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Psychological Factors and the Academic Performance among High School Students: Basis for Academic Self-Engagement Program

ABSTRACT: Students, as learners, must develop not only their intelligence but also non-intellective factors in the education or learning process. The purpose of the study was to identify the different psychological factors, specifically the study habits, attitudes, and methods which in a way influence the academic performance of students, particularly in English and Mathematics subjects among Third Year High School Students in one of the private schools in Manila, the Philippines. The descriptive and documentary method of research were generated for the qualitative analysis. The findings showed that in terms of study habits and attitudes, students are prompt in completing academic assignments and free from wasteful delay and distractions. While for their study methods, it was reflected that students have academic drive which refers to the persistence and determination to succeed in academic work. Moreover, the academic self-engagement program was designed to help the students improved the following non-intellective factors which obtained the lowest mean, particularly students' cooperation with the educational practices and requirements; inclination to use influence and playing up to the teacher to gain special consideration; and the feeling of being isolated or rejected in the academic environment manifested by hostility which affect an academic performance.

KEY WORD: Study Habits; Academic Performance; Teacher Approval.

INTISARI: "Faktor-faktor Psikologis dan Kinerja Akademik di Kalangan Siswa Sekolah Menengah: Dasar untuk Program Keterlibatan Diri Akademik". Siswa, sebagai peserta didik, harus mengembangkan tidak hanya kecerdasan mereka tetapi juga faktor non-intelektif dalam proses pendidikan atau pembelajaran. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor psikologis yang berbeda, khususnya kebiasaan belajar, sikap, dan metode belajar yang mempengaruhi kinerja akademik siswa, terutama dalam mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris dan Matematika pada Siswa Sekolah Menengah Tahun Ketiga di salah satu sekolah swasta di Manila, Filipina. Metode penelitian deskriptif dan dokumenter dihasilkan untuk analisis kualitatif. Hasil temuan menunjukkan bahwa dalam hal kebiasaan belajar dan sikap, siswa cepat dalam menyelesaikan tugas akademik dan bebas dari keterlambatan dan gangguan. Sedangkan untuk metode belajar mereka, tercermin bahwa siswa memiliki dorongan akademis yang mengacu pada ketekunan dan tekad untuk berhasil dalam pekerjaan akademik. Selain itu, program keterlibatan diri akademik dirancang untuk membantu siswa meningkatkan faktor-faktor non-intelektif yang memperoleh nilai rata-rata terendah, terutama kerja sama siswa dalam praktek dan persyaratan pendidikan; kecenderungan untuk menggunakan pengaruh dan bermain dengan guru agar mendapatkan pertimbangan khusus; serta perasaan terisolasi atau ditolak oleh lingkungan akademik yang termanifestasikan dalam permusuhan yang mempengaruhi kinerja akademik.

KATA KUNCI: Kebiasaan Belajar; Kinerja Akademik; Persetujuan Guru.

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INTRODUCTION

Student, as learners, must develop their study habits which in effect will enhance their academic performance. As J.A. Maddox (2003) claims that success in academic performance depends not only on knowledge, but also on factors related in achieving them (Maddox, 2003). Awareness of the existence of these psychological factors, such as motivations, study habits, and interest, will in all likelihood guide the school in adopting programs and policies that will serve as guide in the enhancement of personal growth of students in the school community. With these factors, the students will be guided in actualizing their potentialities; and, thereby, succeed in their scholastic endeavors (Maddox, 2003; Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall eds., 2009; and Bhagat, Vyas & Singh, 2015).

E.C. Miller (2000), a psychologist, also noted that performance has much to do with learning inside the classroom (Miller, 2000). Motivation and study methods of the students are reflected in personal characteristics and behaviors in the classroom. Apparently, these factors inevitably determine their behavior and concomitantly their learning achievements in school (cf Miller, 2000; Allan, 2006; and Gablinske, 2014). In this context, D. Lindren (2010) also stated that:

[...] academic performance is not solely based on the student's intellectual capacity but also other factors, which are non-intellective in nature such as study habits, attitudes towards studying, teacher factor, student motivation to learn (Lindren, 2010).

Review of Related Literature. As a whole, the review of related literature and studies emphasized academic performance and different psychological factors. In the synthesis of the related studies, similarities and differences were noted. The review of related literature provided the researcher sufficient information, insights, and ideas that have bearing to the present study, for instance the work of M.Q. Aragonés (2003) has greatly provided the researcher with information regarding psychological

factors, such as motivation, interest, and environment (Aragones, 2003).

