

# Effectiveness of student welfare programs and services of the Nueva Vizcaya State University: 2016-2019 graduating students' perspicacity

Vadil, Carlo ✉

Nueva Vizcaya State University, Philippines ([drvadil888@yahoo.com](mailto:drvadil888@yahoo.com))

Valdez, Rosalie

Nueva Vizcaya State University, Philippines ([Rosalievaldez111267@gmail.com](mailto:Rosalievaldez111267@gmail.com))

Agaran, Floralyn V.

Nueva Vizcaya State University, Philippines



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## ***Abstract***

The individuals produced by any educational institution like NVSU should be able to contribute positively to the progress and development of the Philippines, and to the upliftment of human conditions. The university, with the vision of becoming a premier university in a global community, must and should provide by all means, a set of student-centered activities and services that would facilitate holistic and well-rounded student development preparing them to become responsible citizens and leaders in the future. Using a descriptive method of research, this research investigation is focused on the evaluation of Student Welfare Programs and Services of NVSU-Bambang Campus. A total of 1,333 graduating students from 2016 to 2019 were considered respondents. The survey instrument and unstructured interview were used to gather data. In describing the data gathered, mean was used to describe the level of effectiveness of these programs and services, and to determine the satisfaction level of the respondents. Results show that there is a high level of effectiveness and satisfaction with the implementation of student welfare programs and services at NVSU-Bambang Campus.

***Keywords:*** effectiveness, graduating students, perspicacity, satisfaction, student welfare programs and services

## **Effectiveness of student welfare programs and services of the Nueva Vizcaya State University: 2016-2019 graduating students' perspicacity**

### **1. Introduction**

The 1987 Philippine Constitution declares that the state shall protect and promote the right of all Filipino citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make education accessible to all. The state shall establish, maintain, and support a completely adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the people and society. Realizing this goal, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is mandated to promote quality education; to take appropriate steps to ensure education is accessible to all; and to ensure and protect academic freedom for the continuing intellectual growth, the advancement of learning, and research, the development of responsible and effective leadership, the education of high-level professionals, and the enrichment of historical and cultural heritage. (CMO No. 9, series of 2013).

In relation to the above statements, there were policies that had been established to regulate or standardize the management of student affairs and services among higher education institutions in the country. The initial policy on student affairs and services came with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memo Order No. 21 Series of 2006 or the "Guidelines in the Implementation of Student Affairs Services." This CHED memorandum order promotes a number of offices and functions subsumed under the Office of Student Affairs (OSA). However, this structure and organization of student affairs, as well as, the different SAS roles were later improved in CMO No. 9, s. 2013 entitled, "Enhanced Policies and Guidelines on Student Affairs and Services." Student affairs (SA) as defined by CMO No. 9 are the services and programs in higher education institutions that are concerned with academic support experiences of students to attain holistic development. It then defines "academic support services" within three categories: Student Welfare Services, Student Development Services, and Institutional Student Programs and Services.

With the above policy, student affairs professionals have always been concerned with the development of the "whole student" or a student's intellectual capacity and achievement, emotional make-up, physical condition, social relationships, vocational aptitudes and skills, moral and religious values, economic resources, and aesthetic appreciations. Although the activities of student affairs have changed over time, the basic tenets of helping students reach their full potential have remained constant. Contemporary efforts in student affairs have attempted to refocus student affairs on creating intentionally the conditions that enhance student learning and development, encouraging student commitment to educationally purposeful activities in and out of the classroom, and assessing those initiatives. Increasing the quality of student-faculty interactions and linking in-class and extracurricular activities through living-learning centers on the campus are two strategies to promote student success. To be involved in the central missions of universities, student affairs must affirm its commitment to student learning and development (Wilson and associates, 2021).

Anent to the above, the Commission on Higher Education as stated in Article 10 of CMO No. 9, encourages different higher education institutions in the country to conduct research studies on SAS programs and to evaluate its proper implementation. Another provision of the CMO is in Article 11 Section 39, which calls for feed-backing mechanisms assessing the effectiveness of SAS programs through monitoring and evaluation. This provides motivation for the researchers to conduct this research investigation.

