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Career Motivation, Distance Learning Attitude, and Time Management of the Offshore Graduate School Students of a Philippine Public University

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the influence of the offshore graduate school students' career motivation and distance learning attitude on time management. Using descriptive-correlational design, the researcher conducted the study to 70 offshore graduate students enrolled in Cagayan State University (CSU), Andrews campus, Tuguegarao City, for the second semester of the Academic Year 2021-2022. The findings showed that the respondents have a high level of career motivation, specifically regarding career insight, resilience, and identity. They also manifest a favorable distance learning attitude and demonstrate a satisfactory level of time management. Significantly, the study revealed that distance learning attitude differs in terms of age. In particular, those who belong to Gen X (42-57 years old) have more favorable distance learning attitude than the Millennials (26 – 41years old) and Gen Z (10 – 25 years old. Finally, the study bared that off-shore graduate students with higher career motivation and more favorable distance learning attitude have better time management.

Keywords: Attitude, career motivation, distance learning, time management

INTRODUCTION

Graduate education, a type of continuing professional development (CPD), is a crucial component of a teacher's development as a professional. It offers specialized and research-intensive training, enabling those with a focus on careers to constantly enhance their abilities and excel at their employment. It is interesting to notice that despite the pandemic and the new regular educational atmosphere, a number of professional teachers continue their graduate studies. Teachers are motivated internally by their love of teaching and desire to further their careers (Bruinsma & Jansen, 2010). This case illustrates how professional desire, which is crucial for navigating the many phases of graduate school, acts as a motivating factor for students to seek master's or doctorate degrees. Additionally, it emphasizes the type, direction, degree, and maintenance of energy invested by a person to ensure certainty of results related to their activity (Kim, 2020).

Graduate degrees became feasible and available during the epidemic due to the delivery of teaching via distance learning. Distance learning is common in colleges and universities (Cabi & Ersoy, 2017), because it allows students to complete their academic work quickly and easily even at their homes or places of employment. Due to the COVID- 19 epidemic, it is therefore not surprising that it has become the most popular educational paradigm for remote learning worldwide (Yu, 2021). Since it may have an impact on learning motivation, mood regulation, and activity flow, students' attitudes toward distance learning are an important consideration. According to previous research, having a positive attitude toward distance learning becomes a motivating factor for academic performance (Chen & Wang, 2010). However, Hussein et al. (2020) highlighted that during the COVID-19 epidemic, negative views toward distance learning were discovered. This situation was attributed to students' poor

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study habits, lack of motivation, and inability to work independently, as well as their low computer proficiency, technical anxiety, and computer hardware issues. These factors were previously identified in studies as contributing to students' unfavorable opinions of online learning (Smith et al. 2000; Rosenberg, 2001).

Furthermore, time management is crucial in the academic success of graduate students as most of them pursuing graduate studies are working full-time jobs and attending to family responsibilities. In contrast, poor time management and weak organization abilities are often critical roadblocks to a good graduate school experience. Students' ability to successfully manage their time has been shown to positively impact their learning and outcomes (Kearns & Gardiner, 2007) and becomes the benchmark of students in developing better study habits and strategies for educational success (Krause & Coates, 2008).

Indeed, there are studies about the career motivation of teachers (e.g., Anghelache, 2014) and distance learning attitude (e.g., Kisanga, 2016; Wasserman & Migdal, 2019). Nonetheless, these variables have yet to be thoroughly examined in the context of education in the new normal, and there is no study yet that determines the influence of these when it comes to time management of Filipino offshore graduate students. Moreover, the underlying mechanism for the relationship of these variables remains unclear, creating gaps in knowledge. Hence, it is interesting to investigate these constructs, particularly in the Cagayan State University (CSU), which offers a graduate school program to offshore students mainly based in the United States of America (USA).

Remarkably, the researcher noted that CSU offshore graduate students have different motivations for earning graduate degrees. Professionally, having a graduate degree demonstrates that a person is driven, committed, and eager to learn. As a result, they work hard to land a job where they can use their education and broaden their skill set. Many people view a graduate degree as a status symbol, a chance for progress, or even a reason for more financial reward. The decision to pursue further education after spending four years getting an undergraduate degree demonstrates a dedication to learning and a sense of self-worth.

