

The Impact of Typhoon Soudelor on Northern Marianas College Students

English Composition II

Northern Marianas College

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Authors Note

This paper was prepared for English Composition 202 Section 01, taught by Dr. Kimberly Bunts-Anderson.

Table of Contents

1. Abstract3

2. Literature Review.....4

3. Research Questions.....4

4. Methodology.....5

5. Findings and Analysis.....5

6. Discussion.....7

7. References.....9

8. Appendices.....10

 Appendix A.....11

 Appendix B.....13

 Appendix C.....15

 Appendix D.....16

 Appendix E.....17

 Appendix F.....19

Abstract

Scott Tabhan, for English Composition II section 01 taught by Dr. Kimberly Anderson-Bunts, in Northern Marianas College, conducted the research on “The Impact of Typhoon Soudelor on Northern Marianas College Students”. The most significant finding discussed is the parallelism of students’ stress level and having no power due to the typhoon. The paper also argues that many students’ cause of stress was also due to the cramming of classes’ lecture time and due time for assignments. Data was collected via twelve students in a Pilot Survey through Survey Monkey and two interviews for qualitative data throughout NMC students.

Literature Review

In the process of collecting literature to support my research on “The Impact of Typhoon Soudelor on Northern Marianas College Students” I discovered immense amount of study conducted on the impact of natural disasters on education but not so much on its impact on a college level. A study conducted by Krista Richardson on “Katrina’s Children: An Analysis on Education Outcomes among Displaced Children in Colorado” states that the most significant way to measure the impact of students is their negative or positive performance in their grades. In investigating this she found out that there was a drop in grades due to a number of reasons. In regards to it’s long term effects, “Five years later, another study found that 40 percent of children still did not have stable housing and another 20 percent remained emotionally distressed. 34 percent of children had been held back in school.” Wade’s also talks about “Katrina generation”, which were the population affected, to be more likely not in school and jobless (Wade. 2015). Through evaluating the two studies conducted we can compare its findings to that we are investigating.

In an article entitled “Off the Radar, Complete Devastation” by Jason Logue in Inside Higher Ed we can clarify the physical damage done by Typhoon Soudelor. Jason states, “Eight of the 25 buildings were damaged, many left without roofs, and four were nearly destroyed” (Lougue. 2015). In the article we can sympathize with its staff and students through an interview with the college’s president, Sharon Hart.

Research Questions

1. How has Typhoon Soudelor impacted Northern Marinas College students of Fall 2015?
2. Has the typhoon affected them mentally?

3. Did the typhoon impact their grades in any way?
4. Has the typhoon affect students financially?

Methodology

The initial step to my project was to narrow the research question down so that my research wouldn't be too broad. After confirming what I was to focus on the data collection process began. Secondary resources were collected via Goggle Scholar and through EBSCOhost Research Databases to ensure the data's legitimacy. Then, primary data was collected through Survey Monkey by its Pilot Survey system. A test survey of 10 questions was first posted in Google Docs for editing and functionality; this Survey received nine responses. Afterwards a final survey was posted and it collected 12 responses. Altogether, the two surveys collected 21 responses with comments, from Northern Marianas College students, that were to be analyzed for the research. Another way primary data was collected was through interviews with 2 students; this was analyzed as well. Lastly, I moved forward onto writing my research paper and completing the project.

Findings and Analysis

On August 02, 2015 Saipan was devastated by one of the strongest typhoons to ever smash through its shores. Typhoon Soudelor left many consequences that will have a long-term effect on the Saipan people. Among the sectors in the community impacted was the damage caused to the only community college on island, Northern Marianas College. With Fall 2015 semester just around the corner will the students be able to handle the stresses of school and that already thrown at them by this overwhelming disaster?

There were a total of 12 responses collected through the Pilot Survey in Survey Monkey among Northern Marianas College students (see Appendix B: Q1-6 for Demographics of Pilot Survey Participants) and two interviewees (see Appendix E & F). Through this, one of the most significant findings was the correlation between students' stress level and the impact of having no power during their studies. This was compared to other issues discovered during the collection process. This issue presented that eight out of 12 participants were impacted in their studies due to having no power; three moderately (25%) and five severely (42%) impacted (Appendix B&C). The participants that had no impact on the issue stated that they had access to some source of electricity like a generator; majorities were unfortunate. Having no power was the most stressful experience due to the stress it creates in its environment. Family members tend to get rowdy and it's difficult living condition can cause conflict within a household.

