International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Relationship between Time Management and Test Anxiety Among Undergraduate Students in South-East

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ABSTRACT

Test anxiety could be at the root of these concerns because it has the capacity of attracting students' into performing very poor in examinations. Much as there are numerous factors associated with undergraduate students' test anxiety, ascertaining the relationship between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students in South-East, Nigeria is the problem that motivated the study. The purpose of the study was to ascertain if time management contributes to test anxiety among undergraduate students in South-East, Nigeria. five research questions were raised for the study while five hypotheses were tested. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. All the 36, 000 regular first year and final year students of federal universities in South-East Zone for the 2020/21 academic session consisted the population of the study. The sample of this study was made up of 395 (200 regular first year and 195 final years) undergraduate students drawn through multi-stage sampling procedure. Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ) and Test Anxiety Questionnaire (TAQ) were used to collect data. The instruments for data collection were validated by three experts; three in the Department of Educational Foundations, all at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliabilities of TMQ and TAQ were established using Cronbach alpha statistics. Coefficients of 0.80 and 0.82 respectively for TMQ and TAQ were obtained. Pearson product moment correlation was used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance by comparing the computed correlation index against the critical values for appropriate decision. The findings of the study revealed that while a moderate negative relationship existed between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students. The implications of the study were brought to the fore and it was recommended among others that educational psychologists should evolve pedagogical interventions that will enable undergraduate students develop time management skills that will address their test anxiety issues.

Key words: Time management, Test Anxiety, Undergraduate Students.

Introduction

Test anxiety among undergraduate students is a source of worry to stakeholders in the university system. A student who is well-prepared for a test as a result of having studied hard the contents of their course is not likely to be test-anxious. However, a student who is given to the over-memorization of their course content could be liable to test anxiety. According to Akanbi (2013), there are certain symptoms that are considered fall-outs of test anxiety which could be traced to the fact that they are not well prepared, memorizing the day prior to the scheduled test date, inadequate studying pattern, or poor organization of the test. Lena and Kent (2012) contended that students that are susceptible to test anxiety tend to lose concentration and attention to academic task. This is to say that students that easily get test-anxious are not likely to pay attention to what is been taught nor concentrate on their course contents to enhance their test performance. Test anxiety among undergraduate students could further be as a result of time management issues.

Time management is a vital skill that is at the core of performance of undergraduate students in testing situations. It refers to the ability of students to make judicious use of their time in attending classes, completing assignments and studying for their tests so as to perform well in them. Time management is a set of values, practice, ability, tools and structure that are combined to help the individual achieve more values out of their timeframe with the goal of attaining excellence in their lives (Aduke, 2015). According to Abd el–Aziz, Eid and Safan (2012), time management is the process of applying certain skills and methods with a view to accomplishing tasks, goals and projects, such as setting aims, allocating, analyzing and organizing. Painstaking allocation of time to every activity will be of immense benefit to undergraduate students who must not play dice with their lives in the university. This is essentially so given that time is an irrecoverable and irredeemable resource. More so, while time management among undergraduate students could influence their text anxiety, test anxiety of undergraduate students may differ along gender lines and class levels.

Class level refers to the category of students grouped together for having similar characteristics or qualities. According to Offor (2017), it connotes a group of students of varying age range, level of intelligence, from different socio economic status who are taught together in a particular place. Denotatively, class level means a category of students grouped together in a particular place to study the same course under the same lecturers with the same course contents at the same time. In the context of the current study, class level is taken to be the year of study a student is on. The study will specifically cover first year and final year of undergraduate studentship in universities. According to Oladipo and Ogungbamila (2013), academic level and students' faculty have no independent and joint influence on test anxiety. However, it could be that first year students are more test-anxious than their final year counterparts because they are still new in the university system and are facing testing situations for the first time at a post-secondary level. On the contrary, it could be that final year students who are facing their final year exams and may risk over-stay in event of failure are bound to be more test-anxious that their first year counterparts.

There are apparent disparities in the findings of some researchers with regards to the relationship between time management and test anxiety among students. Some researchers (Kaur, 2015; Tambaya, 2019) found that a significant positive relationship existed between examination anxiety and time management among students. On the contrary, some others (Eldeleklioglu, 2008; Ghiasvand et al., 2017) found a significant negative relationship between examination anxiety and time management among students.

