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Preferences of Study Time and Academic Performance among Third Year Nursing Students

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Abstract - The study aimed to identify the study time preference of the Nursing students in Liceo de Cagayan University. With this study, the researchers determined the academic performance among the respondents and the relationship between preference on study time and academic performance. This study utilized the non-experimental, descriptive research design, universal sampling. The study used the questionnaire answered the objective of the study. Researchers conducted a survey of practices of nursing students, as well as interviews, about what is the best time to study. Researchers also collected information from the books in the library and selected reliable websites. The respondents of the study were the pioneering batch of the BSN curriculum specifically belonging to the levels N104/ N105 during the second semester of SY 2010-2011, where the total number of respondents was 51. The researchers made sure that the respondents were provided with privacy and that every respondent has the right to refuse in participating to the study. The researchers utilized the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient to measure the degree of linear relationship between time preferences and their

grades in both Medical- Surgical Nursing and Psychiatric Nursing lecture. The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant relationship between the preferred study time of the respondents and academic performance. Therefore, the grades of the students do not depend on what time of the day students study. However, the most preferred time of the respondents to study is during night time for the reason that it is peaceful and quiet.

Keywords - Academic performance, preferences in study time

INTRODUCTION

"No student knows his subject: the most is where and how to find out the things he does not know", said Woodrow T. Wilson, the 28th president of the United States. Every student is unique on how he is able to learn things on school. To deal with the study loads is one of tedious parts of being a student indeed. It leaves a student mostly anxious and at the same time problematic to meet with different academic demands. There could be ways to cope with the matter. A lot may have been done just to make one's study habit effective, but the question is: Is there really one effective method and time of studying to make difference in the academic performance?

Nursing students are most of the time sleep deprived and physically and mentally stressed. They appear to have meager opportunity to scan their notes properly unless there is appropriate time management. With that, students mostly go on cramming. However, Peter Levin said in his book 'Skillful Time Management' cramming is definitely not learning, and it is very ineffective to prepare for a test. In times of preparation for a quiz or an exam, which time would they prefer to study to achieve a good outcome despite of a hectic schedule they have? Is time really a factor in making a study habit more effective to achieve a satisfactory grade?

Currently, the College of Nursing in the country adopts this BSN curriculum, a transition from the AHSE curriculum which was started in June 2008. In Liceo de Cagayan University, coping with this change is a challenge for both the faculty of the college and the students belonging to this curriculum.

The subjects of the study focus on the pioneering batch of this

curriculum in the institution. Every nursing student endures the pressure of having lectures and duties at the same time. As with the time the respondents were subjects of the research, they were enrolled in their third year, second semester of SY 2010- 2011. Their load is 26 units where 8 of which belongs to the Related Learning Experience (RLE). Four subjects were RLE which is accompanied with requirements they all have to deal and comply with. To comply with these RLE units, students go on clinical duty particularly on the subject NCM 104 which is 16 hours per week (8 hours per shift for two days). This semester, students also went on Psychiatric affiliation in Davao City for their NCM 105 RLE.

Researchers have chosen two subjects to be the bases of the evaluation of the academic performance of the respondents. These are the Medical- Surgical Nursing and Psychiatric Nursing for the reason that these are the major subjects of the respondents that require and consume most of their time. The respondents find these two subjects to be the two most difficult subjects they have enrolled during the said semester.

This has caught the interest of the researchers for they would like to find out significant difference between studying in the daytime and in the night time. Researchers had been subjects of the research themselves. Some may say it's more effective when done in daytime but a lot would also disagree and say the otherwise. The study would try to weigh the different time patterns and evaluate the effectiveness of each time pattern through the grades of the respondents. With this study is the aim of the researchers' to uplift the educational status of the nursing students and hopefully the general population.

FRAMEWORK

Dunn and Dunn Learning Styles state that "learners are affected by their: (1) immediate environment (sound, light, temperature, and design); For example, some people need to study in a cool and quiet room, and others cannot focus unless they have music playing and it is warm. (2) own emotionality (motivation, persistence, responsibility, and need for structure or flexibility); example is that, some people must complete a project before they start a new one, and others work best on multiple tasks at the same time (3) sociological needs (self, pair,

peers, team, adult, or varied); For example, a number of people need to work alone when tackling a new and difficult subject, while others learn best when working with colleagues and lastly (4) physical needs (perceptual strengths, intake, time, and mobility) example, many people refer to themselves as night owls or early birds because they function best at night or in the morning".

