

Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (Conditional Cash Transfer Program): A Qualitative Investigation

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ABSTRACT

“Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program: A Qualitative Investigation” explored the encounters of beneficiaries, teachers and school heads of DEPED Elementary schools before and after 4Ps implementation. Utilizing qualitative phenomenological tradition, the results revealed that before 4Ps implementation, the lives of recipients were uphill and tough. They could barely provide the basic needs of their family as well as their requirements of their children in school. However, after 4Ps implementation, their lives have become better since they get cash grants that capacitate them to supply their family’s needs. These were confirmed by the testimonies of school teachers and their heads who admitted that before the implementation of 4Ps, they found the children of 4Ps recipients non-compliant with school requirements and sporadic in class participation. They even added that they found them engage their children in labour. However, after

4Ps implementation, they observed improvement on these children's attendance and involvement in school undertaking. Surprisingly, however, they disclosed amid FGD that the grants were being diverted by some beneficiaries. Based on these findings, I saw the importance of strict implementation and regular monitoring of the social protection programs across the Philippines especially in Mindanao by the appointed agencies of the government, and appropriate legal actions against those beneficiaries who go overboard might be considered.

Keywords: *Education, Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, conditional cash transfer program, phenomenology, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Protecting and helping the poor and vulnerable is one of the social protection programs which government is bound to establish and sustain (Jenson, 2009). Social protection is commonly understood as "all public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups" (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). However, despite the implementation of social protection programs by any government across the globe, there is scarcity on written studies and reports about how these are seriously implemented, monitored, and enjoyed by beneficiaries.

In 2004, Feitosa de Britto remarked that most studies and reports about social protection program which governments or international organizations have published tend to highlight only all the good things about it, with little information on their potential problems. Little has been written about how this precise social assistance instrument has become so overwhelmingly popular that countries around the Global South are adopting it.

In the Philippines, this social protection program is called Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). In the study of Malisay (2013), it was indicated that this program has not yet reached the poorest of the poor in Mindanao. Besides, at present, there is still scarcity in studies which investigate the experiences of recipients/beneficiaries in Mindanao. Thus, this present study was conducted to further explore the experiences of beneficiaries in Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur, Caraga region, Philippines.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to explore the encounters of beneficiaries, teachers and school heads of DEPED Elementary schools before and after Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program implementation.

METHODOLOGY

As researcher, I used qualitative – phenomenological tradition in investigating the encounters of the recipients with kid/youngsters, teachers and school heads before and after the usage of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). Additionally, the information, which I had gathered from the participants were drawn through interview and focus group discussion (FGD). In setting up the credibility of these information, I characterized them into themes, triangulated and introduced in matrices (Creswell, 1998).

Using the criterion sampling, I involved 20 residents in Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur, Philippines. Among them, there were ten 4Ps beneficiaries with youngster or kids, eight classroom teachers and two school heads from Imelda Bunawan Elementary School and San Marcos Bunawan Elementary School, respectively in Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur, Philippines. As an analyst, I purposively chose them fundamentally in view of their rich encounters before and after 4Ps implementation at their respective schools. Along these lines, they themselves could have shared much information as they have encountered how the 4Ps functions in their lives. In backing to this, Creswell (1998) says, “They (informants) must be the people who have encountered the wonder being investigated and can explain their cognizant encounters.”

I conducted this study in communities of Imelda and San Marcos, the adopted communities of Agusan Del Sur State College of Agriculture and Technology (ASSCAT) in Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur, Philippines.

Imelda has a population of 410 households based on the 2012 Community Based Forest Management – CBFM survey. It comprises of seven villages. Besides, the government center is located at the heart of the community where villages are compact, except for Agpan with 135 household which is upland yet very potential for high-value crops. Meanwhile, the only school which is put up in this community is Imelda Bunawan Elementary School where the children of our five selected beneficiaries were studying.

