

## **THE ASSESSMENT OF THE FREE EDUCATION LANDSCAPE ON STUDENT'S QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

**By**

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### **Abstract:**

*Ensuring the quality learning experience of students in the institution of higher education has been a growing concern during the past years before tertiary education has made free. Several studies have focused on faculty and administrative perceptions in Tagoloan Community College, and there has been a lack of research on assessing the quality learning experience of BSBA students. The Assessment on the free education landscape for quality learning experienced by the students sought to answer the questions about quality learning and the significant relationship between the Profile of the respondents, Assessment, and quality learning experience. Respondents of the study were the college students enrolled in BSBA 3rd and 4th-year levels and who are currently having a face-to-face class at Tagoloan Community College at Baluarte, Tagoloan Misamis Oriental. To obtain the desired number of respondents, 442 students were utilized using simple random sampling. The data was gathered, collected, and processed using statistical treatments such as frequency counts and weighted means. The study found that there is a correlation between the Profile of the respondents and the quality learning experience of the students. Although the study was found to have strongly correlated to the variable used, it was then manifested that there was a strong debate in many countries in financing higher education. There were increasing claims and manifestations that higher education should be free. It then outlines the world's contemporary landscape in providing free education and having a close look at the outcome in a different context. The result shows that free higher education although it is hard to sustain and embraces different scenarios, in terms of access and success is found to have noteworthy results.*

**Keywords:** *Free Education Assessment, Education Landscape, and Quality Learning Experience*

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### **Introduction**

Before the pandemic strikes, millions of Families experience financial difficulties and it is one of the top factors that add burdens to the aspect of having education. This is a societal concern that hinders moving on since having a financial crisis is a building block in attaining quality education. People in society or households do not have the privilege to access more education in private schools due to poverty. With this, the free education landscape was launched by the government not only in one specific country but all over the world. Free education is a mechanism initiated by the government as a way of helping and developing the less fortunate but deserving individuals. One of the major sources of free education support is the unified student financial assistance education (UniFAST). This a tertiary education financial assistance that promotes free education to all an implemented under the Republic Act 10931 which ensures equitable access to educational opportunities. With this initiative, eligible students have the opportunity to pursue a tertiary education without having to pay tuition and other school fees under State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and CHED-recognized Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs). A student who availed

and is eligible for free higher education (FHE) enjoys the benefits but subject to admission and retention policies of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Globally, quality education is one of the most important things an individual can pursue. Quality education aims at developing a balanced set of capabilities for children they require to become economically productive, develop sustainable livelihoods, contribute to peaceful and democratic societies, and enhance individual well-being. Free education is indeed important to many poor families. In the early years, most of our ancestors received no formal training at all because education during those times was only available to the upper class. A high-quality education supports freedom, fairness, and inclusive growth, it can reduce poverty and social equity at a local level and achieve economic success "Gupta, J, Vegelin, C", (2016). Education is beneficial in many aspects of life especially, personal and social. Education forms the basis upon which the economic, social, and political development of any nation is founded. A quantum of education can be considered as both an investment and a consumption. Whether education is an investment or consumption good, it entails costs aimed at achieving specific outcomes. These costs are borne by both the government and the household as social and private costs respectively. Investment in education can help to foster economic growth, enhance productivity, contribute to national and social development, and reduce social inequality. Having a free educational system means creating a more educated society, and a free education plan to raise a better-educated society that has equitable opportunity. Furthermore, the student profile and student support are crucial in attaining quality learning experiences. The Republic Act 10931 known as the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act was signed into law in August 2017 by Former President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, providing underprivileged Filipino students the opportunity to pursue college degrees through free tuition and exemption of other fees. The program provides an opportunity to people who cannot afford of going to school.

In this study, we want to know the experience of quality education of the 3rd and 4th year students of Bachelor of Science and Business Administration in Tagoloan Community College having free Tuition fees. This framework presents to make integration among all the factors for the smooth functioning of education systems and to attain quality for the 3rd and 4th year BSBA students to ensure that the learner has a meaningful and memorable learning experience while achieving the desired learning outcomes.

## **Methods**

This study deals with the research design, research environment, research respondents, research instruments, sampling design, data gathering procedures, scoring procedures, reliability and validity of research instruments, statistical treatment, and ethical considerations. Information was gathered from the respondents using a survey questionnaire.

