Length of Study-Time Behaviour and Academic Achievement of Social Studies Education Students in the University of Uyo

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Abstract

This study investigated the length of study time behaviour and academic achievement of Social Studies Education students in the University of Uyo. The purpose was to determine the difference in the academic achievement of the long study time behaviour students and their short study time behaviour counterparts in Social Studies Education. The study used 120 social studies students of the University of Uyo representing 2% of the population. The researchers administered the instrument personally to the students selected. The t-test statistics was used to analyse the data generated for the study. From the result, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence the academic performance of the long study time behaviour students was significantly different from that of their short study time counterparts. In view of the findings, it was recommended that students should set a study time table long enough for effective academic exercises (at least two to three hours daily) for their private study and stick to it.

Keywords: length of study-time behaviour , academic achievement, social studies, education students

1. Introduction

In any school system, academic performance is the priority to students as well as the teachers. Several studies have shown that factors such as motivation and study time have impacted on students' achievement (Cote & Levine, 2000, Singth, Granville & Dika, 2002).

Since grade is a primary parameter of such learning, if a learner earns high grades it is thought that he/she has learned well while low grades indicate poor learning outcome. However, many have also found out that several factors contribute to the grades. No single factor can be taken in isolation as predicting grades. It has been an influence of so many factors such as gender, IQ, study habits, study time, age, year of study, level of parent's educational attainment, social status, number of children, birth order, etc. In fact, almost all the above environmental, personal and natural factors exert influence on academic performance.

The determinants of academic performance are a recurrent topic in public policy debates on higher education. One largely unsettled issue concerns the impact of the most essential factors in the educational production, student's effort and study time on academic achievement. While many would probably agree that students will not learn unless they put forth some amount of effort, our understanding of the ways study time impacts on performance as measures by attaining a certain course grade is rather limited. Quantifying the effect of study time on achievement seems important from at least two perspectives i.e from the perspective of the instructor, who creates classroom learning, experiences and measures learning outcomes, and finally from the perspective of the student who seeks to balance competing personal goals.

In recent years, much effort has been dedicated to understanding the parameter affecting success of undergraduate students in higher institutions of learning. Nonis, Philhours, Syamil, and Hudson (2005) analyzed the personality variables of 228 universities students attending a medium size AACSB accredited public university. Using a hierarchical regression model, they discovered that self-reported time per credit hour spent on academic activities outside of classroom explains a significant portion of the variation in the semester grade point average (GPA) for senior students, but has no impact on the cumulative GPA. Brookshire and Palocsay (2005) also analyzed the achievement of undergraduate students in public management and science courses and

report that overall academic achievement as measured by students' G.P.A. has a significantly higher impact on achievement than students' mathematical skills as measured by their study time scores.

In predicting students' success, researchers have drawn on results of studies across a broad spectrum of education which concludes that their aptitude, experience, study time, effort and environment contribute significantly to academic achievement. Some students are nonchalant towards the learning and practice of Social Studies Education despite the fact that there is availability of qualified and trained teachers to handle the course.

Study time refers to a specific time a student assigns for himself or herself to study in order to acquire knowledge. It does not really matter whether learners study at the same time each day, whether they shut off the radio or television while on private reading and whether they use supplementary materials in their personal studies. Study time also includes some external activities that affects the internal process of learning (Rothkopf 1982). Physiological and physiological factors include anxiety, stress from outside engagement like chores, parental involvement in homework, hunger, lack of care and affection which could have transferred effects on students' learning.

Many studies have been carried out on study time behaviour and students' achievement. The recent ones include that of Logunmakin (2001), Kumar (2002) and Gbore (2006). They all agreed that study time attitude affects strong relationship with academic performance of students while other researchers like Owolabi (1996) and Adeyemo (2005) concluded that students' academic achievement was the outcome of a combination of the study time behaviour and other factors in any course of study. Adeyemo (2005) specifically opined that study time attitude is an exercise that goes beyond merely reading for pleasure.

Study time problems that have to do with student's engagement in home work, assignments, reading and note taking, study period procedure, students' concentration in examination and teachers' consultancy services necessitated this study. This study explores the extent, to which study time behaviour could solve the achievement lingering problems in Social Studies Education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The objective of the study was to determine the difference in the academic achievement of long study time behaviour of University of Uyo students and their short study time counterparts in Social Studies Education based on Examination anxiety.

1.2 Research Questions

This study sought to give answers to the question:

Is there any difference in the academic achievement of long study time behaviour of social studies of University of Uyo and their short study time counterparts

1.3 Research Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study:

1) There is no significant difference in the long study time behaviour of social studies students and their short study time counterparts in University of Uyo.

1.4 Research Assumptions

The assumptions made in this research, include the fact that:

1) The length of study time can affect students' performance.

