



Social studies learners' learning style, attitude, coping strategies, and academic performance

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the relationship of Learning Style, Learning Attitude, Coping Strategies, and Academic Performance in Social Studies. The respondents in this study were the one hundred ninety-eight (198) grade 12 senior high school learners for the first quarter of school year 2022-2023. The data were gathered using a duly- validated adapted research questionnaire and were administered personally by the researcher. The research instrument was pilot tested on 30 selected learners of Barroc National High School, Tigbauan, Iloilo. The study utilized a descriptive – correlational quantitative design of research in collecting, analyzing, and classifying the required data. The data obtained from the adapted questionnaire were tallied, computer-processed, analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools. The predominant learning styles of students, when taken as a whole and grouped according to senior high school strand and by their family income, were auditory, group, and kinesthetic. The level of learning attitudes of students, when taken as a whole and grouped according to senior high school strand and by their family income, is positive. Whereas the level of coping strategies of students, when taken as a whole and grouped according to senior high school strand and by their family income, is low. Learners have an average academic performance in social studies when taken as a whole and grouped according to senior high school strand and by their family income. The result revealed that there were no significant relationships among learning styles, attitude, and academic performance of students ($r = -0.063$, $p = 0.373$ and $r = 0.006$, $p = 0.936$, respectively) while there is a significant relationship between coping strategies and academic performance ($r = -0.142$, $p < 0.05$).

Keywords: Social studies learners, learning style, attitude, coping strategies, academic performance

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis in the country wherein most classes stopped and most schools, universities and colleges were closed (Burgess *et al.*, 2020) ^[2]. According to Sevilla (2020), the coming school year will be full of disruptions related to COVID-19, but the Department of Education still continues to prepare for various scenarios to ensure the learning of students will continue.

The statement of Sevilla (2020) shows that the Department of Education is very determined to ensure the stakeholders that amid Covid-19 the education will continue still. Thus, under the new normal, the Department of Education has prepared various alternative learning delivery modalities as a response to COVID-19 situation in the country. The DepEd provides Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) under modular learning system and other alternative learning delivery modalities to be offered for various types of the learners nationwide.

The knowledge of learning styles may help teachers identify and solve learning problems among students, thus helping their students to become more effective learners. Abbas (2012) stated that to achieve the ultimate goal of learning, teachers must use a combination of teaching methods so as to make classroom environment as stimulating and interactive as possible. This is because students learn in many different ways and there is no standard teaching method that could benefit all as some students are visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic learners while others prefer to work alone or by group. Teachers need to integrate all these preferences as frequent as possible in classroom in order to help students to learn effectively.

Determining students' learning styles provides information about their specific preferences. Understanding learning styles can make it easier to create, modify, and develop more efficient curriculum and educational programs. It can also encourage students' participation in these programs and motivate them to gain professional knowledge. Therefore, determining learning style is quite valuable in order to achieve more effective learning (Tomruk & Yesilyaprak, 2018).

Moreover, students have different attitudes about teaching and learning, and different responses to specific classroom environments and instructional practices. The more thoroughly teachers understand the differences, the better chance they have of meeting the diverse learning needs of all of their students. For most of the teachers, a good student is the one who is eager to learn and has positive attitudes towards learning.

In a study done by Kara (2010) ^[17], it was found out that the positive beliefs of students towards obtaining knowledge support their efforts to learn a subject. Learning is basically an individual performance. For that reason, positive or negative attitudes towards learning are valuable for the success of learning. Learning attitude is a learned tendency of a person to respond positively or negatively towards an object, situation, concept or another person (Sarmah & Puri, 2014). Attitudes can change and develop with time (Syeda, 2016) ^[28], and once a positive attitude is formed, it can improve students' learning (Mutai, 2011) ^[22]. On the other hand, a negative attitude hinders effective learning and consequently affects the learning outcome henceforth performance (Joseph, 2013) ^[15].

The academic performance of the students may also be affected brought about by the new normal. The Department of Education emphasized that it would not necessarily mean

that teachers and learners will go to schools and learn inside the classrooms and devised various modalities to ensure that online learning a choice among all others in this new learning environment (DepEd, 2020)^[6].

The family income, high or low, can have its impact on students' achievement in all their learning years. Since they are in their early years, their family incomes can affect their education. Some schools and colleges may look carefully to this point. They may ask for the family resources and how they can pay their children tuition. Otherwise, they may not have a place in that college. If the family has high income at the early age of the student learning, it may help to accept him or her at that school. This makes a huge different from that student whose family has a high income in his late learning (Humlum, 2011).