The studies of both C.S. Soza (2009) and L.B. Lee (2010) provide the researcher sufficient information that Delay Avoidance or promptness in submitting assignments or requirements on time affect academic performance (Soza, 2009; and Lee, 2010). The study of N.A. Vano (2009) gave a descriptive analysis of students attitudes towards teachers' educational goals and curriculum (Vano, 2009). With regards to study habits and attitude, the researcher found the article of Gregorio R. Maio (2010) and Carol Carter (2013) significant to the present study, since they highlight the importance of developing good study habits and attitudes even at an early age (Maio, 2010; and Carter, 2013).

The studies on teachers' personality and teaching method by E.D. Valaquio (2005); R.N. Casillan (2006); and C.U. Nolasco (2007) contributed necessary information on the relationship of academic performance and teacher approval (Valaquio, 2005; Casillan, 2006; and Nolasco, 2007). In the same way, their articles made known to the researcher the true aspects of classroom management, such as the student, teacher, and the environment; whereas the result of the works of R.T. Arellano (2006) and Crosman Anne (2011) indicated that proper study methods must be included in the curriculum of all high school students (Arellano, 2006; and Anne, 2011).

For the dimension of "Alienation towards Authority", S.E. Solsokom (2000) and W.G. Saucier (2000) give emphasis to school environment, which is the basic requirement for a student to study effectively (Solsokom, 2000; and Saucier, 2000). On the other hand, M.Q. Aragonés (2003) shared idea that the basic source of motivation is interest which is important in the present study (Aragones, 2003).

The researcher fervently hopes that the present study can contribute something valuable to the improvement of students' academic performance in English and Mathematics.

METHODS

The researcher used the descriptive and documentary method of research for qualitative analysis (Evers, 2009; Ahmed, 2010; and Hammarberg, Kirkman & de Lacey, 2016). Purposively chosen, a total of 40 respondents participated in the study. This number constitutes the total population of the third year high school. Among the four levels, the third year high school has the most number of students, who have below average academic performance in English and Mathematics. The following research instruments were used:

Firstly, **SSHA (Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes)**. This was used as the research instrument by K.D. Cliff (2001) and Norman Brier (2010). It is an easily administered measure of study methods, motivation for studying, and certain attitudes toward scholastic activities (Cliff, 2001; and Brier, 2010). The purposes of the Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes are: (1) to identify students whose study habits and attitudes are different from those who earn high grades; (2) to aid in understanding students with academic difficulties; and (3) to provide a basis for helping such students improve their study habits and attitudes and thus more fully realize their best potential (Cerna & Pavliushchenko, 2015; Blazar & Kraft, 2017; and Ebele & Olofu, 2017). It used to identify the following dimensions:

DA (Delay Avoidance). This term refers to promptness in completing academic assignments, lack of procrastination, and freedom from wasteful delay and distraction (Jaradat, 2013).

EA (Education Acceptance). This is defined as the student's approval of educational objectives, practices, and requirements (Najimi *et al.*, 2013).

SA (Study Attitudes). This provides a measure of scholastic attitude. These attitudes are developed as a result of the experiences the student has in the classroom and in the school environment (Langat, 2015).

SH (Study Habits). This is the student's accustomed approach to learning, his/her

attentiveness to matters of study, and the efforts which he/she exerts in the learning process (Ebele & Olofu, 2017).

SO (Study Orientation). This refers to the overall measure of study habits and attitudes (Sarwar *et al.*, 2009).

TA (Teacher Approval). It includes student's opinions of teachers on their classroom behavior and methods (Babad, 1993).

WM (Work Methods). This refers to the use of effective study procedures, efficiency in doing academic assignments, and how-to-study skills (Carey, 2015).

Secondly, **SAMS (Study Attitudes and Methods Survey)**. This is an instrument developed to measure non-cognitive factors associated with success in school (Michael, 2005; and Crede & Kuncel, 2008). It is used to assess the following dimensions:

Academic Drive-Conformity. A combination of both (a) persistence, involving a high level of determination to succeed in academic work regardless of the amount of effort and time required (Michael, 2005; and Wang & Degol, 2014).

Academic Interest-Love of Learning. It is the sheer pleasure gained by students in studying and in doing academic work, much like that experienced by the dedicated scholar who gains great satisfaction in working in the library, in writing papers, and in reading the great books – an intrinsic motivation involving love of learning for its own sake (Michael, 2005; and Graham, 2015).

