

MANAGING STUDY HABITS AND ITS IMPACT ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIA

Kabiru Mohammed Badau

Department of Science Education, Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola, Nigeria

ABSTRACT: *How a student takes his or her studies, greatly determines his/her level of academic achievements. The level of preparation and learning strategies developed and employed consciously by students, go a long way to influence their level of academic performance*

KEYWORDS: study habits, secondary school students, academic performance , Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

How a student takes his or her studies, greatly determines his/her level of academic achievements. The level of preparation and learning strategies developed and employed consciously by students, go a long way to influence their level of academic performance (Ebele&Olofu,2017).

Thus, study habit is one of the greatest students or learning factors that hugely influences students' academic achievements. If undermined by students at all levels, teachers, administrators, parents and guardians, school counselors and the government, then, the trend and menace of students' abysmal performance in both internal and external examinations would continue to boom and become more devastating and alarming(Mahraj&Qamar,2012).

Mark and Howard (2009) are of the opinion that the most common challenge to the success of students in all ramifications is a lack of effective or positive (good) study habit. Study habit is fast disappearing in Nigeria educational system, This is mostly attributed to distractions from devices like TV,GSM and Computers, which are by-products of scientific and technological inventions and innovations Today, many students prefer to watch movies and other shows on television, listening to audio-CDS, watch video-CDS among others. They further maintain that if students can develop a good study habit and with good discipline, they are bound to perform remarkably well in their academic pursuit.

Husain (2000) stresses that lack of effective or positive (good) study habits is a critical study problem among students at all levels. Grace (2013) also maintains that the process of learning is still a little mysterious but studies do show that the most effective process for studying involves highly active behavior over a period of time. In other words, to study effectively, one must read,draw, compare, memorize and test himself over time.

Study habits are usually defined as students' ability to manage time and other resource to complete an academic task successfully. 'Study habit' is the amount and kind of studying routines which the student is used during regular period of study occurred in a conducive environment. Crede & Kuneel (2008) defines study habit as study routines, including, but not

restricted to, frequency of studying sessions, review of material, self testing, rehearsal of learned material and studying in a conducive environment. Study habits are commonly referred to as regular patterns in approaching study tasks. These patterns are made up of a combination of one or more individual tactics or techniques such as note taking (Wade, Trathen & Schraw 1990). When these techniques are used deliberately in particular study situations, they are called study strategies. A study strategy and in turn study habit, is a direct sequence of activities applied by the learner to a set of information rather than a single random event (Kail & Bisanz, 1982).

Study habits typically denotes degree to which students engage in regular acts of studying that are characterized by appropriate studying retains (review or material) occurring in an environment that is conducive to studying. Study habits refer to the activities carried out by learners during the learning process of improving learning. Study habits are intended to elicit and guide one's cognitive processes during learning. Study habits are learning tendencies that enable students work privately.

Azikiwe (1998) describes study habits as "the adopted way and manner a student plans his private reading, after classroom learning so as to attain mastery of the subject". According to her, "good study habits are good asset to learners because habits help students to attain mastery in areas of specialization and ensuing excellent performance, while the opposite becomes constraint to learning & achievement leading to failure". In recent years, study skills and study habits or behaviors has been distinctly differentiated. Bliss & Mueller (1987) were among the first to note that the difference lies in distinguishing between potential and actual behavior. This distinction is elaborated as:- Study skills: study skills are usually steps or procedures such as highlighting, outlining, note-taking, summarizing etc. that may be taught through explicit instruction (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002). Study skills are the specific techniques that make up the study plan.

The concept of study habit according to Husain (2000) is broad, as it combines nearly all other sub-concepts such as study attitude, study methods and study skills. Attitude is a mental and natural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a direct influence on the individual's response to all objects and situations with which is related.

Attitude towards study has great contribution on academic achievement, and good study pattern. Successful learners adopt positive attitude towards study, and do not waste time or energy over what they have to do. If the learning experience is pleasant, the learner's attitude and motivation is usually positive, and if the learning experience is not pleasant he tends to avoid it.

Negative attitude towards study sometimes finds expression in comment such as "I study but cannot remember what I study" or "the lessons are too long". Attitude serves as index on how we think and feel about people, objects and issues in our environment. Study attitude, according to Husain (2000), refers to the predispositions which students have developed towards private readings through a period of time. According to him, study attitude offers great possibilities for successful achievement in studies. Study method is the knowledge and application of effective study skills or techniques by students. Several study methods have been identified several effective study methods and skills that could be used by students based on the learning environment (Husain, 2000).

