## **Problems of the First Year College Students**

Lilan Diana B. Parreño Domingo G. Umani, Jr., Ph.D.

#### ABSTRACT

The research study was conducted to determine the problems confronting the GSC college students. The descriptive method of research was used in the study. The respondents of this study were the 26% students randomly selected from the total population of the GSC first year college students enrolled for second semester of AY-2006-2007 using the Slovin formula. The needed data in this study was gathered using the checklist of problems used by the guidance Office in determining the problems of the students, upon identification of the respondents, they were grouped according to their course, year and section for an easy administration of the study. The conduct of the study was done in March 2006. The statistical tools used were frequency counts, percentage, mean and ranking. Results revealed that majority of the respondents had ages ranging between 23 years old and below, majority were female with family income below PS2000.0 per month. The issues and concerns among the problems of the college students of c350 which need to be given attention were academic problems which ranked first, followed by personal problems, then by health problems, social problems, family problems and problems regarding religion which got the lowest mean responses. Despite the fact that divorce is not practiced and not tolerated in the country especially in the rural area like euphemas, but yet 10.11% of the total respondents have broken families. This situation needs to be looked into closely as well as teachers should be aware of the students' predicament so that they can handle students' feelings inside the classrooms whenever discussions regarding family relations crop up.

## Introduction

College students in the course of their daily activities have encountered problems. These problems are connected with their association with their fellow students, friends, family members and the rest of their immediate environment where they belong.

There are many areas where problems occur. It could either be that social problems are related to studies, health, personal, social, religious practices and family. These problems if not shared or acted upon could lead to a more serious one or even fatal one. Coping mechanisms of the young people at the present times are so weak. High and increasing suicidal cases among young people had been recorded. This situation is alarming if not acted upon.

Problems like this brought about by social pressures and other forces in the environment, should be addressed with appropriate solution. Since, students spent eight hours or majority of their waking time at school, there is a need to determine and identify their problems so that the school authorities especially the guidance office could help them cope with the critical situation they are facing there is a need to empirically determine the reasons or causes of these problems.

# **Objectives of the Study**

The major purpose of this study was to determine the problems confronting the GSC college students.

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following:

1. What is the profile of the GSC first year college students for AY 2006-2007?

2. What are the prevalent problems encountered by the first year college students?

3. What are the issues and concerns to be addressed with regard to the problems of the college students?

# Methodology

The descriptive method of research was used to determine the problems confronting the GSC college students. The descriptive survey technique was employed in this study.

The respondents of this study were randomly selected from the total population of the first year GSC college students enrolled for second semester of AY 2006-2007. The data on the number of the students per course enrolled during the school year was taken from the Registrar's Office.

The students were randomly selected from the total population per course with the use of Slovin formula in determining the sample size.

The needed data in this study was gathered using a checklist of problems used by the Guidance office in determining the problems of the students. The questionnaire was formulated and designed to determine the problems confronting the GSC college students. The questionnaire was composed of two parts. Part 1

includes items on the personal information of the respondents such as name, age, gender, course, year level and parents monthly income. Part II included questions that determined the problems confronting the GSC first year college students in the areas of academic, family, social, health, personal, and religious practices. Since this is already a standardized test, no validation and reliability testing was done.

The checklist of problems was distributed to the respondents. The schedule of the students was taken from the records of the school. Upon identification of the respondents, they were grouped according to their course, year and section for an easy conduct of the study. The conduct of the study was done for one whole month in March 2006. After 3 days the questionnaire were retrieved from the respondents.

The statistical tools used were frequency counts, percentage, mean and ranking.

# **Results and Discussion**

Table 1 presents the personal information of the respondents. Results revealed that majority of the respondents have ages ranging from 23 and below or collectively classified as young with 219 or 82.02 5 of the total respondents. Those having ages ranging 23 and above numbered only to 11 or 4.14%. However, there were 37 or 13.86% who did not indicate their ages.

