

INFLUENCE OF STUDENTS' SUPPORT SERVICES ON ATTITUDE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstract

Student Support Services (SSS) crucial for holistic student growth, addressing challenges; lacking services leads to academic decline, disruptive behavior, risking school disruptions and closures. This study undertakes a comprehensive exploration of the perceived influence of SSS on the attitudes and academic performance of business education students. The study's scope include a population of 4,809 business education students enrolled in public universities situated within the South-western region. A sample size of 346 students, guided by recommendations from Research Advisors, was selected for the research. Data collection was executed through a detailed questionnaire comprising 346 items, ensuring the collection of robust and comprehensive data. The study's findings unequivocally demonstrate the positive impact of SSS on both the academic performance and learning attitudes of business education students engaged in business education courses. In light of these compelling results, it is strongly recommended that policymakers and academic administrators take a proactive stance in evaluating SSS.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Attitude, Business Education, Students Support Services

Introduction

Educational institutions play a crucial role in nurturing students for their future endeavors, both within and beyond the classroom. Consequently, these institutions bear the responsibility of meeting students' fundamental needs, encompassing a broad spectrum of areas, whether educational or personal. This holistic approach to addressing student needs is encapsulated within the framework of Student Support Services (SSS), a cornerstone of the modern education system. SSS has rightfully emerged as a vital function within educational institutions, driven by the overarching goal of fostering the intellectual, physical, moral, and social development of students. By offering a range of services, SSS empowers students to channel their focus toward their educational pursuits, as noted by Lewis (2011). A wide range of student necessities encompasses newcomer orientation, discipline, career guidance, financial aid, counseling (educational, psychological, social, professional), leisure activities, and sports. Meeting these diverse needs is crucial for quality education, with support services pivotal for student success (Eze, 2015). By attending to these needs comprehensively, educational institutions can truly equip students for a bright future.

SSS serve as catalysts for nurturing positive thinking and actions among students, fostering academic achievement, and shaping future career choices. Their significance in the socio-economic lives of students cannot be overstated. These services are meticulously designed to identify and resolve various challenges faced by students. At the heart of student support services lie guidance and counseling, which play a pivotal role in offering guidance on personal, academic, and career-related matters (Alina, 2013). Ogunlade (2011) highlights the importance of a well-equipped clinic in addressing students' healthcare needs, contributing to their overall well-being. Adequate provision of essential amenities such as water, electricity, catering services, and accommodation further enhances students' campus experiences. Ogunlade emphasizes that when these services are effectively provided, they contribute to improved academic performance, aligning with the institution's service standards and fostering positive outcomes. Conversely, insufficient support services can lead to subpar academic performance and disruptive behavior among students, potentially resulting in riots, demonstrations, property damage, and academic disruptions, with the severe consequence of school closures. The provision of comprehensive

student support services not only bolsters academic success but also plays a pivotal role in nurturing a conducive and harmonious campus environment, ultimately benefiting both students and educational institutions. The architects of educational plans often overlook a pivotal aspect of higher education – the learners themselves. Offering both communal and empathetic support to business education students, in addition to academic aid, demonstrates an awareness of students' needs and has the potential to significantly elevate the quality of higher education. The present research aims to delve into the student support services provided by institutions for holistic student development. (Kaur, 2016).

The library stands as a cornerstone among student support services, holding a position of paramount importance. It serves as a bastion of self-education, providing students with a gateway to knowledge, practical insights, intellectual enrichment, and profound enlightenment, expanding their intellectual horizons. Library plays a pivotal role as an educational institution, aiding students in resolving their information-related queries. This is accomplished through unfettered access to reliable sources and the mastery of information tools, allowing students to procure essential information precisely when needed. Indeed, a university's essence is incomplete without a library, for libraries constitute an indispensable component of educational institutions worldwide, spanning schools, colleges, and universities (Alabi and Sani, 2013). Specifically, this study endeavors to examine the impact of student support services on the attitudes and academic performance of Business Education Students.