They analyze other research and make the claim that not only can students identify their preferred learning styles, but that students also score higher on tests, have better attitudes, and are more efficient if they are taught in ways to which they can more easily relate. Therefore, it is to the educator's advantage to teach and test students in their preferred styles.

According to "Improved Academic Success" of www.sciencedaily.com, while some students like to get up early in the morning and study, most will say that late night studying is most productive. When it comes to brain power, students will say they perform better at night- and science seems to agree. But that can be a problem. School starts early in the morning for most students, so the benefits of studying at night can be eliminated early by the drowsiness of missing sleep. Science also shows that the amount you get will affect your academic performance. Furthermore, they mentioned tips to maximize study time which are namely:

- Figure out if you are a morning person or a night person. You might surprise yourself. Try getting up early to study and see if it works out.
- Have a talk with parents to tell them that teen brains do perform better at night, so you won't have to deal with miscommunication. Show them the science.
- Agree on an absolute "start time" for studying if you need to study late. Turn off the TV. Your brain should be just fine at six or seven o'clock. You don't need to start after dark.
- Agree on a solid deadline for closing books and getting to sleep.
- Upon occasion, you may be able to go to school a little late if you have to study for an afternoon test.

One of the studies conducted at Texas University revealed that early risers on an average scores better than their other group, who

sleeps late. The study was conducted on 824 under graduate students. The results opened the possibilities that to get better grades students should get up early.

The results did not pass any judgment on brain functioning, rather, it was found that early risers were able to attend their classes, did not attend any late night drinking binges and were comparatively more regular in their studies. But American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) spokesman Dennis Nicholson, MD, stated that it is very difficult to convert night out die hards in to early birds. The finding were even presented in SLEEP 2008, a joint venture of AASM and the Sleep Research Society. The hostel or dorm life is such that very few students can maintain their regimen and sooner or later they all become night owls.

However, the findings by postgraduate student Martin Sale and his colleagues from the University of Adelaide reveal that the brain works best in the evening and nights. Their research specifically mentions time-of-day variations about brain functioning. The researchers employed magnetic coils to stimulate nerve activity in the brain. The results proved that large changes and simulations were induced during evenings. This is also evident from lifestyle of creative people like authors, coders, and painters etc. who work late in to nights and get up late.

The study and the earlier survey reveal that in order to have success in the academic life one needs to strike a balance. Though mind works best in the night but too much in to the late nights can play havoc with class schedules and regimen. During weekdays or when having your classes the next day, one must avoid studying late at nights.

On the other hand, Dr. Rita and Dr. Kenneth Dunn in their book "Teaching Students through Their Individual Learning Styles: A Practical Approach" have stated that optimal times for learning fall into four categories.

- 30% of the population learns best in the morning hours. These people are the ones that wake up and are ready to absorb new information.
- 30% of the population learns best in the afternoon. They come to life after lunch.
- 30% of the population learns best in the evening. We refer to

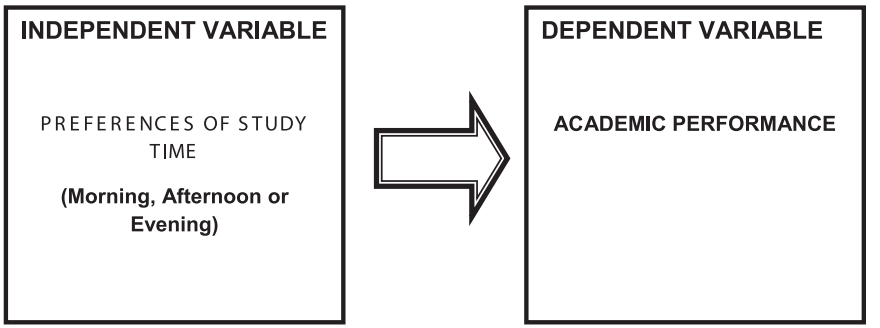
them as "night owls."
- 10% shows no preference. They seem to learn whenever it is necessary to learn.