Majority of the respondents were female with a total number of 148 or 55.43%, while 88 or 32.96% were male and there were 31 or 11.61% who did not indicate their gender.

In terms of family income, majority or 195 (73.03%) of the respondents have an income of P5,000.00 and below, 29 or 10.86% have a family income of P5,001.00 - 10,000.00 and only 15 or 5.62% of the respondents have a family income of P10, 001.00 and above. However, 28 or 10.49% respondents did not indicate their family income.

Out of the 267 first year college students, 25 or 9.36% came from the School of Education, 69 or 25.84% from the school of Hotel and Restaurant Management, 67 or 25.09% from the School of Business Administration, 50 or 18.74% from the School of Information Technology and 56 or 20.97% from the School of Industrial Technology. The identification of the respondents was based on the enrollment of these schools during the second semester of AY 2006-2007.

Profile of Respondents	Froquoncy	Percentage (%)
Age:	Frequency	Fercentage (70)
Young (below 23 years)	219	82.02
Old (23 years and above)	11	4.12
Did not indicate	37	13.86
Total	267	100
Gender	207	100
Male	88	32.96
Female	148	55.43
Did not indicate	31	11.61
Total	267	100
Income		
5,000.00 - below	195	73.03
5,001.00 - 10,000.00	29	10.86
10,001.00 - up	15	5.62
Did not indicate	28	10.49
Total	267	100
Courses		
Education	25	9.36
BSHRM	69	25.84
BSBA	67	25.09
BS Info Tech	50	18.74
BSIT	56	20.97
Total	267	100

#### Table 1 Personal Profile of the Respondents (N = 267)

Table 2 presents the academic problems of the GSC First Year College students. Results revealed that academically, students are 'worried about their grades" with 146 responses or 54.68% (rank 1), this was followed by the problems on their "lack of study habits" with 142 responses or 53.18% which ranked second. This was followed further by the problems "lack in concentration" with 131 responses or 49.06% and this ranked third. The students also felt the burden of "too many projects" with 116 or 43.44% responses. This ranked fourth. The problem "lacking time for study" ranked fifth with 106 or 39.70 responses.

The students' academic problems which fall at the bottom of the list or can be considered as their least problems were "teachers get angry when asked" with only 12 responses or equivalent to 4.49%. Next to this was the problem "unfair grading practices" with 23 responses or 8.61% while "wanting to quit school" and "school too strict" both got 26 responses or 9.74%. "Unapproachable teachers", "not getting along with some teachers", "not getting along with some classmates" and "subjects not meaningful" got 28 responses each or 10.49%.

Problems on "unable to express self", lack of class discussion", "adjusting to new school", "lacking place for study", "afraid to speak", "too many activities", "trouble with oral report", "trouble with written work", "dull classes" and "difficulty in understanding readings" got responses ranging from 40-80 or the number of students who responded to these problems do not belong to top five or the bottom five. The mean number of students who responded to problem under academic performance was 59.58%.

Academic Problems	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
1. Worrying about grades.	146	54.68	1
2. Lacking in study habits.	142	53.18	2
3. Lacking in concentration.	131	49.06	3
4. Trouble with too much project.	116	43.44	4
5. Lacking time for study.	106	39.7	5
6. Lacking text books.	80	29.96	6
7. Being afraid to speak.	73	27.34	7
8. Too many activities.	58	21.72	8
9. Unable to express self.	51	19.1	9
10. Adjusting to new school.	50	18.73	10.5
11. Trouble with oral report.	50	18.73	10.5
12. lacking place to study.	49	18.35	12
13. Lack of class discussion.	47	17.6	13.5
14. Difficulty in understanding readings	47	17.6	13.5
15. Dull classes.	45	16.85	15
<u>16. Trouble with written work.</u>	40	14.98	16
<u>17. Subjects not meaningful.</u>	28	10.49	18.5
18. Not getting along with some classmates.	28	10.49	18.5
19. Not getting along with some teachers.	28	10.49	18.5
20. Unapproachable teacher/s.	28	10.49	18.5
21. School too strict.	26	9.74	21.5
22. Wanting to quit school.	26	9.74	21.5
23. Unfair grading practices.	23	8.61	23
24. Teacher gets angry when asked.	12	4.49	24
Mean	59.58		

