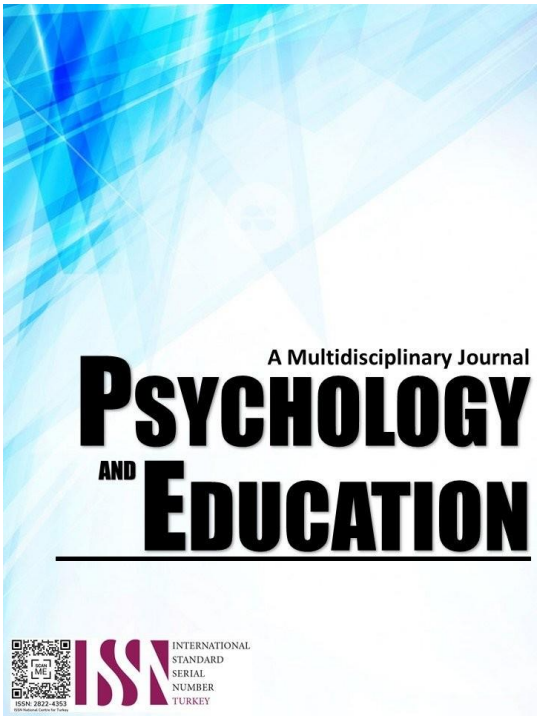
HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS OF EDUCATION STUDENTS ACROSS SPECIALIZATIONS



PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Volume: 22
Issue 2
Pages: 198-205
Document ID: 2024PEMJ2047
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.12748987
Manuscript Accepted: 06-10-2024

Psych Educ, 2024, **22**(2): 198-205, Document ID:2024PEMJ2024, doi:10.5281/zenodo.12748987, ISSN 2822-4353

CC BY NC

Research Article

Historical Thinking Skills of Education Students Across Specializations

John Nerie Gentallan,* Mark Steven Pandan
For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

A trend in history education has been a transition from a more banking approach where students are expected to memorize discrete dates, names, and places, towards a focus on historical thinking skills. In this quantitative research, the self-reported historical thinking skills of education students measured through a validated tool (Meral, et al., 2022) across seven specializations at Bohol Island State University are described and compared along with demographic profile. Results indicate that students exhibit proficient levels of historical thinking, with overall mean scores of 3.69 across the components. Significant differences were found in self-reported historical thinking skills based on the Senior High School (SHS) strand (p=0.039) and specialization (p=0.006), while no significant differences were observed based on age (p=0.723) or religious affiliation (p=0.663). The limited explanatory power of demographic factors (1.2%) highlights the need for future research to explore other potential influences, such as instructional strategies and cognitive differences. The study's limitations include its reliance on self-reported data and the specificity to students, calling for broader and more comprehensive future studies.

Keywords: *historical thinking skills, teacher education institutions, specialization, self-report, demographic factors*

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a significant shift in history education from a traditional "banking" approach, which emphasizes the memorization of discrete dates, names, and places, to a focus on developing historical thinking skills (Wineburg, 2001; Seixas & Morton, 2013). This pedagogical transition aligns with broader educational trends aimed at fostering critical thinking, analytical abilities, and a deeper understanding of historical contexts among students (Wineburg, 2001). Historical thinking skills encompass a range of competencies, including chronological thinking, historical comprehension, analysis and interpretation, research capabilities, and the ability to analyze and make decisions about historical issues (VanSledright, 2014).

Understanding the level of historical thinking skills among education students is crucial, as these future educators will play a pivotal role in shaping how history is taught and learned. As educators increasingly focus on these skills, it becomes essential to evaluate how well-prepared education students are to teach history in a way that promotes critical and analytical thinking (Barton & Levstik, 2004). This study aims to explore and compare the self-reported historical thinking skills of education students across seven specializations a state university in Region VII.

