



Salient Features of Tertiary Education Subsidy on University Students' Persistence

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Abstract— *The study determined the extent of awareness of students on the critical features of the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) program towards their college persistence. It then sought data on their demographics, determined the extent of awareness of TES salient features and the level of persistence in their studies on the nine factors, and identified the difference between their profile and their persistence. It also determined the correlation between the level of awareness of TES salient features and persistence. The descriptive-correlational survey method and the stratified random sampling technique obtained 171 TES grantees as respondents. It revealed that they were so much aware of TES salient features and were persistent in their studies. There was no significant difference in sex and top priority items spent on their persistence in schooling; however, it resulted in a positive difference between their chosen course and marital status on their persistence level. The study also yielded a significant relationship between the extent of awareness and their persistence. It is indicative, therefore, that being cognizant of any government program for students' welfare would lead them toward better decision-making.*



Keywords— *Awareness, salient features, college subsidy, student persistence*

I. INTRODUCTION

Tertiary Education Subsidy is a major program of the national government and follows with the centrality of awareness among the grantees about their persistence in schooling. The term awareness could be attributed to the knowledge and understanding that something exists. More broadly, it is the state of being conscious of something. As the researchers' observations and experiences, if one is aware of something or someone, then he/she knows what to do and where to go to make changes for improvement and success. Thus, the researchers contend that when someone is aware of the benefits of any program, then he/she is expected to do something in return. Henceforth, in the academe, college students must have enough knowledge on the things that concern their welfare as learners, not only on their roles and responsibilities as such but also on the benefits and salient features of particular grants of the program the government has offered them.

Nowadays, college students are indeed fortunate, especially those in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Qualified students in HEIs would not be only free from their tuition and other miscellaneous fees or can avail of student loans from the program, but have also the chance for a Tertiary Educational Subsidy (TES). With such privilege, most college students enjoying additional subsidies are expected to persevere in their studies to attain their goals in life. However, as observed by the researcher, some do not give their schooling much importance. With such privilege, most college students enjoying additional subsidies should persevere in their studies to attain their goals in life. However, as observed by the researcher, some grantees are not giving their schooling of utmost importance. Some of them got pregnant amidst their studies or left school without enough valid reasons.

Furthermore, most of them bought cellular phones directly upon receiving the grant. Having asked, they insisted that they would have to use them in their studies. With these observations, the present study also wants to find out what items they spent with their received subsidy and whether or not they have something relevant to their studies.

Although various researchers and scholars (Agosti et al., 2019; Kinsey, 2021; Krumboltz, 2000; Virola, 2019,) have conducted a plethora of studies in this area, there is a need to conduct more studies to validate their findings on whether awareness of the salient features of TES is significantly related to students' persistence. And that the findings of the present investigation would contribute to the body of knowledge. Thus, this study is deemed indispensable and in order.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A college education is a financial burden for almost all Filipino families (Virola, 2019). Thus, the Philippine government enacted a law (R.A.10931), on August 13, 2017, mandating all public higher education institutions (HEIs) and government-run technical-vocational institutions (TVIs) to provide free quality tertiary education among eligible Filipino students. For Lim et al. (2018), this law intends to enhance the quality of education, which has four component programs. They are (1) free tuition and other school fees in public higher education institutions, (2) free tuition in TESDA technical-vocational training institutes (TVIs), (3) tertiary education subsidy (TES), and (4) student loan program. It also offers a subsidy worth P30,000 to TES beneficiaries with disabilities, the TES-3A category.

As mentioned earlier, aside from providing tuition-free higher education in public HEIs and TVIs, the law also provides assistance mechanisms to give additional support to eligible and financially disadvantaged students. The Tertiary Education Subsidy program is one of the four component programs in that law which aims to provide additional funding to cover education-related costs of students and shall be identified through a prioritization scheme (Ortiz et al., 2019). As emphasized by Maga-ao et al. (2019), apart from the tuition fee in state universities and colleges (SUCs), a qualified TES recipient will be given an amount of 40,000 pesos for those enrolled in a SUC, which is P20,000.00 per semester. As stipulated in sec.7, RA 10931, the priority beneficiaries for the Tertiary Education Subsidy are those continuing Expanded Student's Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA) scholars in the SUCs effective AY 2018-2019; students who are part of households included in Listahan 2.0, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income; and students not

part of the Listahan 2.0, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income based on submitted documentation of proof of income to be determined by the UniFAST Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) Board. Further, such prioritization shall not apply to Filipino students in cities and municipalities without existing SUC or LUC campuses.