Table 2 Academic Problems of the First Year College Students (N = 267)

Data in table 3 presents the problems encountered by the respondents with regard to their families. Results revealed that students felt that their "parents are sacrificing too much" with 84 responses or equivalent to 31.46%. This ranked first. This was followed by their "need to have more freedom" with 63 responses or equivalent to 23.59%. The third was, "parents don't understand" with 55 responses or equal to 20.59%. The fourth was "parents expects too much" with 46 responses or equal to 17.23%. "Parents too strict" ranked fifth with total responses of 44 or 16.48%.

The problems found at the bottom of the list were "problem with mother" with 15 responses only or 5.62% followed by "parents are gambling" with 16 responses or 5.99%. "Death in the family" got 18 responses or 6.74%. "Problem with brothers, with sisters, and with father got 23, 25 & 33 responses or 8.61, 9.36 and 12.36% respectively. Problem on "broken home" got relatively high percentage of 10.10% or 27 responses.

Problems like "sickness in the family", "lack of family concern", "too much work at home", "problem with father", "treated like a child" and "broken home" have responses ranging from 30-43 and they are found in between the top 5 and the bottom 5 of problems of the students. However, the responses of 27 for broken family were relatively high considering that Guimaras province is rural and not urbanized. It was observed that the mean responses under family problem were only 37.38%.

Family Problems	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
1. Parents sacrificing too much	84	31.46	1
2. Need more freedom	63	23.59	2
3. Parents don't understand	55	20.59	3
4. Parents expect too much	46	17.23	4
5. Parents too strict	44	16.48	5
6. Sickness in the family	43	16.1	6
7. Lack of family concern	38	14.23	7.5
8. Too much work at home	38	14.23	7.5
9. Problem with father	33	12.36	9
10. Treated like a child	30	11.23	10
11. Broken home	27	10.11	11
12. Problem with sister	25	9.36	12
13. Problem with brother	23	8.61	13
14. Death in the family	18	6.74	14
15. Parents are gambling	16	5.99	15
16. Problem with mother	15	5.62	16
Mean	37.38		

#### Table 3 Family Problems of the First Year College Students (N = 267)

Data in table 4 presents the health problems of the first year college students of Guimaras State College. Results revealed that the health problems which ranked first among them were "lacking in sleep" with 94 responses or 35.21%; "frequent headache" with 61 responses or 22.85%; "tiring easily" ranked third with 53 responses or 19.85%, followed by "allergies" which ranked fourth with total responses of 52 or 19.48%, and "trouble with eyes" ranked fifth with 49 responses or 18.35%.

The least health problems among first year college students which ranked 15th and at the bottom of the list was "physical handicaps" with only 6 responses or 2.25%, 14th was "trouble with ears" with 13 responses or 4.87%, followed by "frequent stomachache" and being overweight with 16 responses each of 5.99%. "Frequent cold/coughing" ranked 11th with a total responses of 22 or 8.24%.

Other health problems that they have suffered were "not eating regularly", "toothache", "not eating the right kind of food", "getting sick often", and "being underweight" have total responses ranging from 35-48 (13.4-17.98%). It was observed that the mean response under health problem was only 39.73%.