#### *1.1 Objectives*

The main purpose of this research investigation is to evaluate the Student Welfare Programs and Services (SWPS) of the Nueva Vizcaya State University-Bambang Campus from 2016 to 2019 based on the perception of the graduating students. Specifically, it answered the following specific research problems:

- What is the perception of the graduating students of 2016-2019 on the effectiveness of student welfare programs and services (SWPS) of the Nueva Vizcaya State University-Bambang Campus along with information and orientation services, guidance and counseling services, career and job placement services, and economic enterprise development?
- What is the level of graduating students' satisfaction with the quality of different student welfare programs and services of NVSU-Bambang Campus?
- What are the areas needing improvement as far as student welfare programs and services is concerned?

## 2. Review of Literature

The role of the education sector has expanded into areas of social welfare. A key influence, relates to the disintegration of public-funded organizations responsible for mental health and social welfare provision. In a study conducted by Cornish (2019), she considers the policy drive for a broadened students' welfare programs which is a mandate within education settings. Drawing on illustrations of welfare-orientated teaching, the study explores the extent to which a welfare agenda influenced teaching practice and education provision for marginalized youth enrolled on an employability course in an FE college.

Empirical research was conducted by Cornish (2019) with seven tutors and 26 students enrolled on a Level 1 employability course at a large FE college in South East England. Key findings discovered that there was a disproportionate focus on welfare duties when teaching youth with complex backgrounds. Fieldwork data mainly highlighted complications, contradictions and the counter-productive nature of welfare-orientated teaching: it gave rise to 'social welfare tutors'; they have a diminished academic focus and were wholly engaged in welfare duties, reducing the course to something akin to therapy and welfare practice. Despite good intentions, generally, such practice directly reinforced disadvantage and marginalized participants from essential provision that granted access to a range of further study and training opportunities within the setting.

Young people's health and welfare is an enduring, and sometimes contested, underpinning rationale for compulsory schooling. However, a contemporary culture of austerity and accountability has challenged the capacity of schools to address health-related agendas. In a research conducted by McCuaig and associate (2019) they reported on how four Australian teachers negotiate the network of partnerships within and beyond the school when attempting to solve their students' particular health and welfare needs. The researchers concluded that there is a compelling need to better support those particular teachers who are, to all intents and purposes, human safety nets called upon to care for some of the most vulnerable students in the schools.

Ensuring student success has been a ubiquitous and enduring goal of institutions of higher education, making it paramount to identify how this goal can be achieved. Hepworth and associates (2018) identified social integration, perceived institutional commitment to student success, and academic preparedness as potential predictors of student academic success. An ordinal regression model was used to test the relationship between the predictor variables and class grade. A sample of students enrolled in a freshmen-level general education, gateway course was surveyed. Perceived commitment of the institution to student welfare and social integration were not statistically significant. However, academic preparedness was found statistically significant in predicting the acute measure of academic success. These findings suggest that, in the quest to ensure student success, social integration and commitment should be considered secondary factors to academic preparation where student welfare programs and services are of primary factors to consider.

On the other hand, students in schools benefit from career counseling as a means to improve their readiness for academic and career success. In a quantitative study by Sanders and Associates (2017), they explored the career counseling self-efficacy of 143 practicing middle school counselors using the Career Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale-Modified and a subscale of the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale. Although overall, school counselors

were confident, evidence of specific areas of concern and limited time for career counseling was found. Results related to the importance of prior teaching experience in relation to career counseling and self-efficacy were also highlighted. Implications for school counselors and policymakers include examining the amount of time school counselors spend on providing career counseling in comparison to time spent on non-counseling-related duties.

