

# Impact Appraisal of Classroom Management (Attendance and Participation) on Performance of Business Education Students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria

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## Abstract

The study investigated the impact of class attendance and participation on their academic achievement of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria. The study has five objectives and five null hypotheses were raised. Descriptive design method was adopted for the study. Two hundred and ninety (290) undergraduate students that registered and sat for Business mathematics, Principles of Business Education and Economics Analysis examinations in 2011/2012 calendar year were used for the study. Self design registers were used for marking students attendance and participations in the classroom activities while performance in the three examinations for the academic year were used to determine students' academic achievement. To ensure validity of the instruments, the researchers personally record and handled the two registers while board of examiners in department of vocational and technical education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria vetted the final copy of the examination questions and the marking schemes. Staff from in the department assisted the researchers in administering the examinations, supervision and collections of the scripts. Collected scripts were marked by the researchers using the drawn marking schemes. Scores obtained in attendance, classroom participation and examinations were recorded and subjected to statistical analysis using regression for test of null hypotheses one and two while independent samples t-tests were used to test null hypotheses three, four and five. All the hypotheses were tested at significant level of 0.05. The study showed a positive significant relationship between attendance and classroom participation on academic achievement of business education students. It was recommended among others that, teachers should try to reduce boredom among students by motivating them to attend and participate in classroom activities.

**Keywords:** Classroom, Attendance, Participation, Performance, Business Education, Students

## Introduction

In most tertiary institutions, class attendance is one of the conditions that qualifies students to sit for continuous assessment and examination. In USA for example, attendance is taken seriously, in Mexico and India, private universities take attendance much more seriously while in Middle East and in Europe such as Germany, problem of attendance of university classes by students has been an issue for discussion (Kevin 2013). The compulsory attendance policy specified that, students must have certain percentage of class attendance before qualifying for examination of a course and poor attendance can give rise to reprimands. This policy has made it mandatory for lecturers to establish an attendance policy for their course(s) and students absence for any reason must be made known to lecturer(s) in advance else the students will forfeiture their right to make up work.

Participation usually means students speaking in class: answer and ask questions, make comments, and join in discussions. Active participation of students in class is predictable to facilitate critical thinking, resulting in increased retention of information and learning. Participation is of two types, either voluntarily by students or on the preference of instructor. In education, it is believed that the attendance and participation in class will help students to grasp the fundamental knowledge efficiently and enhancing their necessary skills proficiently. Merry and Darren (2001) reported that students that attend and participate in classroom activities gains the advantage to hear discussion and elaboration of important concepts, including the teacher's perspective on the material. In addition to learning from the teacher's explanations of class material, students who are in class hear questions and comments from others, and share their own. It therefore follows that, class attendance and participation are essential factors that help to perfect learners understanding. Similar Pascarella, Terenzini & Hibel (1978) and Kevin (2010) categorically state that students' attendance and their participation in classroom activities help them to succeed in their academic work. LISA (2012) reported that, missing as little as two weeks of school can put young children behind their peers. Buttressing this, Kelci (2013) argued that students that go to class on a regular basis can be more prepared for their upcoming assignments, test, practical, exams, etc. Marburger (2001)

relates the likelihood of a student missing a question on a multiple choice exam to the student's attendance on the day that the material in the question was covered. Devadoss and Foltz (1996) found that after taking into account motivational and aptitude differences across students, the difference in exam performance between a student with perfect attendance and a student attending only half of the classes is, on average, a full letter grade. Based on this, it can be concluded that, class attendance and participation have positive relationship with students' academic performance, while high absentees from the class would have a negative effect on the student's academic grades and would decrease their examination scores and grades.