In particular, the CSU offshore graduate students have revealed to the researcher that they are pursuing their post graduate degrees for two reasons: to gain a better level of education and, ultimately, to raise of their yearly income. According to them, earning a graduate degree will make them unquestionably more employable in the educational sector. Their objectives are to widen their horizons outside the technical field, open doors for professional goals that had been closed off and improve their capacity for problem-solving and decision-making. They are expecting that by getting a higher education degree, they can acquire improved abilities that allow them to contribute more to a workplace.

On a personal note, the researcher has observed from the off-shore graduate students that even though most of them work full-time or part-time in a public or private school in USA and earn enough money to cover their living expenses, they still enrolled in their master's or doctorate programs at CSU. Considering the reality that the off-shore students have a busy schedule with their profession, family, and other business and a different time zone between their home and place of study, it is interesting to investigate and identify the underlying causes of the off-shore graduate students' driving force in their graduate studies.

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Considering these points, the researcher viewed it imperative to examine the interplay of these variables among offshore graduate students vis-à-vis how they could attain their academic goals and optimize their graduate study undertaking in the new normal. Moreover, insights from studies on the likely underlying processes of this time management, career motivation, and distance learning attitude association could serve as a solid foundation for building a time management intervention that would contribute to and improve graduate students' long-term academic performance and success. Also, the study's findings may help the university officials obtain a better knowledge of offshore graduate students, allowing them to adapt their marketing tactics to recruit better and retain goal-oriented graduate students who can successfully achieve their degrees within the timeframe without compromising excellence.

Hence, the study determined the relationship of the level of career motivation and distance learning attitude to the level of time management of CSU's offshore graduate school students for the second semester of the School Year 2021-2022. Specifically, it answered the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status, and number hours devoted to graduate school undertaking?
2. What is the respondents' career motivation as revealed by the Career Motivation Scale?
3. What is the distance learning attitude of the respondents as reflected by Remote learning Attitudes Scale?
4. What is the respondents' time management as revealed by the Time Management Personal Assessment?
5. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' career motivation and distance learning attitude when grouped according to their profile variables?
6. Do the respondents' level of career motivation and distance learning attitude significantly influence their level of time management?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The descriptive-correlational research design was employed in the study. The purpose of this design is to describe the strength and direction of relationships among variables rather than to determine causality (Polit & Beck, 2012). The respondents' profile, career motivation, distance learning attitude, and time management were described in the study, and it examined the differences in the respondents' extent of career motivation and distance learning attitude when grouped according to their profile variables. Meanwhile, it analyzed relationship of the respondents' time management to their career motivation and distance learning attitude.

Respondents and Sampling Procedure

The respondents were the offshore graduate students enrolled at CSU for the second semester of the Academic Year 2021-2022. Majority of them were enrolled in the program PhD in Education major in Educational Management. The researcher used a complete enumeration. Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of the respondents per program.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of the respondents in each program

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Programs	Number of Respondents
PhD in Education major in Educational Management	44
PhD major in English Language Education	6
PhD major in Science Education	4
MAEd major in Educational Management	11
MAEd major in English	1
MST major in Biology	1
MST major in Mathematics	3
Population	**70**

Research Instrument

The main instrument that used in this study was the survey questionnaire. It was converted to Google Form and sent to the respondents for a systematic procedure in gathering data. The questionnaire was divided in to four parts. The first part elicited the profile of the respondents in terms of age range, sex, civil status, and number of hours (per day) devoted to graduate school undertakings. The second part was consisted of the 21 items (presented in a 5-point likert) adopted from Career Motivation Scale developed by Day and Allen (2004). The scale measures the level of career motivation in terms of career identity, career resilience, and career insight. It has high inter-item consistency and moderate associations between the different dimensions within each rater group.

On the one hand, the third part of the instrument was composed of the items from the Remote Learning Attitudes Scale (RLAS) developed by Tzafilkou et al. (2021). It comprised the following five domains: (a) Online Attending Lectures (OAL); (b) Online Communicating with Professors (OCPR); (c) Online Collaborating with Peers (OCPE); (d) Online Find, Access, and Study Educational Material (OEM); and (e) Online Doing Assignments and Homework (OAH). The scale contained 30 items presented in a 7-point Likert scale measuring the attitude of the respondents on distance learning. The RLAS possesses internal validity and the values of Cronbach alpha were all above the accepted threshold of 0.70. Also, the performed bootstrapping procedure indicated that all values in the structural model are accepted and significant (Tzafilkou et al., 2021)

Additionally, the last part of the questionnaire was the Time Management Personal Assessment developed by Wyne State University (2007). It included 25 items that assess the level of time management of the respondents reflecting the concepts on goal setting, prioritization, management of interruptions, procrastination, and scheduling. The respondents scored themselves vis-à-vis the items using the following: 2 if always, 1 if sometimes, and 0 if never.

