

Understanding the Attitudes and Perceptions toward Teaching and Learning Methods on Academic Performance: A Case of History Students in The Colleges of Education in Ghana

Francis Acheampong^{1*} and Faustina Karikari²

¹Department of Social Science Education, St Joseph College of Education, Bechem, Ahafo Region, Ghana

²Department of General Arts, Otumfour Osei Tutu II College, Tetrem, Afigya Kwabre North, Ashanti Region, Ghana.

*Corresponding author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090225>

Received: 13 September 2024; Accepted: 21 September 2024; Published: 17 October 2024

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the perceptions and attitudes of students in Colleges of Education in Ghana towards the teaching and learning of history studies. To achieve this, a descriptive survey research design was employed. In order to provide more details, we also conducted a regression analysis to understand how the attitudes and perceptions of College of Education students towards the study and teaching of history impact their academic performance for a sample size of 298. Overall, we find that the perceptions of students toward teaching and learning methods for history studies in the Colleges of Education do not matter for their academic performances as well as their age and gender. Notably, the attitudes toward teaching and learning methods for history studies and importance attached to history studies significantly contribute to the positive outcomes in the academic performances. This, however, implies that even with negative or no perception, the importance attached to history studies coupled with positive attitude are more likely to outweigh the effect on their academic performances.

Keywords: Attitudes, Perceptions, Teaching methods, Learning methods, Academic performance, History studies.

INTRODUCTION

Education is seen as a powerful tool for enlightenment all over the world. This understanding includes various aspects of the human experience (Parry, 2004; Tate, 2013). The design of this is focused on the overall development of every individual. Due to this, several academic disciplines, such as social sciences, human biology, history studies, zoology and archaeology among many others have expanded (Driver et al., 2011). Without a doubt, among all the academic disciplines, history studies seem to be one of the disciplines that is designed to help students acquire the necessary knowledge, positive attitudes, skills, and values to prepare them to become capable, considerate, self-reflective, and effective problem solvers in society (Milner, 2003).

When preparing to teach, a teacher takes into account different levels of planning, such as methods, techniques, and strategies (Harris and Hofer, 2011; Häkkinen et al., 2017; Killen and O'Toole, 2023). A good method is more than just a collection of methods or mechanical tools. It is crucial to point out that every teacher ought to cultivate their individual methodology. However, it is important to note that a sound approach can only be attained through the consistent observation of particular fundamental principles (Miller, 2021). These factors encompass a systematic teaching approach, a meticulously organised subject matter to reduce inefficiency, and a strategic emphasis on actively involving learners and maintaining their interest (Scheerens, 2016; Muijs and Reynolds, 2017). On the other hand, a technique means changing the variety of stimuli during a lesson; see Barton (2015) and Munna and Kalam (2021). For example, a lesson could start by watching a film, and then continue with activities like role play, simulation, dramatisation, and debate, all in the same lesson. Strategies are the specific techniques, processes, and procedures used to deliver educational material to students in a teaching environment (Abrami et al., 2015; Gilbertson et al., 2022). Strategies are basically ways of arranging or organising a particular set of techniques. During one class period, a combination of lecture, discussion, and workbooks can be used as teaching strategies.

A teaching strategy, according to Dynneson and Gross (1999), is the particular method that a teacher employs to help students learn the content of a course, unit, or lesson. In simple terms, a teaching strategy is a way of sharing information in order to help students understand and actively participate in the subject being taught; see Lee and Hannafin (2016) and Killen and O'Toole (2023). The distinction between creative and unmotivated teaching is primarily based on the approaches that teachers employ when delivering lesson content, skills, and values to their students (Ghanizadeh and Jahedizadeh, 2016; Peterson et al., 2018). Not all strategies are suitable for effectively teaching and learning of history concepts.

Students' perceptions can influence how they view history studies, whether positively or negatively. Many students tend to find history studies dull, boring, and not relevant to their future job prospects (Loewen, 2018; Wineburg, 2018). When students have a negative perception of history studies, it can make them less motivated to learn. This can result in them not getting the support and resources they need, which can hinder their learning. Due to the current economic situation and increased accountability demands, it is possible that fewer students may choose to study history studies to the higher education level (Bastedo et al., 2016). It has been documented that students who enjoyed history studies had a positive view of their own abilities, took ownership of their learning, and believed that their success was a result of their personal effort (Tosh, 2015; Seli, 2019). Some students found the subject difficult to understand and irrelevant to their future needs, which is why they didn't like it.

Many students are not very interested in studying history studies because they think it's easy and don't feel the need to put much effort into it (Loewen, 2018; Wineburg, 2018). It is important to encourage teachers to understand the concepts and techniques that help promote effective teaching and learning (Muijs and Reynolds, 2017; Killen and O'Toole, 2023). When it comes to history studies education, it's important to prioritise improving the learner's attitude and achieving the goals set by the curriculum. The environment in which students learn greatly influences their attitudes towards teaching and learning (Che Ahmad et al., 2017; Saloviita, 2020; Zhang et al., 2023). Open classroom climates, characterised by teacher respect for students' ideas and democratic leadership behaviours, are most likely to positively affect students' attitudes towards teaching concepts (Reichert et al., 2018; Shepherd-Jones and Salisbury-Glennon, 2018). Teachers should tailor their assessment methods to align with the subject's goals of developing reflective, concerned, responsible, and participatory citizens in civic life. A study on redesigning the history studies curriculum for student-centered and constructivist learning found that teachers should make instruction inclusive and challenging to stimulate learning skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, leadership, communication, resilience, and collaboration (Van Gompel, 2019; Bariham et al., 2022; González-Pérez and Ramírez-Montoya, 2022). The curriculum should also emphasise core competencies, values, and desirable attitudes needed for national development.