In Teaching History for the Common Good, Barton and Levstik (2004) address the contentious nature of history education, highlighting fundamental disagreements about its purpose, such as whether to teach a unified national story or multiple perspectives, and whether to focus on factual knowledge or evidence interpretation. They argue that systematic theory and research are crucial for informing these debates, providing evidence of students' historical thinking and challenging untested assumptions. Using the theory of mediated action, which considers the concrete actions, cultural tools, and social contexts that shape understanding, the authors critique the notion that the academic discipline of history should dictate teaching methods. Instead, they propose that history education should prepare students for participatory democracy, aiming to engage citizens collaboratively toward the common good. Barton and Levstik identify four stances toward history—identification, analysis, moral response, and exhibition—and evaluate their potential contributions to democratic engagement. They also discuss six tools of history—narrative structure, stories of individual achievement, national narratives, inquiry, perspective-taking empathy, and caring empathy—comparing their impacts on students' understanding across different cultures. The authors emphasize that both rational and emotional empathy are necessary for comprehensive historical understanding. Finally, they argue that teachers need a guiding purpose, beyond content knowledge and pedagogy, to embrace investigative, multi-perspectival approaches, which is best fulfilled by preparing students for democratic participation. This book provides a detailed, research-based framework for rethinking history education to foster critical thinking and civic engagement. Even though the term “historical thinking” appears only sparingly in the book, the shift away from banking in history education is already evident.

In the introduction of Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts, Wineburg (2001) critiques the persistent narrative of students' historical ignorance, tracing it back to a 1917 study by J. Carleton Bell and David McCollum. He argues that the focus on students' lack of factual knowledge, exemplified by standardized test scores, overlooks critical questions about their understanding of history. Wineburg challenges the prevailing pedagogical dichotomy between content and skills, advocating for a deeper exploration of how students interpret historical documents and integrate personal and cultural narratives. He emphasizes that history education should develop critical judgment and social literacy, aligning with Woodrow Wilson’s view that history cultivates invaluable mental power. Drawing from his transformative academic experience under Jacob Neusner at Brown University, Wineburg highlights the importance of critical engagement with historical texts. His research employs innovative methodologies, such as classroom observations and cognitive task analyses, to reveal the thought processes behind historical interpretation. This interdisciplinary approach, integrating

insights from cognitive science and historiography, aims to foster a more profound and nuanced understanding of history among students, moving beyond mere memorization to critical analysis and judgment.

In The Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts, Seixas and Morton (2012) aim to bridge the gap between the theoretical and practical aspects of history education. They argue that while historians and educators agree on the importance of critical engagement with historical facts, classroom practices often lag behind these ideals. Drawing from Morton's extensive teaching experience and Seixas's research in historical thinking, they offer a framework centered around six key concepts: historical significance, evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspectives, and the ethical dimension. These concepts are not mere supplementary skills but are integral to the entire teaching process, guiding everything from objective formation to student assessment. The authors emphasize that these concepts should be seen as "habits of mind" rather than rigid outcomes, encouraging students to explore and critically engage with historical data. By doing so, students are equipped to develop their own interpretations and understandings of history, fostering a deeper and more meaningful connection to the past. Seixas and Morton's approach aims to transform history education from rote memorization to an engaging, thought-provoking exploration, thereby making history more relevant and accessible for students.

Andal and Hermosa (2023) explored how contextualized learning activities (LA), tailored to student learning styles, affect historical thinking skills in Grade Eight students studying Araling Panlipunan. Conducted at San Isidro National High School with 53 purposively selected students, the study used a descriptive correlational design within a quantitative framework. Data collection involved pretests, surveys, evaluations, and posttests, validated by experts. Analysis with mean, standard deviation, and Pearson R revealed that students predominantly preferred visual learning styles. The contextualized LAs were deemed effective in content adequacy (OWM=3.45), coherence (OWM=3.44), appropriateness (OWM=3.40), and usefulness (OWM=3.43). However, there was no significant correlation between the perceived effectiveness of these materials and the enhancement of students' historical thinking skills. The researchers recommend that Araling Panlipunan teachers further develop their instructional strategies to better cultivate students' historical thinking abilities, thereby enhancing the overall learning experience and skill acquisition. There is therefore an additional pressure for education students who are social studies majors to have high historical thinking skills.