Data Collection and Ethical Considerations

Foremost, the researcher asked permission to the concerned CSU authorities to conduct the study. Upon approval, survey questionnaire through google form was sent to all the

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participants of the study. The data collection commenced in March 2022, and it ended in April 2022. Thereafter, the data were tallied, statistically treated, and analyzed to shed light and understanding on the results of the investigation.

For confidentiality, the researcher did not divulge the name of the participants. The research data remained confidential throughout the study upholds to data privacy rights and assured that all participant personal information, sensitive personal information, and privileged information, collected and to be collected, were processed in compliance with the Data Privacy Act. Furthermore, the researcher obtained the free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) of the participants before the actual conduct of research. The participants were not coerced to engage in the research. As much as possible, the researcher made sure that the participants were comfortable before, during, and after the data collection.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percent, and mean were used to describe the respondents' profile, career motivation, distance learning attitude, and time management. For the career motivation, it was analyzed using the following scale indicated by Day and Allen (2004), as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Arbitrary Scale and Interpretation of Career Motivation

Range	Arbitrary Scale	Interpretation
1.00 - 1.80	very slight extent	very low motivation
1.81 - 2.60	small extent	low motivation
2.61 - 3.40	moderate extent	moderate motivation
3:41 - 4:20	large extent	high motivation
4:21 - 5:00	very large extent	very high motivation

For the distance learning attitude, if the mean was more than the median, it was implied that the respondents more likely to agree to distance learning; hence, it is interpreted as "favorable attitude". On the one hand, if the mean was less than the median, it implied that the respondents less likely to agree on distance learning; hence, it was interpreted as "unfavorable attitude". As regards time management, the scores were interpreted as follows: 45-50 points (excellent); 30-44 points (satisfactory); and 0-29 points (poor).

For hypothesis testing, One-way multivariate analysis of variance and Games-Howell post hoc test with 5000 bootstrap sampling with Bonferroni adjustment were used to determine if there was a significant difference in the career motivation and distance learning attitude of the respondents when grouped according to their age range, sex, civil status, and number of hours (per day) devoted to graduate school undertakings. On the one hand, Kendall's tau-b correlation was employed to ascertain if the respondents' career motivation and distance learning attitude were significantly associated to their time management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Profile

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Table 3. Distribution of Respondents in terms of their Profile Variables

Profile Variables		**Frequency (N=70)**	**Percent (%)**
Sex			
	Female	53	75.7
	Male	17	24.3
Age Range			
	Gen Z (10-25 years old)	1	1.4
	Millennials (26-41 years old)	10	14.3
	Gen X (42-57 years old)	46	65.7
	Boomers II (58-67 years old)	13	18.6
	Mean ± SD 49.2 ± 9.1		
Civil Status			
	Unmarried	24	34.3
	Married	46	65.7
No. of hours (per day) used for Graduate school undertakings			
	Less than 1	9	12.9
	1 - 2 hours	18	25.7
	3 - 4 hours	22	31.4
	More than 4	21	30.0

Table 3 shows that the majority of the respondents were female (75.70%) and married (65.70%). In terms of age range, the majority of them belonged to Gen X (42-57 years old), with a mean age of 49.2 years. Interestingly, most of the respondents (31.40%) spent 3-4 hours a day (21-28 hours a week) to accomplish their graduate school undertakings, which are on top of their work, personal, and family engagements.

Respondents' Level of Career Motivation

Table 4. Summary Table of the Respondents' Level of Career Motivation

Career Motivation	Mean	Interpretation
Career Insight	4.02	High Motivation
Career Resilience	4.13	High Motivation
Career Identity	3.77	High Motivation
Overall	3.97	High Motivation

Table 7 shows that the respondents' level of career motivation is high ($\bar{x}$=3.97). Specifically, they are high in terms of career insight ($\bar{x}$=4.02), career resilience ($\bar{x}$=4.13), and career identity ($\bar{x}$=3.77). This result suggests that respondents are generally quite driven to develop career objectives, accept workplace changes, and engage in work that showcases their professional or technical knowledge. Significantly, for graduate students attending off-shore schools, this strong job motivation is a helpful psychological asset. As a result, this study may clarify that the respondents had painstakingly registered in their respective master's or doctorate

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degree programs despite the thoroughness and rigors of distance learning as a mode in CSU graduate school. This finding supports earlier research that found that most students pursuing master's and doctorate degrees did so because they wanted to advance their career prospects and land a job that required a post-baccalaureate degree (Greaves, 2019), putting an emphasis on the enrichment of an academic career, continuous professional development, and more employment prospects (Moreno & Kollanus, 2013).