2) Examination anxiety coupled with the length of study time can affect students' achievement.

3) students' involvement in domestic chores by parents together with length of study time can affect their academic achievement.

4) anxiety to pass examination can make students to either increase or shorten their length of study time.

1.5 Definition of Terms

Study Time: The number of minutes or hours assigned for one's private study in order to acquire knowledge.

Academic Achievement: Students' effort as measured by school grades.

Examination Anxiety: Fear of failing examination.

2. Related Literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Palm-Beach Study-Time Learning Theory

Palm Beach study time learning theory was postulated in 1864 by Professor Palm Beach of the University of California. It explains that study time is a useful tool for predicting, and controlling learning outcomes behaviours. It provides a basis for the impact of study time on student's learning outcomes. The theorist stated that academic achievement is a function of the time spent on a task needed to complete the task.

The theory further stated that students nowadays are spending less time studying than they use to in the past. According to a recent report, average students in the University of California doing a four year University programme of study used about 24 hours a week and hit the books for just 14 hours, less than they use to do in the past.

2.1.2 Researches

A study conducted by Graven (2008) on the relationship between students' anxiety and their short-study time session for examination revealed that the effect of anxiety on examination preparation was significant on the students' performance when the results were published. In the study, 20 male and 58 female University students responded to self-ratings on their personal anxiety and their study time while preparing for tests/examination. It was speculated that the more a student consumes time while studying, the more accurately his or her retention of the materials studied, and the less his/her anxiety towards the test or examination. The study also indicated that 'unhealthy' student anxiety operationally accounted for low achievement scores on amount of time per study session or time (in days) when he started revision. High scores on anxiety level were also implied 'healthy' study time. Statistics correlate indicated no relationship between performance and study time while a person is studying under anxiety. Crede and Nathan (2008) in their researches at the University of Wisconsin said that study time, ability, and attitude inventories were factors found to compete with standardized tests and previous grades as parameters of academic performance.

They found that study skill inventories and constructs are largely independent of both high school grades and scores on standardized admissions tests but moderately related to various personality constructs. These results were however inconsistent with previous theories on study time. Study time motivation and study skills exhibited the strongest relationships with both grade point average and grades in individual courses. They also explained that academic anxiety was found to be an important negative predictor of students' performance. Scores on longer study time duration and attitude inventories were confirmed as the most predictive indices of performance, based on the depth-of-student preparation and commitment. In all, long study time and skill measures tend to improve prediction of academic performance more than short-study sessions

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

A survey approach was adopted to determine students' study time behaviour and their academic achievement of social studies students in the University of Uyo.

3.2 Area of Study

The study area for this research was the University of Uyo in Akwa Ibom State. Uyo is the capital city of Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. The city is hosting the University of Uyo. The University has seven Faculties which includes the Faculty of Education where Social Studies Education is taught. Students' performance in the subject is staggered with varied study-time behaviour claimed by the students.

3.3 Population of Study

The population of the study was made up of all students in the Social Studies Unit, Faculty of Education, University of Uyo. Specially, years two, three, four and five students offering Social Studies Education were used for the study. The total population of the students was 250.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Using random sampling technique, Pieces of paper were folded and mixed up in a tray. They were written "to participate" and "not to participate". Students who picked "to participate" actually participated in the study while those who picked "not to participate" were exempted. 120 students formed the sample. This was made up of 30 students drawn from years 2, 3, 4 and 5. Consideration was not given to gender but long and short study time behaviours of the students. Students who admitted studying for two hours at a stretch were classified as long

time study behaviour students while those with less than two hours were identified as short time study behaviour students.

3.5 Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire called "Length of study-time behaviour and academic achievement of University of Uyo Social Studies Education students Inventory" was used in collecting data for this study and personal interview was also conducted. The instrument had a 4-point Likert rating of Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

3.6 Validation of Instrument

After developing the length of study time behaviour questionnaire, it was first submitted to experts in the Department of Educational Foundations of the University of Uyo for corrections and content validity. A number of corrections were made, again and again. It was reproduced and given to other research specialists for their comments and further corrections. Their corrections, suggestions, and comments were incorporated into final form of the instrument before it was trial tested.

3.7 Reliability of Instrument

This instrument was pilot tested on a sampled group of Economics students of the same University with different intellectual capabilities of study. The split half reliability was used in analyzing the data. The result yielding a high reliability coefficient thus making the instrument very reliable.

3.8 Research Procedure

The researchers administered the instrument personally to the respondents. The questionnaire was administered to a total of 120 students selected. These respondents were asked to supply their honest responses to the questions. The researcher thereafter collected all copies of the questionnaire from the students for analysis. Except for minor discrepancies and unfilled section, the bias level was not serious to undermine the result of the study and so was ignored. The test scores of the long and short study behaviour students were extracted from their semester Examinations for three consecutive semesters and compared.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The researcher used the t-test statistics to analyze the data and tested the postulated null hypothesis.

