

Students' Learning Styles in Relation to Service Physical Education Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the students' learning styles, whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learning style, in relation to their Service Physical Education performance in terms of written and practical exam results. The moderating variables of age, gender, academic status, religion, and course were also considered. This was conducted among Service P.E. students of the Mindanao State University, Marawi City, officially enrolled during the 2nd semester, A.Y. 2015 – 2016. This descriptive-correlation study was conducted among 925 respondents (227 male and 588 female respondents). The VARK Learning Styles Questionnaire developed by Victoria Chislett was used to assess their learning styles. The Service P.E. performance was taken from their partial written and practical exams. The majority of the respondents were 15-18 years old; most of the respondents were female; most of the respondents were Tuition Privilege status; most of the respondents were Islam believers while others were non-Muslim, and almost all of the respondents were Bachelor of Science (BS) degree pursuers. In terms of learning styles, it was found out that most of the respondents were visual learners. With regard to the Service P.E. performance, most of the respondents received grades of 1.0-1.25 or excellent in their written exams while most of them were rated 1.50-1.75 or very good in their practical exams. The relationship between the variables found out that there were no significant relationships between the moderating variables of age, religion, and course with their respective p-values of 0.272, 0.188, and 0.355 to the independent variable of learning styles. However, there were significant relationships between the moderating variables of gender, academic status and the independent variable of learning styles. Furthermore, age ($p = 0.184$), academic status ($p = 0.385$), religion ($p = 0.784$), and course ($p = 0.869$) were not significantly related to written exam performance while gender was significantly related to written exam performance. Practical exam performance showed no relationship with the different moderating variables. For the relationship between learning styles and Service P.E. performance, it was revealed that learning styles had a significant relationship between written exam performance, while no relationship existed between learning styles and practical exam performance. Good performance in the written exams matters most in how the students prepare for it. On the other hand, ability, preparation, and constant correct practice will matter the most in preparation for practical exams. Thus, it is recommended that Physical Education administrators formulate plans to further improve the competencies of Physical Education teachers, especially in identifying the different learning styles of their respective students, to provide appropriate teaching approaches that facilitate effective learning experiences among their students. Physical Education teachers should provide enough time for skills practice so that most of their students will have greater chances of obtaining higher ratings in their practical exams. A similar study should be conducted in the future using other variables or using an equal number of respondents in gender and religion.

1. Introduction

The idea that people learn differently is venerable and probably had its origin with the ancient Greeks (Wratcher, Morrison, Riley & Scheirton, 1997). Educators have, for many years, noticed that some students prefer certain methods of learning more than others. These dispositions, referred to as learning styles, form a student's unique learning preference and aid teachers in planning small-group and individualized instruction. Learning styles, as defined by Grasha (1996), is the "personal qualities that influence a student's ability to acquire information, to interact with peers and the teacher, and otherwise participate in learning experiences." Blackmore (1996) suggested that one of the first things educators can do to aid the learning process is to simply be aware that there are diverse learning styles in the student population. There are probably as many ways to "teach" as there

are to learn. Perhaps the most important thing is to be aware that people do not all see the world in the same way. They may have very different preferences than others for how, when, where and how often to learn.

Many students have different learning styles and thus need to be taught differently. The best way for a student to learn depends on the student itself and the learning styles that work best for him. The best approach for an instructor to take is to address various learning styles with their teaching plan to enhance and increase students' motivation, achievement, and performances. According to Fleming (1995) there are four main preferred learning styles: visual, aural/auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic. The visual preference includes depicting information in maps, spider diagrams, charts, graphs, flow charts, labeled diagrams, and all the symbolic arrows, circles, hierarchies and other devices that people use to represent what could have been presented in words. The auditory learning style, describes a preference for information that is "heard or spoken." The third learning style preference is the read/write whose preference is for information displayed as words. The kinesthetic learning style refers to the "perceptual preference related to the use of experience and practice simulated to real." Although such an experience may involve other modalities, the key is that people who prefer this mode are connected to reality; "either through concrete personal experiences, examples, practices or simulation" (Fleming & Mills, 1992).

Thus, this study on students' learning styles, whether they are visual, auditory, read/write or kinesthetic learners, was conducted to find out their relationship with Service Physical Education performance in terms of written and practical exams.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study employed descriptive-correlation methods of research. Descriptive statistics describe the respondents in terms of age, gender, academic status, religion, course, learning styles, and Service P.E. performance in terms of written exams and practical exams. The study also tried to determine the relationship between and among the variables.

2.2 Respondents of the Study

The study population was the Service Physical Education (SPE) enrollees of the Mindanao State University, Marawi City and officially enrolled during the 2nd Semester of Academic Year 2015-2016. The total population size was 5507 segregated into 511 enrollees for P.E. 1 (211 for men and 304 for women), 1888 enrollees for P.E. 2 (669 for men and 1219 for women), 1,432 enrollees for P.E. 3 (554 for men and 888 for women) and 1,676 enrollees for P.E. 4 (584 for men and 1092 for women).