Thus, the scenario shows that not all can avail of the subsidy. Section 28 in the Implementing Rules and Regulation of RA 10931, clearly says that students enrolled in higher education in programs and/or institutions not included in the Registry of CHED-recognized programs and institutions; those who have exceeded the Maximum Residency Rule of their program; learners enrolled in TVET programs, not in the Registry of TESDA; and those enrolled in TESDA-registered programs in any TVI who availed of government-funded stuFAPS other than that of Free TVET are not qualified to such program.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Speaking of theories, this study has banked on the "Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which grew out of the work of psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan in 2012, who first introduced their ideas in their book: *Self-Determination and Intrinsic Motivation in Human Behavior*. Here, this theory is an empirically derived theory of human motivation. This theory suggests that people can become self-determined when their needs for competence, connection, and autonomy are fulfilled (Cherry, 2021).

Attention and awareness seem to be intimately related. Intuitively, it seems logical that we become aware of events we attend, whereas information outside our attention remains undetected (Gaal & Fahrenfort, 2008). Thus, another theory has been considered to anchor this investigation. This is the Attention Schema Theory of Graziano in 2015 which claimed that without awareness, attention is still possible, but the brain, in essence, lacks knowledge about its state of attention and, therefore, cannot properly regulate that attention. Here, this theory suggests how important awareness of something very significant to someone.

Further, Tinto's Theory of Student Persistence in 1993 emphasizes three major experiences that shape student motivation to stay in college and graduate. *Self-efficacy* refers to a person's belief in their ability to succeed at a particular task or in a specific situation; a *sense of belonging* in which students have to come to see themselves as a member of a community of other students, faculty, and staff who value their membership; and *perceived value of the curriculum* by which students need to perceive the material to be learned is of sufficient quality and relevance to warrant their time and effort (Kinsey, 2021).

Inspired by the thought of the importance of awareness that any individual should possess towards any program that could benefit his/her future, this study dealt with determining the extent of awareness of some salient features of the TES program. Agosti et al. (2019), pointed out the importance of awareness and reflection on everyday life to promote work-life balance and well-being.

At any rate, persistence considered the dependent variable of the present investigation, refers to individuals' continuing efforts and striving amidst difficult situations, trying times, opposition, and failure. Kinsey (2021) claimed that persistence is a key characteristic of successful people across professional and academic disciplines. In higher education, persistence rates show a student's ability to continue to the next term. This is evidenced by the willingness to continue to try in the face of challenges. This persistence can be a driving force to help students achieve their goals. Student persistence measures the student's activity and engagement. To put it simply, student persistence is something the student does to continue their studies (Ericksen, 2020).

Students must be persistent in pursuing their degrees and be willing to expend the effort to do so even when faced with challenges they sometimes encounter (Tinto, 2016). In another study, the researchers found that students with enough financial support can be persistent in school. Students who are satisfied with the support from their parents may tend to perform well academically at school; hence, it indicates that the forms of financial aid in combination with other factors are predictors of persistence (Moneva et al., 2020). Furthermore, Purigay (2020), in his study, found that the respondents strongly agreed that the Tertiary Education Subsidy gave them more motivation to strive harder and served as a source of inspiration to finish their studies.

This study also wanted to determine whether sex, chosen course, marital status, and the top priority items that the respondents spent their money on from their received subsidy are also among the factors that could influence their persistence in their studies. Krumboltz (2000) claimed that gender and family's monthly income were not related directly to student academic persistence. Woodard, Love, and Komives (2000) claimed that the percentage of women attending higher education institutions increased during the previous two decades and likely will continue to increase and that the rate of attendance for women at higher education institutions continues to grow faster than the rate for men. Bitrus, Apagu, & Hamsatu, (2016) also indicate that the unmarried students had higher mean and standard deviation than the married students.