A positive correlation has been recorded between attitude and achievement and career preferences related subjects (DeWitt and Archer, 2015; Eccles and Wang, 2016; Lauermann et al., 2017). To promote active learning, the history studies curriculum should place learners at the center, offer evidence-supported conclusions, encourage participation in various learning projects, be flexible, varied, and involve all categories of learners. Research on mentees' social studies curriculum concepts and classroom practices in Ghana found that they lack teaching skills to impart history studies as a problem/issue-oriented subject (Yaw et al., 2022). Given this, formative assessment techniques should be implemented in history studies lessons to help learners construct knowledge during the learning process (Box et al., 2015; Granberg et al., 2021). Teachers should focus on the effective domain and lower order thinking skills to produce students with superficial knowledge, which may impact their attitudes towards social and historical issues.

The history studies curriculum in Ghana's Colleges of Education focuses on concepts like economic history, pre- and post-colonialism, world war and global history, pan africanism, freedom and justice, rights and responsibilities, and democratic governance (Adjepong and Kwarteng, 2017; Adu-Gyamfi and Anderson, 2021). The classroom environment is more symbolic and abstract, with an open classroom climate being the most likely to positively affect students' attitudes towards teaching and learning concepts. Open classroom environments featuring student participation and free expression have a positive impact on students' attitudes towards learning concepts (Baeten et al., 2016). Teachers often rely solely on text, lecturing, worksheets, and traditional tests as

methods of learning. However, a variety of teaching techniques, such as cooperative learning, role playing, and technology, can increase students' interest in a topic (Gillies, 2016; Saptono et al., 2020). Using various techniques, such as direct observation, data gathering, reading, role-playing, constructing projects, and watching films, can provide students with new information and increase understanding.

Studies have attempted to understand students' attitudes towards history studies and predict their performance related to this area of the school curriculum (Blazar and Kraft, 2017; Nokes, 2022). Despite ongoing changes in curriculum design, teaching methodology, and administrative practices, most students still perceive history studies classes as dull, boring, and irrelevant to their lives, which affects their performance. This study aims to explore the attitudes of Colleges of Education students towards the teaching and learning of history Studies in Ghana. It aims to understand their perceptions of the subject and their attitudes towards the techniques used in teaching history studies. The study focuses on two main questions: (1) What are the perceptions of Colleges of Education students toward the teaching and learning of history studies? (2) What are the attitudes of students in Colleges of Education toward the techniques used in teaching history studies? (3) Do the perceptions and attitudes significantly influence their academic performances? The study highlights the importance of connecting content to individual interests and using various teaching techniques, such as cooperative learning, role playing, and technology. These techniques encourage active learning and help students develop positive attitudes towards history studies.

METHODS AND DATA SOURCES

Methods

The study investigated the perceptions and attitudes of students in Colleges of Education in Ghana towards the teaching and learning of history studies. To achieve this, a descriptive survey research design was employed. In order to provide more details, we also conducted an exploratory analysis to understand how the attitudes and perceptions of College of Education students towards the study and teaching of history impact their academic performance. The population of the study consisted of history studies' students from all Ghanaian Colleges of Education. We used Google Forms to distribute the questionnaires through WhatsApp. The sampling methods we used were purposeful and simple random sampling. It seems that the decision to sample this approach was intentional, likely because there are colleges that do not offer history studies as a program. Furthermore, the decision to use the purposive sample technique was logical because it allowed individuals with the specific and valuable information required to participate. We used a sample size of 298 based on a margin of error of about $\pm 7\%$ for a student population greater than 5000.

Data Sources

The primary tool used to collect data was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was created as a tool for gathering data from students because it can reduce inconsistency and save time. The structured questionnaire had different sections. In Section A, we collected demographic data such as age, sex, college of education attended, type of assessment method preferred, and the types of learning and teaching techniques conversant with from the respondents. We collected information on the attitudes and perceptions of Colleges of Education students towards history studies using Section B and Section C consisted of the impact of history studies on students' attitudes and perceptions towards history studies. In Section D, we searched for information on the effect of their attitudes and perceptions toward learning and teaching of history studies and the impact on their academic performance. The items in Sections B, C, and D of the questionnaire were all rated on a five-point Likert scale. This scale was chosen to ensure that the data collected would be accurately represented. The Likert scale is commonly used as a tool to gauge respondents' agreement or disagreement with different statements and their overall feelings about a particular subject (Bryman, 2016). The items were coded as follows: Strongly Disagree is coded as 1, Disagree is coded as 2, Neutral is coded as 3, Agree is coded as 4, and Strongly Agree is coded as 5. It was the most popular instrument because it was easy to create, administer, and score (Muinde, 2015). In order to analyse the information, we collected, we coded the quantitative data into Stata 18. In section A, we used descriptive statistics to analyse the demographic data. We used descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, to analyse every item in Section B whereas Sections C and D are analysed by regression using the OLS method and for robustness, we use the Generalized Linear Model. Tables 1 and 2 outline the variables and items used to measure them. Also, Table 7 presents the number of respondents and their respective Colleges of Education.