## **Research Design**

The study utilized descriptive quantitative methods of research. The researchers attempted to analyze, interpret, and report the critical assessment of the free education landscape for quality learning experienced by the students. Information was gathered from the respondents using a survey questionnaire.

## **Research Environment**

The study was conducted at Tagoloan Community College, which is located at Baluarte Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. The Tagoloan Community College was created under municipal ordinance No. 03, Series of 2003, and has an estimated land area of 117.73 square meters. The institution is about 20.8 kilometers away from Cagayan de Oro City.

## The Respondents

The respondents of the study were the selected students from the College of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA). The size of the sample was taken from the total population of the third year level of three hundred forty-five or one hundred seventy-three (173) representing fifty percent of the population. While in the fourth year level, the same formula was used wherein we get a total of two hundred sixty-nine (269) out of five hundred thirty-seven students. In summation, the overall sample size used in this study was four hundred forty-two (442).

## Research Instrument

A modified instrument was used in the data-gathering process. It utilizes the 4-point Likert scale where respondents are required to answer based on their appropriate choices that fit the given questions. The instrument is composed of three parts and has the same criteria for answering the questions.

## Sampling Design

The study utilized stratified random sampling whereby the researchers chose respondents based on their judgment/purpose that they have desirable characteristics and can provide the required information. The researchers have targeted respondents at 50% of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 50% of the population of the 4<sup>th</sup> year students of BSBA thereof.

## Data Gathering Procedures

After seeking approval to conduct the study, the researchers floated the questionnaires to the identified respondents. It was carefully explained to the respondents before answering to ensure that responses are appropriate. The instrument was gathered and collected by the researchers and tabulated results using a statistical parameter as an instrument in the attainment of the result.

## Reliability & Validity of Instruments

To check the reliability and validity of the instrument used in the conduct of the study, a pilot test was conducted. The testing process was done out of the study area to check its accuracy and its reliability. The test comes out with a result of 0.87 which means that the result is valid and reliable. On top of the reliability test conducted, content validity was also implemented to ensure that the instrument is valid. The Dean of the College of Business Administration, research instructor, and advisor in the field reviewed the questionnaire to ensure that it covers all relevant aspects of the construct of interest. Based on the results of the study and the content validity, the researchers concluded that the questionnaire used in this study is both reliable and valid applying the measurement.

## Scoring Procedure

The following shows the scoring procedures that were utilized to describe the Data of the study.

<i>Scale</i>	<b>Mean Range</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
4	3.26-4.00	Strongly Agree	Very Effective
3	2.51-3.25	Agree	Effective
2	1.76-2.50	Disagree	Less Effective
1	1.00-1.75	Strongly Disagree	Ineffective

## Statistical Treatment

The researcher used the following treatment in the analysis and interpretation of the study. The frequency counts and percentage distribution is used to present the personal profile of the respondents in terms of zonal address, student status, daily allowance, and gadget used. Weighted mean and Standard Deviation are used to present the assessment of quality learning experience in terms of delivery of instruction, curriculum, and extracurricular activities. The weighted mean was utilized to present the level of quality learning experience in terms of academic integration and social integration. Pearson's R. was utilized to present the significant relationship between the quality of learning experienced by 3rd yr. and 4th yr. BSBA students of Tagoloan Community College.

## Ethical Consideration

The researcher has presented a consent letter for each participant in this study. Participants can opt in or out of the research at any time. Physical, social, and psychological injury, as well as all other sorts of harm, are maintained to a bare minimum. The participant's information is kept and hidden from everyone else. Researchers have anonymized personally identifiable data so that it can't be linked to other data by anyone else. The research will be conducted in a fair, honest, impartial, and transparent manner after full disclosure is made by those associated with the research or experiment of each aspect of their research interest, and complete records of the research, including data and notes, are retained for such reasonable period as may be prescribed or considered necessary for post-research monitoring.

## Results and discussion

This study includes the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered in the study. The presentation of data is based on the sequence of the problem presented. The first part answers the profile of the respondents in terms of public transportation, students' status, daily allowance, and gadget use. The second part answers the level of assessment on the free education landscape in terms of delivery of instruction, curriculum, and extracurricular activities. Third, the part that answers the level of experience of the students on the Free Higher Education program in terms of Academic Integration, and Social Integration. Lastly, it answers the significant relationship of the student's profile to the quality learning experience.

