



Struggles and Strengths: Learning Challenges, Disposition, and Motivational Landscape of Senior High School 4Ps Beneficiaries

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Abstract

Original Research Article

This study examined the disposition and motivation in learning, challenges faced, and perceived importance of support services among beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). Utilizing a descriptive-comparative research design, data were collected from student beneficiaries through a structured survey questionnaire. Results revealed that respondents demonstrated a high level of positive disposition (M = 3.52) and motivation (M = 3.54) toward learning, indicating strong engagement, goal orientation, and belief in the value of education. Learners particularly emphasized the importance of education in improving their future and supporting their families, reflecting both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). In terms of challenges, the overall level was perceived as less challenging (M = 2.44), although specific concerns such as financial difficulties, limited internet access, and household responsibilities were identified. The findings also showed that beneficiaries prioritized direct financial and educational support services, such as scholarships and cash grants, over community-based interventions. Furthermore, significant differences were found in disposition, motivation, and challenges when respondents were grouped according to profile variables such as sex, strand, number of siblings, and living arrangements, suggesting that socio-demographic factors influence students' learning experiences. Overall, the study concludes that while the 4Ps program effectively supports students' academic engagement and positive attitudes, contextual challenges and disparities persist. The findings highlight the need for targeted interventions and enhanced support mechanisms to ensure equitable and sustained educational outcomes among beneficiaries.

Keywords: 4Ps beneficiaries, learning motivation, student disposition, educational challenges, conditional cash transfer.

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Introduction

The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) is the Philippine government's flagship social protection initiative aimed at reducing poverty and improving human capital through conditional cash

transfers for education, health, and nutrition. Over the years, the program has demonstrated significant contributions in increasing school participation, improving attendance, and promoting child welfare among low-income households. Recent studies



further confirm that 4Ps beneficiaries generally show satisfactory academic performance and improved quality of life, indicating the program's positive influence on learners' educational outcomes. Moreover, evidence suggests that the program enhances school retention and graduation rates, although its overall impact may vary depending on contextual factors such as family support and school quality.

Despite these positive outcomes, existing literature largely focuses on measurable academic indicators such as grades, enrollment, and completion rates, with limited attention given to learners' psychological dimensions, including disposition, motivation, and perceived challenges. While financial assistance has been shown to support access to education, it does not fully address underlying barriers such as digital inequality, household responsibilities, and varying levels of family support. Additionally, there remains a scarcity of studies examining how demographic factors influence these internal and external learning conditions among 4Ps beneficiaries.

Thus, this study seeks to fill these gaps by examining the disposition and motivation in learning, the challenges faced, and the perceived importance of support services among 4Ps beneficiaries. It also investigates differences based on learners' profiles, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how the program influences not only academic participation but also the holistic learning experience of students.

Methodology

This study utilized a descriptive-comparative design to profile disposition (attitudes like self-confidence and resilience), motivation (intrinsic/extrinsic factors), and challenges among 159 SHS students who were 4Ps beneficiaries from four public schools in Cabarroguis District, SDO Quirino (Burgos NHS: 19; Cabarroguis NSAT: 75; Quirino GHS: 56; Tucod NHS: 9), selected via stratified random sampling for representation across schools (Hassan, 2024). A validated and pilot-tested questionnaire with five parts: demographics (Part I), 4-point Likert scales for disposition/motivation (Parts II-III), challenges (Part IV), and service ranking (Part V) was distributed after SDO/school approvals, achieving 100% retrieval with informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Data were analyzed using SPSS: frequency/percentage for profiles, means for levels, ranking for services, t-tests for sex/grade differences, and ANOVA or Analysis of Variance for age/strand/siblings/living arrangement/years as beneficiary, enabling group comparisons and insights into socioeconomic influences.

This study ensured ethical compliance by obtaining informed consent from participants via letters detailing the purpose, procedures, risks/benefits, and rights with a voluntary signed agreement and maintaining strict data confidentiality, limiting access to the researcher for research purposes only, without identifying the respondents.