Health Problems	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
1. Lacking in sleep	94	35.21	1
2. Frequent headache	61	22.85	2
3. Tiring easily	53	19.85	3
4. Allergies	52	19.48	4
5. Trouble with eyes	49	18.35	5
6. Not eating regularly	48	17.98	6
7. Toothache	47	17.6	7
8. Not eating the right kind of food	44	16.48	8
9. Getting sick often	40	14.98	9
10. Being overweight	35	13.11	10
11. Frequent colds/coughing	22	8.24	11
12. Frequent stomachache	16	5.99	12.5
13. Being underweight	16	5.99	12.5
14. Trouble with ears	13	4.87	14
15. Physically handicapped	6	2.25	15
Mean	39.75		

Table 4 Health Problems of the First Year College Students (N = 267)

Data in table 5 presents the social problems confronting the first year college students. Results revealed that "needing time for self" ranked number 1 with 76 or 28.46% of the respondents who said so. This was followed by "lacking in leadership ability" and "lacking in social skills" which tied for rank number 2. "Lack of time for leisure" ranked 4th with 59 responses or 22.09%. "Prefer to be alone" got 32 responses or 11.99% and ranked fifth.

Among the social problems which belonged to the bottom of the list, "too submissive" ranked number 13. "Friends not accepted" and "no interest in groups" with 13 responses each or 4.8%, ranked 11.5. "Too aggressive" and "desiring to break off with some friends" followed next with 23 responses or 8.6%. It was observed that the mean of responses under social problems was only 36.59.

Social Problems	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
1. Needing time for self.	76	28.46	1
2. Lacking in leadership ability.	71	26.59	2.5
3. Lacking in social skills.	71	26.59	2.5
4. Lack of time for leisure.	59	22.09	4
5. Prefer to be alone.	32	11.99	5
6. Don't get along with some classmates.	30	11.23	6.5
7. Awkward in social situation.	30	11.23	6.5
8. Not mixing well with opposite sex.	24	8.99	8
9. Desiring to break off with some friends.	23	8.61	9.5
10. Too aggressive.	23	8.61	9.5
11. No interest in groups.	13	4.87	11.5
12. Friends not accepted.	13	4.87	11.5
13. Too submissive.	12	4.49	13
Mean	36.69		

Table 5		
Social Problems of the First Year College Students	(N = 267)	

Data in table 6 presents the personal problems of the GSC first year college students. Results revealed that having "no regular allowance" ranked number 1 among the problems listed with 115 responses or 43.07%. This was followed by "lacking in self-confidence" which ranked second with a total response of 102 or 38.20 %. This was followed by both being "timid or shy" and "worried about what others would say" which have a total responses of 101 or 37.83%. These ranked 3.5. "Being misunderstood by others" ranked fifth with 84 responses or 31.46%.

On the other hand, personal problems among college students which are found at the bottom of the list were "wanting to be more popular" with 16 responses or 5.99%. This ranked last or 24th in the list of students' social problems. This was followed by "I dislike rules, orders, or discipline" with 21 responses or 7.8% and ranked 23rd. "Avoid speaking to a group" ranked 21st with 28 responses or 10.49% and "worried about sex" ranked 20th with 30 responses or 11.24%. Those personal problems such as "I need understanding and affection", "feeling depressed", "in love", "can't go away with barkadas", "I like to write better than to talk", "needing a more pleasant personal appearance", "feeling bored or lonely", "easy go lucky", "often nervous", "afraid of death", "often irritable", "I hesitate to make decisions", "tendency to day-dream when studying", "not allowed to have a steady" those found in between the top 5 and bottom 5 in the ranking with responses ranging from 31-79. It was observed that the mean responses under personal problems were only 55.13.

