

MARINE TRANSPORTATION AND MARINE ENGINEERING STUDENTS' ATTITUDE ON CLASSROOM SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

Social interaction of the students within the classroom involves the teachers and their classmates where teaching and learning activities are being facilitated which need to be improved and addressed some factors that may somehow influence the learning process of the Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering Students in one private Asian university. This study aimed to determine the difference on the attitude between Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students towards the classroom social environment in terms of teachers as to character, subject mastery and teaching strategy; as well as in terms of their interpersonal relationships with other students. Descriptive type of research was utilized in the study. Results showed that the Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students have positive attitude towards their teachers and peers. They viewed positively the way teachers facilitate the teaching and learning process and the way their colleagues communicate and socialize within the circle of classmates. They maintain constructive view of seeing each other every day with genuine interest in the activities of each member of the class.

Keywords: Maritime, Attitude, Social Environment, Character.

INTRODUCTION

Changing or enhancing the attitude of the students towards school related factors would help them achieve the proper way of learning the skills they need after graduation wherein this is the aim of education to create teaching and learning environment that would bring about desired changes in learners such as making them more knowledgeable, skillful or acquired positive attitudes and values (Reyes, 2013) while school is not strictly a building but rather a setting or place of education that includes the people who go there and that all of these interact with one another to affect learning where school climate can affect student academic achievement and success in addition to positive social and emotional development efforts (Zullig et al., 2010).

Maintaining an interactive classroom for the entire class period is always a challenge for teachers. Class periods must also be managed effectively and efficiently to give justice to the time

spent by the students who expect that teachers must spend the class in the most productive manner for quality education (Laguador & Agena, 2013). It also includes active participation of the students in the classroom discussion which is always being encouraged to strengthen not only the cognitive ability of the learners but also the affective and psychomotor domains (Laguador, 2014).

Collaboration among students provides healthy competition and cooperation within the classroom setting. Students tend to engage in more adaptive patterns of learning when they believe they are encouraged to know, interact with, and help classmates during lessons; when they view their classroom as one where students and their ideas are respected and not belittled; when students perceive their teacher as understanding and supportive; and when they feel their teacher does not publicly identify students' relative performance (Ryan & Patrick, 2001). Buckley et al. (2014) stated that students' sense of connectedness to school (i.e., their feelings of support and acceptance within the school social environment) may potentially impact on their intervening behavior, particularly within the school context.

Providing proper instruction and direction would lead to well-informed members of the class towards a successful teaching and learning process which defines certain rules and regulations to follow by everyone for an orderly manner of day-to-day classroom activities. To help improve student outcomes, it is worthwhile to identify variables within the school environment that can be targeted to enhance student academic achievement (Gietz, 2011) which is directly being influenced within the classroom setting. The classroom social environment is comprised of students' perceptions about how they are encouraged to interact with and relate to others (e.g., classmates, the teacher), and encompasses dimensions of teacher support, promoting mutual respect, promoting student task-related interaction, and promoting performance goals. Teachers help to construct the classroom social environment by creating norms and rules for student social behavior in the classroom and giving explicit messages regarding students' interactions with their classmates (Ryan & Patrick, 2001).

Teaching is a systematic plan to achieve a learning objective (Abanador et al., 2014) while learning is an interactive process that occurs in a specific environment. Learning process should always be meaningful and challenging yet enjoyable in order to stimulate the enthusiasm and interest of the students to perform certain tasks or academic related activities with cooperation (Chavez, Dotong & Laguador, 2014). Classroom is an environment where students expressed their behavior related to academics during lecture session, physical and mental activities (Bulaklak & Pilobello, 2014). Student views about their experience at any educational system, its programs, the component units of the program, and the entire learning environment are essential aspects for quality enhancement (Bay & Subido, 2014). Educators must also possess effective teaching techniques and strategies to ensure and maximize the learning of the students (Orence & Laguador, 2013). This study aimed to determine the difference on the attitude between Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students towards the classroom social environment in terms of teachers as to character, subject mastery and teaching strategy; as well as in terms of their interpersonal relationships with other students.