In a research study conducted by Ash and Associates (2016), they explored the predictors of success among 1,536 students of color from 12 Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU) member institutions. Student success was measured by examining students' intent to graduate along with the degree to which they were thriving intellectually, socially, and psychologically. The study utilized an instrument that included the Thriving Quotient (Schreiner, 2012), which measures students' psychosocial well-being, along with scales that assessed students' psychological sense of community, perceptions of institutional integrity, and commitment to student welfare, spirituality, and satisfaction with student-faculty interaction. The path model explained 35% of the variation in intent to graduate from their chosen CCCU institution among this sample of students of color. In addition to the three factors that directly contributed to students' intent to graduate from their institutions--institutional fit, thriving in their role as students, and students' perceptions of the institutions' commitment to their welfare--the model revealed significant indirect contributors to the success of students of color. Recommendations based on these findings include creating campus environments, policies, and practices that consider the unique needs of all students, equipping faculty for inclusive pedagogy, and delivering on the implicit institutional promises made to students of color during the admissions process.

### 3. Methodology

This research study utilized the descriptive method of research particularly employing a structured questionnaire as the main data-gathering tool. This method was adopted by the researchers since the study intends to describe certain research constructs, and it involved information gathering with analytical interpretation. According to Shields and Rangarjan (2013), the descriptive method of research is the exploration of existing certain phenomena and an approach that emphasizes the present status of such phenomena. It also describes a current situation, determines the nature of prevailing conditions or practices, and seeks an accurate description of activities, objects, persons, and processes.

Best (2011) scholarly characterized descriptive research as one which involves hypothesis formulation and testing; uses the logical methods of randomization so that error may be estimated when referring to population characteristics from observation samples; describes variables and procedures accurately and completely; is non-experimental for they deal with the relationship between non-manipulated variables in a natural setting. This research study was conducted at the Nueva Vizcaya State University-Bambang Campus involving 1,333 or 50.01 percent of the 2,665 graduating students from 2016 to 2019 from the baccalaureate degrees of the four colleges on the campus which were chosen through stratified random sampling technique.

The main instrument used to obtain the data and information needed in the study was a checklist developed and validated by Vadil (2015). The checklist was prepared in such a way that the researchers can elicit accurate information about the effectiveness of Student Welfare Programs and Services along with information and orientation services, guidance and counseling services, career and job placement, and economic enterprise development. To cross-validate, the veracity of the data gathered, unstructured interviews were conducted by the researchers during the signing of the student's clearance. Five options were offered in all of the dimensions to be used for a response, which includes the following:

Scale	Mean Range	Qualitative Description
5	4.20 – 5.00	Always
4	3.40 – 4.19	Often
3	2.60 – 3.39	Sometimes
2	1.80 – 2.59	Seldom
1	1.00 – 1.79	Never

Moreover, the following verbal/qualitative description of each grand mean score of every dimension in terms of the level of effectiveness was followed:

Scale	Qualitative Description
4.20 – 5.00	Very High Effectiveness
3.40 – 4.19	High Effectiveness
2.60 – 3.39	Moderate Effectiveness
1.80 – 2.59	Low Effectiveness
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low Effectiveness

Moreover, the following verbal/qualitative description of each grand mean score of every dimension in terms of the level of satisfaction was followed:

Scale	Qualitative Description
4.20 – 5.00	Very High Satisfaction
3.40 – 4.19	High Satisfaction
2.60 – 3.39	Moderate Satisfaction
1.80 – 2.59	Low Satisfaction
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low Satisfaction

#### 4. Results and Discussion

*4.1 What is the perception of the graduating students of 2016-2019 on the effectiveness of student welfare programs and services (SWPS) of the Nueva Vizcaya State University-Bambang Campus along with information and orientation services, guidance, and counseling services, career and job placement services, and economic enterprise development?*

In order to illustrate the respondents' perception on the effectiveness of student welfare programs and services, the mean was computed. Results are reflected in table 1.