Students Support Services (SSS) are a wide range of programs and services that are carefully designed to make education more appealing and accessible to students. They are an essential part of the higher education system, acting as a conduit between students and the university. Strong student support services are inextricably linked to the quality of higher education. Granting degrees is not enough; colleges also need to make sure that their students have access to strong support networks in order for them to succeed. Significant data supports the idea that students' academic achievement is positively correlated with their active participation in these support systems, as demonstrated by Kaur (2016). Nigerian higher education institutions are fundamentally established with the overarching objective of furnishing each enrolled student with a high-caliber education,

one that empowers them to excel in diverse environments while attaining self-fulfillment and self-actualization.

As elucidated by Simpson (2013), SSS encompass a wide spectrum of functions, spanning institutional and non-institutional criteria essential for students to attain their peak academic performance. Consequently, they encompass administrative and supervisory roles and extend beyond the boundaries of classroom instruction. These services encompass various facets such as student identification, admission processes, classification, and provisions that nurture students' physical, mental, and emotional growth. Within the sphere of higher institution administration, student support services assume a pivotal role, distinct from instructional elements yet indispensable for the institution's effective and efficient operation. They represent a contemporary innovation in higher institution administration, exerting a direct and tangible influence on the institution's seamless functioning (Kaur, 2016).

According to Mwamwenda (2014), support services play a pivotal role in catering to students' needs and fostering positive attitudes toward learning. These services encompass a vast array of areas, ranging from honing study skills and facilitating career choices to providing accommodation options, part-time job opportunities, nurturing personal growth, addressing health concerns, extending benefits, and offering assistance during periods of economic adversity. These services serve as essential pillars, designed to tackle crucial needs or challenges that might otherwise impede students from dedicating themselves fully to their educational pursuits (Choudhry et al., 2013).

Within the realm of higher education, universities assume the responsibility of providing students with a multifaceted support system. This encompasses an array of offerings, including housing provisions, orientation programs, guidance for international students, support tailored to indigenous communities, financial aid, wellness and counseling services, and comprehensive healthcare provisions, among others. Despite universities' earnest efforts to make these services readily available, not all students are cognizant of their existence or can effectively access them throughout their university journey.

To address this issue, universities should collect data to gauge the extent to which these services align with students' needs (Darren, 2018). The importance of learner support services cannot be overstated; they

warrant recognition, continual refinement, and unwavering support to safeguard the well-being of students. Such involvement cultivates a sense of community among students, faculty, and administration, influencing the manner in which programs and services are designed and delivered (Alina, 2013).

Higher education institutions actively strive to create a secure educational environment. The evolving academic landscape introduces novel challenges concerning student safety, and it becomes imperative for students to feel secure on campus. Institutions bear the onus of maintaining a safe learning environment and necessitate collaboration among diverse stakeholders within the institution. The security department assumes a pivotal role in ensuring student safety on campus (Amoatema, 2017). Uniformed security personnel are deployed to provide protection, routinely inspect campus facilities, and uphold a secure atmosphere within campus premises. These security personnel often serve as the "eyes and ears" of the department. The institutional management ensures that all instances of misconduct affecting the institutional environment are promptly addressed. Moreover, emergency notification systems are in place to swiftly alert students in any situation. In fact, no parent would contemplate allowing their child to enroll in an institution that lacks robust security measures. A secure learning environment cultivates positive attitudes among students and fosters undivided focus on their academic endeavors.