METHOD

The normative survey under the descriptive type of research was utilized in the study. Descriptive survey method is appropriate for data derived from simple observational situations, whether these are actually physically observed or observed through the use of a

questionnaire or poll techniques (Costales and Zulueta, 2003). Thirty percent (30%) of the Second year BS Marine Engineering and BS Marine Transportation students served as the respondents of the study. The survey questionnaire for determining the attitude of the students towards school social environment was used to collect data and information.

A survey questionnaire was composed of two areas. It determined the attitude of the students towards: teachers, other students and teaching strategy. The questionnaire was administered to second year BS Computer Engineering (BSCpE) students to test its reliability and validity wherein a computed Cronbach alpha of 0.79 was achieved.

Weighted mean and T-test were the statistical tools to analyze the data result of the study. Weighted Mean was used to analyze the attitude of the students towards school social environment, while t-test was used to test the differences between the attitude of Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students towards the school social environment. On the Scale for Measuring Attitude Towards School Social Environment, the given scale was utilized: 4.50 – 5.00: Strongly Agree (SA); 3.50 – 4.59: Agree (A); 2.50 – 3.49: Moderately Agree (MA); 1.50 – 2.49: Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49: Strongly Disagree (SD).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the obtained weighted mean for measuring the respondents' attitude towards any teacher.

Table 1: Respondents' Attitude Towards Any Teacher

Character	MT	ME	WM	VI	Rank	Sig
1. Gives individual help willingly.	4.13	4.02	4.08	A	3	0.281
2. Understands young people.	4.32	4.19	4.26	A	1	0.175
3. Grades fairly.	3.79	4.22	4.01	A	4	0.041*
4. Seems never to tire of teaching.	4.18	4.27	4.23	A	2	0.203
5. Inspires the students with confidence in their own abilities.	3.82	4.11	3.97	A	5	0.071
Composite Mean	4.05	4.16	4.11	A		
Subject Mastery						
1. Knows the subject.	4.52	4.46	4.49	A	1	0.392
2. Can talk well on many subjects.	4.24	4.17	4.21	A	3.5	0.238
3. Makes the subject matter interesting.	4.38	4.25	4.32	A	2	0.193
4. Follows the textbook closely enough with additional information from research	3.43	3.38	3.41	MA	5	0.253
5. Uses personal illustration frequently	4.29	4.12	4.21	A	3.5	0.432
Composite Mean	4.17	4.08	4.12	A		
Teaching Strategy						
1. Uses meaningful gestures.	4.23	4.31	4.27	A	2	0.254
2. Uses vocabulary best suited to the average student.	4.19	4.01	4.10	A	4	0.223
3. Is serious enough on dealing with the subject	4.39	4.28	4.34	A	1	0.187
4. Does something to gain interest of the students to the subject	4.08	4.15	4.12	A	3	0.329
5. Teaches the students how to study.	3.87	3.61	3.74	A	5	0.177
Composite Mean	4.15	4.07	4.11	A		

The Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students have positive attitude towards any teacher in terms of the way teachers understand young people as denoted by the total weighted mean score of 4.26 on rank number one (1) followed by teachers seem are never tired of teaching and give individual help willingly with computed total weighted mean scores of 4.23 and 4.08, respectively.

Meanwhile, Marine Engineering students (4.22) have significantly higher attitude towards the teachers in the way they perceive the teachers are grading them fairly compared to Marine Transportation (3.79) as denoted by the computed p-value of 0.041 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance.

However, there is no significant difference on the way students see their teachers are inspiring them with confidence in their own abilities which obtained the least total weighted mean score of 3.97 on rank number 5.

The computed composite mean score of 4.11 signifies that the marine transportation and marine engineering students have high level of attitude towards any teacher in terms of character. Students who perceive their teacher as promoting support, respect, and task-related interaction, and not making an ability hierarchy among students salient, tend to hold the most positive beliefs about learning and engage in more adaptive learning-related behaviors (Ryan & Patrick, 2005).

The Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students have positive attitude towards any teacher in terms of the way teachers know the subject as denoted by the total weighted mean score of 4.49 on rank number one (1) followed by teachers make the subject matter interesting and use personal illustration frequently as well as can talk well on many subjects with computed total weighted mean scores of 4.32, 4.21 and 4.21, respectively. Obedience of the students to their professors helped them built a strong character of complying with the requirements and demands of their degree program (Bernardo, Landicho & Laguador, 2014). Respect built from the positive attitude of the students to the students creates an atmosphere strong connection between the course and the students.