**Table 1**

*Mean and Qualitative Description of the Respondents' Perception of the Student Welfare Programs*

SWPS Dimensions	Mean	Qualitative Description
Information and Orientation Services	3.38	Moderate Effectiveness
Guidance and Counselling Services	4.88	Very High Effectiveness
Career and Job Placement Services	4.18	High Effectiveness
Economic Enterprise Development	3.35	Moderate Effectiveness
Grand Mean	3.94	High Effectiveness

Information and Orientation Services. It can be gleaned in Table 1 that the information and orientation services of the campus are rated to have "moderate effectiveness" as perceived by the graduating students as shown by the 3.38 computed mean. The above findings could be interpreted to mean that the campus always holds regular and comprehensive Orientation Programs for new and continuing students; faculty and staff always disseminate information to students that will help them adjust to university life; oriented on regular basis regarding changes in school policies and other concerns. The same group of respondents perceived that information materials on educational, career, personal, and social concerns are often available like anti-violence against women and children, anti-bullying, drug abuse prevention and control, and HIV aids awareness. They also perceived that the campus through the SAS often conducts information/ orientation campaigns on teenage pregnancy, self-care, and healthy lifestyles. However, the graduating students across the four academic years sometimes perceived that the code of conduct and discipline for students is widely disseminated through forums and the use of handbooks.

Guidance and Counseling Services. Data in table 1 show that the guidance and counseling services of the campus were evaluated to have a "very high effectiveness" as shown by the 4.88 computed mean. The above

findings could be interpreted to mean the respondents always perceived that the professional school counselor implements the Guidance Program Component through the use of effective instructional skills and the careful planning of structured group sessions for all students; guidance counselors always show interest in assisting students to arrive at satisfactory solutions to their problems; students always have access to responsive services that assist them in addressing issues and concerns that may affect their personal, academic, social, and career development; individual counseling services are always available to all students who may be experiencing problems that are interfering with their healthy development and confidentiality of students' data is always respected and maintained. The same group of respondents perceived that small group counseling is often available to all students who may be experiencing problems that are interfering with their health development; the guidance counselors often provide gender-sensitive, individual, and group counseling taking into consideration cultural differences. However, the respondents also perceived that a counseling room is sometimes provided for students including those with special needs.

Career and Job Placement Services. It can be gleaned in Table 1 that the respondents perceived that the career and job placement services of the campus were evaluated to have a "high effectiveness" as reflected by the 4.18 computed mean. The above results could be interpreted to mean that career orientation programs and personality enhancement seminars were always conducted before students were deployed in their OJT/Practice Teaching; Labor Education for Graduating Students (LEGS) is always conducted on the campus in coordination with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE); the university has a strong partnership with alumni, industry, schools and governments agencies for career and job placement of students; able and qualified OJT supervisors were designated by the university to guide and assists students in their career and job placement. The same group of respondents often perceived that the campus provides summer jobs to students in coordination with concerned government agencies; information materials and bulleting of information's on career and job opportunities are made accessible to all students, and graduates are given assistance in the preparation of necessary documents needed for employment. However, the respondents also perceived that career counseling is sometimes provided to enable incoming freshman students, and regular students to choose appropriate courses or fields of specialization.

Economic Enterprise Development. It can be gleaned in table 1 that the economic enterprise development of students on the campus is perceived to have a "moderate effectiveness" by the respondents as shown by the 3.35 computed mean. The above results could be interpreted to mean that students are always motivated to join cooperatives inside and outside the university; trainings on technology and livelihood and entrepreneurship are always available for students in the university; students are always given opportunities to embark on IGPs during university programs and convocations. The same group of respondents also perceived that the university often encourages and provides summer jobs to students; training and seminars are often conducted to enhance the financial literacy of students; students are often encouraged to have a savings account and observe thriftiness. However, the respondents of this study also perceived that students are sometimes assisted to venture into income-generating projects to augment their financial needs; and sometimes encouraged to have part-time jobs as sales representatives during their vacant time to earn money.

#### *4.2 What is the level of graduating students' satisfaction on the quality of different Student Welfare Program and Services (SWPS) of NVSU-Bambang Campus?*

It can be gleaned in Table 2 that the graduating students from 2016-2019 serving as respondents have a "highly satisfaction" level with the Student Welfare Programs and Services of the campus as reflected by the 3.86 computed grand mean. The table shows that the respondents have a "very high satisfaction" along with Guidance and Counseling with a computed mean of 4.75; and "high satisfaction" Career and Job Placement Services (4.08); and moderate satisfaction along with Information and Orientation Services (3.35), and Economic Enterprise Development with 3.27 as computed mean.