III. OBJECTIVES

Primarily, this study wanted:

1. to determine the relationship between the extent of students' level of awareness of the salient features of the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) program of the government on their persistence in their studies during the academic year 2021-2022;
2. to determine the profile of the respondents as regards sex, course, marital status, and topmost priority items that they spent their money from their subsidy;
3. to determine the extent of awareness of the respondents on TES salient features; and their level of persistence regarding academic integration, financial strain, social integration, degree commitment, collegiate stress, advising, scholastic conscientiousness, institutional commitment, academic motivation, and academic efficacy; and
4. to determine the significant difference between their profile and their persistence in their studies and the significant correlation between the extent of their awareness of TES salient features on their persistence.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive-correlational research utilizing quantifiable data to ascertain the results. A structured and closed-ended questionnaire was administered to the respondents through Google forms sent via their email addresses. This study was conducted at Bohol Island State University, Clarin, Bohol. Stratified random sampling was employed to determine the sample size. The respondents were those grantees who were second-year up to fourth-year students across undergraduate colleges. In obtaining the data on the student's awareness of the salient feature of the TES program, a researcher-made survey questionnaire was devised. It has 17-item questions wherein the respondents rated each item on the following scales: 4 being "very much aware," 3 being "aware," 2 as "slightly not aware," and 1 being "not aware at all." Though taken directly from RA10931, this instrument was subjected to a dry run on 67 TES grantees for validity and reliability. These students were not part of the actual respondents. As validated by the Statistician, the tool being pilot-tested has been found to have established validity and consistency of results.

Adhering to the research protocols, the respondents were asked to signify their voluntary participation in the investigation through informed consent. Then, the researchers assured them that their identity would be withheld and the data would be used solely for research purposes.

The researchers also adopted the College Persistence Questionnaire (CPQ version 3) of Davidson et al. (2009), but few modifications were made to fit its applicability to the purpose of the study. The researcher sought permission from the authors to use the tool. This instrument has been tested for its validity and reliability (Davidson, et al., 2009) that measure the retention and persistence of college students. Those levels were scaled on a 4-point Likert scale, of which 4 as highly persistent, 3 as persistent, 2, as slightly not persistent, and 1 as not persistent at all.

Per records supplied by the Students' Scholarship Coordinator's office, two hundred ninety-eight (298) TES student-grantees were enrolled that semester. Respondents were then selected using the stratified random sampling procedure to save time, money, and effort. A total of one hundred seventy-one (171) or 57.38% of TES grantees comprised the study's respondents. This study only investigated student-grantees in their sophomore up to senior years or levels to serve its purpose.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic characteristics of the respondents, which include sex, course, marital status, and top priority items that the respondents spent their money on their received TES, were taken into careful consideration since they were considered as intervening variables of the present study. Further, the data derived from this section shall serve as a data bank for the institution.

Table 1. The sex distribution of the respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	136	79.53
Male	35	20.46
Total	171	100

As reflected, one hundred thirty-six (136) or 79.53% of the respondents are female, and thirty-five (35) or 20.46% are males. It can be seen that female respondents are dominant in this study. These findings substantiate the study of Woodard et al. (2000,) wherein the percentage of women attending institutions of higher education increased during the previous two decades and likely will continue to increase, and that the rate of attendance for women at higher education institutions continues to grow faster than the rate for men. Thus, Mangahas (2022) reported in a daily newspaper that in most field surveys, women tend to dominate in number over men. Table 2. The curricular programs of the respondents

Course	F	%
Bachelor of Secondary Education in Mathematics (BSEd. Math)	20	11.69
Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd)	37	21.63
Bachelor in Tech. & Livelihood Educ. in Home Econ. (BTLEd. HE)	24	14.03
Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM)	55	32.16
Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science (BSES)	9	5.26
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS)	26	15.20
Total	171	100%

Here, the BSHM course has the biggest number of grantees with 55 (32.16%), followed by BEEd having 37 (21.63%), then BSCS has 26 or 15.21 grantees, while BSES with the least grantees of 9 or 5.26%. It can be deduced that BSHM has more qualified TES grantees than other courses of this institution.