Research on the differences in historical thinking skills across various undergraduate specializations is limited but growing. McLaughlin and McGill (2017) conducted a study to investigate the efficacy of a history course in fostering critical thinking skills and reducing unwarranted beliefs, contrasting it with a psychology research methods course. They found that while scientific knowledge alone did not significantly impact unwarranted beliefs, the history course led to a significant reduction in such beliefs, particularly for students enrolled in the honors section. The course focused on exposing pseudohistory, pseudoscience, and pseudoarcheology, employing direct instruction on critical thinking and exercises analyzing historical misconceptions. Results indicated that beliefs decreased significantly more for topics explicitly covered in the history course, suggesting the effectiveness of targeted instruction. Importantly, the reduction in unwarranted beliefs was observed not only in studied topics but also in unrelated beliefs, demonstrating a transfer of critical thinking skills. The study underscores the potential of humanities education, alongside the sciences, in nurturing critical thinking abilities and combating pseudoscientific beliefs, emphasizing the need for explicit instruction and interdisciplinary collaboration in teaching and learning critical thinking. It is therefore reasonable to hypothesize that students who undertook humanities and social science as senior high school strand, and students who specialize in social studies in particular, will have higher historical thinking, which is a type of critical thinking. This hypothesis is complicated, however, when the measured historical thinking is self-report.

Studies on the influence of religious affiliation on historical thinking or critical thinking in general are sparse. Şahin, Ahmedi, and Gültekin (2023) examined the relationship between religiosity and cognition, specifically focusing on intrinsic religious motivation, critical thinking, and dichotomous thinking. Utilizing a quantitative design, the researchers surveyed 365 students from diverse departments at Afyon Kocatepe University, employing validated scales including the Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale, Critical Thinking Disposition Scale, and Dichotomous Thinking Scale. Their analysis uncovered significant yet nuanced relationships between intrinsic religious motivation and both critical thinking disposition and dichotomous thinking, challenging conventional expectations regarding the opposition between critical and dichotomous thinking. Moreover, the study revealed that religiosity mediates the relationship between dichotomous thinking and critical thinking, suggesting that intrinsic religious motivation may mitigate dichotomous thinking's rigidity while fostering critical thinking disposition. These findings suggest that believers in such socio-cultural contexts may possess a predisposition toward engaging in critical and dichotomous thinking, with intrinsic religious motivation playing a pivotal role in shaping cognitive styles. Hence there is room for research on the relationship between historical thinking and religious affiliation.

Chan (2010) critically addresses the enduring skepticism within academic circles surrounding self-report data, highlighting its prevalence in journal reviews and authors' acknowledgments of limitations. He broadens the definition of self-report data to encompass diverse variables, from demographics to personality traits, while challenging the exaggerated perception of inherent flaws, arguing for a nuanced understanding of its strengths and limitations. Chan debunks the "urban legend" surrounding self-report data by dissecting its historical roots and four common alleged problems, with a focus on construct validity and correlation interpretation. He cautions against overgeneralization regarding correlation inflation due to common method variance, aiming to foster a more nuanced understanding within the research community. Furthermore, Chan challenges assumptions about the superiority of non-self-report

measures, advocating for a context-dependent approach to data collection. He urges reviewers, editors, and authors to critically assess alleged problems in self-report data and develop systematic frameworks for evaluation, ultimately advancing the acceptance and understanding of self-report data in academic research. Hence self-report data, when interpreted correctly, can still yield valuable insights, especially when the tool has been validated (e.g. Meral, Basci-Namli, & Karakus-Yilmaz, 2022).

Meral, Başcı-Namlı, and Karakuş-Yılmaz (2022) articulated the conceptual framework of historical thinking upon which their tool was aligned. The pivotal role of time perception and chronology understanding in historical thought formation and education was discussed, asserting that a robust grasp of historical time fosters identity formation and informed citizenship. They elucidate three interlinked components of historical time comprehension: chronological knowledge, chronology skill, and perception of change and continuity, highlighting their significance in facilitating holistic analysis of historical events and fostering a healthy historical consciousness. Moreover, the authors expound on historical inquiry as the cornerstone of historians' processes, encompassing skills like classification, verification, sourcing, and contextualization, essential for developing critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning among students. Historical empathy emerges as another crucial facet, enabling students to comprehend past perspectives and experiences, fostering a deeper understanding of historical events and societal complexities. The authors advocate for a nuanced approach to historical empathy, integrating cognitive and affective dimensions to cultivate a comprehensive understanding of historical contexts and perspectives. Drawing from existing frameworks and literature, they propose the development of a historical thinking skills scale for secondary education, aiming to encompass the multifaceted nature of historical cognition and inquiry. Through their comprehensive analysis, Meral et al. underscore the foundational role of time perception, historical inquiry, and empathy in fostering historical understanding and critical thinking skills among students, thereby enriching history education and nurturing informed citizenship.