Results and Discussions

I. Disposition in Learning

Table 1. Level of Agreement of the Respondents on Disposition in Learning as 4Ps Beneficiaries

Statements	Mean	SD	Description
1. I look forward to going to school every day.	3.57	.53	SA
2. I feel like I belong at this school.	3.42	.57	SA
3. I am confident that I can learn new things.	3.52	.54	SA
4. I enjoy activities that challenge me in my studies.	3.44	.56	SA
5. I am willing to participate in class discussions and activities.	3.47	.56	SA
6. I believe education is important for my future.	3.77	.42	SA
7. I feel supported by my teachers and classmates.	3.45	.55	SA
8. I value learning even if it is difficult.	3.42	.59	SA
9. I am proud to be a student in this school.	3.64	.51	SA
10. I feel positive about my ability to succeed in school.	3.56	.55	SA
Grand Mean	3.52	.36	SA

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 Strongly Agree (SA), 2.50 – 3.24 Agree (A), 1.75 – 2.49 Disagree (D), 1.00 – 1.74 Strongly Disagree (SD)

The results in Table 1 reveal that respondents generally exhibit a highly positive disposition toward learning, as indicated by the grand mean of 3.52 (SD = 0.36), interpreted as “Strongly Agree.” This suggests that beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) demonstrate strong affective engagement, motivation, and positive attitudes toward schooling. Notably, the highest mean (M = 3.77) corresponds to the belief that education is important for their future, indicating that students recognize education as a pathway for social mobility—an outcome aligned with the conditional cash transfer framework that promotes school participation (Department of Social Welfare and Development [DSWD], 2023).

Furthermore, high levels of agreement on items related to confidence in learning (M = 3.52), school belongingness (M = 3.42), and willingness to participate (M = 3.47) suggest that 4Ps beneficiaries

possess strong intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy. These findings support recent studies emphasizing that financial support programs contribute not only to access but also to learners’ psychological engagement and persistence (Orbeta & Paqueo, 2021; Baird et al., 2020). The relatively consistent standard deviations imply homogeneity in responses, indicating shared positive experiences among respondents.

The findings are also consistent with self-determination theory, which posits that competence, relatedness, and autonomy enhance motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Students’ sense of belonging and perceived support from teachers (M = 3.45) further reinforce this theoretical perspective. Overall, the results suggest that the 4Ps program contributes positively to learners’ dispositions, fostering attitudes essential for academic success and long-term educational attainment.

II. Motivation in Learning

Table 2. Level of Agreement of the Respondents on Motivation in Learning as 4Ps Beneficiaries

Statements	Mean	SD	Description
1. I want to learn new things in school.	3.66	.49	SA
2. I try my best to get good grades.	3.64	.48	SA
3. I am motivated to study even when the subject is difficult.	3.36	.58	SA
4. I study to achieve my future goals.	3.77	.43	SA
5. I am interested in the subjects I am studying.	3.41	.53	SA
6. I complete my school assignments on time.	3.12	.64	A
7. I feel proud when I do well in my studies.	3.53	.53	SA
8. I participate in school activities because I enjoy learning.	3.43	.57	SA
9. I believe my hard work in school will help my family in the future.	3.83	.38	SA
10. I continue to study even when I face challenges.	3.67	.47	SA
Grand Mean	3.54	.35	SA

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 Strongly Agree (SA), 2.50 – 3.24 Agree (A), 1.75 – 2.49 Disagree (D), 1.00 – 1.74 Strongly Disagree (SD)

The results in Table 2 indicate that respondents, as beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), demonstrate a high level of motivation in learning, with a grand mean of 3.54 (SD = 0.35), interpreted as “Strongly Agree.” This suggests that students are highly driven to engage in academic tasks and pursue educational goals. The highest-rated item, “I believe my hard work in school will help my family in the future” (M = 3.83), highlights the strong influence of family-oriented motivation, reflecting the socio-economic realities of 4Ps beneficiaries and reinforcing findings that conditional cash transfer programs enhance goal-oriented behavior among learners (Orbeta & Paqueo, 2021; DSWD, 2023).