Despite the documented importance of class attendance, the rate of students absenteeism is so high in most Nigerian tertiary institutions, in addition, there is uprising question among students and even lecturers of why is class attendance made compulsory in tertiary institutions? Interaction with some students shows that some of them considered it to be waste of time and that denied students time to other activities. Van Blerkom (1992) reported that, mostly students find class attendance boring and time wastage more especially if the course is not challenging or if they are doing well in the course. It is more surprising that even some scholars argue that academic freedom in tertiary educational institutions provides students with opportunities to absent themselves from classes. To this group of scholars, students from tertiary institutions are adults and, therefore, should be responsible for coming to class on their own accord. The report of Tiffany and Cary (2008) shows that some lecturers argued that marking attendance and compelling student to contribute are antithetical to instilling responsibility and intrinsic motivation in college students and, worse, robs young adults of their free will to make a choice. The scenarios prompted the researchers to determine the:- (i) influence of attendance on performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria; (ii) influence of classroom participation on academic performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria; (iii) difference in the mean performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria who are regular in their classes and those that are not; (iv) difference in the performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria who participates in classroom activities and those that do not; and (v) difference in the mean performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria who regular and also participate in classroom activities and those who are regular only.

## 1.2 Null hypotheses

As a guide, the following null hypotheses were raised and tested at significance level 0.05.

### Null hypotheses

As a guide, the following null hypotheses were raised and tested.

1. Class attendance has no significantly influenced academic performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria
2. Classroom participation has no significantly influenced academic performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria
3. There is no significant difference in the mean performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria who are regular in their classes and those that are not
4. There is no significant difference in the performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria who participate in classroom activities and those that do not.
5. There is no significant difference in the academic performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria who regular and also participate in classroom activities and those who are regular only.

## Methodology

Survey design method was adopted for the study. The researcher used 290 undergraduate students that registered and sat for Business mathematics, Principles of Business Education and Economics Analysis in 2011/2012 calendar year. Three secondary data (class attendances, records of participation and examination results) were used in the study. A novel policy of attendance and participation of the three subjects were used for recording students' attendance and participation in the classroom activities. Three (3) points score was recorded for students that are regular and also participate in classroom activities, two (2) points was recorded for students that are either regular or not regular but do participates in classroom activities while one (1) point for students that are not regular and do not participate in classroom activities. To have accurate data of students' attendance and their participation in classroom activities, the researchers personally record and handled the documents used to registered students attendance and participation.

The researchers personally taught the courses using the syllabi and set the questions and the marking scheme based on the area covered. Validity of each of the instrument and the marking scheme were established

by board of examiners in department of vocational and technical education in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria who vetted the instruments. Their corrections and suggestions were incorporated in the final copy. Staff from in the department assisted the researchers in administering, supervising of the retrieving of the scripts. Retrieved scripts were marked by the researchers using the drawn marking schemes. Scores of students' achievements in the three examinations were recorded against their score of attendances and participation. Statistical research tools used to test null hypotheses one and two was regression while t-test was used to test null hypotheses three, four and five. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Result of test of the Null Hypotheses**

The result of null hypotheses is presented in Table 1 to 5

**Null Hypothesis One:** Class attendance has no significantly influenced academic performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria

Result of test of null hypothesis one is presented in Table 1

Table 1: Regression analysis of test of influence class attendance on students' performance

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Std. Error	Error of Estimate	Beta	z-value	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Sig. (2-tailed)
Students attendance	58.11	1.09	290	1.18	4.5	.88	1.85	0.88	0.774	0.768	.074
Students performance	62.91	1.16	290	1.08							.000

Table 1 present the result of regression analysis used for measuring the influence of students' attendance on their academic achievement. The analysis present Beta value of 0.88, z-value of 1.85, adjusted R<sup>2</sup> was .0768; R value of .88 and R<sup>2</sup> of .774. This result shows 77.4% of estimation efficient of the model. The probability, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.000, shows that attendance significantly influence the performance of business education students with 77.4% at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore not retained

**Null Hypothesis Two:** Classroom participation has no significantly influenced academic performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria

Test of null hypothesis two is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Regression analysis of test of influence participation on students' performance

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Std. Error	Error of Estimate	Beta	z-value	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Sig. (2-tailed)
Classroom participation	59.31	1.26	290	1.01	2.11	.92	1.72	0.92	0.85	0.688	.006
Students performance	66.35	1.33	290	1.08							.000

Table 2 which present the result of regression used to test null hypothesis two shows the Beta value of 0.92 with z-value of 1.72. The R<sup>2</sup> adjusted value of 0.688 and R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.85. This result shows 85% of estimation efficient of the model. The probability, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.000, shows that participation of business education students in classroom activities have 85% influence on their academic achievement. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

**Null Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference in the mean performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria who are regular in their classes and those that are not

Regression result for test of null hypothesis three is presented in Table 3

Table 3: T-test analysis of difference in the mean performance of students that are regular in class and those who are not.