Research Questions

The study sought to identify strengths and areas for improvement in history education within the university's College of Teacher Education. Specifically, this study investigated the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
    1.1. age;
    1.2. specialization/major in current bachelor's;
    1.3. senior high school strand; and
    1.4. religious affiliation?
2. What is the overall level of self-reported historical thinking skills among education students?
3. Is there a significant difference in the demographic profile of the respondents and the self-reported historical thinking skills?
4. Do demographic factors influence the self-reported historical thinking skills of education students?

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to describe and compare the self-reported historical thinking skills of education students at a state university in Region VII. Quantitative research is suitable for this study because it allows for systematic collection and statistical analysis of numerical data, facilitating objective comparisons across different groups and specializations (Creswell, 2014).

Participants

The participants of this study included education students. These students were selected from seven different specializations within the College of Education. The target population consisted of first-year undergraduate students enrolled in these programs. A stratified random sampling method was used to ensure representation across all specializations. The total population of first-year students at the College of Teacher Education is 530. To determine the appropriate sample size, Cochran's formula was employed, which is a widely used method for calculating sample sizes when the population is large. The adjusted Cochran sample size is 223. This sample size was then proportionally stratified by specialization to ensure that each specialization was adequately represented in the study. This stratification process ensures that the sample accurately reflects the distribution of specializations within the population, thereby improving the generalizability of the study's findings.

Table 1 provides the breakdown of the sample size by specialization, proportionally stratified according to the number of students in each specialization.

Table 1. *Sample of Students per Major*

Major	*Total No. of Students*	*Sample*
Elementary Education	105	44
Secondary Education - English	105	44
Secondary Education - Mathematics	65	27
Secondary Education - Social Studies	67	29
Secondary Education - Filipino	72	30

Technology and Livelihood Education	51	22
Technical Vocational Teacher Education	65	27

This proportional stratification ensures that each specialization within the College of Education is represented in the sample according to its proportion in the overall population, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the study's results.

Instruments

A section of the questionnaire is researcher-made, particularly the one on age, gender, specialization in current undergraduate degree, senior high school strand, and religious affiliation. The rest was a validated survey tool. Meral, Basci-Namli, and Karakus-Yilmaz (2022) developed a set of scales to measure the historical thinking skills of secondary school students. The study ensured content and face validity through expert opinion and established construct validity using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The study sample consisted of 817 students, with 497 participating in the EFA and 320 in the CFA. The EFA results revealed a three-factor structure for each subscale: Time and Chronology Perception (TCP), Historical Empathy (HE), and Historical Inquiry (HI). The TCP subscale explained 55.57% of the total variance, the HE subscale explained 52.04%, and the HI subscale explained 49.01%. According to the cited researchers, CFA results confirmed that the subscales had adequate fit indices and reliable coefficients. The findings validated the scale as a reliable tool for assessing historical thinking skills in secondary school students, providing a robust instrument for educational assessment and curriculum development.

Procedure

Preparation. Necessary permissions were obtained from the administration and the College of Education to conduct the study.

Recruitment. Stratified random sampling was used to select participants from each specialization. Faculty members were collaborated with to facilitate student participation.

Survey Administration. The survey instrument was distributed to the selected students. This was done via an online survey platform (Google Forms). All participants were provided with instructions and informed of the purpose of the study.

Informed Consent. All participants were provided with an informed consent form detailing the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Consent was obtained prior to participation.

Data Collection. The completed surveys were collected through Google Forms, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality of responses. Data collection took approximately one week.

Debriefing. After the completion of the study, participants were provided with a summary of the findings and the implications of the research. This was done through a report shared with the College of Education and an optional debriefing session for participants.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data gathered for each research question, appropriate statistical methods will be applied. The demographic profile of the respondents, including age, SHS strand, specialization, and religious affiliation, will be described using frequency distribution and percentage, providing a clear overview of the sample characteristics. The overall level of self-reported historical thinking skills among education students at a state university in Region VII will be assessed using the weighted mean, ensuring an accurate representation of the average skill level. To determine if there is a significant difference in historical thinking skills across different demographic groups, ANOVA will be employed. Finally, regression analysis will be conducted to explore the influence of demographic factors on historical thinking skills, allowing for an understanding of how variables like age, SHS strand, specialization, and religious affiliation impact the students' self-reported abilities.

Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality. Participant anonymity was strictly maintained. Responses were coded to ensure confidentiality.

Data Security. Collected data were stored securely in password-protected files accessible only to the research team. Hard copies of surveys were kept in a locked cabinet.

Non-coercion. Participation was entirely voluntary, and no incentives were offered to avoid coercion.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. *Distribution of Respondents by Profile N= 426*

Profile		*Frequency*	*Percentage*
Age			
	18	89	21
	19	257	60
	20	50	12
	Above 21	30	7

	Total	426	100
Senior High School Strand			
ABM		36	8
GAS		123	29
HUMSS		162	38
STEM		16	4
TVL		89	21
	Total	103	100
Specialization			
Elementary Education		65	15
Secondary Education - English		130	31
Secondary Education - Mathematics		55	13
Secondary Education - Social Studies		44	10
Secondary Education - Filipino		68	16
Technology and Livelihood Education		22	5
Technical Vocational Teacher Education		42	10
	Total	426	100
Religious Affiliation			
Roman Catholic		353	82.9
Mormon		1	0.2
Baptist		13	3.1
Seventh Day Adventist		2	0.5
Born Again Christian		31	7.3
Pentecostal		4	0.9
Non-Denominational Christian Groups (Christian, Protestant, Evangelical Christian)		6	1.4
Non-Mainstream (Ophirian, Hebraic Faith)		3	0.7
Church of Christ		1	0.2
Jehovah's Witnesses		1	0.2
United Church of Christ in the Philippines		3	0.7
Iglesia Filipina Independente		4	0.9
New Apostolic Church		1	0.2
Iglesia ni Cristo		3	0.7
	Total	426	100 %

Table 2. *Self-Reported Historical Thinking Skills N=426*

Components	*Mean*	*Verbal Interpretation*
Time and Chronology Perception	3.59	Agree/Proficient
Historical Inquiry	3.78	Agree/Proficient
Historical Empathy	3.69	Agree/Proficient
Overall Mean	3.69	Agree/Proficient

The self-reported Historical Thinking Skills, as presented in Table 2, shows a generally proficient level of engagement across different components. Time and Chronology Perception, Historical Inquiry, and Historical Empathy have mean scores above 3.5, indicating agreement with proficient historical thinking in these areas. Specifically, students report a mean score of 3.59 for Time and Chronology Perception, suggesting a solid grasp of historical timelines and sequencing. Similarly, Historical Inquiry and Historical Empathy both score above 3.7, indicating a proficient ability to ask critical historical questions and empathize with historical perspectives, respectively. The Overall Mean score of 3.69 further emphasize this interpretation, suggesting an overall agreement with proficient Historical Thinking Skills among the surveyed students.

These findings suggest that the surveyed students possess a satisfactory level of Historical Thinking Skills across multiple dimensions. The proficient scores in Time and Chronology Perception, Historical Inquiry, and Historical Empathy indicate that students demonstrate competency in fundamental aspects of historical analysis and interpretation. This suggests a positive outlook for the development of historical literacy and critical thinking skills among the student population. However, further research could explore specific areas for improvement or interventions to enhance Historical Thinking Skills even further, ensuring students' continued growth in historical understanding and analysis.

The ANOVA results in Table 3 reveal significant differences in self-reported Historical Thinking Skills based on certain demographic factors. Specifically, the SHS Strand and Specialization show significant differences. The SHS Strand has an F value of 2.543 and a p-value of 0.039, indicating that students' Historical Thinking Skills is significantly different in terms their SHS Strands. Similarly, Specialization has an F value of 3.061 and a p-value of 0.006, suggesting that students' Historical Thinking Skills is significantly different in terms their specialization.

Table 3. *Significant Difference between the Demographic Profile of the Students and the Self-Reported Historical Thinking Skills N=426*

Variables	*F-value*	*P-value*	*Interpretation*	*Decision*
Historical Thinking Skills * Age	.442	.723	Insignificant	Do not reject Ho
Historical Thinking Skills * SHS Strand	2.543	.039	Significant	Reject Ho
Historical Thinking Skills * Specialization	3.061	.006	Significant	Reject Ho
Historical Thinking Skills * Religious Affiliation	.798	.663	Insignificant	Do not reject Ho

However, the analysis shows no significant differences in Historical Thinking Skills based on Age (F value = 0.442, p-value = 0.723) and Religious Affiliation (F value = 0.798, p-value = 0.663). These findings imply that age group and religious affiliation of the students' do not significantly differ in their Historical Thinking Skills. In other words, regardless of their age or religious background, students exhibit relatively similar levels of Historical Thinking Skills.