Alienation toward Authority. It is a feeling of being isolated or rejected in the academic environment manifested by hostility toward the academic institution and its members-teachers, administrators, and significant others as well as resentment and even defiance of rules and regulations (Michael *et al.*, 1985; and Michael, 2005).

Manipulation. It refers to an inclination to use power and influence to achieve one's goals and to enhance one's status even at the expense of the teacher or administrator; playing up to the teacher to gain favorable treatment or special consideration (Sylva,

1994; and Michael, 2005).

Study Anxiety. It is marked concern over doing well in school assignments and examinations that reflects a lack of self-confidence and self-assurance (O'Toole, 1995; and Michael, 2005).

Study Method. It is a systematic, organized, methodical, and well-planned set of working habits and procedures in meeting assignments and in taking examinations; effective study skills and techniques resulting in the optimal use of time and ability (Michael, 2005; and Serdyukov, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Academic Profile in English. In terms of the academic performance of the respondents in English. It is shown that most of the girls have Below Average Academic Performance representing 33 or 83%, who belong in the bracket of 75-79. Out of 40 respondents, 12 or 30% have an Average Academic Performance, this group is followed by 9 or 22% of the respondents who fall in the bracket of Above Average Level, while 2 students or 5% of them have an Excellent Academic Performance.

Generally, the academic profile of the Third Year High Students of SY (School Year) 2007-2008 in English shows that majority of them have Below Average Academic Performance.

Academic Profile in Mathematics. On the other hand, the academic performance of the respondents in Mathematics shows that majority of the students or 50% of them have Below Average Academic Performance, while 12 or 30% of them belong in the bracket of 80-84 Average Academic Performance. This is followed by 6 or 15% of the respondents who fall in the bracket of Above Average Academic Performance. Only 2 or 5% have an Excellent Academic Performance. The result shows that the respondents have a Below Academic Performance in Mathematics.

The Psychological Profile of the Respondents. It is consisted of Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes, namely: DA or

Delay Avoidance, WM or Work Methods, SH or Study Habits, TA or Teacher Approval, EA or Education Acceptance, SA or Study Attitude, and SO or Study Orientation (Babad, 1993; Sarwar *et al.*, 2009; Jaradat, 2013; Najimi *et al.*, 2013; Carey, 2015; Langat, 2015; and Ebele & Olofu, 2017).

It is consisted also Study Attitudes and Methods, namely: Academic Interests, Academic Drive-Conformity, Study Methods, Study Anxiety, Lack of Manipulation, and Alienation Towards Authority (Michael *et al.*, 1985; and Michael, 2005).

On the DA (Delay Avoidance).

Result shows the highest mean score of the respondents on Delay Avoidance which is 3.78. Even though an assignment is dull and boring, students still stick to it, because they are diligent in submitting assignments and requirements. They keep all the notes for each subject together, carefully arranging them in some logical order. It was also revealed that students make back up assignments up to date and prefer to study lessons alone than with others (*cf* Zimdars, 2007; and Jaradat, 2013).

A study was conducted by D. Lindren (2010) among High School students using an instrument similar to that used in the present study. D. Lindren (2010) findings are similar to the present study as both found the students diligent in submitting assignments and requirements (Lindren, 2010).

The present study also supports to C.S. Soza (2009)'s study as both found that study habits were being influenced by promptness in submitting school papers and requirements (Soza, 2009). Likewise, L.B. Lee (2010) assessed on his study that delay avoidance in the study habits repertoire was very predictive of certain academic performance. He discovered that even more specific data, such as number of hours of study per week might be even more predictive of study habits (Lee, 2010).

While the lowest mean is 1.65, extra-curricular activities like dating, "*athletics cause me to get behind in my school work*". Without proper attitude, much studying can

be a waste of time and effort. Some students tend to waste their time talking, reading magazines, and listening to the radio (*cf* Craft, 2012; and Leonard *et al.*, 2015).

On the WM (Work Method). The highest mean score of the respondents in Work Method which is 4.03. With this it can be noted that pay more attention to neatness on themes, reports, and other work. They also copy the illustration, diagrams, drawings that the instructor puts on the blackboard. They do not skip over the figures, graphs, and tables in a reading assignment (*cf* Birdsey, 2013; and Carey, 2015).