Kelli (2009) posits that for students to succeed in their studies, they must be able to appropriately assimilate course content, digest it, reflect on it and be able to articulate the information in written and/or oral form. What is fundamental is the ability of a student to acquire effective study habits. Many students feel that the hours of study are the most important.

However, students can study for hours on end and retain very little. The more appropriate a question is, determines how students should study more effectively. Developing good time management skills is very important. Students must realize that there is a time to be in class, a time for study, time for family, time to socialize and time to just be alone. The critical issue is recognition that there must be an appropriate balance. Students should also have vision. A clearly articulated picture of the future they intend to create for themselves is very important and contributes to students' success in school. This will promote a passion for what they wish to do. Passion is critical and leads to an intense interest, dedication and commitment to achieving career goals and objectives.

Marc (2011) explains that students with learning problems, however, may still have generally inefficient and ineffective study habits and skills. Becoming aware of your learning habits or styles will help students to understand why they sometimes get frustrated with common study methods. He observes that good study habits are essential to educational success; as they contribute to a successful academic future. Good study habits lead to good grades while good grades lead to admissions to better colleges and universities, possibly with a scholarship thrown in. This in turn, will lead to a great career. Developing good study habits to Marc is very crucial for every student irrespective of his level of education. It boosts students' ability to be self-disciplined, self-directed and ultimately successful in their degree programs.

The sooner a student starts practicing and developing good habits, the better chance he will have that he will continue with them. Procrastination can be overcome with proper study habits and improving one's study habits is the key to better studying. Being organized and having homework routines are the most important things in helping a child/student develop good study habits for life. Developing good study habits help spell success and a student will find himself working more efficiently and experiencing lesser stress in the process. He adds that having effective study habits creates a more efficient academic environment. Planning your study schedule as a student in advance and faithfully sticking to it saves time. When students have good study habits, they tend to be less stressed. Students who are anxious on exam day are typically the procrastinators who come unprepared. Students who organize their lives and stick to their established study schedules are confident and relaxed at test-taking time (Marc, 2011).

Ashish (2013) opines that if students must ensure academic success throughout the entire year, it is important to ditch bad study habits and establish good ones. He further maintains that no matter what age or academic level, employing effective study strategies can mar all the difference between acing a class, barely passing or worse and failing miserably. She admits that many of today's most common study methods or habits can lead to utter disappointment despite best efforts and intentions. To Ashish (2013), knowing exactly what does and does not work on a personal level, even tracking study patterns and correlating it with related grades and then proactively creating a study plan and schedule around the proven effective methods, is the most powerful study tool of all.

Adeninyi (2011) maintains that good study habits allow students to study independently at home and aspire for higher educational career. The formation of good study habits in secondary

school level further serves as the basis for students' performance in external examinations such as West African Examinations Council(WAEC), National Examinations Council (NECO), Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) and National Business and Technical Examinations Board(NABTEB).

In the view of Agba (2013), serious students do study anyhow without specific techniques, and he submits that such students are most likely to perform below average. Thus, he concludes that good study habits help students to: attend classes very often and do so on time. It also helps them to submit their assignment on time, read or prepare very well for tests and exams, take down notes and develop the points independently, ask relevant questions in class; thereby having good grades at the end of the term or semester. Monday (2008) writing on bad study habits maintains that developing good study habits in school will help students succeed in class and achieve educational goals.

Similarly, Boiling (2000) asserts that good study habit through planning helps students prepare for what is ahead, and accomplish their academic goals. Thus, lack of study habits clearly puts students at a disadvantage, and is one of the main reasons students need remedial classes, fall behind in coursework and drop out of school. Developing good study habits drastically lowers students' risk of academic struggles, and failure to complete a secondary school. Hence, Boiling (2000) submits that who tend to perform high across most of their subjects can be considered to have good study habits by being actively involved in their own learning process, continuous planning and carefully monitoring of the educational task that they are required to complete.

Different students have different and unique study habits. What may be a good study habit to a particular student may be a bad one indeed to another student. As such, it is often difficult to practically pin-point that this is good and that is bad. In the opinion of Katelyn (2013), there is no doubt that different people study in different ways and it is a near certainty that what works for one on topics you find difficult person may not work for another. John (2010) opines that not all students are alike.

There are several key study habits that are crucial to all students' success. One of such is study in a good environment, a little bit of background music, such as classical with no lyrics are fine and a good studying location. Whether studying in rain or shine, day or night what is most important is to be consistent and stay on one schedule.