According to Mwamwenda (2014), support services aim to meet students' needs and enhance their learning attitudes. They cover an extensive range of areas, including study skills, career guidance, accommodation, employment opportunities, personal development, addressing health concerns, providing aid, and supporting students during economic hardships (Choudhry et al., 2013). Universities offer various support forms, including housing assistance, orientation, migration guidance, indigenous student support, financial aid, wellness programs, counseling services, and health care, among others. Despite universities' efforts to provide these services, not all students are fully aware of their availability or can effectively access them throughout their university journey. Institutions should collect data to evaluate the effectiveness of these services in meeting students' needs (Darren, 2018). Recognizing the value of learner support services is crucial for ongoing improvement to ensure students' well-being. Student services play a central role in

enhancing learning experiences, reducing dropout rates, diversifying student life, fostering conflict resolution, and promoting active participation in society. Emphasizing the importance of student engagement as both users and beneficiaries of these services nurtures a sense of community among students, staff, and management, shaping the delivery of programs and services (Alina, 2013).

Student support services are essential to foster positive mindsets and behaviors that complement academic pursuits and shape students' future career choices. These services hold immense significance in the socio-economic life of students, aiming to identify, address, and resolve their issues. Guidance and counseling form the cornerstone of these services, while comprehensive facilities such as well-equipped clinics, access to water, electricity, catering, and accommodation are crucial for students' well-being on campus. Ogunlade (2011) suggests that by adequately providing these services, students' academic performance will improve, aligning with the institution's service standards. Insufficient support services, however, may lead to poor academic performance, disruptive behavior, and potential disturbances to academic activities, risking school closures.

Exploring the impact of support services on Business Education students' attitudes and academic performance offers insights into enhancing educational outcomes. Unveiling how support shapes success can drive systemic improvements in education, benefiting both students and institutions

. Ziarab and Nazir (2020) conducted a research study aiming to evaluate the influence of student support services (SSS) on the holistic development and attitudes of university-level students. The study design followed a quantitative approach, encompassing all university students in Islamabad. A sample of 80 students was selected using the simple random sampling technique. Data collection involved a 56-item questionnaire assessing the availability of SSS and its impact on students' development. The questionnaire's validity was confirmed by experts, showing a reliability of 0.832. Employing descriptive, diagnostic, comparative, and communicative research methods, administrators, faculty members, and student leaders participated as respondents. Data gathering techniques encompassed questionnaires, interviews, and documentary investigations. Results indicated substantial development among students across social,

cultural, political, and intellectual dimensions due to various student support services. Notably, library services stood out as relatively adequate compared to other support services, and a robust correlation was identified between SSS and students' development and learning attitude. While both studies aimed to explore the effect of student support services on student attitude, they differed in methodology and scope. This study utilized a quantitative design, while the present study adopted a descriptive survey design.

Sarafadeen, Ayo, and Imran (2019) conducted a study to assess how student support services influence students' attitudes toward business education programs in Nigerian public colleges of education situated in Ogun State. Guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses, the study sampled 245 Business Education students, employing a descriptive survey design. The study utilized a structured questionnaire, 'Factors Influencing Quality Assurance of Business Education Programme Questionnaire (FIQABEDQ), developed from Babayemi (2019), Azasu et al. (2015), and Salami (2019). This questionnaire was validated by three experts and assessed for reliability using the split-half method, establishing a coefficient of 0.83 via Cronbach's Alpha. Data analysis involved mean and standard deviation, while all null hypotheses underwent testing at a 0.05 significance level using inferential statistics (ANOVA). Findings indicated that business education learning facilities moderately impacted the achievement of program objectives. Additionally, the study proposed upgrading business education facilities to align with self-employment goals and recommended collaborative efforts among stakeholders to ensure adequate and modern facilities in tertiary institutions. This study shares similarities with the present study in examining the impact of support facilities on students' attitudes toward business education programs. However, while Sarafadeen, Ayo, and Imran's study focused on public colleges of education in Ogun State, the present research centers on public universities in South-west Nigeria offering business education.

The aim of this study is to:

1. Assess the impact of student support services on business education students' learning attitudes towards their courses; and
2. Evaluate the influence of student support services on business education students' academic performance.

Research Questions

1. What impact do student support services have on business education students' learning attitudes toward their courses?
2. How significantly do student support services affect the academic performance of business education students?