San Marcos has an area of 4,020 hectares, and 30% of this is marsh area. There are 232 households that are dispersed in seven villages. Since it is along the river bank, so during the wet season, there is a tendency for the river to overflow causing the ground to submerge for 30 days. When this happens, classes in San

Marcos Bunawan Elementary School where our five parent participants enroll their children.

As researchers, I adhered to the guidelines of Creswell (1998) for data analysis. I worked on describing, classifying and interpreting, representing and visualizing the data gathered from our sources. In other words, I analyzed in thick description, classified in themes, interpreted and visually presented the qualitative data obtained from interview and FGD in matrices for audit trail.

During the data collection and analysis, I considered ethics. Since the information or data were obtained from the sources, I hid their identity to ensure confidentiality of their information and to protect their honor and prestige. Likewise, to prove that the information comes from reliable sources, the transcription of data was appended. Moreover, in the analysis of the data where the opinion of authorities was cited in support to or contradiction against my personal insights, we properly acknowledged the authors or editors (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Experiences of Parents with Children in Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program

Parents from Imelda, Bunawa

The parents with children enrolled in Imelda Bunawan Elementary School have various experiences before and after 4Ps implementation.

Before the Implementation of 4Ps:

Life was difficult.

Resorting to a Quack Doctor

In Imelda, Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur, life was hard-up as confessed by most of the parent-participants before they became recipients of 4Ps.

Parent 1 divulged that before 4Ps, the health center in their community had inadequate stocks of medicines. When she was not yet a beneficiary of the program, she happened to visit the center for check-up. But, she discovered that the medicines which a medical practitioner prescribed were not available anymore at the center. So, she decided to seek the services of a quack doctor in the community because of financial incapacity.

Using Alternative Herbal Medicines

This phenomenon was also experienced by Parent 1. It happened when a member for her family got sick. She could hardly run to a doctor because she had no money to pay for his consultation fee or medical service fee. Besides, she also experienced asking medicine from the center, but when she arrived there, there were no medicines available. Thus, like Parent 1, Parent 3 too used herbal medicine when no medicines were available at the health center of the community.

Non-compliance of School Requirements

Parent 1 also experienced how tough life was before 4Ps. She disclosed that during this period, she was financially hard-up as she could hardly buy school requirements of her children.

This problem was also experienced by Parents 4 and 5. Their children could not attend activities in school because they could not provide them with their needs for the said activities. But, what Parent 5 did was she borrowed money just to comply with the school requirements of her children.

Vending Bananaque

Parent 2 admitted that because of hardship, she found other means and ways of augmenting the meager income of her husband. Through vending bananaque to their neighbors, she was able to provide for the needs of their child and send him to school. But, she admitted that under this circumstance, their children had missed classes.

Borrowing Money

Parent 5 disclosed that before 4Ps, her child could hardly attend activities in school because of financial crisis. So, what she did was that she approached her relatives and borrowed money from them enough to comply with requirements of her son. Thus, for her, life before 4Ps was terribly tough.

Based on these experiences of parents from Community Imelda, Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur, it is apparent that majority of them had gone through difficulties in life before becoming eligible members of 4Ps. Generally, they experienced difficulty in providing their children with school supplies and paying their school obligation. Due to hardship, they could hardly involve their children in school activities. So, what some of them did was to look for means and ways so that they could somehow stretch out their income for a living. But, despite engaging in possible ways of income augmentation, still they could hardly make both of their ends meet.

In support to this finding, DevPulse (2009) explained that although individual perseverance makes a big difference in attempting to escape from the intergenerational cycle of poverty, the truth is that it is hard for an illiterate to earn his daily sustenance, much more to provide dependents with proper education. It is a fact that a child has to be pulled out from school to help supplement income for the family.

Parents from Community San Marcos, Bunawan

The parents from San Marcos, Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur had some stories to tell about their experiences before the implementation of 4Ps.

Before 4Ps Implementation

Life is tough too.

