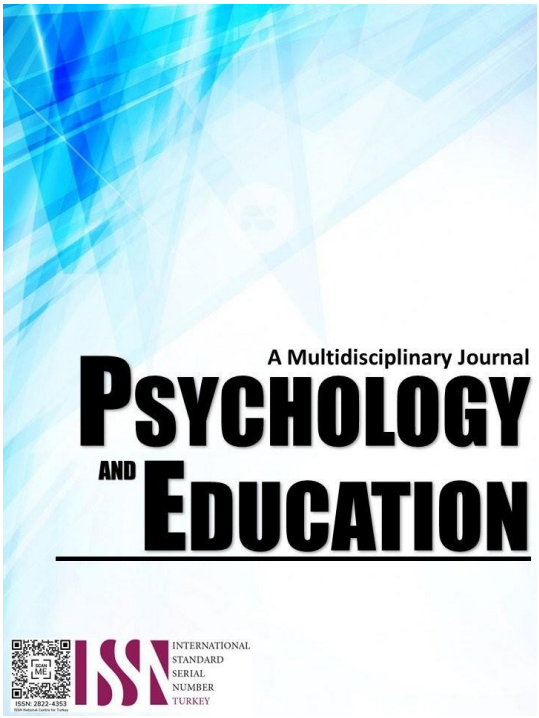
IMPACTS OF COMMON DISTRACTIONS TO THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED STUDENTS IN A PRIVATE SCHOOL IN GUMACA, QUEZON



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Research Article

Impacts of Common Distractions to the Academic Performance of Selected Students in a Private School in Gumaca, Quezon

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the impacts of common distractions to the academic performance of selected students in a private school in Gumaca, Quezon. Aspects studied were the profile of the respondents, such as their age, sex, grade level, and program. It is also viewed as one of the top contributors to distraction to academic among the three variables, such as use of digital devices, multitasking, and mind wandering. To achieve the researcher goal, the researcher used a questionnaire to determine the respondent's profile and administer the questionnaire for the impacts of common distractions to the academic performance. This study involved 80 college students from one of the private schools in Gumaca, Quezon. The result showed that most of the respondents were in the age group of 18–33 years old. The respondents are mostly female, and the majority come from the BSBA department. When it comes to the results of the impacts of common distraction to the academic performance, the study found that the most common contributor to academic distraction is use of digital devices. Most of the respondents are distracted because of use of digital devices. According to the Kruskal Wallis H-test implicated significant difference on the perceive impacts of common distractions to the academic performance when respondents are grouped by age, sex, year level, and department. Since all the computed p-value are less than level significant. The null hypothesis is rejected. This would imply that the perceptions on the common distraction to the academic performance varies between the profile.

Keywords: *common distractions, digital devices, impacts, mind wandering, multitasking.*

Introduction

In the realm of education, classroom disruptions, whether intentional or not, pose a significant challenge. These distractions, while commonplace, can hinder the learning process by diverting students' attention away from the educational content. Educators who comprehend the root causes of these distractions are better equipped to minimize their occurrence, thereby fostering an environment conducive to sustained student engagement.

Distractions, while a ubiquitous part of life, can impede productivity and focus. In the educational setting, these distractions occur regularly, preventing students from fully immersing themselves in the learning process. Such disruptions can obstruct students' ability to concentrate on and assimilate the instructional content (Frisby et al., 2018). Presently, academic perspectives on the nature and representation of distraction vary. For instance, Blasiman et al. and Schmidt view multitasking as a form of distraction, while Unsworth and McMillan associate distraction with mind-wandering. Conversely, Flanigan et al. identify digital devices as the primary distraction source.

Common examples of distractions include receiving a text message while driving, a Facebook notification popping up while studying, or an invitation to a movie when chores await. Despite these interruptions, individuals employ various strategies to accomplish their tasks or mitigate the distractions. A common strategy is to change the work environment. For instance, students might opt to study in a library or café to avoid home distractions.

This study was chosen to investigate the effects of prevalent distractions on students' academic performance. The current trend suggests that distractions are hindering students from concentrating on their studies, thereby impacting their academic performance and potentially leading to academic failure. The aim is to understand how these common distractions influence students' academic performance and explore strategies students can employ to avoid these distractions during study time.

The researcher aimed to find out the factors contributing to anxiety of senior high school students because of the changes in the teacher's educational approach. Students are used to face to face classes then all of a sudden, they need to shift into blended modality which is online class or modular. This switch caused too much stress not only to the teachers that isn't that familiar with technology but also with students who depends on the teachers to gain knowledge. Too much stress causes anxiety, and because of the changes in learning modalities students and teachers are highly affects physically and mentally making them have a high risk of developing anxiety.