In South-East, Nigeria, the researcher's observation as a university student is that the incidence of examination malpractice and worse still, poor performance of students are fast becoming recurring decimals. This is because there is hardly any semester exam that does not witness examination malpractice and poor performance of students. Most senate meetings in many universities concentrate on decisions concerning students' exam malpractice issues. Test anxiety could be at the root of these concerns because it has the capacity of attracting students' into performing very poor in examinations. There are many variables that may interplay with undergraduate students' test anxiety. Could it be that time management and academic self-efficacy are among such variables? Much as there are numerous factors associated with undergraduate students' test anxiety, ascertaining time management and academic self-efficacy as correlates of test anxiety among undergraduate students in South-East, Nigeria is the problem that motivated the study. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

1. Relationship between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students.
2. Relationship between time management and test anxiety among first year undergraduate students.
3. Relationship between time management and test anxiety among final year undergraduate students.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to give direction to the study:

1. What is the relationship between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students?
2. What is the relationship between time management and test anxiety among first year undergraduate students?
3. What is the relationship between time management and test anxiety among final year undergraduate students?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students.
2. There is no significant relationship between time management and test anxiety among first year undergraduate students.
3. There is no significant relationship between time management and test anxiety among final year undergraduate students.

Method

This study employed correlation research design. The design is considered appropriate for the study because, according to Nworgu (2015), it focuses on the existing relationship between or among variables. The participants of the study consisted of 36, 000 regular first year and final year students of federal universities (Alex Ekwueme University, Ndufu-Alike Ikwo, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Michael Okpara University, Umudike, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and University of Nigeria, Nsukka) in South-East Zone for the 2020/21 academic session. The sample for the study constituted 395 (200 regular first year and 195 final years). The sample size was obtained from the population of the study using Taro Yamane's formula. The selection of the sample was done in three stages using multi-stage sampling. The instrument used to collect data were Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ) and Test Anxiety Questionnaire (TAQ). TMQ was adopted from Time Management Scale developed by Britton and Tesser (1991). It contains 18 items and the items are premised on 4 likert scale of never (1) sometimes (2) frequently (3) always (4). For the Text Anxiety Questionnaire, it was adapted from Nist and Diehl (1990) Examination Anxiety Scales. The items are Likert-scaled, containing 10 items. The construction of the items was such that the respondents will respond by choosing one of five response categories viz: Never (N), Rarely (R), Sometimes (S), Frequently (F) and Always (A). The validation of TMQ and TAQ was ascertained by three experts. The reliability of the administering the TMQ and TAQ to a similar group of 50 students in Edo State which is

outside the study area. There was a determination of the internal consistency of the items in TMQ and TAQ using Cronbach statistics. The alpha coefficients obtained were 0.80 and 0.82 respectively for TMQ and TAQ. These values were adjudged adequate and the instrument reliable. Pearson product moment correlation was used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance by comparing the computed correlation index against the critical values for appropriate decision. Nwana's (2007) recommendations were used in taking decisions regarding the research questions. Thus, the correlation coefficient (r) with scores:

        0.00 – 0.20 = Very low relationship

        0.20 – 0.40 = Low relationship

        0.40 – 0.60 = Moderate relationship

        0.60 – 0.80 = High relationship

        0.80 – 0.10 = Very high relationship.

        Testing of the hypotheses was done with P-value (Using SPSS 20). The decision rule was that null hypothesis was rejected when p-value was less than (<) 0.05; otherwise when it was greater than (>) 0.05, it was not rejected.

Results

Table 1: Pearson r on Relationship between Time Management and Test Anxiety among Undergraduate Students.

Source of Variation	N	r	Remark
Time Management			
	395	-0.574	Moderate Negative Relationship
Test anxiety			

Data in Table 1 show that there is a moderate negative relationship existing between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students. This is evident by the size of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient r, which is -0.574.

Table 2: Pearson r on Relationship between Time Management and Test Anxiety among First Year Undergraduate Students.

Source of Variation	N	r	Remark
Time Management			
	200	-0.081	Very Low negative Relationship
Test anxiety			

Data in Table 2 show that there is a very low negative relationship existing between time management and test anxiety among first year undergraduate students. This is evident by the size of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient r, which is -0.081.