Similarly, high agreement on items such as studying to achieve future goals (M = 3.77) and persistence despite challenges (M = 3.67) indicates

strong intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. These findings align with expectancy-value theory, which posits that students are motivated when they value outcomes and believe in their capacity to succeed (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). The relatively lower mean for completing assignments on time (M = 3.12, “Agree”) suggests minor challenges in self-regulation, possibly due to contextual factors such as limited resources or home responsibilities, which are common among economically disadvantaged learners (Baird et al., 2020).

Overall, the consistently high means and low standard deviations reflect a shared, positive motivational orientation among respondents. The findings affirm that the 4Ps program not only improves access to education but also fosters learners’ perseverance, aspirations, and commitment to academic success.

III. Challenges Faced by 4Ps Beneficiaries

Table 3. Level of Challenge Faced by the Respondents as 4Ps Beneficiaries

Challenges	Mean	SD	Description
1. Lack of school supplies	2.48	.85	LC
2. Poor internet connection at Home	2.52	.86	C
3. Lack of access to technology (Cell phones, computers, etc.)	2.34	.90	LC
4. Financial difficulties despite 4Ps support	2.62	.79	C
5. Need to help with family chores or work	2.65	.99	C
6. Lack of parental guidance or support	2.08	.99	LC
7. Health issues	2.29	.87	LC
8. Transportation problem.	2.32	.98	LC
9. Lack of safe and quiet study space at home	2.36	.94	LC
10. Low self-confidence or motivation	2.72	.88	C
Grand Mean	2.44	.58	LC

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 Very Challenging (VC), 2.50 – 3.24 Challenging (C), 1.75 – 2.49 Less Challenging (LC), 1.00 – 1.74 Not a Challenge (NC)

The results in Table 3 indicate that the overall level of challenges faced by 4Ps beneficiaries is “Less Challenging,” as reflected by the grand mean of 2.44 (SD = 0.58). This suggests that while difficulties are present, they are generally manageable and do not severely hinder students’ learning experiences. However, selected indicators rated as “Challenging” reveal specific areas of concern. These include the need to help with family chores or work (M = 2.65), financial difficulties despite 4Ps support (M = 2.62), poor internet connection at home (M = 2.52), and low self-confidence or motivation (M = 2.72). These findings highlight that economic and home-related responsibilities continue to influence learners’ academic engagement, consistent with studies noting that conditional cash transfer programs alleviate but do not fully eliminate poverty-related constraints (Orbeta & Paqueo, 2021; DSWD, 2023).

Conversely, indicators such as lack of school supplies (M = 2.48), limited access to technology (M = 2.34), and transportation problems (M = 2.32) were rated as “Less Challenging,” suggesting that program support and school interventions may have mitigated these barriers. Interestingly, lack of parental guidance (M = 2.08) and health issues (M = 2.29) were also perceived as less challenging, which may imply adequate family and community support systems.

The relatively higher standard deviations across items indicate variability in respondents’ experiences, reflecting differences in household contexts. These findings align with recent literature emphasizing that while social protection programs improve educational access, structural inequalities and digital divides remain persistent challenges (Baird et al., 2020; UNESCO, 2022). Overall, the results suggest that 4Ps contributes to reducing educational barriers, though targeted interventions

are still needed to address lingering socio-economic and motivational challenges.