Groups	Mean	SD	N	Df	t-cal	t-crt	Sig. (2-tailed)
Students that are Regular	68	3.21	176	288	.219	.195	0.02
Students that are not Regular	46	1.25	114				

The result of test of null hypothesis three shows that students that are regular in class have mean score of 68 against 46 for those who are not with standard deviation of 3.21 and 1.25 respectively. The calculated value was .219 while the Table value stood at .195 at significance level of 0.05. The result therefore shows that mean performance of business education students that are regular in the class significantly differed from their counterparts who are not regular. Based on the analysis, the null hypothesis was rejected.

**Null Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant difference in the performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria who participate in classroom activities and those that are not

Result of test of null hypothesis four is presented in Table 4

Table 4: T-test analysis of difference in the mean performance of students who participate in class and those who are not.

Groups	Mean	SD	N	Df	t-cal	t-crt	Sig. (2-tailed)
Students that participate in classroom	63	4.41	98	288	.291	.195	0.00
Students that do not participate in classroom	44	2.01	192				

Result of data used to test null hypothesis four indicates mean score of students who participates in classroom activities was greater than those who do not ( $63 > 44$ ). Their standard deviation stood at 4.41 and 2.01 respectively. The calculated value was greater than Table value ( $.291 > .195$ ) at significance level of 0.05. The result therefore shows that there is significant difference in the mean performance of students who participates classroom activities and those who do not. Based on the analysis, the null hypothesis was rejected.

**Null Hypothesis Five:** There is no significant difference in the academic performance of business education students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria who regular and also participate in classroom activities and those who are regular only.

Result of test of null hypothesis five is presented in Table 5

Table 5: T-test analysis of difference in the mean performance of students who are regular and also participate in class and those who are regular only.

Groups	Mean	SD	N	Df	t-cal	t-crt	Sig. (2-tailed)
Regular and also participate in classroom	75	5.31	98	174	1.12	.195	0.001
Regular only	48	2.25	78				

Analysis of data used to test the null hypothesis five shows that, students that are regular and also participate in classroom activities had mean score of 75 against 49 for those that are regular only. Their standard deviation was 5.31 and 2.25 respectively with degree of freedom value of 174. Calculated value was greater than the critical value ( $1.12 > .195$ ). The results demonstrated a significant association between attendance/participation on students' academic performance. Thus significant difference exists in the performance of students from the two groups. Based on these results, the null hypothesis was rejected.

### Discussion of the Results

The study revealed that, students' attendance in class has influence on their performance in schools. Previous studies documented the relation between class attendance and grades. For example, study of Dekalb (1999) reveals that student achievement is affected in a negative way by absenteeism. In a related study, Snell and Mekies (1995) discovered that students who attended classes 95% of the time were significantly more likely to earn a grade of an A or B. Their study concluded that attendance and academic performance are strongly related. Similarly, Launius (1997), using a sample of 378 students in four sections of an introductory psychology course, found a significant positive correlation between attendance and exam performance, outside activities and, in at least one section, the final exam score. Biegel (2000) in his study titled the interfaces between attendance, academic achievement and equal educational opportunities in the US, observed that there is a direct correlation between class attendance and academic achievement. He explained that students who go to class invariably do

better in school and they maximize their chances for success. To Chung (2004), regular attendance appears to be such an obvious condition for success in college. Clump, Bauer, and Whiteleather (2003) revealed that there is a significant relation between attendance and both immediate test scores and overall class test scores using a sample of 423 undergraduate students enrolled in two sections of a general psychology course. Similarly, Nichols (2003) reported that, there is a significant relationship between student attendance and their achievement. Roby (2004) cited attendance as an important variable in measuring academic performance.