4. Results

4.1 Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of long study time behaviour of University of Uyo Social Studies students and their short study time counterparts based on examination anxiety.

In order to test this hypothesis, independent t-test statistic was used to compute the data as shown below:

Table 1. Independent t-test analysis of the difference in academic achievement of long study time behaviour of University of Uyo Social Studies students and their short study time counterparts

Variable		N	X	SD	t-cal	t-crit	P > 0.05
Length of study time		120	13	5.8			
Academic Achievement	120		28.6	12.6	3.20	2.17	*

Significant at 0.05 level of significance.

4.2 Findings

From the result in Table 1 above, the calculated t-value of 3.20 is greater than the critical t-value of 2.17. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence the academic achievement of long study time behaviour student is significantly different from that of the short study time counterparts based on examination anxiety.

5. Discussion

In the hypothesis above, the results show that there is a significant difference between the long and short study time behaviour students' academic performance. Students who study for long hours tend to perform better than those who study for short study time.

Supporting this finding, Awolabi (1996) explains that there is a significant difference between thirty (30) minutes study time and one hour academic performance ratings of students. According to him, thirty minutes study time is not academic performance oriented, as it often leads to poor examination grade. Awolabi maintains that a combination of the study time and other factors explain students' academic performance in any course of study. In the same way, Adeyemo (2005), opined that study time is a pattern of activity that goes beyond merely reading for pleasure. A student who wants to graduate with good grade has to read his/her books with understanding, and that will take more time to accomplish.

In the same vein Kunal (2008), observes that students who are very successful in their desired career have longer study time. It is stated in the website that students who apply these attitudes in all of their courses, always come out successful. It is necessary for students to develop good study habits in order to know how long it will take them to study and understand their course of study. Supporting this finding, Dika (2002) agreed that a grade is a primary parameter showing such learning. If a learner earns high grades or scores high marks, it is an indication that he/she may have taken time to study well, while low grades is interpreted as using lesser time for learning. However, many studies have revealed that several factors account for the grades. No single factor can do that in isolation. It has been the effect of so many factors such as gender, IQ, study habits and study time.

The findings of this study might have been different from this due to the sample size used. It is hoped that the sample size will be increased in future studies.

6. Recommendations

In view of the findings, the following recommendations are made:

i.   Students should note that one hour, thirty minutes and fifteen minutes study time could only be effective during revision time, therefore students should study at least three hours daily because of different intellectual capabilities.

ii.   Students should set a study time table and stick to it.

iii. They should have a conducive study place. Utilize a chair you may easily lay on for hours and make sure that the location must be away from distraction.

iv.   Students should get assistance from instructors, classmates and friends whenever they have difficulties in their studies.

v.   Students' should develop good study habit in order to understand how long he/she can study for effective outcome.

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Appendix

Section A

Biodata Information

Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐

Age: below 20 years ☐   Above 20 years ☐

Educational   Qualification Obtained:

Primary/Sec. ☐   NCE ☐   OND ☐   HND ☐   Sc./B.Ed.

Religion: Christianity ☐   Islam ☐   Traditionalist ☐

Others …………………………………………… ☐

PART II

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

Section B

Two Hours Study Time and Academic Performance

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1.	An hour study time is not academic performance oriented.				
2.	An hour study time is not academic performance oriented.				
3.	An hour study time most often lead to poor examination grade.				
4.	An hour study time can only be effective during revision time.				
5.	Longer study time always result in impressive academic performance.				
6.	Although I study for longer time duration, yet I always achieve poor performance in my academics.				
7.	I can only assimilate when I read up to an hour time.				
	SECTION C: One-hour Study Time and Academic Performance				
8.	I study for thirty (30) minutes yet, I can still achieve good academic performance				
9.	Thirty (30) minutes study time is only feasible prior to examination.				
10.	I can recall all I study in 30 minutes time.				
11.	Positive results can also be achieved if I read in thirty (30) minutes.				
12.	Reading in thirty (30) minutes is never results oriented for me.				
13.	Length of study time does not affect my academic performance.				
14.	The longer study time I spent for my study, the poorer my academic performance.				
	SECTION D: Thirty (3) Minutes Study Time and Academic Performance				
15.	Fifteen (15) minutes study is not enough for effective studies because students have different intellect.				
16.	Although I study for fifteen (15) minutes yet I always perform well in my examination.				
17.	Fifteen minutes studies affect academic performance negatively.				
18.	Fifteen minutes study time does not improve student academic performance.				
19.	Fifteen minutes study time does not yield a good result.				
20.	Although I study for only a very short time, yet I perform very well in Examination.				