On the other hand, the result shows that students get confused when taking an examination, fail to answer questions to the best of their abilities, are unable to finish examinations within the allotted time and obtain grades lowered by careless mistakes. This indicated that the respondents find it difficult to study or concentrate if they have proper methods. In this context, W. Michael (2005) and other scholars stated that work methods will help students to have work procedure (Michael, 2005; Kaya & Akdemir eds., 2016; and Blazar & Kraft, 2017).

E.B. Moratto (2000) recommended that a course providing training in proper methods and techniques of study must be included in the curriculum of all high school students. She likewise recommended that there should be a daily basic schedule of study for a given week to follow-up the development of certain study habits (*cf* Moratto, 2000; Kaya & Akdemir eds., 2016; and Blazar & Kraft, 2017).

The lowest mean score of 1.50 was obtained for the item, “*teacher criticize my written reports as being hastily written or poorly organized*”. This hold up to the students’ neatness on paper works. They tend to arrange facts to be learned in some logical order – order of importance, order of presentation in class or textbooks, order of time in history. Also, in preparing reports, term papers, they make certain that they clearly understand what they wanted before they begin (Moratto, 2000; and Barnard, 2017).

Acquiring work methods is like keeping

a list of assignments, being neat on paper works as well as organizing materials to be learned (Kaya & Akdemir eds., 2016; Barnard, 2017; and Blazar & Kraft, 2017).

Attitude on TA (Teacher Approval). As regards to the students’ attitude toward their teachers’ classroom behavior and methods, explains that the dimension of teacher approval achieved the highest weighted mean of 4.00 interpreted as generally. This means that teachers succeed in making their subjects interesting and meaningful to their students. This finding supports the result which reveals that teachers enter their profession because they enjoy teaching. It also proves that teachers try to distribute their attention and assistance equally among their students (Babad, 1993; Azel, 2002; and Kubiatio, Torkar & Rovnanova, 2017).

K.D. Cliff (2001) also found out from her study about student’s attitude toward study that teacher play significant role in students’ lives (Cliff, 2001). They also found out that the students were unable to concentrate, got nervous and were confused when taking an examination (Babad, 1993; Cliff, 2001; and Kubiatio, Torkar & Rovnanova, 2017).

In the same ideas are forwarded by G.G. Uriarte (2000) and other scholars, who emphasized that the effective classroom teacher is an important factor in molding the personality of his students. The teachers’ thoughts and ways of communicating influence much the preference of the students (Uriarte, 2000; Azel, 2002; and Kubiatio, Torkar & Rovnanova, 2017).

E.D. Valaquio (2005), on the other hand, explained that the teachers’ method and style of teaching has a great influence in the learning of the students (Valaquio, 2005). Presently, method includes everything the teacher teaches or neglects to do which cause behavioral changes in the students (*cf* Azel, 2002; Valaquio, 2005; and Kubiatio, Torkar & Rovnanova, 2017).

Moreover, according to R.C. Wiley (2009) that in one school a pool was taken to determine the difficulties encountered by both boys and girls in doing their homework (Wiley, 2009). The results indicated that

many students needed a better place for studying, had a hard time getting started, had too many interruptions, and could not keep their minds from wondering (Valaquio, 2005; Wiley, 2009; and Kubiato, Torkar & Rovnanova, 2017).

On the EA (Education Acceptance). Reveals the highest mean score of 4.03 education acceptance was obtained by the first item. This shows that the participants are encouraged to study harder if they are given more freedom to choose courses that they like, but even if they do not like the subject, they would still work hard to make good grades (*cf* Andelin, 1975; Najimi *et al.*, 2013; and Reed, 2014).

Current researchers in Psychology found out that readiness for learning affects achievement of pupils. If the main goal of education is to help each person develop his/her potentials to the fullest, this aim could be attained through the realization of the importance of education as an integral part of an individual's readiness for learning (Wiley, 2009; Blazar & Kraft, 2017; and Serdyukov, 2017).

N.A. Vano (2009) and other scholars gave also a descriptive analysis of a study about the educational goals of the high school freshmen of the Sacred Heart School for boys. They found out that the freshmen had good attitude towards teacher's educational goals and curriculum. As a result, they possess good study habits (Vano, 2009; Hofstein & Naaman, 2011; and Serdyukov, 2017).

Whereas the lowest mean is 1.38, only a small number of students think to drop out of school and get a job. G.G. Uriarte (2000) and other scholars also cited that the classroom learning is a multiplication which holds essential factors, such as student ability, motivation, quantity and quality of instruction, classroom environment, and should be education stimulating (Uriarte, 2000; Blazar & Kraft, 2017; and Serdyukov, 2017).

