The Academic Performance and Comprehensive Examination Performance of The Graduate School Students of Baguio Central University

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Abstract: This research was conducted primarily to look into the existence of the relationship between the level of academic performance and the level of comprehensive examination performance of the Graduate School students of Baguio Central University. Specifically, it sought to answer the following queries: Demography of the subjects in terms of gender and graduate degree program; their level of academic performance; their level of comprehensive examination performance; and if their level of comprehensive examination performance is associated with their level of academic performance. The research design employed was the quantitative design. The general weighted average (GWA) and the average ratings obtained by the subjects in comprehensive examination were used as the data for analysis. The study revealed the following results: the female subjects outnumbered their male counterparts; their academic performance is much higher and better compared to their comprehensive examination performance. The Chi-square Test and the Pearson's (r) Coefficient Correlation both proved that there exist no relationship between the level of academic performance and the level of comprehensive examination performance. The subjects of the current study manifested a very high level of academic performance compared to their level of performance in the comprehensive examinations. The nature of the questions given in the comprehensive examinations is discussion type. Therefore, the Graduate School students who will still be taking the comprehensive examinations must strive to discuss more intensively and extensively the topics on the different subject areas and fields of specialization included in the said examinations.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Comprehensive Examination Performance, Graduate School Students, Descriptive Quantitative Research Design

I. Introduction

Any graduate school student intending to enroll in Seminar in Thesis/Dissertation Writing must first take and pass the required comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examination is administered by the Baguio Central University Graduate School every semester of a given academic year. As a requisite to taking the said examination, the applicant must first present an evaluation of his/her records from the Registrar's Office. This evaluation certifies that the applicant has finished and passed all his/her academic subjects required in the curriculum prescribed in the Graduate School degree he /she is pursuing. Previously, the dates when the comprehensive examination is administered was scheduled. However, because of the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines, a drastic change was instituted to address the effect of the pandemic. The walk-in scheme of scheduling the examination was instituted in order to comply with the basic health protocols to be observed.

What is a comprehensive examination? A comprehensive examination is a specific type of examination that must be completed by a graduate student . . . are not linked to any particular course, but rather test the knowledge across one or more general fields of study ("Comprehensive Examination", 2021). A comprehensive examination is an evaluation that measures a student's competency and mastery of concepts in the field of an academic discipline. ("What is Comprehensive Exam?", 2021). Similar to how it sounds, a comprehensive exam is a test that covers a large array of material. Such a test aims to assess the knowledge and capabilities of a student before granting them a graduate degree.("What is a comprehensive exam? A Grad Students' Guide". (n.d.)). Failure to take and pass the comprehensive examination means the graduate student is not allowed to enroll in Seminar in Thesis/Dissertation Writing. As mentioned earlier, a Registrar's-certified Evaluation of Academic Grades is a requisite for one to be eligible to take the comprehensive examination. The evaluation of academic grades also manifests the academic performance of the graduate student in his/her respective degree.

What is an academic performance? Academic performance is the measurement of student achievement across various academic subjects. ("Academic Performance", (n.d.)). In this current study, the academic performance was based on the general weighted average (GWA) of the grades obtained by the graduate student in all the course work taken by him/herin the pursuit of his/her degree program.

This study endeavored to determine if there exist a relationship or association between academic performance and comprehensive examination performance of the graduate school students. It sought to determine the demography of the students in terms of gender and degree program; the level of academic performance based on the computed general weighted average (GWA); and the level of comprehensive examination performance based on the computed average rating obtained by the graduate students. The levels of performance of the graduate students in both academic and comprehensive examination used the following arbitrary ranges and their corresponding descriptions: 97-99 (Superior); 94-96 (Very High); 91-93 (High); 88-90 (Average); and 85-87 (Fair). The Chi-square Test of Association and the Pearson's (r) Correlation Coefficient were employed to determine if there exist a correlation between academic performance and comprehensive examination performance.

The study was anchored on the Theory on Academic Achievement by Herbert J. Walberg as quoted by Rugutt and Chemosit(2005) and the concept of Assessment.

II. The Methodology

This study employed the descriptive-quantitative research design. Descriptive design was used because it entailed the comparative analysis of the different levels of performance of the Graduate School students both in their academic performance and comprehensive examination performance. The design also assisted the researcher to establish if there exist a relationship in their academic performance and comprehensive examination performance.

This research undertaking was conducted in Baguio Central University, Baguio City involving sixty-four (64) Graduate School students who enrolled in the subject Seminar in Thesis Writing. Passing the comprehensive examination is a pre-requisite to enrolling that said subject. However, to be eligible to take the comprehensive examination, the applicant must present a certified copy of academic records from the University Registrar's Office to show that said applicant has finished all his/her academic requirements prescribed in the curriculum of his/her master's degree program.

Sampling was not utilized considering that there were only sixty-four (64) graduate school students involved in the study. In fact, it was the weighted average grades and average ratings in the comprehensive examination that were subjected to data analysis.

For the gender of the Graduate School students, frequencies and percentages were presented in tabular form. The level of academic performance and comprehensive examination performance were classified into five (5) arbitrary ranges and their corresponding descriptions: 97-99 (Superior); 94-96 (Very High); 91-93 (High); 88-90 (Average); and, 85-87 (Fair). To determine their mean level of performance, the following formula was used: Mean = $AM + (\sum fd/n)i$.