Each child must have his or her right to learn as others. No matter what their backgrounds or their families' income is. Schools must find solutions to help them for better education and not judge them for their family low income (Beck, 2011). They did not choose their background to accept them in a school and rejected them in another because of their family income. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of family income on student achievement.

Senior High School is two years of specialized upper secondary education; students may choose a specialization based on aptitude, interests, and school capacity. The choice of career track will define the content of the subjects a student will take in Grades 11 and 12. Each student in Senior High School can choose among three tracks: Academic; Technical-Vocational-Livelihood; and Sports and Arts. Tigbauan National High School offers Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM), Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) which belong to the Academic Track while under the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Track are Bread and Pastry Production (BPP) and Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

As a teacher, it is very important to determine the students' learning style and learning attitude at school because this is new to them after the pandemic. Furthermore, this learning delivery requires more of independent learning, thus coping strategies on how to cope with the stress and difficult situation becomes prevalent. It cannot be avoided that the teachers may worry or doubt whether the students can perform well or not.

Exemplars potentially provide a means of making complex marking criteria more comprehensible to students. Exposing students to examples of "real students' work" of different standards has been shown to assist students in recognizing writing-quality for themselves. Furthermore, the experience of assessing exemplars helps students get new ideas from their classmates and become more aware of how their own work will be graded.

Teachers can utilize exemplar lessons as models of effective instructional planning based on district planning guides. In addition, as the exemplar lessons were designed for immediate classroom implementation, teachers can use the lessons "as is" or modify the content to meet the needs of their students.

This study was conducted in order to determine the factors that contribute to the academic performance among senior high school learners brought by their leaning style, learning attitude and coping strategies. This study provided platform

and opportunities among teachers to determine what strategies and techniques to be utilized in order to promote positive improvement of the learners.

Methods

Research design

This study utilized the survey-correlational method in research. Survey research is the process of conducting research using surveys that researchers send to survey respondents. The data collected from surveys was then statistically analyzed to draw meaningful research conclusions. Generally, it is the primary step towards obtaining quick information about mainstream topics and conducting more rigorous and detailed quantitative research methods.

On the other hand, correlational research design is useful to researchers who are interested in determining to what degree two variables are related; however, correlational research "does not prove" a relationship; rather, it indicates an association between two or more variables" (Creswell, 2008).

The independent variables were learning style and attitude and coping strategies while the dependent variable is academic performance.

The descriptive statistics used in the study were the frequency count, mean, and standard deviation. The inferential statistics was the Pearson r. The alpha level of significance was set at 0.05 for the inferential test.

Participants and Sampling

Tigbauan National High School is an institution that caters diverse learners with diverse personality. It is a place that is situated near the abundance of the sea and the products of the farm.

The participants in the study were the one hundred ninety-eight (198) out of five hundred ninety-four (594) grade 12 senior high school students. The Slovin's formula was used to determine the sample size of the study. The participants of the study were selected using the stratified random sampling. Stratified sampling was used by drawing the sample from the population and then drawing separate random samples from each stratum (Sullivan, 2008).

They were chosen using the stratified random sampling by means of drawing of lots. This means that all the names of the senior high school students are written in rolled slips of paper and placed in a box. From the box, the required number of participants was drawn. The sample size of the senior high school students is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Grade 12 Senior High School Students

Tracks/ Stands	N	%	n
Academic	340	35%	120
ABM	70	57%	40
STEM	120	33%	40
HUMSS	150	26%	40
TVL-	254	31%	78
BPP	202	25%	50
ICT	52	54%	28
Total	594	33%	198

Instrument

The data in this study were gathered using the standardized questionnaire. Attached to the questionnaire is the personal data sheet of the grade 12 senior high school students.

Personal Data Sheet

This instrument is used to collect data about the personal profile of the senior high school students in terms of senior high school strand, and monthly family income.

Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire

This is a standardized questionnaire composed of 30 items Likert scale adapted from C.I.T.E. Learning Styles Instrument, Murdoch Teacher Center, Wichita, Kansas 67208. In this research instrument, the items are arranged sequentially. Items number 6,10,12,24, and 29 are visual; 11,14,16,22, and 25 are tactile; 1,7,9,17, and 20 are auditory; 3,4,5,21, and 23 are group; 2,8,15,19, and 26 kinesthetic; and 13,18,27,28 and 30 are individual.