		Percentage	
Personal Problems	Frequency	(%)	Rank
1. No regular allowance	115	43.07	1
2. Lacking in self-confidence	102	38.2	2
3. Timid or shy	101	37.83	3.5
4. Worried about what others say	101	37.83	3.5
5. Being misunderstood by others	84	31.46	5
6. I need understanding and affection	79	29.59	6
7. Feeling depressed	56	20.97	7.5
8. In love	56	20.97	7.5
<u>9. Can't go away with "barkadas"</u>	55	20.6	9
10. I like to write better than to talk	54	20.22	10
11. Needing a more pleasant personal appearance	53	19.85	11
12. Feeling bored or lonely	52	19.48	12
13. Easy go-lucky	47	17.6	13
14. Often nervous	45	16.85	14.5
15. Afraid of death	45	16.85	14.5
16. Often irritable	44	16.48	16.5
17. I hesitate to make decisions	44	16.48	16.5
18. Tendency to day-dream when studying	39	14.61	18
19. Not allowed to have a steady	31	11.61	19
20. Worried about sex	30	11.24	20
21. I am always in bad mood	28	10.49	21
22. Avoid speaking to a group	23	8.61	22
23. I dislike rules, order or discipline	21	7.87	23
24. Wanting to be more popular	16	5.99	24
Mean		55.13	

Table 6
Personal Problems of the First Year College Students ( $N = 267$ )

Data in table 7 presents the problems of the first year college students with regard their religious practices. Results revealed that "wanting to understand more about the bible" rank

number with 91 responses or 34.08%. This was followed by "lacking in faith" rank second with 48 responses or 17.98%. "Religious conflict" rank third with 31 responses or 11.61. The mean responses on the problems regarding religion were 56.67. When students were asked whether they would like to talk to someone else about their problems, 140 or 52.43% said no and 19 or 7.12% have no answer.

Problems with Religion	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
1. Wanting to understand more about the bible	91	34.08	1
2. Lacking in faith	48	17.98	2
3. Religious conflict at home	31	11.61	3
Mean	56.67		

Table 7
Problems Regarding Religion of the First Year College Students

Data in table 8 presents the person whom the respondents wanted to share their problems. Foremost in the list were their friends with 55 or 39.29% responses, followed by guidance counselors with 31 responses or 22.14%, family members who could either be their parents and sister inlaw have 29 responses or 20.71%, adviser have 12 or 8.57% responses, others with 11 or 7.86% and the least was either a pastor or a nun with 2 responses or 1.43%.

Table 8 Persons Respondents Wish to Confide Their Problems (N = 140)

Persons to Confide	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Friends	55	39.29	1
Guidance Counselor	31	22.14	2
Family members (Mother, Father, Sister, etc.)	29	20.71	3
Adviser	12	8.57	4
Others (Dr. Galiza, pet cat, in writing, girlfriend, self)	11	7.86	5
Pastor/Nun	2	1.43	6
Total	140	100	

Data in table 9 presents the issues and concerns among the problems of the college students of GSC which needs to be addressed or given attention. Results revealed that many of the students responded on the area of academic problems with the mean responses of 140, followed by personal problems with 105 mean responses, health problems with 69 responses, social problems with 68 responses, family problems with 67 responses and problems regarding religion with 57 responses.

# Table 9Issues and Concerns Among the Problems of the College<br/>Students (N = 267)

Problems	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
A. Academic Problems			
1. Worrying about grades	146	54.68	
2. Lacking in study habits	142	53.18	
3. Lacking in concentration	131	49.06	
Mean	140	52.31	1
B. Personal Problems			
1. No regular allowance	115	43.44	
2. Lacking in self-confidence	102	38.2	
3. Worried about what others would say	101	37.83	
4. Timid or shy	101	37.83	
Mean	105	39.32	2
C. Health Problems			
1. Lacking in sleep	94	35.21	
2. Frequent headache	61	22.85	
3. Getting tired easily	53	19.85	
Mean	69	25.97	3
D. Social Problems			
1. Needing time for self	76	28.46	
2. Lacking in leadership ability	71	26.59	
3. Lacking in social skills	71	26.59	
4. Lacking time for leisure	54	22.19	
Mean	68	25.96	4
E. Family Problems			
1. Parents sacrificing too much	84	31.46	
2. Need more freedom	63	23.59	
3. Parents don't understand	55	20.59	
Mean	67	25.21	5
F. Problems Regarding Religion			
1. Wanting to know more about the Bible	91	34.08	
2. Lacking in faith	48	17.98	
3. Religious conflict at home	31	11.61	
Mean	57	21.22	6