Empirical Model

We formulate the model below to assess the relationship between perception and attitude towards teaching and learning methods and academic performance of College of Education students in Ghana. We assume that academic performance is a function of the perception and attitudes toward teaching and learning methods of history studies. Hence, we derive:

$$Academic\ performance = f(Perception, Attitude) \tag{1}$$

To expand further to include the error term and other potential determinants, we get:

$$Academic\ performance_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Perception_i + \beta_2 Attitude_i + \beta_3 History_i + \beta_4 Age_i + \beta_5 Gender + \epsilon_i \tag{2}$$

Where β_0 represents the slope's intercept, β_1 to β_5 denote the slope's parameter coefficients to be estimated for i cross-section of 298 College of Education students in Ghana and ϵ denote the error term or stochastic disturbance in the model. We estimate the model with both Ordinary Least square (OLS) and Generalized Linear Model (GLM).

Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and Generalised Linear Models (GLM) offer valuable insights for cross-sectional studies, as they effectively manage various data characteristics and complement each other well (Wooldridge, 2010; Agung, 2011). OLS works best with continuous dependent variables and relies on the assumptions of homoscedasticity, normality, and linearity; see Das and Das (2019). GLM offers greater flexibility by accommodating dependent variables that are not normally distributed, including binary outcomes and count data; see also. Evaluating the outcomes from OLS and GLM helps in understanding the reliability of results, examining fit metrics, and providing adaptability in link functions. OLS may react strongly to outliers and deviations from normality, whereas GLM is more adept at managing these challenges by utilising various distribution options. OLS might not be suitable for specific outcomes or research questions, whereas GLM guarantees bounded probabilities and non-negative counts. Employing both models enables a comparison and a deeper understanding of data from various angles, which improves the reliability and clarity of the study outcomes.

Table 1: Variables Description

Variables	Items
Perception P1	Student-centered methods enhance the understanding of history studies
P2	Lecture technique makes history studies class boring
P3	Dramatization technique arouses students' interest in history studies
P4	Role play technique arouses students' interest in history studies
P5	Fieldtrip technique arouses student interest in history studies
Attitude AT1	An ideal history studies classroom should be dominated with teacher-centered methods
AT2	Students feel happy when a tutor invites a resource person
AT3	History is the easiest field of study
Importance of History Studies HS1	It contributes to solving societal problems
HS2	History is the only subject engineered to provide citizenship education
HS3	It creates a clear path for my future aspirations
HS4	History curriculum reflects my interests and cultural background

Note: This Table outlines the variables such as Perception and Attitudes toward teaching and learning methods for history studies and the items used to measure them.

Table 2: Variables Description

Variables	Items
Academic Performance	
AP1	Your level of participation in history classes correlate with my grades or understanding of the subject
AP2	The teaching methods used in class impact your academic performance in history
AP3	A positive classroom environment enhances your learning and academic performance in history
AP4	The relevance of history to your life motivates you to perform better academically
AP5	The application of historical knowledge to real-world contexts improves your academic performance in history
AP6	The curriculum that reflects your interests and background impacts your academic performance
AP7	The availability and quality of resources affect your academic performance in history
AP8	The effectiveness of your history teachers impacts your academic performance
AP9	Teacher’s support directly affects your grades and understanding of history
AP10	The types of assessments used in history influence your academic performance
AP11	Receiving feedback influence your academic performance in history
AP12	Your study habits affect your performance in history
AP13	Effective time management correlate with better academic performance in history
AP14	Having clear career aspirations related to history impacts your performance in the subject.

Note: This Table outlines the questions relating to Academic performance.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis

Here, we present the outcome observed from the responses in relation to age, gender, teaching and learning methods preferred, as well as the assessment methods preferred by College of Education students studying history; see Figure 1 to 4. We observed that majority of the respondents were with the age bracket of 20-25 years representing 56.2%, followed by 26-30 years, representing 28.8% and 14.4% were above whereas 0.6% were just below 20 years; see Figure 1. In terms of gender, males dominated the respondents with approximately 67.9% whereas females were 32.1%; see Figure 2.

We aimed to understand the kind of teaching and learning methods that the students preferred as well as the

assessment methods. Effective teaching requires a balance of different methods. Lectures are valuable for foundational knowledge, while group work and discussions promote deeper understanding and critical thinking. Multimedia enhances engagement and comprehension. Using a variety of teaching strategies ensures that students with diverse learning preferences can succeed and remain motivated. Our findings suggest that majority of history students prefer discussions and lectures with a combined percentage of 84.3% of the respondents, whereas only 30% preferred group work and 11.7% preferred multimedia usage; see Figure 3. Assessments are essential to both teaching and learning. In addition to evaluating student performance, they enhance the educational process by encouraging participation, critical thinking, and personal development. Given this, we asked students to select their preferred mode of assessment. Figure 4 presents the outcome. We observed that majority of students prefer written exams, representing 40.5% followed by presentations representing 29.8% whereas projects and presentations had 22.4% and 7.3% respectively.