Research Questions

This study will determine the impacts of common distractions on the academic performance of selected students in a Private School in Gumaca, Quezon, S.Y: 2023-2024. Specifically, it will seek to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
    1.1. age;
    1.2. sex;

1.3. year level; and
1.4. department?

2. What are the impacts of common distractions to the academic performance of students in terms of:
   2.1. digital devices;
   2.2. multitasking; and
   2.3. mind wandering?
3. Is there a significant difference on the perceived impacts of common distraction to the academic performance of students when respondents are grouped according to profile?

Methodology

Research Design

This study was used a descriptive research design that aims to systematically obtain information to describe a phenomenon, situation, or population, and more specifically, impacts of common distractions affecting the academic performance of students in a private school in Gumaca, Quezon. The researcher used a survey questionnaire as an instrument. Based on the results of the survey, the researcher will be able to determine the details of the study. Descriptive research design is a scientific method that entails observing and describing a subject behavior without influencing it in any way (Shuttleworth, 2019). The primary objective of this design is to "describe" individuals, situations, issues, behaviors, or phenomena in nature (Siedlecki, 2020).

Respondents

Proportionate Random Sampling was utilized in this research: Proportionate sampling refers to the selection of sample from a population, when this selection is based on the principle of randomization, that is, random selection or chance. Proportionate sampling is a sampling method that involves randomly selecting a sample. Eighty (80) students officially enrolled at Eastern Quezon College Inc., S.Y. 2023-2024 located at Gumaca, Quezon were selected through Probability Sampling.

Instrument

The researcher drafted the questionnaire for comments and suggestions by the thesis adviser and validated by two experts regarding to the content. The suggestions served as guidelines for revisions of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire has two parts: Part I. of the questionnaire included the profile of the respondents. Part II of the questionnaire consisted the impacts of common distraction to the academic performance using the Likert scale of; 1 – Least Agree (LEA), 2 – Less Agree (LA), 3 – Agree (A), 4 – Much Agree (MA) and 5 – Very Much Agree (VMA)

To test the internal consistency of the questionnaire using Cronbach's Alpha, a pilot test was conducted at the South Luzon State University (SLSU) Gumaca Campus with 12 respondents. The result is 0.09 which is excellent implying that the research instrument is acceptable.

Procedure

Prior to the conduct of the study, the researcher will send a letter to the school administrator and department head. Upon approval, the researcher will administer the instrument to the target respondents.

In administering the questionnaire, the researcher will use the time allotted for vacant time to avoid distractions from class discussion. The student response was given enough time to answer the questions. After data gathering, the researcher collected them for tallying the scores and applied the statistical treatment used in the study.

The descriptive research design method using a Likert scale was used in order to rate the impacts of common distractions to the academic performance of students. Data were gathered through "proportionate sampling," and both males and females officially enrolled in the private school in Gumaca, Quezon, will be selected to fill out the questionnaire. The data will be gathered through a face-to-face survey following the safety health protocols.

Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher used statistical measures to treat the collected data. All the data were carefully read and examined for analysis. They were tallied and entered into a master list on the data collection sheet. Percentage and frequency were used to interpret the profile of the respondents. To describe the items in the indicators, the mean was computed. Additionally, to test the significant difference between three or more means, the researcher used the Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test.

Results and Discussion

This section deals with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data. All the data gathered were presented here in tabulated form with corresponding interpretation. The first part described the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, year level, and department. The second part is the impacts of common distractions to academic performance of selected students in a private school in

Gumaca, Quezon.

Table 1. *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Age*

Age	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*	*Rank*
18-23 years old	69	86	1
24-28 years old	10	13	2
29-33 years old	1	1	3
34 years old- above	0	0	4
Total	80	100	

Table 1 reveals that most of the respondents belonged to the age group of 18-23, with a frequency of 69 or 86% of the respondents and the last group would be the age group of 34 and above with no respondents.

Larry D. Rosen (2017) in his article "The distracted student mind — enhancing its focus and attention" discusses how today's students, including young adults, are spending less time focused on their schoolwork, taking longer to complete assignments, and feeling more stressed in the process due to the constant temptation to check their smartphones.

Table 2. *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Sex*

Sex	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*	*Rank*
Male	36	45	2
Female	44	55	1
Total	80	100	

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents as to their sex. We have males with a total of 36 respondents, which is 45%, and females with a total of 44 respondents, which is 55%. This revealed that the majority of the respondents are females.