Generally, study habits can be classified into two-good study habits, and bad study habits. Good study habits according to Katelyn (2013) are sometimes referred to as positive or productive study habits. As the name implies, they are those pleasant study habits which have the tendency to improve the academic performance of students or that seem to produce good results. They are the study habits which make students successful in their studies after developing and applying them throughout their academic career.

Good study habits occur as a result of practice and knowing what methods are most effective for you as a student. When studying, stay away from distractions, such as the computer. Instead of procrastinating, work on a long term assignment daily, instead of studying the night before, study a little each night. Review what you learned in class every day when you get home, before starting homework. Also, a good tip is to review what you did in class the previous day at the beginning of class when, you have a few minutes before the teacher starts talking. By learning the ways that you learn the best, you will be successful in your studies. Katelyn (2013)

therefore, identifies fourteen positive or good study habits which students can employ in order to improve their academic performance. They are: attending all classes regularly, reviewing your notes daily, reading material Prior to it being covered in class study, have at least one conference with the teacher, develop and learn a word list for the course, read materials to improve your background in the course (other than text), attend help session, attend learning resource lab when available, develop a list of possible questions, ask questions in class, study an old exam (when available), avoid a last minute cram session, and sleep at least 8 hours the night before exams commence. In the same vein, Harper and Row (2009), highlight students good study habits as thus:

1. Studying every day
2. Creating a quiet place at home or anywhere to study
3. Turning off the phone, TV and other devices that may disturb you when studying
4. Listening to soft music or white noise
5. Studying in a way that suits your learning style
6. Taking regular breaks
7. Studying early (do not wait for last minutes)
8. Studying the hardest things first, spending more time
9. Asking for help if one is struggling with his studies, taking notes as one studies as well as organizing notes in a notebook or folder.

On the other hand, bad study habits according to John (2010) are negative or non-productive study habits which, are undesirable and counter-productive to students' a on academic performance. When developed and utilized by students at all levels, they tend to hamper academic progress and' performance of the users. Due to the peculiarity and uniqueness of individual student, what may be considered as bad study habits to student "A", may seem to be very productive and efficient for student if "B". However, bad study habits generally range from procrastination, truancy, not taking note, selective if reading, studying while watching television or what is generally regarded as distractive study etc. Nikki (2013) identifies bad reading habits to include studying with friends, listening to loud music, studying in uncomfortable conditions, cramming, etc.

There are several factors that tend to affect students study habits. Anything can affect students' study habits. There, ability to study and concentrate can be increased by finding a quiet place where they can concentrate. Distractions such as phones, chat rooms and text messaging, TV, video games, music and computers can all decrease students' ability to learn. Whatever is going on around and within a student's own mind is going to affect his study habits.

According to Cerna&pavliushchenko (2015), study habits can be affected by factors such as:

1. Age of a student
2. Home environment
3. Studying materials
4. Television and computer games
5. Social network (face book)

6. Students' determination and aspiration
7. Financial and economic status of parents
8. Surrounding such as entertainment center, games center etc.
9. The rule of the schools
10. The teaching style of teachers
11. The leisure of the students
12. Some activities in schools
13. Availability of library
14. The nature friends and peer group
15. Assignments and homework restriction
16. Students' parents educational background
17. Parents not interested and supportive in helping their children study
18. Household chores
19. Family problems
20. Procrastination and poor time management

21. Students' comfort level
23. The noise level
24. The lighting level and the availability of items that might be necessary to study or to enhance concentration.

Styles of Study Habits

Harper & Row (2009) grouped styles of study habits into:

- Group or individual study
- Class attendance
- Study in or outside the library
- Day or night study

Katelyn (2013) provided several elements that characterize effective study techniques. These are:

1. Learning to select important information
2. Learning to summarize information's
3. Learning to organize information
4. Learning to take affection notes in the classes
5. Learning to underline appropriately
6. Learning to construct question
7. Learning to facilitate elaboration processing

Reading Habits and its effects on academic performance

Reading habits and academic performance are essential for research workers and educationist to know that every child whether he or she is gifted, average, normal or backward etc, should be educated in his or her own way , but he or she possesses good study habit, he or she can perform well in academic and in every situation (Owusu-Acheaw,&Larson,2003). It is the reading habit which help the learner in obtaining meaningful and desirable knowledge. Good reading habits acts as a strong weapon for the students to excel in life. (Bashiru&Matto, 2012).