Figure 1: Age Of Respondents

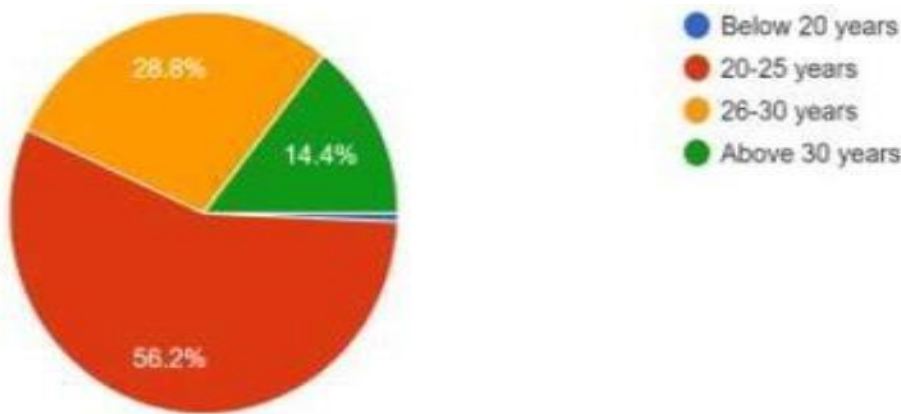


Figure 2: Gender of Respondents

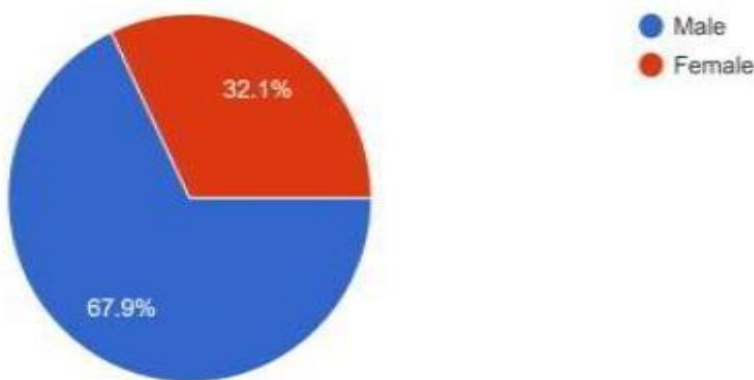


Figure 3: Teaching And Learning Methods Preferred

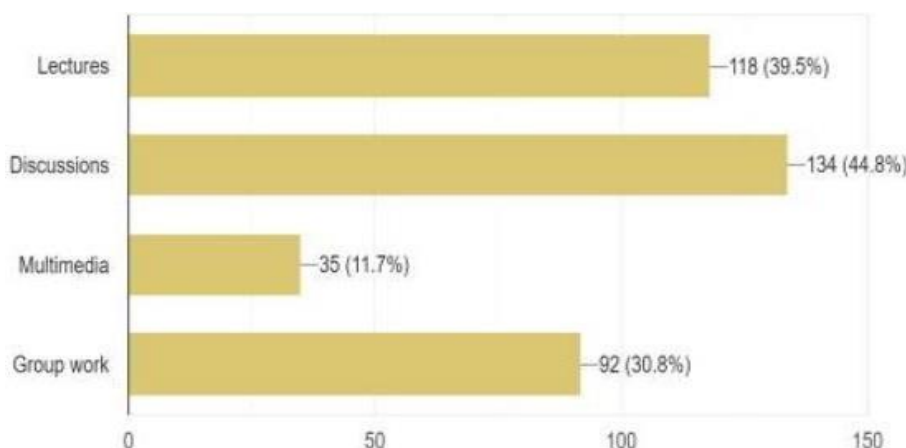


Figure 4: Assessment Methods Preferred

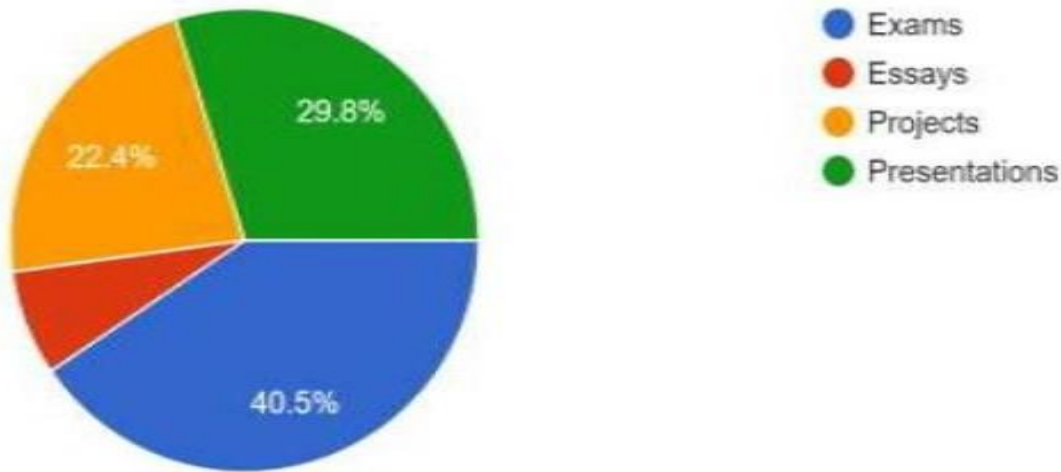


Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	SD	Max.	Min.	Obs.
Performance	4.22	0.48	5	3	298
Perception	3.32	0.48	5	2	298
Attitude	4.28	0.73	5	2	298
History	3.99	0.62	5	2	298
Gender	1.68	0.47	2	1	298
Age	2.57	0.74	4	1	298

Notes: This table contains descriptive statistics for: Mean; SD = standard deviation; Max = maximum value; Min = minimum value; Obs. = number of observations.

Exploratory Analysis

Summary Statistics

We begin our empirical analysis by providing some descriptive statistics; see Table 3. For the analysis, we estimate the average responses for each latent variable for every respondent per the representative items. According to the descriptive statistics, academic performance and attitude had the highest mean among the variables. Specifically, academic performance had a mean of 4.22 which implies that, on average, most students agree that their perception and attitude towards teaching and learning methods contributes to their academic performance with a standard deviation of 0.48. We observed a fascinating outcome from the responses for perception. It is evident that on average students have neutral opinion on their perceptions of teaching and learning methods for history studies with a mean of 3.32 and standard deviation of 0.48. This evidence motivates the study to further explore how this could significantly lead to improvement in the students' academic performances. Moreover, the importance of history studies is much more crucial to College of Education students. We observed that the average response was 3.99 which is equivalent to 4 on the Likert scale used.

Correlations and Normality Test

We report the correlations and normality tests of the variables in this section. As shown in Table 4. Our evidence suggests that perceptions and attitudes toward teaching and learning methods showed positive and significant correlations with the academic performance of College of Education students studying history. Moreover, the importance given to history studies also showed positive and significant correlation with academic performance

of students. In contrast, age and gender depicted insignificant correlations despite having negative signs. Interestingly, we observed that age correlated with the importance of history studies and perception towards teaching and learning methods—but showed negative correlation with the importance of history studies and positive with perceptions toward teaching and learning methods.