Table 3. The marital status of the respondents

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	168	98.24
Marrried	3	1.75
Total	171	100

The result showed that one hundred sixty-eight (168), or 98.24%, are single, and three (3), or 1.75%, are married. As expected, for them to give more attention to their studies, they should be single at their age level. The study of Bitrus, Apagu validates this result, and Hamsatu, (2016) indicates that the unmarried students had higher mean and standard deviation than the married students.

Table 4. Top priority items spent on their received subsidy

	F	%	Rank
Bags	21	12.28	10
1. Boarding house rentals	60	35.08	5
2. Capital for business	12	7.01	11
3. Cellular phones	76	44.44	3
4. Clothes/pants	42	24.56	7
5. Food and groceries	126	73.68	1
6. Given to parents	110	64.32	2

7. Jewelry	0	0	14
8. Laptops	67	39.18	4
9. Medicine	54	31.57	6
10. Motorcycle (down payment or monthly installment)	7	4.09	12
11. Paid debts	27	15.78	9
12. Shoes	28	16.37	8
13. Treat friends, relatives, classmates, etc.	5	2.92	13

This table shows that one hundred twenty-six (126) or 73.68% of them spend on buying foods and groceries as the topmost priority items (rank 1); followed by buying “given to parents” (110 or 64.32%), and on “cellular phones” (76 or 44.44%) from their received TES. This indicates that the grantees have used their subsidy wisely, as they spend items considered necessities, essential, and related to their studies, as stipulated by the said program (par. b, sec.7, RA 10931). This finding is supported by Maga-ao’s (2019) study where he reported that the students prioritized products, they found helpful to their studies but were not affordable without subsidy.

Table 5. The salient features of the TES program

Statements of the TES Program Salient Features	SD	Mean	Description
1. TES is one of the four programs under R.A. 10931.	0.47	3.74	VMA
2. TES aims to give additional support to eligible financially-disadvantaged students.	0.57	3.76	VMA
3. As a grant-in-aid, TES shall cover students in both public and private higher education institutions.	0.53	3.73	VMA
4. Not all college students can avail of this subsidy.	0.61	3.67	VMA
5. TES shall prioritize beneficiaries continuing Expanded Student’s Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA) scholars.	0.61	3.51	VMA
6. Students who are part of households included in the National Household Targeting System or Listahanan 2.0, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income, are prioritized for this TES.	0.62	3.48	VMA
7. Students not part of the Listahanan 2.0, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income based on submitted documentation of proof of income to be determined by the Unified Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education Act (UniFAST) Board, are also prioritized	0.69	3.23	A
8. Such prioritization shall not apply to Filipino students in cities and municipalities with no existing SUC or LUC campus	0.78	3.09	A
9. TES grantees enrolled in higher education programs will enjoy a full academic year of the grant amount, subject to yearly renewal based on their continued studies	0.66	3.56	VMA
10. As a TES grantee in BISU Clarin, you will be given an amount of 40,000 pesos for the whole school year.	0.51	3.83	VMA
11. TES grantees with disabilities are given an additional subsidy worth P30,000 to be divided in accordance with the number of academic terms.	0.92	3.04	A
12. TES may use to support the cost of tertiary education or any portion thereof to cover allowance for books, supplies, transportation, miscellaneous personal expenses, including a reasonable allowance for the documented rental or purchase of a personal computer or laptop, and other education-related expenses.	0.52	3.70	VMA
13. TES may use to cover allowance for room and board costs incurred by the grantees.	0.65	3.56	VMA