WW Going to School

Parent 1 recounted the event when her children went to school and back home every day without slippers. Unlike the children of Parent 1, the child of Parent 5, however, quit schooling because of economic problem.

Lack of Money for Medicines and Hospitalization

Parent 2 revealed a circumstance when her child was brought to hospital because of loss bowel movement (LBM), the family hardly paid hospital bills and bought prescribed medicines. Parent 3 also experienced it; she could hardly bring her children to medical clinic for checkup. Unlike Parent 3, Parent 5 sought for alternative medicine from a nearby quack doctor because she did not have much money to pay for medical services of a medical practitioner.

Incapability to Send Children to School

Sending children to school was a problem of Parent 4 because she considered as additional expenses for the family. But, despite it, she tried her best to send them to school.

In sum, the experiences of parents from San Marcos, Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur before the implementation of 4Ps were as problematic as those from Community Imelda. Based on the data, their children generally experienced going to school bare-footed. Because their house was far from the school, some of their children were tempted to quit attending classes. Meanwhile, at times of sickness, they could hardly pay hospital bills and buy medicines so they were forced by circumstance to seek services of a quack doctor in the vicinity. Besides, because of poverty, they thought of education as a mere wastage of money.

In view of this, Tesser (1988) explained that individuals will devalue the importance of a dimension in which their self-worth is threatened because knowing that they themselves are inferior to others can be distressing (Brown & Gallagher, 1992; Klein & Kunda, 1993).

After the Implementation of 4Ps

During the interview and focus group discussion, most of the parents from the adopted communities expressed gratitude for their life had improved after they became recipients of 4Ps.

In Imelda, Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur, for instance, the parents generally were thankful as revealed in the matrix because the program has provided them some benefits.

Quality of life has improved.

Hospitalization and Additional Health Benefits

Parents 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 disclosed that they have availed of hospitalization, medical, and other health-related services after 4Ps implementation. Yet, each of them told about stories of what they had experienced.

Parent 1, for instance, said that her family has regularly visited the health center because they could then get enough medicines as well as services of medical practitioners such as doctor, nurse, midwife, community health workers. She narrated an incident when she brought her children to the center for check-ups, she was happy because there was a health worker who attended to them. Additionally, at times when a member of their family got sick, they could avail of free hospitalization in government hospital.

Similarly, Parent 2 had the same experiences with Parent 1. But, what made her sustain the practice of visiting the health center was the fact that they could receive additional benefits aside from the usual medical services a doctor in the community provided.

Likewise, Parent 3 experienced that free hospitalization which Parent 1 shared. However, she disclosed that when she got herself submitted for medical check-up, the health worker at the center asked her to pay for her service a minimal amount of Php 30.00.

Meanwhile, Parent 4 opened up that her family has availed of health services at the center for all her children. They have experienced receiving free medicines. But, she confessed the fact that they only go to the center for medical checkups because they are mandated by law.

Like the other parent-participants, Parent 5 has availed of the medical services including medicines too.

Income Stretch

Parent 2 shared that through 4Ps, their lives have somehow improved. However, she disclosed that she does not rely much on the financial benefits which the family has received from the programme. So, the family put up a commodity store to earn income in addition to the financial assistance they have received through the bank.

Affordability to Secure Food and School Needs

Most of the parent-participants admitted that through the cash benefit they have received from the programme, they can buy their basic needs and school needs.

Parent 4, for instance, said that she could buy instrument and uniform for her child who is a member of the school's lyre and bugle. Besides, she could even afford to buy the requirements of her child for other different activities in school.

Meanwhile, Parent 5 disclosed that she uses the financial assistance she gets from the programme for their food such as, rice. Similarly, Parent 6 admitted it too. She buys food as it is her priority over any other needs. But, there was a time that she bought the requirements of her child. It was when her child joined different activities in school. She was nevertheless thankful for through 4Ps, she provided her child's need.

In fear of getting penalized due to non-compliance with the conditions, the beneficiaries were obligated to regularly visit the health center, attend the Family Development Sessions (FDS) and require their children to attend classes.