Respondents' Distance Learning Attitude

Table 5. Distance Learning Attitude of the Respondents

Distance Learning Attitude	Mean	Interpretation
Online Attending Lectures (OAL)	4.17	Favorable Attitude
Online Communicating with Professors (OCPR)	4.14	Favorable Attitude
Online Collaborating with Peers (OCPE)	4.13	Favorable Attitude
Online Find, Access, & Study Educational Material (OEM)	4.35	Favorable Attitude
Online Doing Assignments & Homework (OAH)	4.39	Favorable Attitude
Overall	4.24	Favorable Attitude

Table 5 reveals that the respondents' distance learning attitude is favorable ($\bar{x}$=4.24). This finding implies that the respondents favor online distance learning in their graduate studies. They benefit from distance learning because it gives them flexibility, several possibilities to attend lectures, a simple way to get in touch with the professors, and control over how they collaborate with other students. Additionally, students find that distance learning facilitates the discovery, accessibility, and study of educational materials and increases their desire, enthusiasm, and participation in completing assignments, homework, and other obligations. The fact that majority of the respondents work in the USA and were able to enroll in their graduate programs in the Philippines despite the distance and different time zones may be a contributing factor in their positive attitude toward distant learning. This result is consistent with Buthelezi and Van Wyk (2020) assertion that graduate students are more likely to show a favorable attitude toward distance learning because it allows for multitasking, facilitates independent and interdependent study, fosters collaboration, and develops 21st-century skills through the use of synchronous and asynchronous sessions.

Respondents' Level of Time Management

Table 6. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of their Level of Time Management

Level of Time Management	Frequency (n=70)	Percent
Excellent (45-50 points)	14	20
Satisfactory (30-44 points)	48	68.57
Poor (0-29 points)	8	11.42
Overall Mean= 37.60 (Satisfactory)	-	-

Table 6 presents the distribution of the respondents in terms of their level of time management. Notably, the data show that most of the respondents (68.57%) have satisfactory

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time management, which is corroborated by the overall mean of 37.60. Such a finding implies that, generally, the respondents can manage their time fairly well. However, they still need further improvement of their skills, particularly in goal setting, prioritization, managing interruptions, scheduling, and avoiding procrastination.

Additionally, the respondents' satisfactory time management may be attributed to the situation in which the off-shore students must complete their graduate studies and work obligations concurrently, taking into account the different time zones between the Philippines and the USA as well as additional pressures brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of this, it requires a lot of work from offshore students to manage their time well in relation to all of their employment and graduate school obligations. Similarly, Yilmaz et al. (2006) discovered that the majority of graduate students only had moderate-level time management skills, whereas a very small fraction had high-level time management skills. Alyami et al. (2021) also found that the graduate students' struggles in their personal and academic lives had a negative impact on their time management, particularly in their online learning, in a pandemic environment.

Difference in the Respondents' Level of Career Motivation and Distance Learning Attitude When Grouped according to Profile Variables

Table 7. Comparison of the Respondents' Level of Career Motivation and Distance Learning Attitude When Grouped according to Profile Variables

	Motivation			Attitude			F	*P*
	Mean		Std. Deviation	Mean		Std. Deviation		
Sex							0.311	0.734
Female	3.94	A	0.58	4.18	A	1.92		
Male	4.06	A	0.46	4.42	A	1.58		
Age							3.060	0.019
<42 years	3.81	A	0.48	3.02	A	1.39		
42 – 57	3.92	A	0.61	4.24	AB	1.79		
58 – 67	4.31	A	0.13	5.24	B	1.85		
Civil Status							1.500	0.230
Unmarried	3.84	A	0.75	4.29	A	1.96		
Married	4.04	A	0.41	4.21	A	1.80		
No. of hours (per day) used for Graduate School Undertakings							0.796	0.575
Less than 1	3.93	A	0.61	3.97	A	1.46		
1 - 2 hours	3.96	A	0.68	4.75	A	1.72		
3 - 4 hours	4.09	A	0.41	4.02	A	2.01		
More than 4	3.88	A	0.56	4.13	A	1.93		

*Mean of the same letter is not significantly different at the 0.05 level.