Table 3: Pearson r on Relationship between Time Management and Test Anxiety among Final Year Undergraduate Students.

Source of Variation	N	r	Remark
Time Management			
	195	-0.0512	Moderate negative Relationship
Test anxiety			

Data in Table 3 show that there is a moderate negative relationship existing between time management and test anxiety among final year undergraduate students. This is evident by the size of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient r, which is -0.0512.

Table 4: Test of Significance of Pearson Correlation between Time Management and Test Anxiety among Undergraduate Students.

Source of Variation	N	r	p-value	Remark
Time Management				
	395	-0.574	0.027	Sig
Test Anxiety				

Analysis in Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students. The calculated r (-0.574) had *P*-value <0.05. The null hypothesis one was therefore rejected.

Table 5: Test of Significance of Pearson Correlation between Time Management and Test Anxiety among First Year Undergraduate Students.

Source of Variation	N	r	p-value	Remark
Time Management				
	200	-0.081	0.073	Not Sig
Test Anxiety				

Analysis in Table 5 shows that there is no significant relationship between time management and test anxiety among first year undergraduate students. The calculated r (-0.081) had *P*-value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis seven was therefore not rejected.

Table 6: Test of Significance of Pearson Correlation between Time Management and Test Anxiety among Final Year Undergraduate Students.

Source of Variation	N	r	p-value	Remark
Time Management				
	195	-0.0512	0.001	Sig
Test Anxiety				

Analysis in Table 6 shows that there is a significant relationship between time management and test anxiety among final year undergraduate students. The calculated r (-0.0512) had *P*-value less than 0.05. The null hypothesis eight was therefore rejected.

Discussion

Relationship between Time Management and Test Anxiety among Undergraduate Students

The finding of the study revealed that a moderate negative relationship existed between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students. This means that the higher a students' level of time management students, the less test-anxious the student will be. Similarly, students who are good time managers are not bound to be test-anxious. In other words, good time managers exude self-concept in testing situations. Lending credence to the foregoing, Igwe and Okonkwo (2016) noted that time management skills have significant effect on the reduction of students' test anxiety and academic stress levels. In addition, the finding of the current study revealed that a significant relationship existed between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students. This finding of the study is in collaboration with the assertion of Ghiasvand et al. (2017) that a statistically significant negative correlation existed between the students' TMQ scores and the state anxiety and trait anxiety scores. This position is however contradicted by the assertion of Abdel–Azizet al. (2012) that there was an insignificance correlation between test anxiety and all components of time management skills. Contradicting the findings of the current study further, Tambaya (2019) contended that that a significant positive and low relationship existed between examination anxiety and time management. The afore-mentioned contradictions may not be separated from the disparity in sample characteristics.

Relationship between Time Management and Test Anxiety across Gender

The finding of the study revealed that while a moderate negative relationship existed between time management and test anxiety among male undergraduate students, a very low negative relationship existed between time management and test anxiety among female undergraduate students. This is indicative of the fact that test anxiety as a result of poor time management affects the male students more than the female students. Put differently, the female students appear to be better managers of time than their male counterparts. Furthermore, the finding of the current study showed that while there was no significant relationship between time management and test anxiety among male undergraduate students, a significant relationship existed between time management and test anxiety among female undergraduate students. This finding of the study is rather inconsistent with the position of Kaur (2015) that there was no significant difference in academic anxiety of male and female secondary school students and no significant difference existed in time management competency of male and female. This inconsistency could be traceable to the fact while the reviewed study concentrated on secondary schools, the current study focused on university students. In other words, the peculiarities of the respondents in the disparate areas of study could be at the core of the foregoing inconsistency. More so, the seeming dissimilarity of the pedagogical intervention employed by the educational psychologists in the disparate areas of study could be responsible or the inconsistency in findings.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that a moderate negative relationship existed between time management and test anxiety among undergraduate students. It was further concluded that academic levels of undergraduate students moderated the relationship between time management and test anxiety.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made. These include:

1. Educational psychologists should evolve pedagogical interventions that will enable undergraduate students develop time management skills that will address their test anxiety issues.
2. University authorities should strengthen the counselling units to help students with time management skills that will enable them eschew test anxiety in testing situations.

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