Table 3. *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Year Level*

Year Level	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*	*Rank*
First Year	15	19	3
Second Year	28	35	2
Third Year	32	40	1
Fourth Year	5	6	4
Total	80	100	

Table 3 shows that most of the respondents are third-year college students, with a frequency of 32 or 40%. Followed by second-year with a frequency of 28 or 35%. Next to it is the first-year with a frequency of 15 or 19%, and the last category is the fourth-year college students with a total frequency of 5 or 6% only.

Table 4. *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Department*

Department	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*	*Rank*
BEED	13	16	4
BSED	17	21	2
BSBA	35	44	1
AB	15	19	3
Total	80	100	

Table 4 shows the frequency and distribution of the respondents as to their department; Most of the respondents are Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA), with a frequency of 35 or 44%, and the last group with the lowest respondents came from Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED), with a total frequency of 13 or16%.

Table 5. *Respondents Assessment on the Impacts of Common Distractions to the Academic Performance in terms of Use of Digital Devices*

Indicators *I am distracted when I . . .*	*Mean*	*Verbal Interpretation*	*Rank*
1. Use digital devices during class hours.	3.82	Much Agree	2
2. Feel that digital devices usage has affected my academic performance.	3.52	Much Agree	5
3. Feel that digital devices usage has affected my sleep schedule.	3.83	Much Agree	1
4. Spend 12 hours and above on digital devices per day.	3.63	Much Agree	3
5. Missed a deadline because of digital devices usage.	3.57	Much Agree	4
Average Mean	3.67	Much Agree	

Legend: *Least Agree (1.00-1.80), Less Agree (1.81-2.60), Agree (2.61-3.40), Much Agree (3.41-4.20), Very Much Agree (4.21-5.00).*

Table 5 illustrates the impacts of common distractions to the academic performance in terms of use of digital devices the highest rate of mean is indicator 3, "i feel that digital devices usage has affected my sleep schedule." The lowest mean is indicator 2, "i feel that digital devices usage has affected my academic performance. "It also revealed that the result of impacts of common distractions to the academic performance of respondents in terms of use of digital devices with the total average mean of 3.67 which interpreted as Much Agree.

Flanigan and Kim (2022) published the first academic book on digital distractions in college classrooms; the concept of digital distraction has started to attract more attention. Although digital distraction is a new term, the studies on digital distractions started more than a decade ago. Nowadays, more educators and professionals start to realize the detrimental effects of using digital devices on students' learning performance and feel powerless about the increasing number of students becoming highly dependent, even addicted, to digital devices.

Table 6. *Respondents Assessment on the Impacts of Common Distractions to the Academic Performance in terms of Multitasking*

Indicators *I am distracted when I . . .*	*Mean*	*Verbal Interpretation*	*Rank*
1. Am switching between different task while doing school works	3.58	Much Agree	4
2. Multitasking affects my academic performance.	3.71	Much Agree	2
3. Can not focus on studying because of another task.	3.75	Much Agree	1
4. Have difficulty carrying out multiple learning activities.	3.65	Much Agree	3
5. Missed a deadline because of multitasking.	3.42	Much Agree	5
Average Mean	3.62	Much Agree	

Legend: *Least Agree (1.00-1.80), Less Agree (1.81-2.60), Agree (2.61-3.40), Much Agree (3.41-4.20), Very Much Agree (4.21-5.00).*

Table 6 illustrates the impacts of common distractions to the academic performance in terms of multitasking the highest rate of mean is indicator 3, "Can not focus on studying because of other task.'' The lowest mean is indicator 5, "Missed a deadline because of multitasking.'' It also revealed the result of impacts of common distractions to the academic performance of respondents in terms of multitasking with the total average mean of 3.62 which interpreted as Much Agree. According to Procast (2014) that human beings cannot focus on more than one thing at a time, as argued by Tropall (2016), humans are not like computers which can run multiple processes with all of the needed focus on each one. To do something well, one, must be able to focus on the task given to them and delegates other inputs to appropriate, lesser levels of awareness.