In an account of the normality test, it is evident that all the variables except importance of history studies showed significant univariate normality. Further, we performed a multivariate normality to ascertain whether the proposed model would follow the normality assumption. According to the evidence presented in Table 4, our proposed model follows the normality assumption given that multivariate test indicated significant test statistics with p-value < 0.05; see Mardia et al. (1979).

Table 4: Correlation and Normality Tests

	Perf.	Percept.	Attit.	History	Gender	Age	Normality test [chi ²]
Performance	1						13.13**
Perception	0.24***	1					9.13**
Attitude	0.45***	0.31***	1				126.79***
History	0.46***	0.25***	0.24***	1			5.28
Gender	-0.002	-0.01	-0.01	-0.03	1		759.04***
Age	-0.05	0.24***	0.08	-0.15**	0.21***	1	121.94***
Performance + Perception + Attitude + History + Gender + Age							681.69***

Notes: Performance and Perf. denotes academic performance, Percept. denotes perception, Attit. denotes Attitude. *** and ** denotes 1% and 5% significance levels.

Table 5: Baseline Results

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Perception	0.25***		0.11**	0.04	0.06	0.22
	(0.06)		(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.18)
Attitude		0.30***	0.28***	0.23***	0.23***	0.23***
		(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
History				0.28***	0.28***	0.36**
				(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.14)
Gender					0.02	0.02
					(0.05)	(0.05)
Age					-0.03	0.32
					(0.03)	(0.27)
Perception* Age						-0.07

						(0.07)
History*Age						-0.03 (0.05)
Constant	3.41***	2.94***	2.66***	1.95***	1.96***	1.10
	(0.19)	(0.15)	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.23)	(0.72)
R2	0.06	0.21	0.22	0.34	0.34	0.34
F-stat.	18.52***	77.00***	41.09***	50.24***	30.19***	21.77***
Root MSE	0.47	0.43	0.43	0.39	0.39	0.39
Observations	298	298	298	298	298	298

Notes: *** and ** denotes 1% and 5% significance levels.

Regression Analysis: Do the perceptions and attitudes significantly influence their academic performances?

In this section, we perform regression analysis to tease out the relationship between the perceptions and attitudes toward teaching and learning methods while taking into account the importance of history studies, gender and age as potential mediating and moderating factors. First, we perform a linear regression using the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method given the normality evidence of our proposed model. For robustness’s sake, we also employ the Generalized Linear Model (GLM) to robust check the outcome from the OLS regression. Employing both models facilitates a comparison and a deeper understanding of the data from various angles, which improves the reliability and clarity of the study findings.