In terms of academic problems the respondents worry most about their grades, followed by lacking in study habits and lacking in concentration. For their personal problems, having no regular allowance disturbed them most followed by lacking in self-confidence, with regard to their health problems, the respondents were worried most easily. For their social problems, the respondents were very concerned in social skills or graces and lacking time for leisure. With regards to their family problems, the respondents were worried most about their parents sacrificing too much, followed by needing more freedom and parents cannot understand them. With regard to their problems regarding religion, the respondents are worried most about wanting to know more about the bible, lacking in faith and religious conflict at home.

The significant findings were as follows:

1. Results revealed that majority of the respondents have an ages ranging from 23 and below or collectively classified as young.

2. Majority of the respondents were female.

3. Majority of the respondents have a family income of P5, 000.00 and below a month.

4. Majority of the respondents come from the School of Hotel and Restaurant Management and Business Administration.

5. In terms of academic problems, "worried about their grades" ranked first, followed by "lack of study habits" and "lack in concentration" ranked third.

6. As regard to problems with the family, their number one problem was "parents are sacrificing too much" followed by "need to have more freedom" and "parents don't understand" ranked third. Although problem on "broken home" ranked only number eleven (11) or 27 students out of 267 respondents (10.11%), however, this number is little bit high considering that divorced is not practiced in our country and Guimaras is not highly urbanized province.

7. In terms of health problems, respondents replied "lacking in sleep" as their number one problem, followed by "frequent headache" and "tiring easily" which ranked third.

8. With regard to social problems, "needing time for self" ranked number one (1) followed by "lacking in leadership ability" and "lacking in social skills" which tied as rank number two (2) and "lack of time for leisure" ranked fourth.

9. In terms of the students' personal problems, "no regular allowance" ranked number one (1), followed by "lacking in self-confidence" ranked number two (2) "timid or shy" and "worried about what others would say" both ranked third.

10. With regard to the students' religious practices, "wanting to understand more about the Bible" ranked number one (1) followed by "lacking in faith" ranked number 2 and "religious conflict" ranked number 3. 11. Majority of the respondents said, that they would like to talk to someone else about their problems. They wanted to share is with friends, guidance councilor/s, family members who could either be their parents and sister in-law, classroom, pastor and nun in a descending order.

12. The issues and concerns among the students of the college students of GSC which needs to be addressed or given attention, academic problems ranked first, followed by personal problems, followed by health problems, social problems, family problems and problems regarding religion which got the lowest mean responses.

# Conclusions

1. That the ages of most of the first year college students ranges from 23 years and below, majority were female with family income below P5,000.00 per month;

2. That the students suffer lots of problems especially in the areas of academic, personal and religion having majority of the students responding to them.

3. That the issues and concerns among the problems of the college students of GSC which need to be given attention were academic problems which ranked first, followed by personal problems, followed by health problems, social problems, family problems and problems regarding religion which got the lowest mean responses.

4. That even though divorce is not practiced and not tolerated in the country especially in the rural area like Guimaras, but 10.11% of the total respondents have broken home and this situation needs to be looked closely as well as teachers should be aware of the students predicament so that they can handle students feelings inside the classroom whenever discussions regarding family relations cropped up.

## Recommendations

1. For the school to look for more benefactors so that deserving students having a family income of less than P5, 000.00 a month will be able to avail of scholarship grants so that the burden of paying their tuition fees will not be upon the shoulders of their parents.

2. For the Guidance office to look individually into the problems of the students especially those which ranked one (1) to five (5) so that they could extend appropriate guidance activities in such a way that the students will look into the problem areas with a different eye and will be able to feel that these problems are not a burden, rather a challenge that they should conquer.

3. For the Guidance Counselor to conduct students' orientation, seminars/talks on family and social problem awareness so that the coping mechanisms of the students will be made stronger.

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