These are the responsibilities that the beneficiaries ought to do in exchange of having a better quality of living. According to Lin (2004), the magnitude of reciprocation is a positive function of the amount the recipients received. Additionally, the idea that an individual feels indebted when helped and that the donor expects future reciprocity implies that human beings are rational and will remember how much they have helped others.

After the Implementation of 4Ps

The information of the beneficiaries from Imelda Bunawan Elementary School, Agusan Del Sur was confirmed by those from San Marcos Bunawan Elementary School, Agusan Del Sur. The parents specifically enumerated the benefits they had received from the program after the implementation of 4Ps.

Availing of Medical Services and Medicines

Parent 1 shared that her family had availed of the free medical services and medicines at the health center. She cited an instance when her child got sick. She admitted that when she brought her to the center, the medical practitioner, who was on-duty, had quickly attended to them and provided them with prescribed medicines.

Similarly, Parents 3, 5, and 6 confirmed the truth about it. Parents 3 and 5 added that their children had availed of monthly weighing and medical check-ups. But, as part of conditionalities, they had to attend seminar for health at the center too.

Provision of Basic and School Needs

Most of the beneficiaries asserted the fact that after the implementation of 4Ps, they could already buy basic and school needs of their children. Parents 4 and 5 affirmed that they could provide food, clothes, shoes, and bags of their own children. Because of this provision, they disclosed that their children had been motivated to go to school every day.

In sum, after 4Ps implementation, the beneficiaries from San Marcos Bunawan Elementary School have experienced a better living. They have availed of free hospitalization and medical check-ups at the community health center. Besides, they can afford to provide the basic needs of their family as well as the school requirements of their children.

Since their lives get improved, the self-esteem and self-image of the beneficiaries has also developed. According to Brown and Gallagher (1992), because of the benefits an individual receives, he is likely motivated to maintain his positive self-image or self-worth.

Experiences of Teachers and School Heads with the Beneficiaries' Children enrolled in Public Elementary Schools

The teachers as well as their school heads disclosed their experiences with the children of 4Ps beneficiaries during the interview and focus group discussion. So, in this section, their experiences with their pupils before and during the implementation of 4Ps would be described.

Teachers and School Heads from Imelda Bunawan Elementary School

Before the Implementation of 4Ps

The participants started to describe their experiences with their pupils before the implementation of 4Ps. But, their description was limited to what they had seen in, heard from, and thought about their pupils in a certain duration of time.

In Imelda Bunawan Elementary School, for instance, the teachers and school head narrated their individual encounter with the children of 4Ps before the implementation. In their stories, they described how they were in school and at home, and how were they affected by circumstances.

Pupils' lives were despicable.

Messy Appearance and Putrid Smell

Teacher 1 described some of her pupils untidy and stinky because she saw them wearing the same clothes which they had already worn at home. She even wondered why their parents had not attended to them before going to school. Similarly, the School Head 5 had observed this untidy appearance of some pupils in the campus. She added that because of their dishevelled hair with lice and unpleasant smell, their peers in school would often tease and ridicule them. So, they eventually developed inferiority complex. They drove themselves away from their classmates.

Erratic in School or Class Attendance

Teacher 2 described their pupils, who came from economically hard-up families, irregular and inconsistent in their class attendance.

Teacher 3 saw the reasons why they had missed classes. One of the causes, according to her, was that they worked in the rice fields. She thought that because of money which they earned from working in the field, they chose to miss their classes.

Another reason for having been absent in-class was their family situation. They grew up in a broken family where their own parents got separated. But, because their mother decided to work to generate income for their survival, she could not monitor their attendance in school.

Teacher 4 also noticed the frequency of their pupils' absences was at the average of three (3) to four (4) times a month. She learned that during this period, they were working in banana plantation (e.g., banana fruit peeling and harvesting) to earn income for survival.

