

Punctuality in Submitting Academic Outputs

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ABSTRACT

Punctual submission of academic outputs is widely viewed as an indicator of responsibility, time management, and self-regulation; however, many Senior High School learners struggle to meet deadlines due to distractions, competing responsibilities, and fluctuating motivation. Previous studies have established that effective time management is associated with improved academic performance and reduced stress, positioning punctuality as a critical self-regulatory behavior (Macan, Shahani, Dipboye, & Phillips, 1990; Zimmerman, 2002). This qualitative study explored the lived experiences of 20 Senior High School students from Danggagan National High School to understand the reasons behind timely and delayed submissions and the strategies students use to cope with challenges to punctuality.

Using a phenomenological approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted to investigate students' reasons for punctual submission, struggles encountered, coping mechanisms, and the advice they offer peers. Thematic analysis revealed nine major themes. The most frequently reported motivations were responsibility and discipline (85%) and stress avoidance or preventing cramming (85%), followed by respect for teachers, time, and deadlines (75%), and time management and organization (65%). These results support previous findings indicating that procrastination often driven by task aversiveness and low self-efficacy negatively affects timely task initiation and academic performance (Steel, 2007).

Instructional factors were also found to influence punctuality. Prior research suggests that clear deadline policies and late-point schemes can highlight early warning signs of non-persistence, while earlier submissions are often associated with higher academic performance (Santelli et al., 2020; Jones & Blankenship, 2021). Overall, punctuality emerged as a multifaceted behavior shaped by self-regulation, emotional management, social expectations, and instructional design. The findings suggest that implementing scaffolded deadlines, anti-procrastination coaching, and transparent yet supportive submission policies may help students manage workloads, reduce stress, and improve academic outcomes.

Keywords: student punctuality; time management; Senior High School

INTRODUCTION

Punctual submission of academic requirements is a persistent challenge among many Senior High School students. While students generally intend to submit outputs on time, various obstacles such as environmental distractions, household responsibilities, lack of motivation, and difficulties in organizing schedules often hinder task completion. As academic requirements accumulate, students may experience heightened stress and pressure, which further discourages timely submission. Consequently, punctuality is not merely a matter of meeting deadlines, but an essential skill that supports effective academic functioning and personal responsibility.

Responsibility and time management are integral components of student life. Students are expected to regulate their learning behaviors, resist procrastination, and complete academic tasks within defined timelines. To encourage punctuality, teachers commonly impose late-point or penalty policies, which have been found to serve

as early indicators of students' risk for academic non-persistence (Santelli et al., 2020). Habits of postponing academic outputs negatively affect both learning quality and overall academic performance.

Punctuality has also been consistently linked with academic success. Students who manage their time well and submit outputs earlier tend to demonstrate stronger academic performance than those who submit close to or after deadlines (Jones & Blankenship, 2021). A supportive instructional environment—where expectations, schedules, and assessment requirements are clearly communicated plays a significant role in shaping students' punctuality behaviors.

Given these concerns, this study seeks to examine the underlying reasons why some Senior High School students are able to submit academic outputs punctually while others struggle. By identifying the root causes of punctuality and delay, the study aims to provide insights that can inform both students and teachers in developing strategies that promote timely submission and academic success.

Research Questions

1. What are the reasons why students submit academic outputs punctually?
2. What struggles do students face in submitting outputs on time?
3. How do students address the struggles they encounter?
4. What advice can students give their peers regarding punctual submission of outputs?

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative research design guided by a phenomenological approach to understand how Senior High School students experience punctuality in submitting their academic outputs. The focus of the study was on students lived experiences and how they make sense of deadlines, responsibility, instructional expectations, and time management as part of their self-regulated learning. A phenomenological approach was chosen to allow participants to describe these experiences in their own words instead of measuring behavior through numerical data such as percentages or frequencies.

Research Setting

The study was conducted at Danggagan National High School, a public secondary school located in Danggagan, Bukidnon. The school offers different Senior High School programs where students are regularly required to complete and submit written and performance-based academic tasks across various subjects. This setting provided a suitable context for examining how students deal with academic deadlines and the expectations set by their teachers. Although the study was limited to one school, its purpose was to provide a detailed understanding of students' experiences within this specific educational context rather than to produce findings that can be generalized to all schools.