Another significant discovery amongst NMC students is the shortened semester from the original fifteen-week class to the adjusted thirteen-week. Although majority thought that they were getting the appropriate amount of lecture time in class it was not so in regards to turning in assignments where it is divided evenly (See Appendix B). Although it is not an enormous difference between the two it stands out due to the number of comments received on the issue in the Pilot Survey as well as the Interview portion. Due to the shortened semester students complained about not having enough time in turning in assignments but others were not affected so. One of the correspondents in the Pilot Survey stated, "Teachers don't understand that we have other classes and that they think we should put all of our effort into one assignment," there was also a repetition of "cramming" assignments among their comments in the Pilot Survey due to the adjusted Fall 2015 schedule. Some classes do require more attention than others due to their higher level of studies. "Interviewee A", who is a married female with children, shares that

she is receiving the appropriate amount of lecture time for her English class but not so for accounting. She further explains that her instructor in accounting class has a limited time to teach a higher level of lecture that affects the quality and/or quantity of the course work.

When asked “Interviewee B”, “Are you affected financially, mentally, or academically?” He answered financially above the rest; he explains that due to “the short time, the Financial Aid I use to pay school has been cut by a month” (see Appendix F). This is a notable issue in regards to finance because many students use Financial Aid to pay for college and school supplies, not to mention the recent increase in tuition. One hypothesis initially was that more students would be affected financially since the lifestyles the typhoon forced to the residents to live were very costly one.

Although there is a pattern of negativity there seems to be a consistent agreement in the Pilot Survey and interviews that NMC staff are doing their best considering the circumstances. “Interviewee B” supports this calling it “the most professional thing they can do about the situation”. He further explains his standing on the issue, “... [It would] only affect us if we let them. We adapt and drive on”. This demonstrates the maturity level among college students compared to that of lower education.

Discussion

When the research first kicked off it supposes to aim in determining the long-term effects of Typhoon Soudelor on NMC students however the data collected is more so still fresh. Although grasping the immediate effects and its source(s) is just as important. The report may serve as an initial review so as too see if the problem will still exist and how long will it affect an individual. To better understand the “actual” long-term effects a comparison must be done

within a five or even ten year follow up. But before a follow up report the current research may need more data and development to have an even more accurate baseline. In considering this more data may need to be acquired throughout a variable of participants. Also, as a result of the findings a more focused one can be done. Since students' grades can be used to measure their positive or negative impact it may be required to look at some sort of academic record, just simply testing participants won't be sufficient.

References

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Appendices

Appendix A

Survey Questions (without answers)

1. Are you male or female?

- Male Female

2. What is your age?

- 17 or younger 18-20 21-29 30-39
 40-49 50-59 60 or older

3. Which of the following best describes your relationship status?

- Married Widowed Divorced
 In a domestic or civil union Single

4. What grade are you in?

- Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Fifth year/ Other

5. What is your ethnicity?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native Asian or Pacific Islander
 Black or African American Hispanic or Latino
 White/Caucasian

6. Children?

- Yes No

7. Is this your first time attending college after a natural disaster?

- Yes No

Questions	Slightly Mild	Mild	None	Moderate	Sever
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8. How much of a financial impact has the typhoon had on your tuition, books, or other school supplies?					
9. During the duration without power, how difficult has it been studying?					
10. How much stress has the effects of Typhoon Soudelor been on your college experience?					
11. Presently, are you still feeling the effects of the typhoon in any way?					

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. Do you think the damages on campus are unsafe or hazardous?					
13. Do you think you are getting the appropriate amount of lecture time in your classes?					
14. Do you think NMC staffs are handling the situation to the best of their abilities?					
15. Do you agree with the thirteen-week class adjustment from the original fifteen-week?					
16. How likely will you be attending college after another natural disaster?					
17. Do you think you are getting the appropriate amount of time to turn in assignments?					