The School Head 5, also, confirmed this phenomenon. She was aware of the irregular attendance of some pupils. When she called their attention, she came to know about the reasons for their absences in their classes. One of the causes, according to her, was sickness. The pupils with attendance problem explained that they got sick when they were absent. The second cause was taking the responsibility of parents in earning livelihood. When she asked for justification, her concerned pupils pointed out that their parents were irresponsible, for they compelled them to work rather than to attend their classes.

Limited of Basic and School Needs

Teacher 1 saw how economically hard-up her pupils were then. She noticed that they had come to school without school supplies and “baon”. Because of dearth, they were always absent from their classes.

This was also the phenomenon which Teacher 2 had encountered in her pupils. She recalled the past when some of her pupils whom she identified as children of the poorest had missed classes because of scarcity. She seldom saw them attend her classes. If they were physically around in her class, she could not see them bring notebook, pencil, and “baon”. She also noticed them coming to school barefooted every day.

On the other hand, the School Head 5 talked about her experiences with some pupils who came to school with “baon”. She said that during her conversation with them, she learned that these kids skipped their breakfast. But, during recess, some of them stayed in the classroom. She also observed that other kids went out of their classrooms to find a place where they could take their “baon” for recess and lunch at the same time.

Skipping Breakfast

There were some pupils in this school who attended their classes without taking a meal in the morning. Teacher 2 disclosed that she had a number of pupils especially the poorest who skipped breakfast. She learned that skipping a meal happened to them because their families had no food to prepare for them in the morning before going to school.

Similarly, the School Head 5 encountered this event too. She disclosed that there were several pupils who had come to school without taking their breakfast.

Barefooted

There were pupils who had come to school barefooted. Teacher 2 met some of them in her classes. During their homeroom period, she asked them why they were not wearing slippers, she had learned that for the parents, buying slippers was not yet their priority. So, they sacrificed coming to school without slippers.

Working for Subsistence

Attendance of pupils in their classes is essential. But, in the case of Teacher 3, this was a problem. She learned why her pupils were irregular in their class attendance, and it was rooted from the economic condition of their families. Their families were hard-up, so they had to work in the rice fields for daily subsistence. But, there was another reason why some of them were compelled by circumstances to labor, and it was their family situation. Confronted with

challenges of having a broken family, the parent who stood by them in this distressing situation thought of engaging them to work for survival.

Teacher 4 also confirmed this concern with her pupils. She observed that they would be absent from her classes at an average of 3-4 times a month because of their engagement in banana peeling and harvesting at a banana plantation to earn a living.

Similarly, the School Head 5 confirmed the encounters of her teachers. She told them that she was aware of the fact that some pupils especially those who came from poor family were requested by their parents to help them in the rice field to earn an income to buy food. On the other hand, she learned that there were other reasons why some pupils were often absent from their classes. It was due to sickness and work for survival.

Indeed, the lives of teachers' pupils before the implementation of 4Ps in Imelda Bunawan Elementary School were pitiful. As experienced by teachers and school head before 4Ps implementation, they witnessed how their pupils had suffered from their impoverished condition. They walked barefooted in coming to school. They often wore unwashed and stinky clothes. Because their parents did not have budget for their food, they skipped meals. They even failed to comply with their school requirements. In effect, it was not only their academic performance was affected, but also their self-confidence and self-esteem.

In view of this, Tesser and Campell (1982) explained that individual's self-esteem or self-confidence gets low because he thinks of himself inferior to others. In this context, an individual feels inferior because he compares himself to others around him.

Teachers and School Head from San Marcos Bunawan Elementary School

In San Marcos Elementary School, for instance, the teachers and the school head narrated their individual encounter with the children of 4Ps before the implementation. In their stories, they described how they were in school and at home, and how they were affected by circumstances.

Before the Implementation of 4Ps

Pupils' state or condition was miserable.

