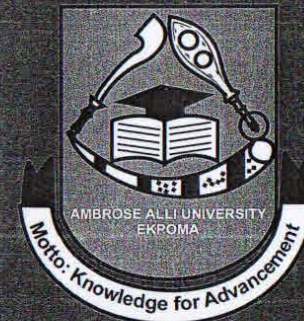


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EDITORIAL

In keeping with our promise of coming out with regular issues of our journal, I am happy to present to the reading pleasure of our esteemed audience, Vol. 14 No.2 of Studies in Education. To sustain this effort, I urge your continued support and patronage. Wishing you a fruitful reading of the well-researched papers that had been packaged in this volume.

Prof. Oyaziwo Aluede
Editor-in-chief

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Developing the Communication Skills of Teacher Trainees:

The Role of Teacher Educators

by

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Abstract

This study examines how communication skills can be effectively developed in the teacher trainees so that they will be models of effective teachers. This study was guided by three research questions and a sample of 331 teacher educators drawn from tertiary institutions in Imo State was used. A 30 item structured questionnaire was used for data collection and mean for data analysis. The results revealed that teacher educators are ineffective in modeling effective communication skills to trainees. They also lack skills in the use of digital communication tools and therefore unable to use them in communicating with trainees. Based on these, some recommendations were made including the need for the revision of the teacher education curriculum in order to integrate the teaching of communication skills and equip teacher educators on the use of digital communication tools in teaching to enhance communication.

Keywords: Developing, Communication, Skill and Teacher Educators.

Introduction

Communication is an indispensable life skill and our ability to master and use it effectively influences our level of success in different life endeavours. Scholars have defined communication in a number of related ways. Jayaweera (1991) defines it as an interaction through which persons or groups of persons share information, experiences and culture. Similarly, Hybels and Weaver (2001) defines communication as any process in which people share information, ideas and feelings which involve not only the spoken and written word but also non verbal language. Furthermore, the Concise Oxford Dictionary defines communication as "the act of imparting... and transmitting information". In a similar discussion, Park cited in Aina and Ogunbiyi, (2012:215) defines it as a network that 'creates and makes possible consensus understanding among individuals'. Following these definitions, communication is indeed a tool used to inform, share, discover, persuade and influence relationships and behaviour of others. It is indeed a complex process and the requisite skills must be acquired in order to have effective communication and ensure that the communicators understand themselves. Saunders and Mills (1999) define communication skills as "the transmission of a message that involves shared understanding between the context in which the communication takes place". It is also one of the basic learning instruments usually referred to as the 4Cs- communication skills, critical thinking, creative thinking and collaboration. In the 21st century, discussions on communication skills go beyond the basic skills and include the digital communication tools. Academic excellence in the

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Sources of Examination Anxiety among Final Year Students of University of Ilorin, Nigeria

By

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Abstract

Examination anxiety, a common phenomenon among students of tertiary institution (most especially the finally students), is characterized by feelings of severe apprehension, uneasiness, nervousness, fear and tension which often predispose them to academic failure in particular and health hazards on the other hand. This study therefore investigated sources of examination anxiety among final year students of University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The descriptive survey method of research was adopted for the study while the simple random sampling technique was used to select 600 respondent that participated in the study. The instrument used to gather the required information was questionnaire type titled "Sources of Examination Anxiety Questionnaire (SEAQ)". It has two sections (A&B). Section 'A' sought the demographic information of the respondents while 'B' has four sub-sections containing five items each. The measure of central tendency and t-test statistics were used to analyse the data gathered for the study. The findings revealed that emotion is the major source of examination anxiety among final year students of tertiary institutions. The respondents were different in their sources of examination anxiety based on gender but similar based on mode of entry. It was recommended that guidance counsellors, curriculum planners and seasoned educational administrators should be adequately involved in students' affairs and in formulating academic calendar for tertiary institutions.

Methodology

The descriptive survey method of investigation was adopted for this study. Thus, the expression of a representative sample of the population was obtained through the use of questionnaire titled "Sources of Examination Anxiety Questionnaire (SEAQ)". The instrument (SEAQ) has four sub-sections (Personal, School, Home, Emotion) with five items under each. The items under the sub-sections are designed to measure sources of examination anxiety among final year students. The instrument used was subjected to the test-retest method of reliability and a coefficient of 0.81 was established and thus found reliable for the purpose of the study. The simple random sampling technique was adopted to select 6 out of the 15 faculties in the University of Ilorin (as at the time of the investigation). Similarly, simple random sampling technique was used to select 600 respondents (final year students) who were purposively stratified across the variables of gender and mode of entry. The researchers administered the instrument to the respondents in the halls before the commencement of examination. The frequency counts, measure of central tendency and t-test statistics were used to analyse the data collected.