Methodology

The study employs a descriptive survey design approach to conduct a comprehensive investigation. The target population for this research consists of business education students enrolled in public universities in South-western Nigeria. This population include a total of 4,809 students currently pursuing business education in public universities across the South-western region. To ensure a representative sample, a total of 356 subjects were selected for the study using Taro Yamane's method of sampling. The proportionate sampling technique was employed to ensure that each institution, based on its frequency in the overall population, was fairly represented in the sample. To select the participants within each stratum, a simple random sampling method was employed through a ballot system. This approach ensured that every member of the population had an equal opportunity to participate in the study, thus eliminating any potential bias on the part of the researcher in the sampling process. The research instrument utilized in this study is divided into two sections, labeled as Section A and Section B. Section A collects demographic information about the respondents, while Section B includes twenty question items. The instrument's validity was confirmed through a rigorous validation process involving the submission of the research tool, along with its intended research objectives, inquiries, and hypotheses, to the researcher's research experts. Utilizing Cronbach's alpha method, an achieved reliability coefficient of 0.84 was observed. Of the 356 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, a total of 346 were returned, correctly filled, and used for analysis. Demographic data were analyzed using frequency and percentage, while the research questions were addressed through mean and standard deviation calculations.

Results

This paper investigates the impact of student support services on the attitudes and academic performance of business education students. The

analysis provides a rigorous examination of data, addressing research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question One: Assess the impact of student support services on business education students' learning attitudes towards their courses

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses on student support services and learning attitude of students

S/ N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1.	Availability of relevant business education materials in the school library enhance students' attitude towards the programme.	3.56	0.66	Very Great Extent
2.	Business education was selected as main course of study during admission processing because of the counselling previously received on its efficacy.	3.18	0.74	Great Extent
3.	Professionalism of library staff encourages students to use the facilities.	3.33	0.77	Very Great Extent
4.	Sporting activities within the Institution foster good relationship among the students.	3.27	0.78	Very Great Extent
5.	Friendly students' registration procedures promote students' attitude towards learning.	3.39	0.67	Very Great Extent
6.	Vocational guidance and counselling enable students to develop right attitudes towards their chosen programmes.	3.32	0.70	Very Great Extent
7.	Career guidance provides opportunity for students to take appropriate decision on courses that complement their choices.	3.34	0.75	Very Great Extent
8.	Provision of relevant books at library encourages students to develop good research attitude.	3.38	0.74	Very Great Extent
9.	Provision of alternative power supply within the Institution allows students to extend their reading period till night hours.	3.37	0.76	Very Great Extent
10.	Efficiency security apparatus within the campus eliminates fear of unknown among the students.	3.36	0.73	Very Great Extent
Weighted average		3.35	0.73	Very Great Extent

Table 1 presents mean and standard deviation data showcasing the impact of student support services on the learning attitudes of business education students. The findings indicate that counseling, the availability of relevant course materials in the library, and the professionalism of library staff significantly influence students' positive attitudes toward their program. Similarly, sporting activities, smooth registration procedures, vocational guidance, and career counseling play a vital role in fostering favorable attitudes toward learning (with means ranging from 3.18 to 3.39). Moreover, factors such as library resources for research, alternative power supply aiding extended study hours, and robust campus security also greatly influence positive learning attitudes (means ranging from 3.36 to 3.38). The standard deviations, varying from 0.66 to 0.78 across the constructs, signify relatively narrow response distributions, indicating proximity to the mean values. The overall weighted average mean of 3.35 and a standard deviation of 0.73 from Table 10 suggest that collectively, these constructs exert a significant and positive influence on the learning attitudes of business education students toward their courses. In conclusion, the data strongly support the notion that student support services greatly and positively impact the attitudes of business education students toward their academic pursuits (mean = 3.35, SD = 0.73).