So, in the morning there is a possibility of 40% of the students at their peak and in the afternoon, 40%. That leaves a possibility of 40% of students learning best when school is no longer in session. Dunn and Dunn also learned that student energy is highest right after lunch. However, teacher energy is lowest after lunch. This combination results in active students with tired teachers. Statistics show that discipline problems are greatest after lunch.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the study time preference of the Nursing students of Liceo de Cagayan University;
2. To determine the academic performance among the respondents; and
3. To determine the relationship between preference on study time and academic performance.

RESEARCH FLOW



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to contribute knowledge in general to its target population. It is significant for especially among nursing students to further enhance their study habits and effectively cope with academic

demands. This study will enable them to assess their best time to study to get good examination results.

Furthermore, it is significant to the Level Coordinator so as she can develop a class schedule for her students which will enable them to learn according to their time preference.

It is also beneficial to the Dean of the College for her to gain knowledge of the academic performance of her students and furthermore develop ways to improve the quality of education among them.

It would also contribute to the Nursing Research which may be significant as reference for related studies. The study is however still for further evaluation so as to benefit more its target population and readers.

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

This study included the third year level N104 and N105 of the College of Nursing of Liceo de Cagayan University of the school year 2010-2011. It included information acquired through questionnaires. The secondary data were the final grades of the respondents from their Medical-Surgical and Psychiatric Nursing. The names of the respondents were not reflected for privacy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized non-experimental, descriptive research design. It described the nature of the phenomenon under investigation after a survey of practices of nursing students on the best time to study. Descriptive research is a method used to obtain information relating to the current phenomenon to describe what exists within a certain conditions of the situation.

The researchers gathered data and information from the university library and from one of the most widespread data resources in the World Wide Web. So with the information that they gathered from the respondents, they were able to come up with a problem. The study was conducted at Liceo de Cagayan University with the use of instrumental research which was the questionnaire wherein it comprised questions that correlated with the research problem and questions which answered the objective of the study. The researchers

used the natural setting which is the uncontrolled real life situation or environment. Several interviews were conducted to gather information and to differentiate the best time to study and in order to establish a new knowledge.

The respondents of the study were the pioneering batch of the BSN curriculum specifically belonging to the levels N104/N105 during the second semester of the school year 2010-2011. The researchers utilized the non-probability universal sampling procedure which yielded the total number of 51 respondents.

The research data gathering procedure started with a permit to conduct the study secured from the Dean's office and duly signed by the Dean and the Researchers' adviser prior to the distribution of questionnaires. The Level III Coordinator was also given a letter for approval to have a copy of the grades of the subjects of the respondents (N104/N105). The questionnaires were given to the respondents and the researchers discussed some questions for qualification.

Personal interviews were conducted after having identified the qualified respondents of the study. The respondents answered the given questions guided by an unstructured questionnaire. Responses were recorded and jotted.

Privacy of the respondents was ensured and that every respondent has the right to refuse from participating in the study. Researchers also explained the study being conducted and the procedure to be done and the benefits and/or the possibility of negative effects of the study (if there is any) to the respondents. Formal letter was also given to the respondents prior to the interview to have their consent if they were available for the said schedule of interview.

The researchers utilized the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient to measure the degree of linear relationship between the preferences of study time among 3rd year nursing students and their grades in both Medical-Surgical II and Psychiatric Nursing lecture. The p-value was also used to determine the level of significance among the variables and to decide whether to accept or reject the null hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents prefer most to study at the evening (6pm-11pm) because it is convenient for them and

it is quiet since most of the people are asleep already. It is preferable and comfortable because it is the only time of the day where they can study because they spend the day in school for their classes and that they are already done with household chores. Some were used to it since their high school days and that some stated that they feel energetic at night. It was also stated that it increases self-determination and focus in a certain topic especially in memorization.

The second most preferred time is morning (12am-11am) since it is also quiet, solemn and comfortable, more particularly in the early morning. Some had given reasons that it is convenient for them, they can easily absorb or comprehend the things they study as well as there is not much work to do on that time. Mornings are the best study time to some because they feel sleepy by the evening or afternoon and that it is the most effective time for them.

The least preferred time is the afternoon (12nn-5pm) where only two respondents have chosen it. The reasons were it was easy to absorb what they are reading and that it is comfortable for them. It also increases their self-determination.