Discussion

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender and Faculty

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	280	46.7
Female	320	53.3
Total	600	100.0
Mode of Entry		
Direct	248	41.3
UTME	352	58.7
Total	600	100.0

The results in table 1 revealed that 46.7% of the respondents are males while 53.3% are females: more female participated in the study. A total of 352(58.7%) of the sample size for the study were admitted into the university through Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) while 248(41.3%) came in through Direct Entry (DE).

Research Question 1:

What major source is responsible for examination anxiety among Final year students of University?

Table 2: Rank Order of Sources of Examination Anxiety

Source of Exam Anxiety	Mean Score	Rank
Emotion	10.11	1 st
Personal	10.02	2 nd
School	9.86	3 rd
Home	9.81	4 th

The results shown in table 2 provide answer to the research question. Emotion is the major source of examination anxiety among final year students of the University of Ilorin. This suggests that examination anxiety manifests among final year students because of panic over failure, lack of self-confidence, worry about performance, negative mindset on examination and feeling of confusion on how to answer questions. This result corroborates the earlier finding of Cherry (2013), which established that most students exhibit anxiety as a result of fear of possible poor performance and worry over the consequences. The final year students of the University of Ilorin are not exempted in this direction since they expressed been apprehensive over possibly unsatisfactory outcome of examination grades. A good reason why emotion plays major role in provoking examination anxiety is the fact that individual is entitled to his/her feelings and may not want to share such with others even if it is negative. Thus, students could suffer emotional threats for a long time which in turn may degenerate to examination anxiety and consequently poor performance.

Another source which is of significance is 'personal' factors. As reflected in the instrument, this implies that final year students develop examination anxiety as a result of inadequate preparation, poor time management, memory of previous poor performance and others. Hills (2014) did mention that majority of the respondents in a study on Causes of Test Anxiety identified poor preparation and fear of not finishing the test as major factors causing anxiety in them. There are other sources but of less significance; these are school and home.

Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant difference in the sources of examination anxiety among final year students based on gender*

Table 3: Results of the t-test on gender

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Male	280	15.10	2.75			
Female	320	14.26	2.73	598	-3.73	1.90

*Significant, <0.05

Hypothesis 2: *There is no significant difference in the sources of examination anxiety among final year students based on mode of entry*

Table 4: Result of the t-test on mode of entry

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Direct Entry	248	15.21	2.68			
UTME	352	15.32	2.45	598	-.51	1.96

The results in table 3 revealed that male and female final year students differed in the source of examination anxiety. This finding negates the earlier study of Olushola (2008) who established no significant difference in the causes of academic stress among tertiary institution students based on gender. The variation could be due to difference between the focus of the previous and present studies (causes of academic anxiety and sources of examination anxiety respectively). On the other hand, no significant difference was found in the sources of examination anxiety among final year students based on mode of entry. Thus, irrespective of the mode of admission into the University, final year students are similar in the sources of their examination anxiety. This corroborates the earlier findings of Cherry (2013) who mentioned that students generally expressed similar causes of test anxiety notwithstanding various peculiar characteristics. One may allude the fact that examination has nothing to do with mode of entry and thus students are generally likely to have similar dispositions to it.

Implication of the Findings

It is apparent from the findings of this study that students, especially the final year, require adequate counselling on how to prepare for examination and avoid test-related anxiety. The various examination crimes and health challenges which often characterize examination period could be traced to effects of anxiety on students. In addition, the inability of students to cover the recommended materials may be due to short span of the semesters which (if true) is not ideal for academic excellence. Thus, the services of professional counsellors become indispensable in order to guarantee adequate academic performance. The roles of seasoned educational administrator and curriculum planners have not been adequately felt, especially in the area of giving required duration for coverage of course contents. If that has been done, the level of examination anxiety among final year students could have been significantly reduced.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made;

- Guidance counsellors should constantly educate final year students on the best study habits and how to avoid and cope with examination anxiety. It is equally important to involve professional counsellors in the planning of the university calendar in order to enlighten the authority on the relationship between duration of session and students' ability to cope.

- Seasoned educational administrations should be assigned to constantly organize seminars for students on time management. This will assist students to prepare well ahead and use time wisely during examination.
- It is expedient that curriculum planners make positive input in the designing of syllabi and adequate time for its coverage in such a way that final year students will be able to cover the required contents and reduce examination anxiety.

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