The outcome for the OLS estimations is presented in Table 5. We performed six estimations denoted as Model 1 to Model 6. Models 1 and 2 account for the direct and separate impacts of perceptions and attitudes toward the teaching and learning methods for history studies whereas Model 3 combines both attitudes and perceptions. In Model 4, we include the importance of history studies as a mediating variable to understanding whether it plays full or partial role whereas in Model 5, we also include age and gender as moderating factors. Lastly, we rely on the correlation test as presented in Table 4 to look at the interaction effects of age and the importance of history studies as well as age and perceptions toward teaching and learning methods. Our findings suggest that both perceptions and attitudes toward teaching and learning methods have a direct, positive, and separate relationship with the academic performance of students studying history in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. This implies that positive perception and attitude is associated with positive academic outcomes. However, the impacts are more likely to dwindle when both variables are considered simultaneously as evidenced for Model 3 in Table 5. We observed that the coefficients decreased as these variables were simultaneously assessed on the academic performance of students.

Further we assessed the mediating role of the importance of history studies together with the perceptions and attitudes toward teaching and learning methods on academic performance of the students as presented as Model 4. Intriguingly, we observed that the coefficient of perceptions lost its significance as well as magnitude whereas attitudes’ coefficient slightly reduced despite being significant. This, however, suggests that the importance attached to history studies has a full mediation role in the relationships between perceptions and attitudes toward teaching and learning methods for history studies in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. Evidence presented for Model 5 suggests that age and gender play no significant moderating role in the relationship between perceptions toward teaching and learning methods, attitudes toward teaching and learning methods, the importance of history studies, and academic performance of students. Given that the coefficients and signs of attitudes toward teaching and learning methods as well as the importance of history studies remained unchanged with the inclusion of age and gender in the model. Similarly, we observed that the inclusion of the interaction effects of age and the importance of history studies as well as age and perceptions toward teaching and learning methods yielded no significant results, albeit the coefficient of the importance

Table 6: Robustness

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Perception	0.25***		0.11**	0.04	0.06	0.22
	(0.06)		(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.18)
Attitude		0.30***	0.28***	0.23***	0.23***	0.23***
		(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
History				0.28***	0.28***	0.36**
				(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.14)
Gender					0.03	0.02
					(0.05)	(0.05)
Age					-0.03	0.32
					(0.03)	(0.27)
Perception* Age						-0.07
						(0.07)
History* Age						-0.03
						(0.05)
Constant	3.41***	2.94***	2.66***	1.95***	1.96***	1.10
	(0.19)	(0.15)	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.23)	(0.71)
AIC	1.325	1.155	1.147	0.986	0.996	1.00
BIC	-1621.56	-1631.71	-1626.80	-1629.44	-1618.17	-1607.03
observations	298	298	298	298	298	298

Notes: *** and ** denotes 1% and 5% significance levels.

of history studies increased in magnitude whereas attitudes toward teaching and learning maintained its magnitude and sign. Among the estimated models, Models 4, 5, and 6 depicted the minimum and same root mean squared errors. This implies that these models are preferred to the other ones given their statistical reliability.

Finally, we performed different estimations using GLM regression estimator for robustness’s sake. The outcome is presented in Table 6. The findings were similar to that of the OLS except that here only Model 4 is preferable given the post-estimation statistics for the Aikaike Information Criteria (AIC) and Bayesian Information Criteria (BIC). This further suggests that the outcome observed with the OLS is robust enough for inference. Overall, we find that the perceptions of students toward teaching and learning methods for history studies in the Colleges of Education do not matter for their academic performances as well as their age and gender. Notably, the attitudes toward teaching and learning methods for history studies and importance attached to history studies significantly contribute to the positive outcomes in the academic performance of Colleges of Education students. This, however, implies that even with negative or no perception, the importance attached to history studies coupled with a positive attitude is more likely to outweigh the effect on their academic performances.

A plethora of studies have argued that students who attached importance to history studies had a positive view of their own abilities, took ownership of their learning, and believed that their success was a result of their

personal effort (Tosh, 2015; Seli, 2019). However, the environment in which students learn greatly influences their attitudes towards teaching and learning (Che Ahmad et al., 2017; Saloviita, 2020; Zhang et al., 2023). These arguments are consistent with our findings indicating that the importance given to the subject is much more crucial to students’ academic performance. This is against the backdrop that a positive correlation exists between attitude and achievement and career preferences related subjects; see DeWitt and Archer (2015), Eccles and Wang (2016), and Lauermaun et al. (2017).

CONCLUSION

The study examined the perceptions and attitudes of Ghanaian History students regarding the teaching and learning of history, utilising a descriptive survey research design and exploratory analysis. The research included history students from different colleges throughout Ghana, using both purposeful and simple random sampling techniques. Using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and the Generalised Linear Model (GLM), we conclude that students’ perceptions of history teaching methods in colleges do not impact their academic performance, regardless of age or gender. However, attitudes and importance of history studies significantly contribute to positive outcomes. The implications of our findings suggest that:

1. It seems that teaching methods have less influence on academic performance, indicating that schools could consider various teaching styles without worrying about harming results. This is in line with our revelation that most students prefer lectures and discussions as shown in Figure 3 in section 3.1.
2. Equity in performance across age and gender implies that history education is likely inclusive in this context.
3. Attitudes and perceived importance of history are key drivers of academic success, emphasising the need to foster student engagement, interest, and motivation.
4. Teacher strategies should focus more on shaping positive attitudes toward history rather than solely modifying teaching techniques.