To determine if there exist a relationship between the academic performance and comprehensive examination performance of the Graduate School students, the Chi-square Test of Association and the Pearson's (r) Coefficient Correlation were employed.

During the conduct of this study, Graduate School students were not identified. Only their General Weighted Average (GWA) and average ratings in the comprehensive examination were put into analysis. The results were presented in aggregate form and not in individual presentation. The provisions of the Data Privacy Law were strictly observed. The researcher endeavored that all sources of information, materials and other resources used in relation to the conduct of this study were properly acknowledged.

III. Results and Discussion

3.1. Profile of the Subjects

Table 1 shows that of the sixty-four (64) Graduate School students who took the comprehensive examination, 91% were females and nine percent were males. This indicates that majority of the examinees were females. Majority of the subjects are pursuing Master of Arts in Elementary Education (46.88%)

Table 1. Profile of the Subjects by Gender and Degree Program (n=64)

Degree/Gender	Gender		Total
	Males	Females	
MAAS	0	2	2
MAEE	3	27	30

MAENGL	3	9	12
MAF	0	4	4
MAGC	0	0	0
MAHE	0	3	3
MAM	0	4	4
MAPE	0	2	2
MBA	0	0	0
MPA	0	7	7
TOTAL	6	58	64

Legend:

MAAS-Master of Arts in Administration and Supervision

MAEE-Master of Arts in Elem. Education

MAENGL-Master of Arts in English

MAF-Master of Arts in Filipino

MAGC-Master of Arts in Guidanceand Counselling

MAHE-Master of Arts in Home Economics

MAM-Master of Arts in Mathematics

MAPE-Master of Arts in Pre-Elementary Education

MBA-Master in Business Administration

MPA-Master in Public Administration

3.2. Level of Academic Performance of the Graduate Students

The computed mean general weighted average was 94.436 interpreted as "Very High" (Table 2). This implies that the Graduate School students exhibited a very high level of academic performance in the entire course work of the master's degree program they were pursuing.

Table 2. Level of Academic Performance of the Graduate School Students (n=64)

Ranges	Frequency	d	fd
97-99	0	2	0
94-96	52	1	52
91-93	12	0	0
88-90	0	-1	0
85-87	0	-2	0
	∑f=64		∑fd=52

Mean = 94.436 (Very High)

Table 3.3. Level of Performance in the Comprehensive Examinations of the Graduate School Students (n=64)

Table 3, on the other hand, their mean average rating in the comprehensive examination of 91.200 which is interpreted as "High". This is indicative that their comprehensive examination performance was not at par with their academic performance.

Table 3. Level of Performance in the Comprehensive Examinations of the Graduate School Students (n=64)

Ranges	Frequency	d	fd
97-99	0	2	0
94-96	2	1	2
91-93	44	0	0
88-90	17	-1	-17
85-87	1	-2	-2
	∑f=64		∑fd= -17

Mean=91.202 (High)

3.4. Level of Academic Performance and Level of Comprehensive Examination Performance of the Graduate School Students

The main objective of this study was to find out if there exist a relationship between academic performance and comprehensive examination performance of the students. The Chi-square Test was employed. The computed Chi-square is 13.12. The tabular p value of 26.30 was greater than the computed p value of 13.12. This showed that there is no relationship between the two performances (Table 4). To confirm this finding, the Pearson's (r) Coefficient Correlation was employed. The computed r was 0.08 which was interpreted as "No Correlation." This implies that the academic performance of the students was not predictive of their comprehensive examination performance and *vice versa.*

Table 4. Level of Academic Performance and Level of Comprehensive Examinations Performance

Cell	fo	fe	(fo-fe)²	(fo-fe)²/fe
7	2	2	0	0.00
8	39	36	9	0.25
9	11	14	9	0.64
13	5	8	9	1.13
14	6	3	9	3.00
15	1	0.1	0.81	8.10
Total				13.12

Note:

Computed Chi-square=13.12

df=(r-1)(c-1)=4x4=16

p value, 0.05=26.30

Interpretation: No Association

IV. Conclusion

This study endeavored to determine if there exist a correlation or association between the academic performance and the comprehensive examination performance of the graduate school students of Baguio Central University. It sought to determine the demography of the graduate students in terms of gender and degree program; the level of academic performance based on the computed general weighted average obtained by the graduate school students; and the level of comprehensive examination performance based on the computed average ratings obtained by the graduate school students.

The study revealed that the female examinees outnumbered their male counterparts; majority of the examinees could be elementary school teachers since majority are pursuing the Master of Arts in Elementary Education; the examinees exhibited a very high level of academic performance; however; they exhibited a lower performance in their comprehensive examination.

Therefore, the Graduate School students must sustain obtaining very high grades in all the academic subjects they enroll in as prescribed in their respective degree program they are pursuing. In the comprehensive examinations, the nature of the

questions given is discussion type. So, the Graduate School students who will still be taking the comprehensive examinations must strive to discuss more intensively and extensively the topics in the different subject areas and fields of specialization covered in the said examinations in order for them to obtain much higher ratings.

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