

Students' Sick-Role Behavior and Course Completion in Public and Private Universities in Uganda.

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Abstract: *The study was on Students' sick-role behavior and course completion in public and private universities in Uganda. It was conducted in 6 public and private universities in Uganda while balancing 3 regions: Central, Western and Eastern. The study used both Quantitative and Qualitative in nature and used a Positivism philosophy backed with Health Belief Model (HBM) by Rosen stock, supported by the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) which was proposed in 1975 by Martin Fishbein. Students perform sick-role behavior having reasoned about the positive and negative consequences. Health Belief Model terms like Susceptibility, Perceived benefits, Perceived barriers, Self-efficacy and Clue to barriers were borrowed from Sleep and Diet were used as constructs of sick-role behavior. Unit of analysis was university students. The study used a sample size of 372 participants (students). 306 respondents and 18 informants. 62 students and 3 informants from each university participated in the study. The study found out that: There is a relationship between students' health behavior and course completion. Sleep and Diet do not affect the course completion because significant coefficient (0.01) is less than 0.05 - thus, not significant. The null hypothesis "There is no relationship between students' sick-role behavior and course completion" is accepted. Students have already achieved their dreams by being at campus. Living a university life – being free from the outside of elders, is living a heavenly world. Enjoying life, as they term it. Students care less about studies. After S.6 (Advanced Level) stress, they relax from reading a lot and spend most of their campus life sleeping. Some negligently miss lectures or even exams. At the end of the semester of the year, the majority of students get retakes. By the time of the course, almost a half of the intended students fail to complete their courses. The study recommended students to always feed on balanced to improve their health. Physical activities should be availed to students to make their bodies active other than sleeping most of their time.*

Background:

Sick-role behavior is the activity undertaken, for the purpose of getting well, by those who consider themselves ill. It includes receiving treatment from appropriate therapists, generally involves a whole range of dependent behaviors, and leads to some degree of neglect of one's usual duties (Stanislav, et al. 2020). The sick role anthropology is where social expectations for the behaviors of a person are diagnosed as suffering from a malady e.g. being excused from work or school.

The sick role is regarded as a temporary stage of deviance that should not be prolonged if at all possible. Finally, in the sick role the sick person or patient must seek competent help and cooperate with medical care to get well (Stanislav, et al 2020). The role of a sick person is a concept that concerns the social aspects of becoming ill and the privileges and obligations that come with it. The general idea is that the individual who has fallen ill is not only physically sick, but now adheres to the specifically patterned social role of being sick. University students' illness behaviors and health risk factors are important determinants of their ongoing health, as well as academic achievement and course completion.

There are the rights and obligations of a sick person. Patterson describes two rights and two responsibilities that an ill person has: a patient has a right not to be blamed for her illness and a right to be given some leeway by others in regards to normal obligations (Patterson, M. J. 2021).

The model does not always grant people access to the sick role. Illnesses which are stigmatized by people in society such as AIDS are deemed to be the fault of the individual and therefore the person may not be given the same rights as others. People do not always go to the doctor (Jellinek, M. 2015).

The sick role evokes a set of patterned expectations that define the norms and values appropriate to being sick, both for the individual and for others who interact with the person. Social benefit of adopting the sick role is that people who do so are not looked down on or morally judged if they do not work (Stanislav, et al, 2020).

The sick person is exempted from carrying out some or all of normal social duties (e.g. work, family). The sick person must try and get well – the sick role is only a temporary phase. In order to get well, the sick person needs to seek and submit to appropriate medical care (Stanislav, et al, 2020). In addition, there have been installations of health clinics in universities to cater for students' health affairs while studying at university. These are known to be 'bays' of the sick students and they assist to keep students in a better health appearance.

Students from different universities use sick role behavior as a defense mechanism of relaxing thus sleeping more than necessary and claiming to eat whatever their appetite governs them. This diverts them from what the intended purpose of joining the university (Jellinek, M. 2015). The researcher asks himself: Isn't sick-role behavior affecting course completion? Therefore, the study intended to find out if there is a relationship between sick-role behavior and course completion in public and private universities in Uganda.

Methodology: The study used both Quantitative and Qualitative in nature and used a Positivism philosophy backed with Health Belief Model (HBM) by Rosen stock, supported by the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) which was proposed in 1975 by Martin Fishbein. Students perform sick-role behavior having reasoned about the positive and negative consequences. Health Belief Model terms like Susceptibility, Perceived benefits, Perceived barriers, Self-efficacy and Clue to barriers were borrowed from Sleep and Diet were used as constructs of sick-role behavior. Unit of analysis was university students. The study used a sample size of 372 participants (students). 306 respondents and 18 informants. 62 students and 3 informants from each university participated in the study.

Findings: The study found out that: There is a relationship between students' health behavior and course completion. Sleep and Diet do not affect the course completion because significant coefficient (0.01) is less than 0.05 - thus, not significant. The null hypothesis "There is no relationship between students' sick-role behavior and course completion" is accepted. Students have already achieved their dreams by being at campus. Living a university life – being free from the outside of elders, is living a heavenly world. Enjoying life, as they term it. Students care less about studies. After S.6 (Advanced Level) stress, they relax from reading a lot and spend most of their campus life sleeping. Some negligently miss lectures or even exams. At the end of the semester of the year, the majority of students get retakes. By the time of the course, almost a half of the intended students fail to complete their courses.

Recommendations:

The study recommended students to always feed on balanced to improve their health. Students should always control their sleep behavior. Physical activities should be availed to students to make their bodies active other than sleeping most of their time. They should practice physical activities improve their health and their bodies to remain active. Institutions should provide convenient environment that doesn't scare away students from campus premises. Incentives should be provided to entice and motivate students to participate in university co-curricular activities like Music, Dance and Drama. Online learning system should be emphasized such that students can learn using their personal gargets when at their places of residence instead of over sleeping.

Keyword: Health behavior, Sick-role, Sleep, Diet, Students, Universities

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