No Involvement in School Activities

There were pupils prior to 4Ps who could hardly participate in school or class activities. Teacher 1, for instance, observed that one of the reasons why they could not participate in school activities was the fact that they could not afford to buy the needed requirements.

Similarly, Principal 5 experienced the same concern with pupils before she was promoted to the position. According to her, there were some pupils who could not participate in school activities because their parents' priority was not to buy their materials for the said activities but to sustain their daily subsistence.

This was confirmed by Teacher 3, but the reason which was shared by her pupils who did not want to participate in the activities was due to their personal appearance.

Irregular Attendance

Attendance of the pupils in the school is essential, but teachers in this school had discovered some factors why their pupils were incurring absences in their classes.

Teacher 1 observed the irregular attendance or frequent absences of her pupils especially the poor ones. She came to know that having no school uniform to wear was the factor why some of her pupils sometimes missed classes. When she asked them why it was so, they said that their parents could not afford to buy them school uniforms then.

In addition, Teacher 3 shared physical appearance as another factor why her pupils were inconsistent in class attendance. According to her, they were hesitant to go to school because they were ashamed of their untidy look. So, they opted to be absent over the possibility of getting ridiculed by their classmates or peers.

Teacher 2, however, admitted that in her attempt to find the cause of absences by some of her pupils, she conducted a consultation. She found that it was their "barkadas" who swayed them to cut classes. Moreover, when she got the opportunity to talk to the parents of these children, Teacher 2 discovered that the parents themselves were not aware of their children's absences or truancy.

No Access to Free Check-up and Medicines

There were some factors why some pupils who got sick could not come back to school and missed several sessions. Teacher 1 learned from her pupils and their parents that when they were sick of flu, they went to the health center of their community, but there was no physician who could check them up and provide them right medicines. So, they would run to a quack doctor in the barrio with hope to get recovered from illness.

Low Academic Rating

Learner's academic performance is determined by some factors. According to the School Head 5, there were a number of her pupils in the classroom who got low in some of their academic performance. She learned from her teachers that one of the factors why some pupils got low was their failure to comply

with their projects and other assignments. So, when she talked to them about their performance, she learned that some of them were unable to submit their requirements because their family could hardly afford to buy materials. She was convinced that the grants which parents had received were not enough to sustain the food needs of their family.

Indeed, the state of life the pupils had before the implementation of 4Ps was disgraceful. In consequence, their academic performance in San Marcos Bunawan Elementary School was tremendously hampered. Tesser (1998) explained that the self-esteem or self-worth of individuals is malleable. Thus, due to distressing conditions, the pupils were easily overtaken by their inferiority complex, so their performance in classes was hampered.

After 4Ps Implementation

The teacher and school head participants started to describe their experiences with their pupils especially those who were identified as children of 4Ps beneficiaries after the implementation of the programme. But, their description was limited to what they had seen in their school children, what factors had influenced them, and how they felt about the circumstances which surrounded them.

In Imelda Bunawan Elementary School, for example, one of the concerns of teachers before 4Ps implementation was their pupils' attendance, but after the implementation of this program and of Home Visit program of the school, the rates of absences and dropouts were reduced.

Pupils' attendance and involvement in school activities are upgraded.

Decreasing Rate of Absences and Dropouts

In the case of Teacher 1, the rates of absences and dropouts before 4Ps were high. But, she was thankful for, through 4Ps, her school children had eventually attended their classes. She thought that this improvement in class attendance could be attributed to the conditions of the programme for the beneficiaries. Knowing that their benefit would be deducted, they were motivated to be regular in their class attendance. In effect, absences and dropouts were controlled.

But, Teacher 1 also realized that the said progress in the attendance of her pupils could even be attributed to the Home Visit program of the school. This system requires DepEd teachers across grade levels to visit their pupils at their own homes and informally discuss with their parents issues affecting their children's attendance and performance. So, through this initiative, as explained by Teacher 1, the awareness of parents on their role in school for their children was enhanced.