In general, the summary of weighted mean of study habits and attitudes. Delay avoidance obtained the highest mean of 2.69, which is interpreted as

Satisfactory. The respondents are prompt in completing academic assignments, lack of procrastination, and free from delay and distraction.

On the TA (Teacher Approval). Whereas the lowest mean is 2.31, which is interpreted as Needs Improvement. The student's opinions of teachers on their classroom behavior and methods. In addition, education acceptance got a mean of 2.45, which is interpreted as needs improvement and study attitudes with 2.38, which is also interpreted as needs improvement.

Meanwhile, the results presents the highest mean score of 2.18, results entail that students find learning new concepts and gaining information to be a most satisfying experience, they tend to pursue their scholarly interests. This is not just with the purpose of getting high grades for competitive reasons but also they are enjoying and interested to anything presented to them (*cf* Babad, 1993; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; and Butler, 2012).

On the other hand, with regards to reading textbooks, it obtained the lowest weighted mean score of 1.53. This means that only few students utilize library resources as well as reading great books beyond the minimum textbook requirement (*cf* Grissmer & Ross eds., 2000; and Sabarwal, Evans & Marshak, 2013).

Evidently, Gregorio R. Maio (2010) has identified interest as a source of motivation (Maio, 2010). As R.N. Casillan (2006) mentioned, in his article entitled "Motivation in Teaching and Learning", that motivation is a process of impelling the pupils to do something which should be accompanied with the interest, with appreciation (Casillan, 2006). The basic source of motivation is interest. Interest of student must be built up because students learned better, when they are motivated on their own and challenged to put further their best effort (Grissmer & Ross eds., 2000; Casillan, 2006; Maio, 2010; and Sabarwal, Evans & Marshak, 2013).

Academic-Drive Conformity. In the academic drive-conformity, the

highest mean is 2.53, students believe that hard work is the key to their success in school. The result also disclosed that the respondents never easily give up or stop trying to do their best. This can be attributed to “motivation” or academic drive to study. This motivation is enhanced by setting goals and immersing oneself to studies (cf Rhodes, 2007; Batchelor, 2013; and Kingi & Kalai, 2018).

With regards to rules and regulations, it exhibits the lowest mean of 1.48. The respondents have the tendency to disobey school policies and violate rules and regulations of the school (cf Clarke, 2009; and Nance, 2016).

Apparently, E.D. Valaquio (2005) and other scholars wrote that not only motivation but also interest are the first objective which depends upon the stimulus. They averred that motivation towards a goal is developed in the student within the level of his/her ability, consistent with his/her subjective interest. If students have academic drive-conformity, they would understand the meaning of being obedient particularly in school rules and regulations. Interest in the subject matter itself reached all other factors, including teacher competence and environment (Valaquio, 2005; Clarke, 2009; and Batchelor, 2013).

The highest mean score of the respondents in Study Method which is 2.14. Based from the result, the students regularly have a system for keeping notes and papers well organized by using their time effectively. They also review notes and lessons that need to be over learned and try to express it in their own thoughts and words (Shinn, 1997; and Eck, 2006).

Study Anxiety. Based on the mean score of study anxiety why, it obtained a highest mean of 1.78, the respondents have the tendency to feel low and depressed at times that they can't concentrate on their school work. However, they don't usually become anxious over small points, particularly in reading and studying that they miss the really important points (O'Toole, 1995; Azel, 2002; and Michael, 2005).

L.B. Lee (2010) also described the academically successful Filipino child is one who has developed proper study habits and has effective technique of gathering, organizing and presenting data. He is the one who works with concentration, and not easily distracted or doesn't have a tendency to be fearful. He holds confidence toward school work and tends to conform without any fuss (Lee, 2010).

The purpose of the Survey is two folds: (1) to identify those students who might experience difficulty in their school work because of poor study methods or to specific attitudinal factors, and (2) to diagnose for purposes of counseling or guidance those areas which might contribute to such difficulty. The Survey may be particularly useful for group administration to high school students for individual counseling or group guidance (cf Lee, 2010; and Mikaye, 2012).

