addressing any potential financial burdens that may arise.
5. Customize support services to meet the specific needs of individual students. Recognize that

different students may have varying financial situations and requirements.

6. Foster collaborations with external organizations, such as scholarship providers and financial literacy programs, to further support students in managing their finances and reducing stress.
7. Emphasize the link between reduced financial stress and academic success. Encourage students to set and work towards long-term academic goals, highlighting how SFA satisfaction contributes to these goals.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no significant competing financial, professional, or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript. The study involves only human participants who volunteered for this study and informed consent was obtained from them.

References

1. Alshurideh, M. (2014). The factors predicting students' satisfaction with universities' healthcare clinics' services. *Dirasat. Administrative Sciences*, 41(2), 451-464.
2. Britt, S.L., Canale, A., Fernatt, F., Stutz, K. & Tibbetts, R. (2015). Financial stress and financial counseling: Helping college students. *Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning*, 26(2), 172-186.
3. Chen, J. & Hossler, D. (2017). The effects of financial aid on college success of two-year beginning nontraditional students. *Research in Higher Education*, 58(1), 40-76.
4. Faize, F. A., & Nawaz, M. (2020). Evaluation and Improvement of students' satisfaction in Online learning during COVID-19. *Open Praxis*, 12(4), 495-507.
5. Galvez, R. (2018). Student Affairs and Services of La Consolacion University Philippines: An Evaluation.
6. Montalto, C.P., Phillips, E.L., McDaniel, A. & Baker, A.R. (2019). College student financial wellness: Student loans and beyond. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 40(1), 3-21.
7. Taylor, Z.W. and Bicak, I. (2020). First-generation college student financial aid: Results from a national financial aid jargon survey. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 38(1), 91-109.
8. Tran, A.G., Lam, C.K. and Legg, E. (2018). Financial stress, social supports, gender, and anxiety during college: A stress-buffering perspective. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 46(7), 846-869.
9. Yousafzai, I.I. & Jamil, B. (2019). Relationship between admission criteria and academic performance: A correlational study in nursing

- students. *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences*, 35(3), 858.
10. Radwin, D., Conzelmann, J. G., Nunnery, A., Lacy, T.A., Wu, J., Lew, S., ... & Siegel, P. (2018). 2015-16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS: 16): Student.
 11. Financial Aid Estimates for 2015-16. First Look. NCES 2018-466. National Center for Education Statistics.
 12. Herbaut, E. & Geven, K. (2020). What works to reduce inequalities in higher education? A systematic review of the (quasi-) experimental literature on outreach and financial aid. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 65, 100442.
 13. Ren, Z. (2023). The Government's Assistance to Lower-Income Families' Education. *Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 13, 326-331.