



EFFECT OF STUDENT -LECTURER ATTENDANCE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AT CAVENDISH UNIVERSITY UGANDA

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Abstract

This study attempts to investigate whether there is a direct relationship between attendance and academic performance by both lecturers and students. The study used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, utilizing a cross-sectional survey design. The findings of the data collected suggests that the null hypothesis was rejected since the computed significance value was larger than the popular significance value ($\text{sig} = 0.05$); accepting the research hypothesis to the effect that there is significant effect of lecturer student attendance on the academic performance of students. The study therefore recommends that to help improve attendance and time management; certain course practices can be used to encourage attendance, testing extensively from material presented in class rather than material from the text can encourage better attendance, use of in-class quizzes and other exercises will reward attendance encouraging a greater commitment to the course by requiring more homework and reading will make students more likely to attend the lecture however students and lecturers through workshops should be taught how to effectively manage time.

Keywords: *Teacher, Students, Performance, Relationship.*

1. Introduction

The university ensures that the programs offered are delivered outstandingly by qualified and experienced lecturers. Courses are analytically monitored and updated to integrate new developments and theories; this is targeted at having a successful graduate who will be at a competitive position in the current job market both in Uganda and within the region. This will ensure that the graduate's possess appropriate abilities, with concrete sympathetic of the subject areas. (CUU, 2008). CUU being a new institution of higher learning in Uganda is facing a lot of competition from the already established universities and the upcoming ones. The University is currently experiencing tension between professional and academic values, in regards to competition with other university graduates. This tends to displace 'low quality' graduates from the 'play ground' of employment, thus a study to assess the effects of student-lecturer attendance on academic performance. (CUU, 4th May 2010)

2. Literature Review

A review of existing research shows that there is empirical evidence to support the hypothesis that higher absenteeism by lecturers contributes to lower student performance. According to Bruno *et al.*, (2007); concluded that students in a classroom eventually lose the desire to learn when the regular teacher is frequently absent and the delivery of instruction is by an array of substitute teachers. Chung (2000) asserts that regular attendance appears to be such a clear reason for success in examination. He explained that students who miss too many lectures end up performing poorly, losing, or requiring significant help in the form of one-on-one meeting or tutoring in order to catch up. However Derek and Francis (1998) argue that a student of John Moore University Liverpool, attendance of students greatly affects student performance. A comparative study was carried out on undergraduate first years students of biological science and the results were found to be statistically significant correlated with student lecture attendance. This proposed research will compare all the faculties at Cavendish University Uganda and test the hypothesis that regular attendance is correlated with higher academic scores.

In Uganda and most developing countries the differences in lecturer absenteeism rates across large urban geographical areas threaten the promotion of equity and excellence in the Universities or higher institutions of learning. A study carried out by Hammen & Kelland (1994) found that teaching a lecture course in introductory human physiology with 40-183 students provided an opportunity to test the hypothesis that regular attendance is correlated with higher examination scores. Data on 556 students were recorded during five semesters, each consisting of three classes per week for 14 weeks. The students were in the second year of pharmacy, nursing, physical education, and dental hygiene programs. Attendance was recorded in each class. Regular attendance was encouraged but was not used to influence scores. The maximum possible score was 400 points, based on two, one hour examinations and a two hour final examination. Examinations consisted of multiple-choice questions derived from reading assignments in a required textbook. Linear regression analysis indicated a small negative relation between total point scores and absences,

amounting to an average decrease of 2 points for each absence, or a decrease of 0.5% per absence. Correlation coefficients averaged -0.33 ". The results suggest that regular attendance was helpful in a statistical sense but was not a decisive factor in learning human physiology as presented in current textbooks. This proposed research will compare all the faculties at Cavendish University Uganda and test the hypothesis that regular attendance is correlated with higher academic scores.

According to a study conducted by Man, Love and Elliott (1977) found that the overall performance of a school was negatively affected by high teacher absenteeism. In their study, the rating of a school, on a number of both academic and administrative dimensions, declined with increased teacher absenteeism. Contrary Ratnam, Debbie and Lisa, (1993) provide some empirical evidence of the relationship between face-to-face contacts for accounting students by comparing their performance with their attendance at tutorials. Previous research has shown that there was no significant difference in the performance of students, measured by their results, between students who attended lectures with those who did not. Internal students who had face-to-face contact outscored those who did not attend lectures. This suggests that attendance does explain performance. Consistent with previous studies, students who attended lecturers have a greater possibility of scoring a higher mean average grade than those who did not attend lecturers. They hypothesized that attendance at tutorials is useful and is conducive to better learning in accounting at the undergraduate levels. This proposed research will compare all the faculties at Cavendish University Uganda and test the hypothesis that regular attendance is correlated with higher academic scores.