**Table 1. Percentage distribution of respondents' demographic profile in terms of student status**

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Student's status</i>	Working	85	19.2
	Full-time student	357	80.8
<b><i>Total</i></b>		<b>442</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1. Shows the percentage distribution of respondents' demographic profiles in terms of student status. The data revealed that working had 85 or 19.20 percent, and the full-time student had 357 or 80.80 percent. This means that the majority of the respondents were the Full-time students and frequently have a better college experience and a wider selection of activities available to them outside of their classroom. And full-time students invest a significant amount of time each week in academics alone. According to Watts and Pickering (2000), working part-time and studying full-time has a variety of positive outcomes

and respondents generally viewed part-time employment as a necessity to survive in the contemporary higher education sphere.

**Table 2. Percentage distribution of respondents' demographic profile in terms of daily allowance**

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Daily Allowance</i>	50-100	326	73.8
	101-200	81	18.3
	201-300	27	6.1
	300 above	8	1.8
<b><i>Total</i></b>		<b>442</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2. Shows the percentage distribution of respondents' demographic profiles in terms of the daily allowance. The data revealed that 50-100 had 326 or 73.80 percent, 101-200 had 81 or 18.30 percent, 201-300 had 27 or 6.10 percent, and 300 and above had 8 or 1.80 percent. This means that the majority of the respondents' daily allowance ranges from 50 to 100 pesos which are intended to cover the ordinary daily expenses to spend on food and transportation. Barnett-Verzat and Wolff (2002) also demonstrated that irregular allowances are more common than fixed amounts of money given to children regularly and that parents who help their children are better off financially.

**Table 3. Percentage distribution of respondents' demographic profile in terms of gadget use**

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Gadget use</i>	cell phone	341	77.1
	Tablet	28	6.3
	Laptop	69	15.6
	Computer	4	0.9
<b><i>Total</i></b>		<b>442</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 shows the percentage distribution of respondents' demographic profiles in terms of gadget use. The data revealed that cell phones had 341 or 77.10 percent, tablets had 28 or 6.30 percent, laptops had 69 or 15.6 percent, and computers had 4 or 0.90 percent. This means that the majority of the respondents use cell phones. This implied that using cell phones helps BSBA students achieve a quality learning experience since cell phones make studying easier for them. Gadget use is one of the variables in obtaining a quality learning experience because gadgets allow students to do school activities and assignments while saving time. Students can also learn more effectively when they use learning apps. According to Apriani (2021), the gadget learning model is now usable in our education.

**Table 4. The level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of delivery of Instruction.**

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description	Interpretation
1. Instructors give us direct instructions during the activity.	3.51	0.50	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
2. Listening attentively when the instructions are given during class.	3.56	0.51	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
3. Understanding the specific command of my instructor.	3.50	0.52	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
4. .Doing the task easier for it was instructed clearly	3.51	0.53	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
5. Instructors explain the topic incomprehensible language.	3.54	0.52	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
6. Instructors use more than one way of explaining the topic, especially when the first explanation is not clear.	3.52	0.52	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
7. The instructor has a good command of the topics as the assigned task.	3.52	0.53	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
8. Instructor accepts inquiries for clarification of the incomprehensible assigned task	3.58	0.53	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
9. Instructions given to us create a positive impact in doing specific tasks.	3.56	0.51	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
10. Doing tasks are easy because it was instructed clearly.	3.56	0.52	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
<b>Average</b>	3.53	0.52	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
<b>Legend:1.00-1.75 (Strongly Disagree) 1.76-2.50 (Disagree), 2.51-3.25 (Agree), 3.26-4.00 (Strongly Agree)</b>				

Table 4. Presents the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of delivery of instructions. The data exposed that the average mean on the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of delivery of instructions is 3.53 with an SD of 0.52 viewed by the respondents as “**Very Effective**”. This means that the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape was very effective. This implied that if the assessment level is high, instructors will need to deliver instruction that is deeper and more rigorous. They will need to cover a broader range of topics and ensure that students have a solid understanding of the material. This may require more time and resources to plan and deliver instruction effectively. In line with this, the highest item of the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of delivery of instructions is “Instructor accepts inquiries for clarification of incomprehensible assigned task.” with a mean of 3.58 and SD of 0.53 and adjudge as “**Very Effective**”.