14. Students enrolled in higher education in programs and/or institutions not included in the Registry of CHED-recognized programs and institutions are not qualified for the program.	0.80	3.15	A
15. Students who have exceeded the Maximum Residency Rule of their program are not qualified for such a program.	0.84	2.95	A
16. Students enrolled in TVET programs, not in the Registry of TESDA are not qualified for such programs.	0.90	2.82	A
17. Students enrolled in TESDA-registered programs in any TVI who availed of government-funded stuFAPS other than Free TVET are not qualified for such a program.	0.89	2.87	A
Total mean		3.39	VMA

This table shows that the respondents are very much aware(mean=3.39) of the TES program's salient features. This means that they have enough knowledge and a conscious understanding of those given salient features of the program. Out of 17 salient features, they rated 10 items as "very much aware," and the rest rated "aware." Surprisingly, no items are rated "slightly unaware" or "not aware at all." This is true precisely because they are given annual orientation about the program. And probably during such orientation, they paid much attention to the program

features. Much more, their parents were also oriented on this program.

Specifically, on statement number ten (10): "As a TES grantee in BISU Clarin, you will be given an amount of 40,000 pesos for the whole school year", this gets the highest mean of 3.83 described as "very much aware." In contrast, statement number 16 (*Students enrolled in TVET programs, not in the Registry of TESDA are not qualified in the program*) gets the lowest mean of 2.82, described as "slightly aware."

Table 6. Student's persistence concerning the identified nine factors

ITEMS	MEAN	SD
Factor 1: Academic Integration		
1. On average, across all your courses, how interested are you in what is said during class discussions?	3.60	0.56
2. How satisfied are you with the instruction you receive here?	3.47	0.58
3. How well do you understand the thinking of your instructors when they lecture or ask students to answer questions in class?	3.33	0.51
4. How satisfied are you with the extent of your intellectual growth and interest in ideas since coming here?	3.38	0.54
5. How much connection do you see between what you are learning here and your future career possibilities?	3.32	0.67
6. How concerned about your intellectual growth is the faculty here?	3.44	0.55
7. How would you rate the quality of the instruction you receive here?	3.49	0.52
Total Mean	3.43	
Factor 2: Financial Strain		
8. How often do you worry about having enough money to meet your needs?	3.49	0.66
9. How difficult is it for you or your family to be able to handle college costs?	3.38	0.58
10. When considering the financial costs of college, how often do you feel unable to do things other students here can afford to do?	3.22	0.69

11. How much of a financial strain is it for you to purchase the essential resources you need for courses, such as books and supplies?	3.19	0.56
Total Mean	3.32	
Factor 3: Social Integration		
12. What is your overall impression of the other students here?	3.12	0.53
13. How much have your interactions with other students impacted your personal growth, attitudes, and values?	3.36	0.62
14. How strong is your sense of connectedness with others (faculty, students, and staff) on this campus?	3.06	0.57
15. When you think about your overall social life here (friends, college organizations, extracurricular activities, and so on), how satisfied are you with yours?	3.31	0.57
16. How much have your interactions with other students impacted your intellectual growth and interest in ideas?	3.25	0.60
17. How much do you have in common with other students?	3.01	0.63
18. How often do you wear clothing with this college's emblems?	3.25	0.58
Total Mean	3.19	
Factor 4: Degree Commitment		
19. How supportive is the family of your pursuit of a college degree in terms of their encouragement and expectations?	3.68	0.53
20. At this moment, how strong would you say your commitment is to earn a college degree, here or elsewhere?	3.57	0.54
21. When you think of the people who mean the most to you (friends and family), how disappointed do you think they would be if you quit school?	3.50	0.70
22. There are so many things that can interfere with students' progress toward degrees that feelings of uncertainty about finishing are likely to occur along the way. At this moment in time, how certain are you that you will earn a college degree?	3.49	0.58
23. After beginning college, students sometimes discover that a college degree is not quite as important to them as it once was. How strong is your intention to persist in your pursuit of a degree, here or elsewhere?	3.48	0.59
24. When you consider the benefits of having a college degree and the costs of earning it, how much would you say that benefits outweigh the costs, if at all?	3.40	0.56
Total Mean	3.52	
Factor 5: Collegiate Stress		
25. Students differ significantly in how distressed they get over various aspects of college life. Overall, how much stress would you experience while attending this institution?	3.08	0.61
26. How much pressure do you feel when trying to meet deadlines for course assignments?	3.18	0.67
27. How often do you feel overwhelmed by the academic workload here?	3.23	0.53
28. How much do other aspects of your life suffer because you are a college student?	3.11	0.67
Total Mean	3.15	
Factor 6: Scholastic Conscientiousness		
29. College students have many academic responsibilities. How often do you forget those that you regard as important?	2.98	0.72
30. How often do you turn in assignments past the due date?	2.78	0.91