Table 4. *Predictor Analysis for Historical Thinking Skills N=426*

Predictors	*R Square*	*F-value*	*P-value*	*Interpretation*	*Decision*
Age	.012	1.238	.294	Insignificant	Do not reject Ho
SHS Strand					
Specialization					
Religious Affiliation					

The regression analysis reveals that the predictors (SHS Strand, Age, Religious Affiliation, and Specialization) have minimal impact on Historical Thinking Skills. With an R Square value of 0.012, only 1.2% of the variability in Historical Thinking Skills is explained by these variables, and the Adjusted R Square is even lower at 0.002. The F-value of 1.238 and a p-value of 0.294 indicate that the overall model is not statistically significant, suggesting that the chosen predictors do not collectively explain the variations in Historical Thinking Skills.

None of the individual predictors—Religious Affiliation, Age, Specialization, and SHS Strand—are statistically significant, as their p-values all exceed 0.05. This implies that these factors do not have a meaningful effect on Historical Thinking Skills. Given the low explanatory power and lack of significant predictors, it is evident that other variables, not included in this model, might better explain the variance in Historical Thinking Skills. Future research should consider additional or alternative factors to identify what influences Historical Thinking Skills more effectively.

The demographic profile of the respondents in this study provides a comprehensive overview of the diverse backgrounds from which they come, highlighting key factors that may influence their perspectives and approaches to historical thinking. The age distribution of the respondents, predominantly 19 years old (60%), suggests that the majority are in their late teens. This age group is typically in the early stages of their higher education journey, which can be a critical period for developing historical thinking skills. The respondents' specializations reveal a significant focus on secondary education majors, with English (31%) and Filipino (16%) being the most common. Interestingly, only 10% of respondents are specializing in Social Studies, which directly correlates with historical thinking. According to McLaughlin and McGill (2017), students specializing in humanities and social sciences, particularly those focused on social studies, are expected to have higher historical thinking skills due to the nature of their coursework, which often involves critical analysis of historical events and perspectives. The overwhelming majority of respondents identify as Roman Catholic (82.9%), with smaller representations of other religious affiliations. The demographic profile of the respondents provides a valuable lens through which to examine the factors influencing historical thinking.

The study reveals that education students at a state university in Region VII. generally report a proficient level of historical thinking skills across three major components: Time and Chronology Perception (TCP), Historical Inquiry (HI), and Historical Empathy (HE). With mean scores of 3.59, 3.78, and 3.69 respectively, students' self-assessments indicate a satisfactory grasp of essential historical skills, reflecting their ability to understand historical timelines, critically evaluate historical evidence, and empathize with historical perspectives. These results align with Barton and Levstik's (2004) assertion that history education should go beyond factual knowledge to foster critical thinking and participatory democratic engagement. The overall mean score of 3.69 suggests that the students are well-prepared to engage with historical content in a meaningful way, embodying the "habits of mind" described by Seixas and Morton (2012).

The study also explored the relationship between demographic factors and historical thinking skills. Significant differences were found in self-reported historical thinking skills based on the Senior High School (SHS) strand and specialization. Students who followed the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand reported higher historical thinking skills compared to those from other strands such as Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM) or Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL). This supports McLaughlin and McGill's (2017) findings that humanities education, which includes rigorous historical study, is effective in fostering critical thinking skills, or perhaps more precisely, in increasing confidence in one's historical thinking skils. Students specializing in Secondary

Education - Social Studies also reported higher skills, consistent with the hypothesis that those with a focused background in history-related disciplines develop stronger historical thinking abilities.

However, no significant differences were found based on age or religious affiliation. This suggests that, unlike SHS strand and specialization, age and religious background do not significantly impact students' historical thinking skills. This is an intriguing finding, as it highlights the importance of educational context over personal demographics in developing these skills. This result sheds additional light on Şahin, Ahmedi, and Gültekin's (2023), which suggests that religiosity mediates the relationship between dichotomous thinking and critical thinking, suggesting that intrinsic religious motivation may mitigate dichotomous thinking's rigidity while fostering critical thinking disposition.