Moreover, the questions such as “Understanding the specific command of my instructor.” Garnered with a computed mean of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 0.52 the lowest computed mean is still found to be “**Very Effective**”. This implied that there are still some students who did not find the command of their instructor as good as they expected, however, they were able to manage and rated as effective. Thus, this item may lead to improvement since it did not meet the highest mean. According to Hammer (2010) The

most impactful teachers also obtain and implement constructive feedback, and use different techniques to encourage active learning oriented towards students becoming" self-directed, independent, and critical thinkers.

**Table 5. The level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of curriculum**

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Seeking interaction with my classmates and teachers and also making use of the content provided in the course environment is satisfying.	3.50	0.55	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
2. The college course followed the syllabus.	3.47	0.50	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
3. Eager to give extra effort on this course because it can bring contributions to my professional competence	3.61	0.52	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
4. The objectives of the work term are to further build the students for their knowledge and skill level which is developed within their course program.	3.56	0.50	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
5, The instructor prepares course material.	3.43	0.56	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
6. Instructors keep students inspired, for them to build interest in the subject matter of this course.	3.39	0.57	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
7. Text and assigned tasks from the instructor were valuable for future jobs.	3.47	0.57	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
8. Exams and assignments were reflective of course content.	3.46	0.52	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
9. Course workload and requirements were appropriate for the course level.	3.43	0.53	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
10. The course environment felt like a welcoming place to express ideas.	3.42	0.53	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
<b>Average</b>	3.47	0.53	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
<b>Legend:1.00-1.75 (Strongly Disagree) 1.76-2.50 (Disagree), 2.51-3.25 (Agree), 3.26-4.00 (Strongly Agree)</b>				

Table 5. Presents the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of curriculum. The data exposed that the average mean of the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of the curriculum is 3.47 with an SD of 0.53 viewed by the respondents as “**Very Effective**”. This means that the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape was meet student’s expectations. This implied that if the assessment level is high, the curriculum may need to be adapted to better support student learning. This involves using different instructional methods or resources in incorporating more formative assessments to help students better understand the material. In line with this, the highest item of the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of the curriculum is “Eager to give extra effort on this course because it can bring contributions to my professional competence.” with a mean of 3.61 and an SD of 0.52 found to be “**Very Effective**”. This implied that students on the free education find it very

effective in the area of the curriculum when they give extra effort to this course because it can bring contributions to their professional competence. Moreover, the lowest item is “Instructor keeps students inspired for them to build interest in the subject matter of this course.” with a computed mean of 3.39 and its corresponding SD of 0.57 is “**Very Effective**”. This implied that there are still some students who did not find that their instructor keeps them inspired to build interest in the subject matter of the course. Thus, this item may lead to improvement since it did not meet the highest mean. According to Krug (1957), the Curriculum consists of all the means of instruction used by the school to provide opportunities for student learning experiences leading to desired learning outcomes.

**Table 6. The level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of extracurricular Activities**

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Being involved in extracurricular activities affect student retention.	3.18	0.63	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
2. Less involvement in extracurricular activities will affect student retention.	3.07	0.69	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
3. Extracurricular activities increased school achievement.	3.24	0.71	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
4. Extracurricular activity participation will have a positive effect on students' persistence to graduation.	3.22	0.68	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
5. Participating in extracurricular activities increased educational aspirations.	3.27	0.64	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
6. Extracurricular activity involvement encourages students to do better in academic performance.	3.19	0.74	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
7. It harms my studies when I join extracurricular activities in school.	2.89	0.89	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
8. It promotes mutual feelings between classmates and improves my communication ability when I participate in extracurricular activities.	3.22	0.65	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
9. Some extracurricular activities are important to studies	3.18	0.68	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
10. Extracurricular activities help students to improve their knowledge of different aspects of being a student.	3.24	0.64	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
<b>Average</b>	3.17	0.69	Agree	<b>Effective</b>
<i>Legend:1.00-1.75 (Strongly Disagree) 1.76-2.50 (Disagree), 2.51-3.25 (Agree), 3.26-4.00 (Strongly Agree)</i>				

Table 6. Presents the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of extracurricular activities. The data uncovered the average mean of the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of the extracurricular activities is 3.17 with an SD of 0.69 and rated as “**Effective**”. This means that the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of extracurricular activities meets students’ desired expectations. This implied that if the assessment level is high, extracurricular activities may be designed to incorporate assessment to provide students with additional opportunities to explore using their skills and knowledge. This may involve incorporating formative assessments or performance-based assessments into extracurricular activities. In line with this, the highest item of the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape in terms of the extracurricular activities is “Participating in extracurricular activities increased educational aspirations.” with a mean of