31. How often do you arrive late for classes, meetings, and other college events?	2.37	0.95
32. How often do you arrive late for classes, meetings, and other college events?	2.44	0.96
Total Mean	2.64	
Factor 7: Institutional Commitment		
33. How confident are you that this is the right college or university for you?	3.53	0.64
34. How much thought have you given to stopping your education here (perhaps transferring to another college, going to work, or leaving for other reasons)?	2.48	1.04
35. How likely is it that you will reenroll here next semester?	3.10	0.99
36. How likely is it you will earn a degree from here?	3.57	0.56
Total Mean	3.17	
Factor 8: Academic Motivation		
37. In general, how enthused are you about doing academic tasks?	3.30	0.53
38. Some courses seem to take a lot more time than others. How much extra time are you willing to devote to your studies in those courses?	3.23	0.61
39. How inclined are you to do most of your studying within 24 hours of a test rather than earlier?	3.12	0.56
40. How often do you read educationally-related material not assigned in courses?	2.93	0.61
41. Students vary widely in their view of what constitutes a good course, including that the best course asks students to do very little. In your view, how much work would be asked of students in a really good course?	3.24	0.54
42. How often do you encounter course assignments that are enjoyable to do?	3.09	0.63
43. This semester, how much time do you spend studying each week relative to the number of credit hours you are taking? Assume each credit hour equals one hour of studying per week.	3.15	0.57
44. How much time do you spend proofreading writing assignments before submitting them?	3.15	0.61
Total Mean	3.15	
Factor 9: Academic Efficacy		
45. How confident can you get the grades you want?	2.99	0.70
46. How good are you at correctly anticipating what will be on tests beforehand?	3.08	0.52
47. When you consider your study techniques, how effective are your study skills?	3.19	0.49
48. How much doubt do you have about being able to make the grades you want?	2.86	0.63
49. When you wait for a submitted assignment to be graded, how assured do you feel that the work you have done is acceptable?	3.01	0.57
50. How much doubt do you have about being able to make the grades you want?	2.80	0.67
Total Mean	2.98	
Composite Mean	3.17	
Interpretation	Persistent	

As shown in this Table, the respondents are slightly persistent in their studies, which means they have less determination to finish their studies, with a composite

mean of 3.17. It is manifested in their "persistent" choice of six (6) factors out of nine (9), which are: social integration, collegiate stress, scholastic conscientiousness, institutional

commitment, academic motivation, and academic efficacy). However, they expressed very much persistence in the three (3) factors; i.e., 1, 2, and 4 (academic integration, financial strain, and degree commitment), which means that they are strongly committed to earning a degree, very interested, and satisfied with the quality of instruction they are receiving from this institution, and not that strained anymore due to financial support from the government. It indicates that financial aid from outside the family's threshold also increased the respondents' desire to finish tertiary education (Fuentes, 2021). In the whole analysis, the results of this study suggest that aside from financial constraints, other

factors such as those of the school, quality teachings, contact with peers, support from family members, scholastic potentials, performance and aspirations, and schooling stress are all contributory towards their persistence in their studies. Much more, Tinto's Theory of Student Persistence (1993) emphasizes the *sense of belonging* in which students have to come to see themselves as a member of a community of other students, faculty, and staff who value their membership; and the *perceived value of the curriculum* by which students need to perceive the material to be learned is of sufficient quality and relevance to warrant their time and effort (Kinsey, 2021).