Manipulation. Manipulation obtained a highest mean of 1.85. This entail that the students occasionally take advantage of any opportunity that come their way. This means that the respondents have the determination to achieve what they want to be in the future. On the other hand, the lowest mean is 1.10, students are not convinced that one of the best ways to get ahead in school is to flatter and play up to the teacher. The participants believe in their own skill and effort to be successful in the future (Sylva, 1994; and Michael, 2005).

In this context, L.G. Meyer (2008) and other scholars mentioned that attitudes influence how well students learn and how they behave. Attitudes are learned, emotionally-toned disposition to react in a consistent way toward persons, objects, and ideas (Sylva, 1994; Michael, 2005; and Meyer, 2008).

In addition, C.U. Nolasco (2007) also took the concept in his article which is entitled “Good Study Habits with Proper Attitude will Lead to Good Pupils Performance” that students with good attitude and study habits will give better academic results (cf Sylva, 1994; Michael, 2005; Nolasco, 2007; and Meyer, 2008).

On the TA (Teacher Approval) Again. It can be noted that the respondents have a highest mean of 1.48, at times they have the impression that teachers fail to understand the needs, feelings, and interests of the students. While the lowest mean is 1.23, teachers fail to make their subjects interesting and meaningful. Teachers and students are both important in a learning environment. They should work hand in hand to facilitate learning (cf Babad, 1993; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; and Butler, 2012).

Between the two factors, W.G. Saucier (2000) and other scholars assessed that one must have a favorable attitude towards learning and it is important likewise to recognize the environment, in which the student will have whether resentment or acceptance to follow rules and regulations (Saucier, 2000; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; and Butler, 2012).

On the same note, R.C. Wiley (2009) and other scholars suggested that immediate environment must be improved by keeping neat and tidy surroundings as well as having good interpersonal relationship. Students need a better place for studying so that they can concentrate on their homework (Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Wiley, 2009; and Butler, 2012).

In general, the Academic Drive has the highest mean of 2.10 which is interpreted as Satisfactory. It reveals that the respondents have a strong determination regardless of the amount of effort and time required.

Summary of Weighted Mean of SAMS (Study Attitudes and Methods Survey). The lowest mean is 1.34, it reveals the defiance of school rules and regulations. Followed by Manipulation which obtained a mean of 1.38 which is interpreted as needs improvement. One must have a favorable attitude towards learning and it is important likewise to recognize the environment, in which the student will have whether resentment or acceptance to follow rules and regulations.

Develop an academic self-engagement program to enhance the academic performance of the students. According

to Crosman Anne (2011), people differ in their level of achievement or performance, because there exists also a difference in their abilities and potentialities (Anne, 2011). The content was broken down into the following dimensions which based from the result obtained the lowest mean and have an interpretation of needs improvement (OECD, 1999; Michael, 2005; and Anne, 2011).

From the dimension, items were carefully analyzed and selected according to the weight of the response of the students as well as the significance of the item, as follows: (1) *Education Acceptance* which is defined as the student's approval of educational objectives, practices, and requirements; (2) *Teacher Approval* that includes student's opinions of teachers on their classroom behavior and methods; (3) *Study Attitude* provides a measure of scholastic attitude, and these attitudes are developed as a result of the experiences the student has in the classroom and in the school environment; (4) *Manipulation* is an inclination to use power and influence to achieve one's goals and to enhance one's status even at the expense of the teacher or administrator, in playing up to the teacher to gain favorable treatment or special consideration; and (5) *Alienation towards Authority* is a feeling of being rejected or isolated in the academic environment (cf OECD, 1999; Michael, 2005; Anne, 2011; and Westbrook *et al.*, 2013).

Through the academic engagement program, it will improve academic performance and reinforce the existing competencies of the teachers.

CONCLUSION

In light of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn. The third year high school students have poor academic performance in English and Mathematics. Generally, the respondents are prompt in completing assignments and free from wasteful delay. Also, they have the strong determination to succeed in academic work. The academic self-engagement program will help enhance the academic performance.

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are submitted for consideration: (1) Curriculum administrator and teachers should recognize the individual needs of the students, specifically in English and Math subjects, then tie these to classroom activities to help improve academic performance; (2) Design a developmental program to enhance students' study habits and attitudes, and see next page for the proposed academic self-engagement program; (3) Students should be given encouragement and support by both school and home environment, so that they will be motivated to perform better in school work; and (4) The academic self-engagement program be implemented and monitored.¹

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¹**Statement:** I am the sole author of my research paper and most importantly it is an original work and not a product of plagiarism; and it is not submitted, reviewed, and published by other scholarly journal.

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