3.27 and SD of 0.64 or “**Very Effective**”. This implied that students on the free education find it very effective when they were participating in all extracurricular activities in a way, which increases their educational aspirations. Moreover, the lowest item is "It harms my studies when I join extracurricular activities in school." with a mean of 2.89 and SD of 0.89 which is rated as "**Effective**". This implied that there are still some students who did not find that extracurricular activities may harm their studies. In other words, although extracurricular activities are part of the component of effective learning, some of them are not affected by this activity. It explains further that even if other students are not actively participating the school-organized activities will not affect their learning. This finding is supported by Hattie (2008) who reveals that extracurricular activities could benefit students where they can learn something beyond what they have learned in the classroom. In addition, students with more involvement with the programs have shown a decrease in behavioral issues and a significant positive effect on students' academic achievement.

**Table 7. The level of experience of the students in the Free Higher Education program in terms of academic integration.**

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Instructors’ way of teaching helps academic learning process easy to understand.	3.55	0.57	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
2. Interest in ideas and intellectual matters has increased this year.	3.43	0.56	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
3. Getting good grades is important	3.56	0.56	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
4. In addition to required reading assignments, I read many of the recommended books in my course to gain more knowledge	3.41	0.62	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
5. Always make sure to be academically updated so that I will not fail when a quiz or exam is given	3.48	0.57	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
6. Academic experience this year has had a positive influence on my intellectual growth and interest in ideas	3.50	0.54	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
7. Very satisfied with the extent of intellectual development that has improved since enrolling in this institution.	3.44	0.55	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
8. Very satisfied with the extent of my intellectual growth and interest in ideas since coming here.	3.39	0.56	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
9. very satisfied with the quality of academic knowledge that I am receiving from this institution	3.41	0.53	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
10. Satisfied with the academic experience at TCC this past year.	3.41	0.60	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
<b>Average</b>	3.45	0.57	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
<b>Legend:1.00-1.75 (Strongly Disagree) 1.76-2.50 (Disagree), 2.51-3.25 (Agree), 3.26-4.00 (Strongly Agree)</b>				

Table 7. Presents the level of experience of the students in the Free Higher Education program in terms of academic integration. The data exposed that the average mean of the level of experience of the students in the Free Higher Education program in terms of academic integration is 3.45 with an SD of 0.57 and found to be “**Very Effective**”. This means that the level of assessment in terms of Free Educations Landscape was very applauding. This implied that if the assessment level is high, individuals who have more experience in navigating the free education landscape may have a better understanding of the available resources, scholarship opportunities, and support systems, which can improve their academic integration. In line with this, the highest item of the level of experience of the students in the Free Higher Education program in terms of academic integration is “Getting good grades is important” with a mean of 3.56 and SD of 0.56 as the topmost priority. This implied that students with free education are challenged to get good

grades. Moreover, although the lowest item is the extent of the intellectual growth and interest in ideas it still draws a commendable response. The finding implies that there are still some students who are not very satisfied with the extent of their intellectual growth and interest in ideas. Thus, this item may lead to improvement since it did not meet the students' expectations. According to Johnson & Johnson (2008), Students described that the community structure in which they renew their social ties with the university contributes to academic integration.

**Table 8. The level of experience of the students in the Free Higher Education program in terms of social integration**

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Enrolling in this institution has developed close personal relationships with other students.	3.50	0.52	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
2. Friendships developed in this institution have been personally satisfying.	3.50	0.51	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
3. Interpersonal relationships with other students have had a positive influence on my personal growth, attitudes, and values	3.52	0.52	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
4. It is easy to meet and make friends with other students.	3.36	0.60	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
5. Few of the students I know would be willing to listen and help if someone had a personal problem.	3.33	0.60	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
6. Participating in leisure activities with friends creates a strong bond.	3.42	0.57	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
7. Creating relationships with other students inspires them to do good things, especially for others.	3.37	0.56	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
8. Having a sense of connection with others like faculty, students, and staff on this campus is very helpful.	3.47	0.59	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
9. Seeing students with friends socializing with each other is a good social interaction.	3.43	0.54	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
10. Very satisfied in terms of social life in this institution especially having new friends, joining college organizations, and extracurricular activities.	3.45	0.64	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
<b>Average</b>	3.43	0.56	Strongly Agree	<b>Very Effective</b>
<b>Legend:1.00-1.75 (Strongly Disagree) 1.76-2.50 (Disagree), 2.51-3.25 (Agree), 3.26-4.00 (Strongly Agree)</b>				