Research Question Two: How significantly do student support services affect the academic performance of business education students

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses on student support services and students’ academic performance

S/ N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
11.	Student’s counselling services helps to improve student academic performance	3.51	0.71	Very Great Extent
12.	Activities of Student Affairs Unit always motivate students to improve their performance in business education courses.	3.38	0.74	Very Great Extent
13.	Student union government in the Institution does project activities that encourage academic performance of the students.	3.18	0.81	Great Extent
14.	Creating awareness on rules and regulations under which students operate on campus motive students to improve their academic performance.	3.29	0.77	Very Great Extent
15.	Adequate attention to the academic concerns of the students by the counselling unit encourages students to perform excellently.	3.28	0.73	Very Great Extent
16.	Provision of alternative power supply in all classrooms boosts morale of students to improve their learning.	3.37	0.72	Very Great Extent
17.	Security apparatus within the campus encourage the students to be more committed to their academic performance.	3.28	0.79	Very Great Extent
18.	Adequate provision of library materials improves academic performance of the students.	3.32	0.78	Very Great Extent
19.	Provision of departmental libraries in the Institution avoid students’ opportunity to improve their academic performance	3.29	0.81	Very Great Extent
20.	Sporting activities within the campus boast academic morale of the students.	3.23	0.87	Great Extent
	Weighted average	3.31	0.77	Very Great Extent

Table 2 data analysis highlights the mean and standard deviation of responses regarding student support services' impact on the academic performance of business education students. Findings indicate significant positive influence on academic performance through services like counseling, student affairs activities, and awareness creation on campus rules (with means ranging from 3.29 to 3.51). Moreover, initiatives such as student union projects, attention to academic concerns by counseling units,

provision of power supply in classrooms, and campus security significantly motivate academic commitment (means ranging from 3.18 to 3.37). Similarly, provisions like adequate library resources, departmental libraries, and campus sporting activities positively influence academic performance (means ranging from 3.23 to 3.32). The standard deviations, ranging from 0.71 to 0.87 across all constructs, suggest responses closely aligning with the mean, indicating narrower distributions. The grand weighted average mean of 3.31 and a standard deviation of 0.77 from Table 11 affirm that these constructs collectively exert a significantly positive influence on the academic performance of business education students. In conclusion, this data underscores that student support services have a notably positive impact on the academic performance of business education students (mean = 3.31, SD = 0.77).

Discussion of Findings

The study aimed to assess the impact of student support services on the attitude and academic performance of Business Education Students. Findings highlighted the influence of counseling on course selection and the positive effect of relevant library materials on students' program attitudes. Services encompassed activities aiding academic progress, tailored to individual needs. Darren (2018) emphasized this support's role in addressing academic challenges and enhancing learning development. The study uncovered gender differences in perceiving service impact on academic performance, suggesting gender's role in these perceptions. Counseling and Student Affairs Unit activities notably boosted academic performance, as Karemera (2017) noted satisfaction with academic facilities correlated with better performance. High school performance positively impacted academic success, while family income showed no significant association. Regional disparities were evident as respondents from different states perceived support services' impact on learning attitudes differently, indicating the influence of regional contexts, policies, and cultural variations on these perceptions. These variations suggest state-level factors shape how students view support services regarding learning attitudes in the context of Business Education.

Conclusion

The study's findings indicate that universities offer comprehensive support services with library resources including books, journals, and digital materials standing out as particularly robust. These resources significantly outshine other services like hostels, security, and counseling in their potential to motivate students for excellent performance. Furthermore, the provision of alternative power supply in classrooms elevates students' enthusiasm for learning, while robust security measures within the campus contribute to heightened student commitment to academic excellence.

Recommendations

1. Policymakers, curriculum specialists, and academic administrators should assess student support services via monitoring bodies.
2. Governing bodies should assess if modern facilities meet students' needs amidst evolving global conditions.
3. Governing bodies must guarantee student access to institutional students support services.

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