The study further shows that students' participations in classroom activities have impact on their academic outcomes. This finding affirmed the views of majority of scholars that carry out similar research. For instance study of ACPA and NASPA (1997) shows that, active learning invites students to bring their life experiences into the learning process, reflect on their own and others' perspectives as they expand their viewpoints, and apply new understanding to their own lives. The study of Harry and Megan (1977) shows that, students who participate actively in the classroom learn the subject matter more effectively than students taught in the traditional lecture mode. They stressed that, this group of students show greater development in areas such as oral communication, critical thinking and problem solving. Institution Benchmark Report (2002) revealed that, students tend to learn more when they are actively involved in their education in different settings.

The result of the study shows that, students who are regular in their classes earned higher marks in the courses than students who are not regular. The findings of the study is similar with that of Devadoss and Foltz (1996) who reported that, student with perfect classroom attendance perform better than students that attend only half of the classes. In the same lane, Marburger (2001) report shoes that, students who missed class were significantly more likely to respond incorrectly to questions relating to material covered that day than were students who were present. The contention of Daniel (2006) shows that a significant link exists between absenteeism and learning, he stressed that, students who were absent during a class period were more likely to respond incorrectly to a question pertaining to material covered in their absences than were students who were present. Millis, Dyson and Cannon (2009) reported that frequent attendees had higher passing rates on the examination and for the course than the passing rates for sporadic attendees. In addition to being more likely to pass, frequent attendees earned higher scores on the examination and higher final grades than those of their sporadic attendee counterparts.

The result of the study further revealed that there is a strong link between participation in classroom activities and student outcomes in business subjects. The result of the study further affirmed the finding of Millis, Dyson and Cannon (2009) reported that there was a significant association between a high rate of classroom participation and a high score on of students in comprehensive examination. These findings suggest that classroom attendance/participation may be a significant determinant of performance of students on comprehensive examinations.

Finally, the study shows that, business education student who are regular and also participate in classroom activities perform better than their counterparts that are regular only. The result is similar with that of Chan, Shum and Wright (1997) who reported that relationship between class attendance and participation on academic performance in two sections of a Principles of Finance course was positive. Credé, Roch, and Kieszczynka. (2010) reported that, class attendance without participation simply denotes physical presence in the classroom. Similarly, Millis, Dyson and Cannon (2009) study reveals that, students with better classroom attendance/ participation had improved examination performance because of the receipt of exam cues given in class rather than greater comprehension. There added that, attendance/participation may be a consequence of self-selection, i.e., on average, students motivated to attend class would likely do better in any setting. Ebi (2012) reported that, students who attend classes more frequently and participate in classroom activities, take good notes, study, and turn in homework nearly always than those who report participating with less frequency and their rate of academic abilities are better than their counterparts that do not

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The study provides evidence which shows that attendance improves students' performance. From the result, it can be concluded that class attendance and participation are the essential factors that perfect learners: - understanding, grasping firmly knowledge, improvement of necessary skills and academic performance. However, the students that attend classes regularly and also participate in classroom activities perform better than their contemporaries that are regular only. The main implication arising from this study is that, since class attendance is so clearly associated with academic performance, students who excessively absenteeism and hardly participate in classroom activities significantly increase their odds of a poor performance in a given course, loss of interest in schooling and consequently withdrawal from schooling.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:-

1. Business education lecturers should try and recognizing students with their names and characters. This

- will help him to notice students that are absent for proper counselling.
2. Lecturers should always mark attendance, in addition, the school authority should make minimum attendance requirement of at least 80% for a student to qualify to sit for a semester examination. Students whose absences are unavoidable and understandable must inform the authority else they face the same consequences.
  3. Classroom attendance and participation should be considered as 10% of students' continuous assessment. This will help to improve their attendance and participation in the classroom activities.
  4. Business education lecturers in tertiary institutions should make greater use of instructional techniques that will require active student participations such as class discussion, questioning, cooperative learning, problem-based learning etc
  5. Business education lecturers should occasionally, ask the more verbose students to hold back from commenting in order to give others a chance take extra steps to encourage quiet students to speak up.
  6. Business education lecturers in Nigeria tertiary institutions should try to reduce boredom among students by motivating and encouraging them to participate in classroom activities.

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