Owusu-Acheaw and Larson(2003 categorized reading habit into:

1. Importance of reading novels
2. Numbers of novels
3. Materials read at library
4. Leisure time
5. Engagement in library
6. Perception about reading
7. Influence of reading on academic performance
8. Hindrance to reading habit.

How does Study Habits affect Academic Performance

Grades is always an indicator of how well a learning material is learnt. If a learner earns high grades it is concluded that he/she may have learned a lot, while low grade indicates lesser learning. Consequently

Many studies found out that there are also several factors that would account for the grades. No single factor can be definitely pointed out as predicting grades. It has been interplay of some many factors-year level, learner's socio-economic status, IQ, gender, age etc.

In fact, almost all of existing environmental and personal factors are a variable of academic performance. Though many student do not realize that some study habit components skills can influence their academic performance. As emphasized by educators, counselors and psychologists, these skills may become predictors of academic performance of students at any level of education. The study habit component skills by Bakare (1970, include, homework and assignment; time allocation to work; reading and note-taking; study period procedures; concentration; Written work; Examination and Teacher consultation.

- a. Homework and Assignment covers the habits that students have in studying outside the class hours. It assesses how the student organizes his/her academic schedule at home to facilitates learning. According to Okafor (1981), the idea of giving students homework and assignments is because in the pursuit of their studies, instead of being on-lookers waiting for some authority (the teacher) to impose items of information on them, they become also initiators or active participants in learning.

- b. Time Allocation to work is the dimension that assesses the habit of a student to avoid certain factors that might distract his/her focus from succeeding in the course of studying.
- c. Reading and Note-taking is the dimension that assesses students' habits of note-taking. Orderly, labeled, and legible note written in a student's own words and the use of key words and some supporting detailed notes have been correlated with positive academic outcomes. Omoegun (2000) reported that students at all levels, to properly function in our society of today where information is rapidly increasing and knowledge becoming more complex must master how to read and take notes.
- d. The study period procedures subscales assesses habits related to spreading/spacing studying, while Concentration assesses the habits a student has formed to avoid distraction while studying. Therefore, it is necessary that a student should have a good study environment. The library is about the best place to study in. Akinboye (1980) described it as the academic power house and a chief link between students and the wisdom of the ages.
- e. Written work assesses a student's habits in expressing his/her thoughts in an organized manner with attention to neatness and mistakes.
- f. The Examination dimension works at the habits of a student in preparing for examination and teacher consultation evaluates' habit of interacting with the teacher in studying effectively.

Jay(2013) recommended five(5) study skills to make students succeed in their studies, which are:

1. Plan your work.

Great planning affects every level of the academic process, from mapping out a term to breaking down a problem set. Top students plan as soon as they receive their syllabi or assignments, determining what resources they need and when they'll do their work. This doesn't mean that they do everything immediately, but that they cultivate and maintain an awareness of exactly what they need to do to excel.

2. Set routines.

Successful students set very clear study routines. A student who devotes two hours to reading and reviewing for his or her biology class every Friday afternoon can rest assured that he or she never falls behind in biology. Similarly, a student who plans a schedule at the beginning of the term using his or her syllabi will never be surprised about when his or her exams and papers are due.

3. Build systems.

Top performers create systems to deal with different types of assignments and contingencies. One efficient and effective paper writer I know according to Jay(2013) developed a comprehensive system of research, preparation, outlining, writing, and revising to approach every paper, no matter the subject. He was able to rely on this system to knock almost every paper out of the park. Great students also take advantage of resources designed to help them keep their assignments, tasks, and lives in order.

4. Collaborate with others.

Few people can do it alone, and successful students understand the value of collaboration.

Collaboration doesn't mean cheating, but rather bouncing ideas off of one another to get different perspectives on a problem. Strong students might review problem sets or homework with friends before an assignment is due, while others might meet with their instructor to review paper outlines before beginning to write.

5. Do it right the first time.

Whether taking notes, planning, executing, or calculating, great students know the value of doing something correctly the first time. They take notes carefully so they don't have to re-read their textbooks, they compute carefully so they don't have to redo problems, and they plan carefully so they don't experience a backlog in work as important deadlines approach. Students are strongly encouraged to incorporate these principles and techniques into their study routine. This will make a huge difference in their academic performance!

CONCLUSION

This article concludes that bad study habits negatively affect academic performance of secondary school students, while good study habits improve learning outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are proffered for managing study habits for improving secondary school students' academic performance:

1. That principals, teachers and school guidance counselors should collaboratively guide students on how to develop good study habits, thereby enhancing academic success.
2. Parents should also enforce study habits right from home to improve academic performance of secondary school students.
3. Teachers should encourage students to visit the library to read additional materials stocked in the library.
4. Teachers should engage students in assignments, presentations and projects at all times.