Regression analysis revealed that demographic factors (age, SHS strand, specialization, and religious affiliation) collectively explained only 1.2% of the variance in historical thinking skills, indicating that these variables have minimal predictive power. This underscores the complexity of measuring cognitive skills like historical thinking. The low explanatory power suggests that other unmeasured factors, such as specific instructional strategies, the quality of teaching, and individual cognitive differences, may play a more significant role in influencing historical thinking skills.

Conclusions

The study focused on first-year education students at state university in Region VII, encompassing various specializations within the College of Education. The primary variables analyzed were historical thinking skills, demographic factors (age, SHS strand, specialization, and religious affiliation), and the relationship between these factors. A validated survey tool adapted from Meral, Basci-Namli, and Karakus-Yilmaz (2022) was used to measure historical thinking skills. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and regression analysis were employed to interpret the data and determine the significance of relationships between variables.

This study provides valuable insights into the historical thinking skills of education students. Employing a quantitative research design, the study effectively describes and compares self-reported historical thinking skills across various specializations. The findings indicate that students generally exhibit proficient levels of historical thinking, particularly in Time and Chronology Perception (TCP), Historical Inquiry (HI), and Historical Empathy (HE). The analysis reveals significant differences in historical thinking skills based on Senior High School (SHS) strand and specialization, but not on age or religious affiliation. Despite these differences, the regression analysis suggests that demographic factors account for only a small portion of the variance in historical thinking skills, highlighting the need to consider other influencing factors in future research.

A limitation of this study is that the tool's intended participants are secondary students whereas the respondents are college students. The study relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability or inaccurate self-assessment. The findings are specific to first-year education students and may not be generalizable to students from other institutions or different academic levels. The regression analysis included only four demographic factors, potentially overlooking other relevant variables such as teaching quality, curriculum differences, or personal cognitive traits. As a cross-sectional study, it captures data at a single point in time, limiting the ability to draw conclusions about changes or trends in historical thinking skills over time.

Future researchers should conduct longitudinal research to track changes in historical thinking skills over time and identify long-term influencing factors. Craft and validate more appropriate tools for historical thinking. Expand the study to include students from different institutions, academic levels, and regions to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Incorporate additional variables such as instructional strategies, quality of teaching, and individual cognitive differences to better understand the factors influencing historical thinking skills. Employ a mixed-methods approach to gain a more comprehensive understanding of historical thinking skills, combining quantitative data with qualitative insights from interviews or focus groups.

Acknowledgment

The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. John Nerie Gentallan in securing the necessary permissions to conduct the study at the identified university.

References

Andal, R. A. E., & Hermosa, J. (2023). Learning Style of Grade Eight Students: Basis on Enhancing Historical Thinking Skills Using Contextualized Learning Activities in Araling Panlipunan. International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research, 4(5), 1639-1650.

Barton, K. C., & Levstik, L. S. (2004). Teaching History for the Common Good. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Chan, D. (2010). So why ask me? Are self-report data really that bad?. In Statistical and methodological myths and urban legends (pp. 329-356). Routledge.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. Sage Publications.

Lévesque, S. (2008). Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-First Century. University of Toronto Press.

Levstik, L. S., & Barton, K. C. (2011). Doing History: Investigating with Children in Elementary and Middle Schools (4th ed.). Routledge.

Meral, E., Basci-Namli, Z., & Karakus-Yilmaz, T. (2022). Developing the Historical Thinking Skill Scale at the Secondary School Level. International Journal of Curriculum and Instructional Studies, 12(2), 413-440.

Şahin, M., Ahmedi, B. K., & Gültekin, M. (2023). Religiousness and Cognition: The Relationships Between Intrinsic Religious Motivation, Critical Thinking, and Dichotomous Thinking. Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi, 27(1), 281-296.

Seixas, P., & Morton, T. (2013). The Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts. Nelson Education.

VanSledright, B. A. (2014). Assessing Historical Thinking and Understanding: Innovative Designs for New Standards. Routledge.

Wineburg, S. (2001). Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past. Temple University Press.

Affiliations and Corresponding Information

John Nerie Gentallan
Bohol Island State University – Philippines

Mark Steven Pandan
Holy Name University – Philippines