This finding suggests that future research on academic performance should perhaps focus more on students’ intrinsic characteristics—such as motivation and interest in the subject—rather than on demographic or teaching method variables.

Table 7: Institutions and Respondents

Colleges of Education	Number of Respondents
Abetifi Presbyterian College of Education	1
Accra College of Education	9
Ada College of Education	1
Adventist College of Education - Asokore	1
Agogo Presbyterian Women College of Education	2
Akrokerri College of Education	1
Akropong Presbyterian College of Education	1
Al-Faruq College of Education	2
Bagabage College of Education	2
Berekum College of Education	2
Dambai College of Education	1

E.P College of Education - Bimbilla	63
Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education	12
Enchi College of Education	1
Foso College of Education	5
Gbewaa College of Education	1
Komenda College of Education	5
Mampong Technical College of Education	4
Offinso College of Education	29
OLA College of Education	5
SDA College of Education	14
St Francis College of Education	1
St Joseph College of Education - Bechem	116
St Monica's College of Education	2
St Vincent College of Education	2
Ta2 College of Education	10
Tumu College of Education	2
Wiawso College of Education	3
Total	298

REFERENCES

1. Abrami, P. C., Bernard, R. M., Borokhovski, E., Waddington, D. I., Wade, C. A., and Persson, T. (2015). Strategies for teaching students to think critically: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 85(2):275–314.
2. Adjepong, A. and Kwarteng, K. O. (2017). Resuscitating ‘Clio’ for the development of twenty-first century Ghana and beyond: Arguments in defence of the government’s decision to reintroduce national history as a separate subject in the pre-tertiary school curriculum. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(6):19–44.
3. Adu-Gyamfi, S. and Anderson, E. (2021). History education in Ghana: a pragmatic tradition of change and continuity. *Historical Encounters*, 8(2):18–33.
4. Agung, I. G. N. (2011). *Cross section and experimental data analysis using EViews*. John Wiley & Sons.
5. Baeten, M., Dochy, F., Struyven, K., Parmentier, E., and Vanderbruggen, A. (2016). Student-centred learning environments: an investigation into student teachers’ instructional preferences and approaches to learning. *Learning Environments Research*, 19:43– 62.
6. Bariham, I., Yirbeykaa, E. K., and Bordoh, A. (2022). Teachers perspective on redesigning social studies curriculum for student-centered and constructivist learning: Empirical study of secondary schools, northern region. *Social Education Research*, pages 307–321.
7. Barton, K. C. (2015). Elicitation techniques: Getting people to talk about ideas they don’t usually talk about. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 43(2):179–205.
8. Bastedo, M. N., Altbach, P. G., and Gumport, P. J. (2016). *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, Political, and Economic challenges*. JHU Press.
9. Blazar, D. and Kraft, M. A. (2017). Teacher and teaching effects on students’ attitudes and behaviors. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 39(1):146–170.