REFERENCES

- Adeninyi, V. (2011). *Studying to Pass: Implication for students*. Lagos: Macmillan.
- Agba, R. (2013). *Why Students Must Develop Study Habits*. Calabar: Rixmas Publishing Company.
- Akinboye, J.O. (1980). A study of self-concept study behavior and health attributes Of male and female Adolescence. *Journal of African Studies*, 1(2), 21-27.
- Ashish, R (2013). Study Habits for Students: Bad Ones to Avoid, Good Ones to Achieve Success. www.education/soe/news-events, 12/3/2016.
- Azikwe, U. (1998). Study approaches of University students. *WCCI Region 11 Forum*, 2, 106-114
- Bless, L.B & Mullelller, R.J. (1987). Assessing study behaviours of college students: findings from a new instrument. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 11(2), 14-18.

- Bakare, C.G.M. (1970). *Study habits inventory*. Department of Guidance and Counselling, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Bashiru, I&Mattoo, N.H.(2012). A study on study habits and academic performance among Adolescents(14-19) years. *International Journal of Science Tomorrow*, 1,(5), 1-5.
- Bolling, S .(2000). *The Advantages & Disadvantage of Study Habits for College Students*. New Jessy: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Cerna,A&Pavlinsheheako,K. (2015). Influence of study habits on academic performance of international college students in shangai.*Higher Education Studies*,5(4),42-45.
- Crede, M &Kunnel, N.R. (2008). Study habit,Skills and Attitude:the third pillar supporting collegiate academic performances. *Perspectiveon Psychological Science*,25, 147-166.
- Ebele,U.f&Olofu,P.a. (2017). Study habits and its impact on secondary school Students academic performance in biology in the federal capital territory, Abuja. *Educational Research and Reviews*,12(10), 583-588.
- Gettinger, M.,& Seibert, J.K.(2000). Contribution of study skills to academic Competence. *School Psychology Review*,31, 350-365.
- Grace, F (2013). Would Group Study Improve your Grades? Retrieved from www.about.com. 11/3/2016.
- Harpe, T& Row, A (2009). Effective Study Habits. Retrieved from www.arbeitsblaetter.com 12/3/2016.
- Horward, M.A. (2000). How to study, *Psychology Science*,20(4),516-522.
- Husain, A. (2000). *Developing Study Habits*. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.
- Jay, B. (2013).*Five(5) Essential study skills*. Subject Tutoring and organizational Coaching.
- John, M. (2010) .Students Study Habits and Styles. Retrieved from www.worldwidelearn.com 12/3/2016.
- Kail, R.V., &Bisanz, J. (1982). Cognitive strategies. In C. R.PUFF(ed), *Handbook of Research methods in human memory and cognition*. Newyork: academic Press.
- Katelyn, F. (2013). College Study Habits News. Retrieved from www.studymode.com/essays 12/3/2016.
- Kelli ,K. (2009). Developing Good Study Habits News. Retrieved from moster.com.media/ads 11/3/2016.
- Marc, K (2011), The importance of Good Study Habits. Retrieved from www.answer.com 12/3/2016.
- Mehraj,U.D&Qamar, J. (2012). Study habits of higher secondary school students Working and non-working mothers.*Journal of Education and Practice*,3(12),119-128.
- Monday, M. (2008).Ten bad study habits you should resolve to avoid Retrieved from www.newa4jax.com2/42016.
- Nikki,K. (2013). Common Bad Study Habits. Retrieved from www.newa4ax.com2/42016.
- Okafor, F.C.(ed). (1980). *Philisophy of Education and Third World Perspective Law*. Rencesville Virginia: Brunside Publishing company.
- Omoegun, O.M. (2000). Effects of remedial guidance on Academic achievement Of Lagos state adolescents in English comprehension. *Ilorin Journal of Education*, 20, 87-93.
- Omotere,T. (2011). *The effects of study habit on the academic performance of Students*. Ogun:Ego Booster Books.
- Onwuegbuzie, U. (2001). Correlation between study habit and students Academic Success. *Journal of Education*,2(1),27.
- Owusu-Acheaw,M& Larson, A.G. (2003). Reading habit and its effects onAcademic Performance. A study of studentsof Koforidua polytechnic.
- Wade, S.E., &Trathen, W.,&Schraw, C.(1990). Spontaneous study strategies. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 25,147-166.