Teacher 4 confirmed the motivational effect of the ‘Operation Baling’ on children’s progress in class attendance. She saw how this initiative had further increased the attendance of her school children. She thought that her conference with the parents of her pupils was instrumental in enlightening them about their important roles for motivating their children to finish their studies. But, she was aware of the fact that aside from Home Visits, her children especially the members of 4Ps were even more driven to comply with the 85% class attendance as it was mandated by law.

The School Head 5 validated the information of Teacher 4 regarding the mandated conditions of the program to the beneficiaries. She said that through them, the absences of the 4Ps children would be reported to DSWD; consequently, their benefits would have been deducted. So, to complement 4Ps, the school devised a program to closely monitor 4Ps children’s attendance. Aside from this initiative, DEPEd also subscribed to the Feeding program of health center. To keep the children from getting absent. She explained that through this program those children with no “baon” would stay in school until they would be dismissed by their teachers in the afternoon.

Development of Self-Confidence

The self-confidence of school children in this school has gradually been improving since the implementation of 4Ps.

In the class of Teacher 2, for instance, she had seen some improvements in the physical appearance of her pupils when 4Ps was implemented. They had already taken a bath before going to school. They had brushed their teeth after taking their meal in the morning and in the evening. When they arrived at the school, the boys had to make sure that their hair had been groomed, while that of the girls had been well combed. Because of these developments in their physical appearance, their self-confidence had built up so much that they would like to be in school every day.

The School Head 5 confirmed the experience of Teacher 2. According to her, she too had seen several 4Ps pupils who were already well-groomed, and the hair of some girls had been combed too so that hair lice would not have thrived. She likewise had noticed the development of their self-confidence and self-esteem because, as she further explained, they became actively participative in different activities in the campus.

Involvement of Pupils’ Parents

Teacher 2 was aware of the parents’ participation or involvement in school activities such as, “Brigada Eskwela.” She thought of attributing it to 4Ps. Since 4Ps beneficiaries’ involvement in activities of DEPEd was required by the programme,

as Teacher 2 explained, it could be their opportunity to monitor the attendance as well as the performance of their children in school. So, they had no choice but to abide by it.

Teacher 4 confirmed with Teacher 2's observation on parents' involvement in school activities. She was also happy to see parents following up their children's academic performance in the class as well as their attendance. In health sessions on different topics once a month. But, she acknowledged the effect of her home visits to this development on the part of the parents in complementation with 4Ps.

On the other hand, 4Ps parents' involvement was not only limited to school activities but also to health-related activities. Through the effort of teachers in DEPEd in establishing partnership with parents of their school children, they made it known to 4Ps most especially the importance of their role in keeping their children healthy and strong. So, the parents through "Home Visits" had become conscientious in bringing their children to the health center as shared by Teacher 3 to attend health-related sessions once a month.

Teacher 4 also confirmed this instance of 4Ps' involvement as she learned that the parents of her school children had visited the health center and submitted their children for deworming every six (6) months as required by the programme through the initiative of DEPEd teachers to remind them and keep their children's health records. Teacher 4 added that 4Ps parents should maintain the health card of their children as through it, they could avail of free medical check-up and medicines.

The School head 5 validated the information of Teacher 4 as regards the initiative of DEPEd to follow up parents of their responsibility to bring their children to health center. She explained that teachers themselves had exerted much effort to do it because, as she thought, health is one of the factors that could affect the attendance and performance of school children. So, the government agency such as DEPEd wanted to keep school children strong and healthy for their future success.

Using School Library

School library is one of the facilities which was seldom used by the school children before 4Ps implementation. But, during the implementation, it had been used as the best place to do assignments or homework and write researches.

Teacher 3, as regards this facility, was then happy, for her children had seen the usefulness of the library. She learned that during their visit in the library, they were looking for books where they could find answers to the guide questions as their assignments. Because of this instance, she thought that the programme had been instrumental in driving them to be more diligent, resourceful, and

dedicated in their studies.