Appendix B

Survey Questions (with answers)

1. Are you male or female?

- Male (6) Female (6)

2. What is your age?

- 18-20 (8) 21-29 (2) 30-39 (2)

3. Which of the following best describes your relationship status?

- Single (12)

4. What grade are you in?

- Freshman (6) Sophomore (5) Junior (1)

5. What is your ethnicity?

- Asian or Pacific Islander (12; Chamorro=6, Filipino=3, Palau=2, No Answer=1)

6. Children?

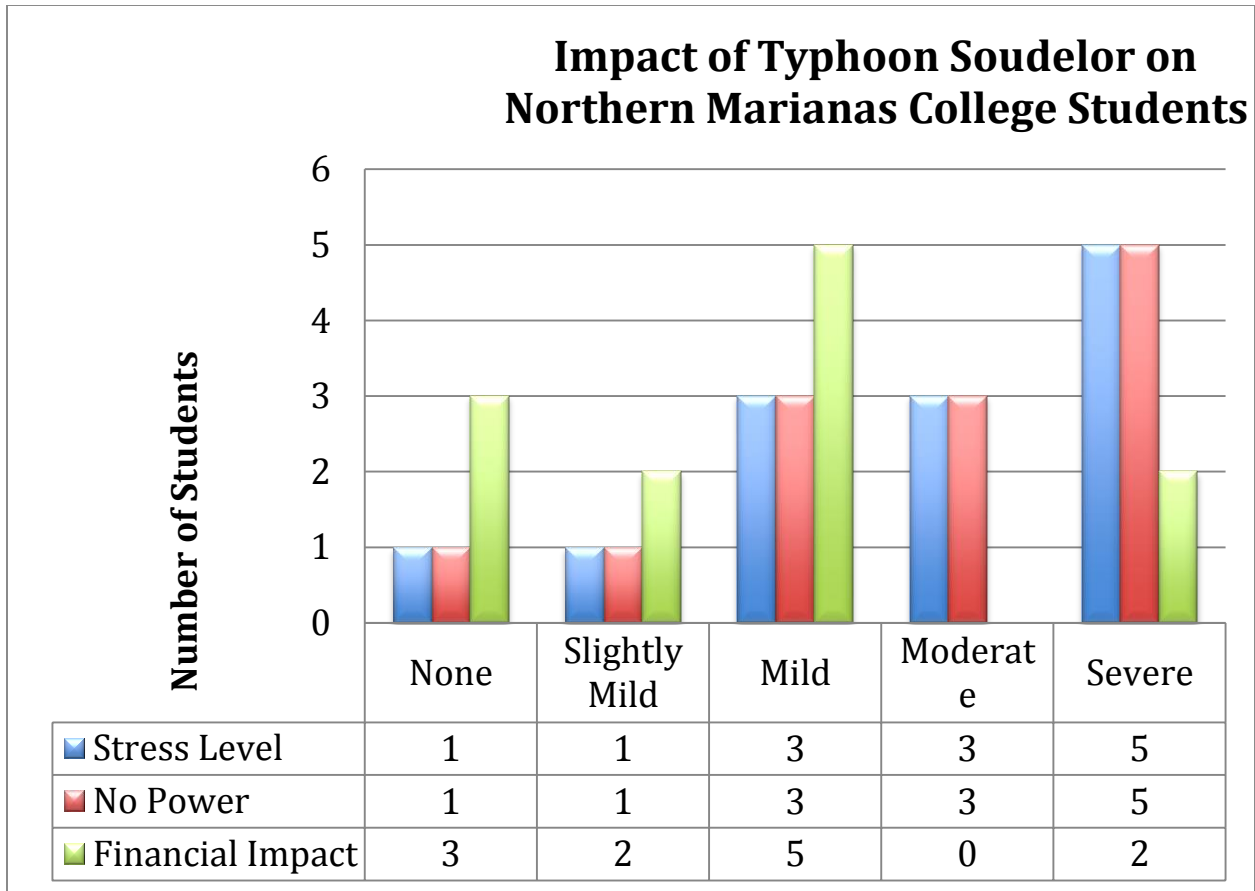
- Yes (2) No (10)

7. Is this your first time attending college after a natural disaster?

- Yes (8) No (4)

Questions	Slightly Mild	Mild	None	Moderate	Sever
8. How much of a financial impact has the typhoon had on your tuition, books, or other school supplies?	2	5	3	0	2
9. During the duration without power, how difficult has it been studying?	1	3	1	3	5
10. How much stress has the effects of Typhoon Soudelor been on your college experience?	1	3	1	3	5
11. Presently, are you still feeling the effects of the typhoon in any way?	5	0	1	6	0

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. Do you think the damages on campus are unsafe or hazardous?	2	7	1	2	0
13. Do you think you are getting the appropriate amount of lecture time in your classes?	2	5	1	4	1
14. Do you think NMC staffs are handling the situation to the best of their abilities?	4	8	0	0	0
15. Do you agree with the thirteen-week class adjustment from the original fifteen-week?	0	4	2	3	3
16. How likely will you be attending college after another natural disaster?	1	5	1	5	0
17. Do you think you are getting the appropriate amount of time to turn in assignments?	2	4	0	3	3