Table 7. The difference between courses and the level of persistence

Variables	x ²	Df	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Level of persistence and course	13.32	6	.038	Significant	Reject the H ₀

This table shows the difference between their chosen course and their level of persistence. It shows that there is indeed a significant difference between the level of persistence and their course, of which the p-value of .038 is lesser than the .05 level of significance; hence, the statement of the null hypothesis is also rejected. This means that these

two variables influence each other, which further suggests that their level of persistence is affected by their chosen courses. Their courses, such as education, environmental science, hospitality management, or computer science courses, this has something to do with their persistence in their studies.

Table 8. The difference between marital status and the level of persistence

Variables	x ²	Df	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Level of persistence and Marital status	3.37	1	.026	Significant	Reject the H ₀

The above table shows the significant difference in marital status and the level of persistence, where the tabular p-value of .026 is lesser than the .05 level of significance; hence, the statement of the null hypothesis is rejected, which means that these two variables do influence each other, which further suggests that their persistence or non-persistence is affected by their being single status. Simply put, their marital status affects their persistence level in their

studies. It cannot be refuted that single status has fewer personal problems than married life. They do not have children to feed, shelter, or clothe. It is presumed that the unmarried should persist in their studies to prepare for their brighter future. However, this finding goes contrary to the study of Krumboltz (2000), where a positive association was noted towards academic persistence.

Table 9. The extent of awareness on TES salient features and the level of persistence

Variables	t	Df	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Awareness of the salient features and level of persistence in their studies	3.4507	0.26	<.001	Significant	Reject the H ₀

This table indicates a positive correlation between the extent of grantees' awareness of TES salient features and the level of persistence in their studies, $r(169)=0.26, p= <.001$). Hence, the statement of the null hypothesis is rejected. This simply implies that awareness of the salient features of the

TES program has something to do with the sustaining power of their desire to finish schooling. In other words, the more awareness, the higher the persistence the students become. Thus, the claim of Harrison(n.d.) supports this result which says that if one is aware of something or someone, then

he/she knows what to do and where to go to make changes for improvement and success. Tinto (2016) claimed that students must be persistent in pursuing their degrees and be willing to expend the effort to do so even when faced with challenges they sometimes encounter. Further, this finding is guided by the "Attention schema theory" of Graziano (2015), which claims that awareness is part of the control mechanism for attention and that without awareness, attention is still possible, but the brain, in essence, lacks knowledge about its state of attention and therefore cannot properly regulate that attention. This theory, therefore, suggests that awareness is indispensable in one's control of the action. This connotes the indispensability of possessing enough knowledge of something necessary to attain one's goal in life, and that is finishing their studies.

VI. CONCLUSION

A positive correlation between the two main variables led the researcher to conclude a significant result. This means that the more awareness the respondents have of the salient features of the TES program, the higher their persistence in their studies. In other words, acquiring enough knowledge about the program the respondents enjoy would bring them to persevere and finish their degrees. Simply put, the more they are aware or knowledgeable of the program, the more persistent they become. Precisely, awareness or having enough knowledge of something indispensable for the grantees is a factor in their desire to be persistent. To add more, if one is aware, such awareness would guide him/her in making the right moves. Therefore, it is indicative that being cognizant of any program the government has offered students would shed light on better decisions. With all these, TES grantees shall spend their subsidy on buying items such as laptops and cellular phones, which are considered indispensable in their studies; shall strive more to become highly persistent in their studies; they should develop their scholastic consciousness and academic efficacy to succeed in their studies easily; and future researchers will be encouraged to get the significant differences among the nine factors of college persistence, and correlating them would be a good study to delve into.

VII. PLAN FOR RESEARCH DISSEMINATION AND UTILIZATION

This study is intended for the TES grantees and their parents. A plan has been conceptualized to include the parents in the orientation of the student-grantees at the beginning of classes for their awareness of the program. And that proper monitoring of their sons/daughters as TES grantees will be maintained.

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