According to McKeachie, 1994; Murphy, 1998; Browne and Race, 2002; Exley and Dennick, 2004; students are particularly interested in information that will help them in exam questions. Modules that only measure facts recall, rather than the higher order of thinking, encourages student absenteeism because the material needed can actually be accessed over the internet and other sources like journals. However, VanBlerkon (1992) studied why student missed lectures; it was reported that the most frequent reasons given by the students were: pressure from other courses, becoming discouraged, and believing attendance have little effect on a grade. In a different study (VanBlerkon, 1992); found fairly low correlation between academic perseverance, self-efficiency, class attendance and course grades. On the other hand Marburger (2001) investigated the connection between non-attendance and exam performance in a sample of 60 students of principles of microeconomics course. In this study, information on student attendance at each class during the semester was harmonized with records of the class meeting when the material related to each question was covered. The results indicate that students who miss class on a given date are notably more likely to respond incorrectly to questions relating to material covered that day than students who were present. This proposed research will compare all the faculties at Cavendish University Uganda and test the hypothesis that time management of both lecturers and student is correlate with higher academic scores.

3. Methodology

The research used both qualitative and quantitative, cross-sectional survey design of collecting data. Under quantitative approach use of both structural and non structural questionnaires was administered to respondents (i.e. students and lecturers). The study used correlation analysis to compare student lecturer, attendance and academic performance. It also used cross-sectional survey in that questionnaires were administered to respondents and collected at once for analysis.

4. Findings

Most of the respondents were between the age of 18-29 years with a frequency of 178(88.6%) compared to lowest number of respondents aged between 40-49 years whose frequency was 2(1.0%); Most of the respondents were students from department of business with a frequency of 96(47.8%) compared to the department with the lowest respondents which was ICT whose frequency was 22(10.9%); Most of the respondents were Ugandans with a frequency of 168(83.6%) compared to that of international whose frequency was 33(16.4%); most of the staff had a qualification of master's with a frequency of 18(90%) compared to that of those holding a bachelors degree whose frequency was 1(5%); the study considered qualifications for lecturers only;

Absenteeism

The standard deviation and means describing how lecturer's absenteeism affected students; in a scale of 1-5 strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Not sure = 3, Agree = 4, strongly agree = 5. The mean of 3.02 seem to suggest that most students were not sure whether lecturer absenteeism affect their performance; while the standard deviation of 1.23 seem to suggest that their opinions were relatively close to each other.

Time Management

The standard deviation and means describing how lecturer's time management affected students; in a scale of 1-5 strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Not sure = 3, Agree = 4, strongly agree = 5: The mean of 3.20 seem to suggest that most students were in agreement with the statements; while the standard deviation of 1.23 seem to suggest that their opinions were relatively close to each other.

The standard deviation and means describing student's absenteeism; in a scale of 1-5 strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Not sure = 3, Agree = 4, strongly agree = 5: The mean of 3.02 seem to suggest that most lecturers were in agreement with the statements on students absenteeism; while the standard deviation of 1.002 seem to suggest that their

opinions were not relatively close to each other. The standard deviation and means describing student's absenteeism; in a scale of 1-5 strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Not sure = 3, Agree = 4, strongly agree = 5: The mean of 3.08 seem to suggest that most lecturers were not sure of the statement regarding students time keeping; while the standard deviation of 0.815 seem to suggest that their opinions were relatively close to each other.

Regression – Lecturer-Student Relationship and Student Performance

Model		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4	20.054	18.181	.000 ^a
	Residual	176	1.103		
	Total	180			

The table reveals that the model was significant in regard to lecturer-student relationship explaining academic performance of students in Cavendish University-Uganda (F=18.18; Sig=0.000).

5. Conclusion

Research study has indicated that attendance is statistically significant in explaining overall academic performance of students. Students who miss lectures frequently significantly increase their odds of a poor grade in a given course. The researchers then conclude that: i) testing extensively from material presented in class rather than material from the text can encourage better attendance; ii) The use of in-class quizzes and other exercises will reward attendance; iii) encourage a greater commitment to the course by requiring more homework/coursework and reading will make students more likely to attend the lecture; and iv) Students and lecturers through workshops should be taught how to effectively manage time.

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