IV. Support Services Provided by the Program

Table 4. Perceived Rank of Importance of Support Services Provided by the Program to Beneficiaries

Support Services	Mean Rank	Final Rank
Livelihood Program for Parents	7.03	5
Skills Training for Parents	8.08	7
Infrastructure Development in Barangay	10.23	13
Funding Assistance for School Needs	5.86	4
Free Tutoring Services	8.91	10
Implementation of Vocational/Skills Trainings	8.48	8
Feeding Program	9.60	12
Health and Medical Assistance	5.48	3
Parenting Sessions / Family Development Sessions (FDS)	7.80	6
Educational Scholarships / Allowances	4.42	1
Cash Grants for Education and Health	4.92	2
Community Seminars and Trainings	10.38	14
Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance	8.70	9
Youth Empowerment Activities	9.43	11
Community-based Projects (gardening, clean-up drives, etc.)	10.55	15

The results in Table 4 present the perceived importance of support services provided to 4Ps beneficiaries, revealing clear priorities among respondents. Educational scholarships/allowances (Mean Rank = 4.42) and cash grants for education and health (Mean Rank = 4.92) emerged as the top two most important services. This indicates that direct financial assistance remains the most valued support, as it directly addresses immediate educational and health-related needs. These findings are consistent with the core design of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), which emphasizes conditional cash transfers to improve school participation and health outcomes (Department of Social Welfare and Development [DSWD], 2023).

Health and medical assistance (Rank 3) and funding assistance for school needs (Rank 4) also ranked highly, highlighting the importance of holistic support systems that address both academic and well-being dimensions. This aligns with studies suggesting that integrated social protection services significantly enhance human capital development (Orbeta & Paqueo, 2021). Meanwhile, livelihood programs (Rank 5) and parenting sessions or Family Development Sessions (Rank 6) were moderately valued, indicating recognition of long-term capacity-building interventions for families.

On the other hand, services such as community-based projects (Rank 15), community seminars (Rank 14), and infrastructure development

(Rank 13) were perceived as less important. This may suggest that beneficiaries prioritize immediate, tangible benefits over indirect or long-term community interventions. The findings support the argument that economically disadvantaged households tend to value programs with direct and visible impacts on daily survival and schooling (Baird et al., 2020).

Overall, the results emphasize that while various support services are beneficial, direct financial and educational assistance remain the most critical in sustaining student participation and success among 4Ps beneficiaries.

V. Test of Difference on the Level of Agreement of the Respondents on Disposition and Motivation in Learning as 4Ps Beneficiaries When They are Grouped by Profile

Table 5. Test Difference on the Level of Agreement of the Respondents on Disposition in Learning as 4Ps Beneficiaries When They are Grouped by Profile

Variable	Statements	T/F	p-value	Decision
	Disposition			
Sex	I am willing to participate in class discussions and activities.	5.573	.019	Reject Ho
	I value learning even if it is difficult.	10.133	.002	Reject Ho
Strand.	I believe education is important for my future.	3.512	.032	Reject Ho
Whom they lived with	I feel positive about my ability to succeed in school.	4.668	.011	Reject Ho
	Motivation			
Strand.	I believe my hard work in school will help my family in the future.	3.474	.033	Reject Ho
Number of siblings	I try my best to get good grades.	3.121	.047	Reject Ho
	I participate in school activities because I enjoy learning.	3.340	.038	Reject Ho
Whom they Lived With	I feel proud when I do well in my studies.	3.411	.035	Reject Ho

p-value of ≤.05 is significant

The results in Table 5 reveal that there are statistically significant differences in selected indicators of disposition and motivation in learning among 4Ps beneficiaries when grouped according to profile variables, as all reported p-values are less than .05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that learners' demographic characteristics influence their attitudes and motivation toward education.

In terms of disposition, significant differences were found based on sex in willingness to participate ($p = .019$) and valuing learning despite difficulty ($p = .002$). This suggests that male and female students may differ in engagement and perseverance, which is supported by studies highlighting gender-based differences in academic behavior and self-regulation (OECD, 2021). Similarly, strand influenced students' belief in the

importance of education ($p = .032$), implying that academic track may shape future orientation and perceived relevance of schooling. The variable “whom they live with” also showed significance ($p = .011$), indicating that family structure plays a role in shaping students’ confidence and academic outlook, consistent with findings on the impact of home environment on learner self-efficacy (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020).