Table 7. *Respondents Assessment on the Impacts of Common Distractions to the Academic Performance in terms of Mind Wandering*

Indicators *I am distracted when I . . .*	*Mean*	*Verbal Interpretation*	*Rank*
1. Am thinking about something that is not related to studying.	3.76	Much Agree	2
2. Find myself worrying about something while studying.	3.82	Much Agree	1
3. Lose track of what I am doing or forget what I am doing.	3.52	Much Agree	4
4. Am not paying more attention when studying.	3.4	Agree	5
5. Find it hard to when I have difficulty concentrating or staying focused on studying.	3.63	Much Agree	3
Average Mean	3.62	Much Agree	

Legend: *Least Agree (1.00-1.80), Less Agree (1.81-2.60), Agree (2.61-3.40), Much Agree (3.41-4.20), Very Much Agree (4.21-5.00).*

Table 7 illustrates the impacts of common distraction to the academic performance in terms of mind wandering. The highest rate of mean is indicator 2, "Find myself worrying about something while studying.'' The lowest mean is indicator 4, Am not paying more attention when studying. It also revealed the result of impacts of common distractions to the academic performance of respondents in terms of mind wandering with the total average mean of 3.62 which interpreted as Much Agree. Smallwood and Schooler (2015) further updated their definition of mind-wandering as "attention drifts from its current train of thought to mental content generated by the individual rather than cued by the environment." Both definitions revealed the mechanism of mind-wandering: shifting attention from a primary task to personal preferred thoughts.

Soemer et al. (2019) conducted a study in which 125 eighth-grade students were asked to read an easy, moderately tough, or difficult text and then answer multiple comprehension questions. The findings also demonstrated that reading tough materials causes more frequent mind wandering and poorer reading comprehension.

Table 8. *Summary Table on the Impacts of Common Distractions to the Academic Performance of Selected Students in a Private School in Gumaca, Quezon.*

Impacts of Common Distraction to the Academic Performance	*Average Mean*	*Verbal Interpretation*	*Rank*
Use of Digital Devices	3.67	Much Agree	1
Multitasking	3.62	Much Agree	2.5
Mind Wandering	3.62	Much Agree	2.5

Average Mean	3.63	Much Agree

Legend: *Least Agree (1.00-1.80), Less Agree (1.81-2.60), Agree (2.61-3.40), Much Agree (3.41-4.20), Very Much Agree (4.21-5.00).*

Table 8 summarizes the impacts of common distraction to the academic performance of students. As the result show, the highest impact of common distraction to the academic performance of students is use of digital devices, with a mean of 3.67. This confirms that most of the respondents are distracted due to use of digital devices, while the lowest factor among the variables of common distraction is multitasking, and mind wandering with a mean of both 3.62

Table 9. *Significant difference when perceived respondents are grouped according to profile using Kruskal Wallis H test*

Profile	*P-Value*	*Significant*	*Decision*
Age	-0.40	0.60	Reject Ho
Sex	0.00	1.00	Reject Ho
Year Level	0.20	0.80	Reject Ho
Program	0.00	1.00	Reject Ho

Ho: μ>0.05, 0.01, 0.1, the null hypothesis is accepted

Table 9 shows the Kruskal Wallis test implicated significant difference on the perceive impacts of common distractions to the academic performance when respondents are grouped by age, sex, year level and program. Since all the computed p-value are less than level significant. The null Hypothesis is rejected. This would imply that the perceptions on the common distraction to the academic performance varies according to age, sex, year level, and program. It informs the study of DeCandia (2021) asserted that the top distractions a student may face are social media, texting, television, and family issues. These distractions may cause the student to be unable to listen and comprehend the discussion. Despite the fact that numerous researchers have looked into this topic, there is a lack of knowledge about the difficulties students face and the strategies they use to overcome them. This research aims to fill in the gaps.

Conclusions

Most of the respondents are females aged 18–33 years old, and the majority are third-year college students from the BSBA department. Among the three impacts of common distractions to academic performance, use of digital devices gained the highest mean. Thus, it indicates that it greatly contributes to the distraction to academic performance of students. This led us to conclude that use of digital devices can have a huge impact on why students are distracted. There is a significant difference when perceived respondents are grouped according to profile. It implies that the perceptions on the common distraction to the academic performance vary between the profile.

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were forwarded: To the School Administrators, they may serve as the basis in designing program and seminars to the needs of the teachers. To the Parents, they may help them to guide and understand how distractions can affect the academic performance of their children. To the Teachers, they may provide additional knowledge on what strategy to use to educate students on how can they focus on studying and avoiding common distractions affecting their academic performance. To the Students, they may will give them knowledge on how the common distractions can affect their academic performance and how to overcome them. To the Future Researchers, this study may provide contribution to other researchers in a way that this may serve as reference for their research studies similar to this topic using larger population for more reliable result.

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