However, the students are moderately agreed the way teachers follow the textbook closely enough with additional information from research as denoted by the computed total weighted mean score of 3.41 on rank number 5.

There is no significant difference between the attitude of Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students in terms of subject mastery of the teachers as indicated by the computed p-values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance.

The computed composite mean score of 4.12 implies that the marine transportation and marine engineering students have high level of attitude towards any teacher in terms of subject mastery.

In the study conduct by Patrick et al (2001) found out that teachers perceived as having a high mastery focus spoke about learning as an active process, and this was reflected in their practices. They required involvement from all students, emphasized effort, and encouraged student interaction. Those teachers also exhibited social and affective support for, and concern about, students' learning and progress.

The Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students have positive attitude towards any teacher in terms of the way teachers act seriously enough on dealing with the subject as denoted by the total weighted mean score of 4.34 on rank number one (1) followed by teachers use meaningful gestures and do something to gain interest of the students to the subject with computed total weighted mean scores of 4.27 and 4.12, respectively. Interest like motivation could drive someone to pursue their degree programs as they plan it to finish in specified time (Ramirez & Dizon, 2014). Interest is an intrinsic motivational factor that stimulates the enthusiasm of a person to perform better or more than what is expected of him to accomplish (Laguador, 2013a). As the student population becomes more diverse and student needs become more complex, teachers are increasingly challenged to find ways to maximize student learning (Gietz, & McIntosh, 2011). Meanwhile, the students also agree that their teachers use vocabulary best suited to the average student and teach the students how to study which obtained the least weighted mean scores of 4.10 and 3.74, respectively.

There is no significant difference between the attitude of Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students in terms of teaching strategy of the teachers as indicated by the computed p-values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance. The computed composite mean score of 4.11 implies that the marine transportation and marine engineering students have high level of attitude towards the teaching strategy.

Table 2: Respondents' Attitude Towards Other Students

Towards Other Students	MT	ME	WM	VI	Rank	Sig.
1. When others make an error in my presence. I am almost certain to point it out to them.	3.29	3.44	3.37	MA	1	0.154
2. I find it hard to take a genuine interest in the activities of some of my friends.	2.35	2.41	2.38	MA	4	0.274
3. Some of my friends/classmates consistently do things of which I disapprove.	2.18	2.09	2.14	D	8	0.201
4. On general, college students are not very mature socially and emotionally.	1.43	1.52	1.48	SD	10	0.164
5. Some people whom I know become conceited or hard to live with.	2.37	2.14	2.26	D	7	0.108
6. At times, I feel some of my friends find it hard to seek for my advice and help on decisions they have to make.	2.63	2.51	2.57	MA	3	0.245
7. One cannot afford to give attention to the opinions of others when he is certain he is correct.	2.33	3.45	2.89	MA	2	0.192
8. I find it hard to sympathize with people whose misfortunes I believe are due mainly to their own shortcomings.	2.18	2.38	2.28	D	5.5	0.239
9. Some people are always trying to get more than their share of the good things in life.	2.02	1.78	1.90	D	9	0.043*
10. The success of most people I know seems primarily from the breaks they got.	2.39	2.16	2.28	D	5.5	0.619
Composite Mean	2.32	2.39	2.35	D		

Table 2 shows the obtained weighted mean for measuring the respondents' attitude towards other students. The Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students are moderately

agree towards other students in terms of when others make an error in their presence, they are almost certain to point it out to them as denoted by the total weighted mean score of 3.37 on rank number one (1) followed by one cannot afford to give attention to the opinions of others when they are certain they are correct and at times, they feel some of their friends find it hard to seek for their advice and help on decisions they have to make with computed total weighted mean scores of 3.37, 2.89 and 2.57, respectively. Both respondents have no significant difference on the following mentioned statements as manifested by the computed p-values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance.

They are also moderately agreed in finding it hard to take a genuine interest in the activities of some of their friends as indicated by the computed total weighted mean score of 2.38 on rank number 4. Both respondents have no significant difference on this statement as denoted by the computed p-value of 0.274 which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance.