Table 8 presents the level of experience of the students in the Free Higher Education program in terms of social integration. The data exposed that the average mean of the level of experience of the students in the Free Higher Education program in terms of social integration is 3.43 with an SD of 0.56 and rated as “**Very Effective**”. This means that the level of assessment on the Free Educations Landscape was implemented to attune with students' expectations. This implied that if the assessment level is high, the availability and accessibility of free education resources can also play a role in social integration. If individuals are unable to access these resources due to factors such as lack of internet access or inadequate technological infrastructure, they may be excluded from participating in the social aspects of the academic

community. In line with this, the highest item of the level of experience of the students in the Free Higher Education program in terms of social integration is “Interpersonal relationships with other students have had a positive influence on my personal growth, attitudes, and values.” with a mean of 3.52 and SD of 0.52 and rated as “**Very Effective**”. This implied that students on the free education find it very effective since the students' interpersonal relationships with other students have a positive influence on their personal growth, attitudes, and values. Moreover, although the lowest among the computed mean is that few of the students are willing to listen and help if someone had a personal problem. As can be gleaned from the findings that there are still students who do not have the feeling of extending help to those who are in need manifesting that they lack strong engagement and making them socially exposed. The finding suggests that this area should be strengthened through the creation of some social awareness activities and training students to immerse in the activity involving social defiant. Ron-Balsera's (2015) study of Ecuadorian migrant youth in Spain discusses how the role of peer friendships and supportive relationships with teachers enables migrant students to stay in school and withstand exclusion, aggression, and marginalization.

**Table 9. Test of the significant relationship of the student's profile to the quality learning experience**

Students Profile	Quality learning experience		
	R-value	P-Value	Decision on Ho
Zonal Address	.270**	.050	Rejected
Students Status	.930**	.004	Rejected
Daily Allowance	.646**	.022	Rejected
Gadget use	-.105*	.027	Rejected
<i>Significant if P-value &lt; 0.05</i>			
<i>Legend: Ho is rejected if Significant Ho is accepted if Not Significant</i>			

Table 9 depicts the significant relationship between the student's profile to the quality learning experience. The data exposed that public transportation (r-value=.270\*\*, p-value=.050), students' status (r-value=.930\*\*, p-value=.004), daily allowance (r-value=.646\*\*, p-value=.022), and gadget use (r-value=-.105\*\*), have a significant relationship between the student's profile to the quality learning experience since the p-value is greater than 0.05 level. Also, the null hypothesis is rejected. The zonal address is one of the factors in the quality learning experience of students as distance to school contributes to their performance. Students who stay closer to school had better, more reliable transport. Zonal addresses dictate how much students allocate for their transportation expenses which they take from their daily allowance. Student status is also a factor in the quality learning experience. Whether working students or full-time students have both advantages and disadvantages in their academic performance in managing their time to study. Daily allowances help students to lessen the burden as allowances cover ordinary daily expenses which include transportation costs. Gadget use is also a factor. Gadgets used help students to browse additional references and advance learning related to their academic endeavors. It also helps them to be inspired and motivated in studying and keeping in touch with their family and friends. Zonal address, daily allowance, student status, and gadgets used has a significant relationship in attaining quality learning experiences for students.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

Free education for quality learning is a government mandate under the Commission on Higher Education that carries out its function of establishing a complete, adequate, and integrated system. It aims

to promote relevant and quality higher education that guarantees academic freedom for continuing intellectual growth. An assessment must be made to measure its effectiveness in terms of the level of learning and knowledge absorption. The study shows that free education is very effective since many are benefited and as a privilege to those deserving individuals that fall short of economic well-being, and hinders them to enjoy education. It can be seen that learners valued most this privilege as they take advantage to gain knowledge for free. However, despite that the students do not have a burden in terms of monetary school obligations still experience some constraints on their day-to-day challenges as they belong to the lower-level category in society. As can be seen in the student's assessment seem beneficial to them but they are not exempted from experiencing financial drain since their daily expenditures, more so that education of today involve different mechanism to fine tune to the present educational trend. There are a lot of challenges they faced such as transportation, daily allowances, and the gadget to be used for Hybrid learning.

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