2.3 Sampling Procedure

There were 925 respondents of this study, taken from the population of 5,507 Service P.E. students, using the Sloven's formula in computing the sample size. Using ratio and proportion method, 337 male and 588 female respondents were derived. Determined through stratified random sampling procedure, 85 P.E. 1 samples (35 male and 50 female), 318 P.E. 2 samples (113 male and 205 female), 241 P.E. 3 samples (91 male and 150 female), and 281 P.E. 4 samples (98 male and 183 female) were obtained.

2.4 Research Locale

The study was conducted in the College of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation, Mindanao State University, Marawi City.

2.5 Research Instrument Used

The research instrument was a questionnaire which was composed of two parts. Part I gathered information on the respondents' demographic profile, which included age, gender, academic status, religion, course, and their performances in the course's written and practical exams. Part II was the VARK Learning Styles Questionnaire developed by Victoria Chislett, which was used to assess the respondents' learning styles. This is a standardized questionnaire that classified the respondents' learning styles into Visual, Auditory, or Kinesthetic. The questionnaire consisted of 16 items with four (4) choices representing the four learning styles.

2.6 Data Gathering

In gathering the data for this study, certain procedures were followed. A letter-request was sent to the Dean through the Chairman of the Department of Service Physical Education of the College of SPEAR of the Mindanao State University, Marawi campus requesting for a permission to conduct the study and to ask for the lists of students enrolled in Service P.E. courses the 2nd Semester, Academic Year 2015-2016.

After computing for the sample size, another letter-request was sent to the Service P.E. instructors requesting permission to conduct the study and another letter-request sent to the respondents. After a two-month period of gathering data, scoring and tallying commenced. Statistical treatment followed using the SPSS software.

2.7 Statistical Tools

For the descriptive data of the study, the frequency and percentage distribution were used. The Pearson Product Moment for Correlation Coefficients or Pearson r and the Chi-square were utilised for the relationships between and among the variables.

3. Results

Based on the statistical results of the study, the following findings are revealed:

The majority of the respondents were 15-18 years old; most of the respondents were female; most of the respondents were Tuition Privilege status; most of the respondents were Islam believers while others were non-Muslim; and almost all of the respondents were Bachelor of Science (BS) degree pursuers. In terms of learning styles, it was found out that most of the respondents were visual learners. With regard to the Service P.E. performance, most of the respondents received grades of 1.0-1.25 or excellent in their written exams, while most of them were rated 1.50-1.75 or very good in their practical exams.

The relationship between the variables found out that there were no significant relationships between the moderating variables of age, religion, and course with their respective p -values of 0.272, 0.188, and 0.355 to the independent variable of learning styles. However, there were significant relationships between the moderating variables of gender, academic status and the independent variable of learning styles.

Furthermore, age ($p = 0.184$), academic status ($p = 0.385$), religion ($p = 0.784$), and course ($p = 0.869$) were not significantly related to written exam performance while gender was significantly related to written exam performance. Practical exam performance showed no relationship with the different moderating variables.

For the relationship between learning styles and Service P.E. performance, it was revealed that learning styles had a significant relationship between written exam performance, while no relationship existed between learning styles and practical exam performance.

4. Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions and implications are drawn:

1. Age, religion, and course are not determinant factors of a person's learning styles. Whether an individual is young or old, Muslim or non-Muslim, taking a Bachelor's degree course or Technology course, their learning styles vary. However, being a male or a female affects one's learning style because males are more active than females, which leads to males' tendency to have a kinesthetic learning style. Furthermore, this study also shows females often tend to have a visual learning style. On the other hand, academic status also matters in learning style by the fact that academics rigors demand more time on visual observations and read and write efforts from the students.
2. Good performance in the written exams matter most in how the students prepare for it. Performance in the written exams does not guarantee whether a student is a scholar or not, young or old, Muslim or a non-Muslim and whatever course one takes. However, it is revealed that females are more inclined to perform well in the written exams as compared to males.
3. Ability, preparation, and constant correct practice will matter the most in preparation for practical exams. Whether an individual is young and old, male or female, scholar or paying students, Muslim or non-Muslim, or taking a Bachelor's degree course or Technology course, practical exams results vary.
4. Performance in the written exams is significantly related to learning styles. This implies that written exams demand more reading and comprehension which is supported by the findings in this study that shows that the majority of the respondents belonged to the visual learning styles.

4.1 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations of the study:

1. Physical Education administrators should formulate plans to further improve the competencies of Physical Education teachers especially in identifying the different learning styles of their respective students in order to provide appropriate approaches in teaching that facilitates effective learning experiences among their students.
2. Physical Education teachers should provide enough time for skills practice so that the majority if not all of their students will have greater chances of obtaining higher ratings in their practical exams.
3. Similar study should be conducted in the future using other variables or using equal number of respondents in terms of gender and religion.

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