There is no significant difference on the level of disagreement of students in finding it hard to sympathize with people whose misfortunes they believe are due mainly to their own shortcomings and the success of most people they know seems primarily from the breaks they got which obtained weighted mean score of 2.28 that implies positive attitude with no significance difference between the two groups of respondents as indicated by the computed p-values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance.

They also disagreed in viewing some people whom they know become conceited or hard to live with and some of their friends/classmates consistently to things of which they disapprove which obtained the computed weighted mean scores of 2.26 and 2.09 respectively with no significance difference between the two groups of respondents as indicated by the computed p-values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance which also signifies positive attitude. Marine Engineering students have significantly higher degree of disagreement in the view that some people are always trying to get more than their share of the good things in life as compared to the Marine Transportation students as denoted by the computed p-value of 0.043 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. This also implies that both groups have higher level of positive attitude on this statement.

The respondents have high level of positive towards other students when they answered strongly disagree in the view on general that college students are not very mature socially and emotionally as denoted by the computed total weighted mean score of 1.48 with no significance difference between the attitude of the two groups as manifested by the computed p-value of 0.164 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance.

Marine students wanted to be instructed completely in order for them to perform the activities accurately with the help of other members of the group through teamwork (Velasco et al., 2015). The computed composite mean score of 2.35 implies that the marine transportation and marine engineering students have high level of attitude towards other students. It seems that they don't find it hard to communicate and work on their studies, projects and assignments that would cause them to be discouraged to continue and finish their degree programs in the academy.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering students have high level of positive attitude towards any teacher and students in the academy. They agree that teachers have the capability

to provide quality instruction with an enhanced strategy in presenting ideas and knowledge-based content from various researches. Research may also be incorporated in teaching and learning activities as culminating activity of each course as strong evidence of student outcomes (Laguador & Dotong, 2014; Garcia et al., 2015).

It is good to be observed by the students that their teachers know how to understand the needs of young people like them and they seem that to tire teaching. Marine Engineering students have significantly higher attitude towards their teachers in giving grades fairly compared to Marine Transportation which is something that the teachers who are handling these students to discuss and re-orient them regarding the grading system and give them feedback from time to time about their academic performance. Give them their midterm grades and results of quizzes in the most appropriate time to let them know their performance and the scores they still need to obtain to get the grades they expect to achieve from a certain course.

Educators can improve school climate, student behaviour, and academic achievement by teaching students positive, acceptable behaviours, much in the same way that academic skills are taught (Gietz & McIntosh, 2011). Inspiring the students should always be part of the responsibilities of the teachers to stimulate the interest and enthusiasm of the students to reach their full potential as future leaders, professional mariners and successful seafarers. Having an effective classroom management is a skill that needs to be mastered by the Maritime Professional teachers. Since they are not education graduates, they must achieve the value of this expertise (Laguador & Alcantara, 2013).

Lessons may be started with some words of wisdom to continue their journey towards life. Giving them the opportunity to hear some words of encouragement directly from their teachers would provide higher level of engagement to the course and strong social interaction with their teachers and peers. Helping the students understand the sense of responsibility and sense of urgency would lead them to another accomplishment in leadership roles (Martinez et al., 2014). The emphasis on the importance of the classroom social environment, including support, mutual respect, task-related interaction among students, and a lesser focus on competition among students, is apparent in reform recommendations (Ryan & Patrick, 2005).

They see their teachers doing their tasks seriously in dealing with the course and they are doing something to gain interest of the students towards the subject being discussed. The types of academic tasks teachers assign can encourage or dissuade cooperation and sharing of expertise. Furthermore, the types of participation structures they establish and the way they publicly recognize students contribute to the social environment (Ryan & Patrick, 2001). Some teaching strategies may still be adapted to add variation in the usual lecture-discussion method but teachers may still need to provide activities and projects that would enhance the study habits of the students. Teachers must treat the students equally even the slow learners and give them proper attention to develop the appropriate way of study habits and practices inside and outside the classroom (Laguador, 2013b). Giving the low performing students enough attention would lead them to greater accomplishment of their future careers (Dotong, 2014). The use of group contingencies is one such evidence-based approach to promote appropriate behavior among many students or an entire class (Flower et al., 2014).

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