**Table 2***Overall Satisfaction of Student Welfare Programs and Services*

SWPS Dimensions	Mean	Qualitative Description
Information and Orientation Services	3.35	Moderate Satisfaction
Guidance and Counseling Services	4.75	Very High Satisfaction
Career and Job Placement Services	4.08	High Satisfaction
Economic Enterprise Development	3.27	Moderate Satisfaction
Grand Mean	3.86	High Satisfaction

The overall satisfaction of the respondents only shows that NVSU-Bambang Campus is implementing properly the different programs and services for the welfare of the students as mandated by CHED Memo No. 9 series of 2013. The Nueva Vizcaya State University-Bambang Campus seeks to provide quality welfare programs and services for all students, taking account of their age, background, ability, and interests. It continuously helps students to become self-directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and for the broader community. For this to occur, NVSU-Bambang Campus needs to align itself as higher education institution where every student can learn and grow with confidence. Students develop best in schools where teaching and learning occur in a context of student welfare. It is the assumption of the researchers that the campus needs to be safe and a happy place for students and their teachers. Students' welfare is enhanced when all members of the academic campus participate in the learning programs and life of the university as a whole.

#### *4.3 What are the areas needing improvement (ANI) as far as student welfare programs and services are concerned?*

Based on the gathered data through the administered questionnaire, the following are areas needing improvement as far as student welfare programs and services is concerned.

a. Minimal dissemination of the Code of Conduct and Discipline for students through forums and other modes, and the issuance of Student Handbook to students. *During the academic year 2016-2019, the Code of Conduct and Discipline were only discussed during the Orientation Program at the beginning of every semester. With regards to the Student Handbook, it passed through different levels of stakeholders' consultation and is subject to the approval of the Board of Regents before it will be published for distribution to students.*

b. Provision of a counseling room for students including those with special needs. *The Guidance and Counseling Services Department of the campus is situated in an old building where the provision of counseling room is pre-arranged as the need arises. However, once the new guidance office in the CAS building will be turned over to management, a well-designed counseling room is provided with attention to detail on the needs of special students.*

c. Provision of career counseling to enable incoming freshman students, and regular students to choose appropriate courses or fields of specialization.

d. Provision of assistance to venture on income-generating projects to augment their financial needs.

## **5. Conclusions**

Based on the salient findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- There is high effectiveness of the student welfare programs and services of the Nueva Vizcaya State University-Bambang Campus.
- There is a high satisfaction level of the respondents with regards to the implementation of the student welfare programs and services of the campus.

- The areas needing improvement include dissemination of the code of conduct and discipline, availability of counseling room and individual counseling, and provision of financial assistance.

### 5.1 Recommendations

The following are henceforth recommended:

- There is a need to sustain the student welfare programs and services with a “very high effectiveness” in terms of implementation and enhancement of the other areas.
- The level of satisfaction differs from time to time, hence, a continuous improvement of services along with information and orientation services, guidance and counseling services, career and job placement services, and economic enterprise development may be given utmost attention.
- The Code of Conduct and Discipline may be disseminated through social media or thru the NVSU Website. A printed copy of the Student Handbook is given to each student.
- The newly constructed Guidance Services Office be functional to attend to the individual needs of students.
- Students may be motivated to join the NVSU Student Cooperative where they can seek financial assistance as they venture into income-generating projects to support their financial needs.
- The research questionnaire used in this study has been content and face validated by research experts. However, one further study can validate the constructs of this instrument to make it more usable in various contexts and other related studies.
- Further studies can also benefit from a cross-sectional study encompassing a larger sample of students from across the university. This can provide more understanding of the delivery of the SAS program and address more specific concerns that the students are facing and experiencing during their academic stay at the university.

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