Participants and Sampling

The participants were 20 Senior High School students selected through purposive sampling. This sampling method was used to ensure that participants had actual and repeated experiences with academic output submission and deadlines. The small number of participants allowed for in-depth exploration of individual experiences, which is appropriate for phenomenological research. While the sample size limits generalization, it enabled the researcher to gather rich and meaningful descriptions of students' perspectives on punctuality.

Data Collection

Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews. This method allowed students to share their experiences freely while still guiding the conversation toward key topics such as punctuality habits, challenges in meeting deadlines, motivation, self-discipline, and instructional factors that influence submission behavior. All interviews

were conducted with the participants’ informed consent. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and to preserve the original meaning of the participants’ responses.

Data Analysis

The interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis. The process involved repeated reading of the data, initial coding, identification of emerging themes, and refinement of these themes. The analysis focused on understanding patterns and meanings across students’ narratives rather than simply confirming previous studies. To support the credibility of the analysis, direct quotations from participants were included in the presentation of findings to reflect their actual voices and experiences.

Rigor and Trustworthiness

To ensure the quality and trustworthiness of the research, several strategies were applied. Credibility was enhanced through careful review of transcripts and sustained engagement with the data. Peer debriefing was used to reduce personal bias during coding and interpretation. An audit trail was kept to document analytic decisions throughout the research process. The researcher also practiced reflexivity by acknowledging personal assumptions and remaining mindful of their influence on the interpretation of the data.

Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school administration prior to data collection. All participants were informed of the purpose of the study and were assured that their participation was voluntary. Confidentiality was strictly observed by using pseudonyms and securely handling all collected data. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

RESULTS

A thematic analysis was conducted on the interview responses of the 20 participants regarding their reasons for submitting academic outputs on time. Nine major themes emerged, reflecting students’ motivations, attitudes, and perceptions toward punctuality.

Table 1. Major Themes and Frequencies (n = 20)

Theme	Frequency	% of Respondents
Responsibility / Discipline	17	85.0%
Stress avoidance and avoiding cramming	17	85.0%
Respect for teachers, time, and deadlines	15	75.0%
Time management and organization	13	65.0%
Accomplishment / Confidence	6	30.0%
Habit-building and future readiness	6	30.0%
Academic performance / Grades	5	25.0%
Quality of work	4	20.0%
Trust / Credibility	2	10.0%

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that students’ punctuality in submitting academic outputs is influenced by a combination of internal and external factors.

Responsibility and Discipline

Responsibility and discipline emerged as the most prominent theme, reported by 85% of participants. This finding aligns with Zimmerman (2002), who emphasized the role of self-regulation in successful academic behavior. Timely submission appears to reflect students’ sense of accountability and ownership of their academic responsibilities.

Stress Avoidance and Preventing Cramming

An equally significant motivator was stress avoidance. Participants indicated that submitting outputs on time helps prevent last-minute pressure and emotional distress. This supports the work of Steel (2007), who identified procrastination as a source of increased academic stress and reduced performance.

Respect for Teachers, Time, and Deadlines

Respect emerged as an important social influence on punctuality. Students viewed timely submission as a sign of respect for teachers and academic norms. This reflects findings by Wentzel (2014), who noted that respect for authority and classroom expectations contributes to positive learning behaviors.

Time Management and Organization

Effective time management was another crucial factor influencing punctuality. Consistent with Macan et al. (1990), students who demonstrated planning and organizational skills were more capable of meeting deadlines and managing academic demands.

Accomplishment, Habit Formation, and Future Readiness

Themes such as accomplishment, confidence, and habit-building suggest that punctuality contributes to students' long-term academic and professional development. These findings are consistent with Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy, which emphasizes the role of mastery experiences in building confidence.

Academic Performance, Quality, and Credibility

Students also recognized the academic benefits of punctual submission, including better grades and improved output quality. Submitting tasks early provides more time for review and revision, supporting previous research on preparation and performance (Schraw et al., 2007). A smaller number of participants highlighted trust and credibility, suggesting that punctuality helps build a positive academic reputation (Tuckman, 2002).

Overall, the results emphasize that punctuality is a multifaceted behavior shaped by self-discipline, emotional regulation, social expectations, and academic structures.

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