For motivation, the strand significantly influenced the belief that hard work benefits the family ($p = .033$), while the number of siblings affected effort in achieving good grades ($p = .047$)

and participation in school activities ($p = .038$). This may reflect resource distribution and responsibility dynamics within households (Tansel & Özdemir, 2021; Marah et al., 2025). Additionally, living arrangements significantly influenced students’ sense of pride in achievement ($p = .035$), underscoring the role of family support systems (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020; Kim & Lee, 2022).

Overall, the findings suggest that socio-demographic factors shape both disposition and motivation, reinforcing the need for differentiated and context-sensitive educational interventions among 4Ps beneficiaries.

VI. Test of Difference on the Level of Challenge Faced by the Respondents as 4Ps Beneficiaries When They are Grouped by Profile

Table 6. Test of Difference on the Level of Challenge Faced by the Respondents as 4Ps Beneficiaries When They are Grouped by their Profile

Variable	Statements	T/F	p-value	Decision
Sex	Lack of school supplies	6.395	.012	Reject Ho
	Lack of access to technology (Cell phones, Computers and etc.)	6.519	.012	Reject Ho
Number of Siblings	Lack of access to technology (Cell phones, Computers and etc.)	3.199	.044	Reject Ho

p-value of $\leq .05$ is significant

The results in Table 6 indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the level of challenges faced by 4Ps beneficiaries when grouped according to selected profile variables, as all p-values are less than .05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This implies that certain demographic characteristics influence the extent to which learners experience specific educational barriers.

In terms of sex, significant differences were observed in challenges related to lack of school supplies ($p = .012$) and lack of access to technology ($p = .012$). This suggests that male and female students may experience unequal access to essential

learning resources, which could be influenced by gender roles, allocation of household resources, or differing academic demands. Recent studies highlight that gender disparities persist in access to educational materials and digital resources, particularly in low-income households (UNESCO, 2022).

Moreover, the number of siblings significantly affected access to technology ($p = .044$), indicating that learners from larger families may face greater competition for limited devices such as mobile phones or computers. This aligns with findings that household size can constrain access to

educational resources, especially in economically disadvantaged contexts where resources must be shared among multiple children (Orbeta & Paqueo, 2021).

These findings underscore that while the overall level of challenges was rated as “Less Challenging,” disparities still exist within subgroups of beneficiaries. The variability in access to school supplies and technology reflects broader issues of digital inequality and resource distribution. Therefore, targeted interventions—such as provision of learning materials and improved access to digital tools—are necessary to ensure equitable learning opportunities among 4Ps beneficiaries.

The findings of the study reveal that 4Ps beneficiaries generally demonstrate a strong and positive disposition and motivation toward learning, as evidenced by consistently high levels of agreement across indicators. Learners value education, exhibit confidence in their abilities, and maintain goal-oriented behaviors, particularly in relation to improving their family’s future. Although challenges were overall perceived as less severe, selected issues such as financial constraints, limited internet access, and competing household responsibilities remain evident. The results further show that demographic variables such as sex, strand, number of siblings, and living arrangements significantly influence students’ disposition, motivation, and experienced challenges. Additionally, beneficiaries prioritize direct financial and educational support services over community-based or indirect interventions. Overall, the 4Ps program contributes positively to learners’ academic attitudes and engagement, though disparities across subgroups highlight the need for more targeted and inclusive support mechanisms.

Future studies may explore longitudinal designs to assess the long-term impact of 4Ps on academic achievement and career outcomes. Researchers are encouraged to include larger and more diverse samples across regions to improve generalizability. Further investigation on the role of digital access and learning environments is recommended, particularly in the context of blended or online learning. Qualitative approaches may also

be employed to capture in-depth experiences of beneficiaries. Additionally, future research may examine the effectiveness of specific support services, such as Family Development Sessions and livelihood programs, in enhancing student outcomes and reducing socio-economic disparities.

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