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Table 7 presents that there was a statistically significant difference in the linear combination of motivation and attitude based on respondents' age, F (4, 132) = 3.06, p = 0.019; Wilk's Λ = 0.837, partial η2 = 0.085. Specifically, the Games-Howell post hoc test with Bonferroni adjustment reveals that the distance learning attitude of respondents from Gen X (42-57 years old) is significantly higher than those of Millennials (26-41 years old) and Gen Z (10-25 years old). Other pairwise comparisons are not significantly different, including their career motivation. This finding implies that the respondents belonging to Gen X have a more favorable distance learning attitude than the Millennials, and Gen Z. This point was observed among the off-shore graduate students. Those who belong to Gen X have expressed their strong positive stance on the use of technology to support their learning. Consequently, their enthusiasm to learn through the distance mode has not dwindled despite the overt challenges they encountered. This scenario may be attributed to the fact that as the first generation to have grown up with computers (Sandeen, 2008), Gen X has become technologically proficient (McKenna, 2021). Also, the finding is consistent with the report of Chyung (2007) that older learners tend to have a more positive outlook than the younger ones when it comes to distance learning.

Influence of the Respondents' Level of Career Motivation and Distance Learning Attitude on their Level of Time Management

Table 8. Test of Relationship between Level of Career Motivation and Distance Learning Attitude and Time Management

Variables		Correlation Coefficient	*p-value*
Career Motivation		0.43**	<0.00
Distance Learning Attitude		0.17*	0.04
	OAL	0.18*	0.03
	OSCAR	0.12	0.17
	OCPE	0.16	0.05
	OEM	0.18*	0.03
	OPRAH	0.16	0.06

**Significant at α=0.01

Table 8 reveals that time management had significant positive relationship with career motivation (τb = .429, p < .001) and distance learning attitude (τb = .172, p = .040). Specifically, in the domains of distance learning attitude, OAL (τb = .178, p = .035) and OEM (τb = .180, p = .035) are significantly related to time management. These positive correlations imply that higher scores in career motivation and distance learning attitude correspond to higher scores in time management.

Further, the data suggest that offshore students who are strongly motivated to achieve career objectives, accept workplace changes, and participate in their occupations typically have better goal-setting, prioritization, interruption management, scheduling, and avoiding procrastination. This situation can be reasonably linked to the fact that people can handle all of

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their tasks successfully when they are highly motivated in their working environment with distinct professional goals, which may result in productivity and a sense of fulfillment (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2018).

Additionally, offshore students who are receptive to distant learning have a tendency to organize and plan their time more well, especially when it comes to graduate studies. More precisely, respondents who favor distance learning have better time management since it gives them the chance to attend online lectures (both synchronous and asynchronous) and makes it easier to search, access, and study educational materials. This scenario is plausible because distance learning provides off-shore students with freedom and independence; as a result, they tend to prioritize duties more effectively, create strategic timetables, delegate responsibilities, and retain emotional composure, which is consistent with prior studies (Dowd, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The study has established that CSU off-shore students manifest a high career motivation, favorable distance learning attitude, and satisfactory time management in the new normal scheme of graduate education under the distance learning modality. Furthermore, age range engenders differences in the distance learning attitude in which Gen X learners lean towards a more positive outlook than the younger ones. Most importantly, the study posits that if there is a high level of career motivation and a favorable distance learning attitude, the better is the time management of the off-shore graduate students. This claim aligns with various educational principles modeling the importance of motivation and attitude in managing time for academic and non-academic activities geared toward a balanced, productive, and insightful graduate education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After having analyzed the results of this study, the following are recommendations:

1. The guidance services of CSU, in collaboration with the Graduate School, may conduct special sessions for off-shore students with a focus on time management, particularly in goal setting, prioritization, managing interruptions, scheduling, and avoiding procrastination.

2. For the CSU Graduate School, it may be considered as part of the off-shore program that each learner is assigned a program advisor or counselor to provide guidance. In doing so, each learner may develop more the ability to manage time effectively; thus, yielding meaningful learning.

3. Future studies may also consider coming up with a structural model of academic productivity of graduate students with emphasis on career motivation, distance learning attitude, and time management as constructs to be included. The mixed design may be utilized to have an in-depth and comprehensive analysis considering the bigger sample size and broader geographical context.

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