Interview Questions

1. Have your plans to graduate or complete your studies changed? If so, please provide details.
2. In what ways are you still feeling the affects one month into school?
3. Do you think your grades are being affected as a consequence of the typhoon? If so, how?
4. In your opinion, has the attendance of students decreased or increased due to the typhoon?
5. Due to the change in nine-weeks of classes from the original fifteen-weeks, do you think you are getting the appropriate amount of lecture time in your classes? Has your course preparation and study time been affected? Do you feel that the quality and/or quantity of course work have been impacted? If so, how?
6. Are you affected financially? Mentally? Academically? If yes, how so?
7. What other issues, if any, are you experiencing?
8. How do you feel about the damaged campus? Safety/Health hazards?
9. Do you think NMC is doing its best to help students? What could NMC do to improve assistance for students?
10. Do you think teachers are handling the situation the situation well? Please explain.

“Interviewee A” Questions and Answers

1. Have your plans to graduate or complete your studies changed? If so, please provide details. *Yes, just a bit. Depending on where I will be employed.*
2. In what ways are you still feeling the affects one month into school? *We have 3 kids... We slept at a relative's apartment during the warm nights, bought rechargeable/battery fans that were used during the day. Took showers at a relative's apartment, collected rainwater for flushing, and used drinking water for everything else.*
3. Do you think your grades are being affected as a consequence of the typhoon? If so, how? *No*
4. In your opinion, has the attendance of students decreased or increased due to the typhoon? *Increase, because we are required to show up more because there are fewer days of class.*
5. Due to the change in nine-weeks of classes from the original fifteen-weeks, do you think you are getting the appropriate amount of lecture time in your classes? *Yes in English. No in Accounting.* Has your course preparation and study time been affected? Do you feel that the quality and/or quantity of course work have been impacted? *Yes (Accounting) If so, how? Instructor has limited time to teach.*
6. Are you affected financially? Mentally? Academically? If yes, how so? *I would say we're still fortunate than many others we know.*
7. What other issues, if any, are you experiencing? *None*
8. How do you feel about the damaged campus? Safety/Health hazards? *Just wondering when will they start fixing the damaged buildings.*

9. Do you think NMC is doing its best to help students? What could NMC do to improve assistance for students? *Offer more night/online classes.*
10. Do you think teachers are handling the situation the situation well? Please explain. *They are doing well.*

Appendix F

“Interviewee B” Questions and Answers

1. Have your plans to graduate or complete your studies changed? If so, please provide details. *No they have not. I still plan on completing my studies no matter the situation.*
2. In what ways are you still feeling the affects one month into school? *No I do not. Situation we cannot control only affect us if we let them. We adapt and drive on.*
3. Do you think your grades are being affected as a consequence of the typhoon? If so, how? *No they are not.*
4. In your opinion, has the attendance of students decreased or increased due to the typhoon? *I think they have decreased. At least for this semester. I know many students that have been continuously going to school for the past semesters stopped because of the typhoon.*
5. Due to the change in nine-weeks of classes from the original fifteen-weeks, do you think you are getting the appropriate amount of lecture time in your classes? Has your course preparation and study time been affected? Do you feel that the quality and/or quantity of course work have been impacted? If so, how? *The only way it affected study time is that there is a lot more material to cover in such a short time span. The quality of the lectures and material have not been affected in anyway though.*
6. Are you affected financially? Mentally? Academically? If yes, how so? *Financially, because of the short time, the financial aid I use to pay school has been cut by a month.*

7. What other issues, if any, are you experiencing? *None what so ever. Just another school semester.*
8. How do you feel about the damaged campus? Safety/Health hazards? *The school has provided many cut of areas with appropriate markings. It is to where anyone with common sense can stay clear of.*
9. Do you think NMC is doing its best to help students? What could NMC do to improve assistance for students? *NMC is doing its best with a bad situation from my perspective. From where I am standing everything is on point.*
10. Do you think teachers are handling the situation the situation well? Please explain. *Teachers make do with what they have and it seems that they are taking the situation pretty well. The teachers I have are going through day by day as if nothing happened. At least they how the want us to perceive, which is the most professional thing they can do about the situation.*