Table 2 shows the breakdown of grades of the students in Medical-Surgical Nursing II and Psychiatric Nursing lecture. For MS II, 54.9 % has the highest percentage, where 28 respondents to have a grade ranging from 2.8-3.0. Nineteen respondents, which is 37.25 % of the population have grades ranging from 2.5-2.7. One respondent (1.96 %) got a grade from the range of 2.2-2.4. Three students (5.88 %) had a failing grade in the subject whose grades range from 3.1-5.0. The data reveal that majority of the students have grades that are just passing. This may be due to the type of study and the schedule of the students. A 7:30-10:30 AM class precedes this two-and-a-half-hour subject which was taught on Mondays and Tuesdays for the same time schedule. Failure of the three students may be due to the type of their study habits or practice of proper time-management considering the study workload and their duty hours. The preferred time to study may also be one of the factors. Another is that the students may find the subject difficult since it requires memorization, analysis and critical thinking.

A percentage of 68.6 accounts for the highest frequency which is 35 out of 51 respondents having grades ranging from 2.8-3.0 for Psychiatric Nursing Lecture. The second highest percentage is 19.61 for a frequency of 10 out of 51 respondents having a grade ranging

from 2.5-2.7. One respondent however has a grade ranging from 2.2-2.4 which is 1.9% of the population. Five respondents (9.8%) got a failure in the subject. Generally, the grades in this subject are lower than the Medical-Surgical Nursing II which may be due to inability of the students to manage their time in studying two major subjects at the same time of the day. Moreover, the students may find this subject difficult as this subject follows immediately after the Medical-Surgical Nursing lecture, where students are given only an interval time of fifteen minutes to shift from one subject to another. Another factor is the schedule itself since it was on 2:00-4:00 PM and that this time is often called the 'holy hour' where students may have been sleepy even without the intention of doing so. Students may also have less comprehension at this time since it is already the third subject of the day and two more subjects follow it until 9:00 PM. They had been listening to lectures since 7:30 AM.

Furthermore, the grades of every student vary from one another. Not all students whose time preference of studying is evening have good grades. Most of these students have grades ranging from 2.8-3.0. For example, student 43 prefers to study in the morning and but has good grades in both subjects which are 2.4 and 2.3 respectively. On the other hand, students 3 and 35 have also chosen morning as their study time yet their grades in both subjects are 2.8 and 3.0 respectively. There were 3 students who failed in Medical-Surgical Nursing II Lecture and 5 in Psychiatric Nursing Lecture. The students who failed have varied preference in study time but have preferred evening as their convenient time for studying. Comparatively, students 5 and 28 also preferred evening as their most preferred time to study however they got grades of 2.5 for MS II and 2.6 for Psychiatric Nursing respectively.

As shown in the tabulated Pearson correlation, there is no correlation with the preferred study time to the Medical-Surgical Nursing II grades with the result of 0.122. The study time of the students does not affect their grades in their subjects. With regards to P-value, there is no significant relationship between the preferred study time and the grades in Medical-Surgical Nursing Lecture since P-value exceeds 0.05 significance level. There is also no correlation with the preferred study time and the Psychiatric Nursing lecture grades which has a result of 0.167. The p-value result which is 0.240 reveals also that there is no significance between the preferred study time and academic

performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the researchers conclude that there is no significant relationship between the preferred study time of the respondents and academic performance among the pioneering batch of the BSN curriculum. Therefore, the grades of the students do not depend on what time of the day students study. The most comfortable time of the day varies from each student however, the most preferred time to study of the students is the evening because it is quiet, comfortable and convenient. The morning and afternoon were considered second and third respectively. The failure of some students in Medical-Surgical Nursing II and Psychiatric Nursing Lecture is accountable to the students' hectic schedule and time and stress management. Other factors that may affect the grades of the respondents would include intelligent quotient and emotional quotient of the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Students must not study only on the time they preferred most instead in times that they are comfortable and relaxed to facilitate more retention on what is being studied.
2. Nursing students must practice time and stress management wisely and effectively.
3. Future researchers on time preferences and academic performance should consider studying a larger sample size to support hypothesis.
4. Students must learn to balance study time over other activities. Students must know their strengths and weaknesses in all of the subjects they are enrolled, prioritized subject where they consider difficult.

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