Teacher 4 confirmed this instance with her pupils too, based on the logbook of the library. She thought that her pupils especially the children of 4Ps had realized the value of reading books. Since they had no reading materials at home, they used their recess or vacant time to drop by the library and make their assignments.

In sum, after 4Ps implementation, the lives of 4Ps children in school as observed by their teachers and school head were hopeful. Since it was implemented, these pupils have been trying their best to be regular in their school attendance. They have also used their library facilities. More surprisingly, their parents have also involved in school activities.

In this regard, Greenberg and Frisch (1972) explained that when the individuals are indebted to any agency because they receive help, they feel more obligated to reciprocate.

After 4Ps Implementation

In San Marcos Bunawan Elementary School, most of the teachers including their school head have observed improvements in their children as well as their parents after the implementation of 4Ps. They enumerated some of the benefits they had enjoyed.

Attendance and participation of 4Ps children in school activities are better.

Participation in School Activities

School activities were once unimportant for children before 4Ps implementation because of extraneous expenses required from the parents. But, after the implementation of the programme, 4Ps parents most especially have supported their children's interest in school activities.

Teacher 1, for instance, noticed that her pupils had shown active participation in different activities of the school. She learned that they had ever wanted to get involved in school activities because their parents could already afford to buy their needed requirements such as, uniform and shoes.

Teacher 3 also confirmed the fact about the involvement of children in school activities. She learned that their parents have bought them their needs after receiving their fund. She thought, with this instance, the after effect of the programme in providing the needs of the children. It kept children's interest in coming to school, attending their classes, and performing well in their studies.

Teacher 1 saw this instance in her school children. She was happy with the improvement of her pupils in their academic performance, and she attributed this to parents' support to their participation in both class and school activities.

Through these activities, they could eventually overcome their fright and outgrow their inferiority complex.

Improving Class Attendance

The class attendance of school children after the implementation of the 4Ps has improved because of some considerations. One of them is the 4Ps condition that a child of the beneficiaries must comply with the 85% attendance policy. Due to this condition, the parents, as shared by the teachers and their school head, have visited the school to monitor their children's attendance.

Teacher 2, for instance, admitted that some parents of her pupils had regularly dropped by the school and peeked through the windows or door of their classroom the presence of their children. In short, they had been monitoring the attendance of their children.

Likewise, Teacher 4 observed the same instance. But, she learned that the parents had been monitoring their children's attendance because of fear that they would be removed from the list of beneficiaries. So, she thought that the parents would really do their best to meet the condition.

The School Head 5 confirmed this instance through her experience with some parents. She learned that some parents would buy their children's projects to motivate them to attend their classes regularly. So, buying their needs was one of the ways and means the parents could do for their children to attend classes. Again, they did these ways out of fear to be removed from the roster.

Diversion of Funds

Meanwhile, as regards the funds allocated for school requirements, Teacher 4 observed that some 4Ps parents used cash grants for buying galvanized iron and electric fan.

In closure, the attendance and involvement of pupils in San Marcos Bunawan Elementary School have improved, and it is due to close monitoring of class attendance by the teachers as well as the school head. However, there is a controversial disclosure that some 4Ps parents diverted the use of cash grants for other purposes. Though this is unveiled, there is still a need to look into this issue by future researchers.

CONCLUSIONS

There are two implications of the findings to educational practices. At first, the 4Ps parents and their children are encouraged to attend classes and involve in school activities because of the cash grants they have received from 4Ps as well as the feeding program of the schools. Besides, it is rewarding, for

the 4Ps children are even inspired to study hard and vie for honours in their respective classes. So, to sustain the drive of the parents and children of 4Ps, the DSWD official representatives must continue monitoring the school attendance through the assistance of the school teachers and principals.

Lastly, the Home Visit program of the Department of Education must be sustained too as this is of great help to inform the parents about the school attendance and activities of their children. Through this, the parents are empowered to do their responsibilities in overseeing or monitoring their children in school.

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