10. Box, C., Skoog, G., and Dabbs, J. M. (2015). A case study of teacher personal practice assessment theories and complexities of implementing formative assessment. *American Educational Research Journal*, 52(5):956–983.
11. Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.
12. Che Ahmad, C. N., Shaharim, S. A., and Abdullah, M. F. N. L. (2017). Teacher-student interactions, learning commitment, learning environment and their relationship with student learning comfort. *Journal of Turkish Science Education*, 14(1):57–72.
13. Das, P. and Das, P. (2019). *Linear Regression Model: Relaxing the Classical Assumptions*. *Econometrics in Theory and Practice: Analysis of Cross Section, Time Series and Panel Data with Stata 15.1*, pages 109–135.
14. DeWitt, J. and Archer, L. (2015). Who aspires to a science career? a comparison of survey responses from primary and secondary school students. *International Journal of Science Education*, 37(13):2170–2192.
15. Driver, J. C., Bovy, K., Butler, V. L., Lupo, K. D., Lyman, R. L., and Otaola, C. (2011). Identification, classification and zooarchaeology. *Ethnobiology Letters*, 2:19–39.
16. Dynneson, T. L. and Gross, R. E. (1999). *Designing Effective Instruction for Secondary Social Studies*. Second Edition. New Jersey Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Prentice-Hall Inc.
17. Eccles, J. S. and Wang, M.-T. (2016). What motivates females and males to pursue careers in mathematics and science? *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 40(2):100–106.
18. Ghanizadeh, A. and Jahedizadeh, S. (2016). EFL teachers' teaching style, creativity, and burnout: A path analysis approach. *Cogent Education*, 3(1):1151997.
19. Gilbertson, K., Ewert, A., Siklander, P., and Bates, T. (2022). *Outdoor education: Methods and strategies*. *Human Kinetics*.
20. Gillies, R. M. (2016). Cooperative learning: Review of research and practice. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education (Online)*, 41(3):39–54.
21. González-Pérez, L. I. and Ramírez-Montoya, M. S. (2022). Components of education 4.0 in 21st century skills frameworks: systematic review. *Sustainability*, 14(3):1493.
22. Granberg, C., Palm, T., and Palmberg, B. (2021). A case study of a formative assessment practice and the effects on students' self-regulated learning. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 68:100955.
23. Häkkinen, P., Järvelä, S., Mäkitalo-Siegl, K., Ahonen, A., Näykki, P., and Valtonen, T. (2017). Preparing teacher-students for twenty-first-century learning practices (PREP 21): a framework for enhancing collaborative problem-solving and strategic learning skills. *Teachers and Teaching*, 23(1):25–41.
24. Harris, J. B. and Hofer, M. J. (2011). Technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) in action: A descriptive study of secondary teachers' curriculum-based, technology-related instructional planning. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 43(3):211–229.
25. Killen, R. and O'Toole, M. (2023). *Effective teaching strategies 8e*. Cengage AU.
26. Lauermaun, F., Tsai, Y.-M., and Eccles, J. S. (2017). Math-related career aspirations and choices within eccles et al.'s expectancy-value theory of achievement-related behaviors. *Developmental Psychology*, 53(8):1540.
27. Lee, E. and Hannafin, M. J. (2016). A design framework for enhancing engagement in student-centered learning: Own it, learn it, and share it. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 64:707–734.
28. Loewen, J. W. (2018). *Teaching what really happened: How to avoid the tyranny of textbooks and get students excited about doing history*. Teachers College Press.
29. Mardia, K., Kent, J., and JM, B. (1979). *Multivariate analysis*. New York: Academic Press.
30. Miller, R. W. (2021). *Fact and method: Explanation, confirmation and reality in the natural and the social sciences*. Princeton University Press.
31. Milner, H. R. (2003). Teacher reflection and race in cultural contexts: History, meanings, and methods in teaching. *Theory into Practice*, 42(3):173–180.
32. Muijs, D. and Reynolds, D. (2017). *Effective teaching: Evidence and practice*. Sage.
33. Muinde, R. M. (2015). *The influence of media on behaviour among secondary school students in Kitui central sub-county, Kitui county*. PhD thesis, University of Nairobi.
34. Munna, A.S. and Kalam, M.A. (2021). Teaching and learning process to enhance teaching effectiveness: a literature review. *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation (IJHI)*, 4(1):

1–4.

35. Nokes, J. D. (2022). Building students' historical literacies: Learning to read and reason with historical texts and evidence. Routledge.
36. Parry, G. (2004). Education and the reproduction of the enlightenment. In *The Enlightenment World*, pages 233–249. Routledge.
37. Peterson, A., Dumont, H., Lafuente, M., and Law, N. (2018). Understanding innovative pedagogies: Key themes to analyse new approaches to teaching and learning. Technical report, OECD Publishing.
38. Reichert, F., Chen, J., and Torney-Purta, J. (2018). Profiles of adolescents' perceptions of democratic classroom climate and students' influence: The effect of school and community contexts. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 47:1279–1298.
39. Saloviita, T. (2020). Teacher attitudes towards the inclusion of students with support needs. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 20(1):64–73.
40. Saptono, L., Soetjipto, B. E., Wahjoedi, W., and Wahyono, H. (2020). Role-playing model: Is it effective to improve students' accounting learning motivation and learning achievements. *Jurnal Cakrawala Pendidikan*, 39(1):133–143.
41. Scheerens, J. (2016). Educational effectiveness and ineffectiveness. A critical Review of The Knowledge Base, 389.
42. Seli, H. (2019). Motivation and learning strategies for college success: A focus on self-regulated learning. Routledge.
43. Shepherd-Jones, A. R. and Salisbury-Glennon, J. D. (2018). Perceptions matter: the correlation between teacher motivation and principal leadership styles. *Journal of Research in Education*, 28(2):93–131.
44. Tate, N. (2013). International education in a post-Enlightenment world. *Educational Review*, 65(3):253–266.
45. Tosh, J. (2015). The pursuit of history: Aims, methods and new directions in the study of history. Routledge.
46. Van Gompel, K. (2019). Cultivating 21st century skills: An exploratory case study of design thinking as a pedagogical strategy for elementary classrooms. Pepperdine University.
47. Wineburg, S. (2018). Why learn history (when it's already on your phone). University of Chicago Press.
48. Wooldridge, J. M. (2010). *Econometric analysis of cross section and panel data*. MIT press.
49. Yaw, E. O., Donkor, S. T., Yeboah, J., and Appiah, C. (2022). Students' Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Techniques Used in Teaching and Learning of Social Studies in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. *Universal Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, pages 259–272.
50. Zhang, H., Yu, L., Ji, M., Cui, Y., Liu, D., Li, Y., Liu, H., and Wang, Y. (2023). Investigating high school students' perceptions and presences under VR learning environment.
51. In *Cross Reality (XR) and Immersive Learning Environments (ILEs) in Education*, pages 97–117. Routledge.