The questionnaire is responded using the following responses

Scale	Responses
5	Strongly Agree
4	Agree
3	Uncertain
2	Disagree
1	Strongly Disagree

To describe the perceptual learning style preference, all the numerical values are added and multiplied by 2. The scale below is used.

Scale	Description
38-50	Major Learning Style Preference
25-37	Minor Learning Style Preference
0-24	Negligible

The learning style questionnaire was faced and content-validated by the experts. The suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of the instrument were incorporated in the modification of the instrument. Once the instrument is faced and content-validated, the questionnaire is pilot-tested to thirty (30) randomly selected senior high school students of Barroc National High School Tigbauan, Iloilo.

The result of the pilot testing was used in determining the computer-processed factor analysis, construct validation, and reliability testing of the research instrument using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), if the computed Cronbach Alpha is equal to 0.70 or more but not more than 1.0, the questionnaire is considered reliable. While items with factor analysis of .50 and above were included in the instrument while those below .50 were discarded.

Learning Attitude Questionnaire

This is a standardized questionnaire adapted from Kara (2010)^[17] composed of 40 items in the prepared Likert scale and negative statements are coded inversely.

The questionnaire was responded using the following responses

Scale	Responses
5	I Agree
4	I partly Agree
3	I have no option
2	I Disagree
1	I Totally Disagree

To describe the learning attitudes, the scale below was used

Scale	Description
4.51-5.00	Very Positive
3.51-4.50	Positive
2.51-3.50	Moderate
1.51-2.50	Negative
1.00-1.50	Very Negative

The learning attitude questionnaire was faced and content-validated by the experts. The suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of the instrument were incorporated in the modification of the instrument. Once the instrument was faced and content-validated, the questionnaire was pilot-tested to thirty (30) randomly selected senior high school students of Barroc National High School Tigbauan, Iloilo.

The result of the pilot testing was used in determining the computer-processed factor analysis, construct validation, and reliability testing of the research instrument using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), if the computed Cronbach Alpha is equal to 0.70 or more but not more than 1.0, the questionnaire is considered reliable. While items with factor analysis of .50 and above are included in the instrument while those below .50 are discarded.

Coping Orientation to Problem Experience Questionnaire:

This is a 28- item standardized questionnaire adapted from Carver, *et al.* (1989) used by Kubalik (2013)^[19].

Scale	Responses
1	I usually don't do this at all
2	I usually do this a little bit
3	I usually do this a medium amount
4	I usually do this a lot

To describe the coping strategies, the arbitrary scale below was used

Scale	Description
3.51-4.50	Very High
2.51-3.50	High
1.51-2.50	Low
1.00-1.50	Very Low

The coping strategies questionnaire was faced and content-validated by the experts. The suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of the instrument were incorporated in the modification of the instrument. Once the instrument was faced and content-validated, the questionnaire was pilot-tested to thirty (30) randomly selected senior high school students of Barroc National High School Tigbauan, Iloilo.

The result of the pilot testing was used in determining the computer-processed factor analysis, construct validation, and reliability testing of the research instrument using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), if the computed Cronbach Alpha is equal to 0.70 or more but not more than 1.0, the questionnaire is considered reliable. While items with factor analysis of .50 and above were included in the instrument while those below .50 were discarded.

Data collection

Prior to the gathering of data, an approval for the formal conduct of the survey was sought from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Schools Division of Iloilo. Upon approval, the consent of school principal of Tigbauan National High School was sought to allow him to conduct the study and determine the number of senior high school students who participated in the study. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the participants at school. After the questionnaires were answered, they were retrieved, coded, encoded, and processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Software.

The academic performance of the senior high school students was based on their social studies grade during the first quarter of the school year 2022-2023. This was a secondary data taken from the class record of the teacher advisers. The academic performance of the senior high students is interpreted using this scale: very high (95- 100), high (90-94), average (85-89), fair (80-84), and low (75-79).

Data analysis

Statistical Data Analysis Procedure

The data gathered from the study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The following were the statistical tools that will be used in the analysis of the data.

Frequency count and Percentage: This was used to describe the personal data information of the senior high school students.

Mean: This test was used to determine the students learning style and attitude, coping strategies, and academic performance of senior high school students.

Standard Deviation: This test was used to determine the homogeneity as well as the heterogeneity of the learning style and attitude, coping strategies, and academic performance.

Pearson r: This test, set at .05 alpha level of significance, was used to determine the relationships among the learning style and attitude, coping strategies, and academic performance.

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