

STUDY HABITS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RIVERS-WEST SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The study investigated Study Habits and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers-West Senatorial District of Rivers State, Nigeria. The population of the study is 2,650 Senior Secondary Two (S.S.2) students in selected public schools in the Rivers-West Senatorial District. The sample size is 437 which was chosen through Taro Yemeni's sample size selection formula. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire which dwelt on the extent of relationship between aspects of study habit such as regular reading, students-teacher consultation, regular involvement in doing class assignments, regular library patronage and regular engagement in doing take-home assignments and academic performance. Five research questions guided the study and were analysed using mean statistical tool. The findings revealed that there is high extent of relationship between study habit and academic performance. Consequently, recommendations were made which include: parents should provide books and encourage their wards to study hard; counselors should be employed to counsel students on how to develop study habit; students should be encouraged to do their class and take-home assignments.*

KEYWORDS: Academic Performance, Secondary School Students, Study Habit, Assignment

INTRODUCTION

Education and knowledge are among the most precious virtues that mankind crave. The seeming twin concepts are important because every given society has used knowledge/education to improve or develop. It is for this reason that resources are heavily invested in the education sector. Acquisition of education is also acquisition of knowledge. The two concepts are inseparable because they almost mean the same thing.

The above notwithstanding, for one to be said to be educated means that the person must have performed well in academics. Hornby (2010:865) defines performance as "how well or badly something works". Performance is an act or process of performing a task. It also involves an act involving numerous efforts or trouble. Eze cited in Obinwa (2010) opined that "academic performance relates to the degree of performance students put towards academic success". Furthermore, Bell (2011) noted that:

In educational institutions, success is measured by academic performance or how well a student meets standards set out by Government and the institution itself. As career competition grows fiercer in the working world, the importance of students

doing well in school has caught the attention of parents,

legislators and government education departments pp143.

To further buttress the fore-goings, especially on the clarification of the concept of academic performance, Braide (2018) posits that:

Most people know that academic performance generally refers to how well a student is accomplishing his or her task and lessons, but there are quite a number of factors that may determine the level and quality of students' academic performance pp1.

In tertiary level of education, performance is assessed in various ways. For systematic scoring, learners prove their knowledge by undertaking oral or written test, performing presentations as is done in seminars, partaking in classroom activities, discussions and submission of take-home assignments. In the Nigerian secondary school system, learners are evaluated through home works, assignments, test, examinations etc (Obinna 1998).

It is however important to note that the academic achievement of learners may well be marred or enhanced depending on their approach to studying. Study is the activity of learning or gaining knowledge either from books or by examining things in the world. Studying is the procedure of getting information from prints that is information stored in written materials (magazines, newspapers, books). Mace (2002) opines that study is an organized gaining of intelligence and an interpretation of information and ideologies that calls for memorizing and usage. Kelly (1998) specified that study is the utilization of person's intellectual ability to the gaining, comprehending and arrangement of information; doing it over and over again entails some method of formal learning. Okorodudu (2000) is of the view that study is a course of topic mastery. Studying entails diligence as it concerns a specified person engaged in it.

Habit is a thing that one does often and almost without thinking; especially something that is hard to stop doing (Hornby 2000:530). It is identified as a way of doing something. A person's habit consists of a unique ways of how specific things are allowed or done by such individual or person. Habit is relative to person or people. Each human being acts in a unique way. This is so because nature made things uniquely. The temperament and general attitude of a person is not the same with that of another person or individual.

Considering the exposition on the concept of habit and study, it can then be said that study habit refers to the consistent ways a person does with regards to gaining knowledge. Hussain cited in Braide (2018:2) opines that study habit is the predispositions which learners have acquired regarding isolated studying over time. Since habits exemplify uniqueness in an individual, study routines are the activities of person related to studies. Study habits are routines of implementing and practicing abilities of learners in learning processes for gaining mastery. Study habit functions as the propeller of learning. A student's learning character is characterized by his study habits. Study habits are the various attitudes, methods techniques and strategies which individual students adopt while studying. Individual behaviour is guided by habit, therefore, in the process of studying, the various habits or techniques students adopt are what define their performance. The above bring to the fore, the importance of both study

and habit in a student's life yet the actual implications are unknown. The uncertainty of the effect of study habit on the academic performance of students remains a source of concern especially with regards to Rivers-West Senatorial District of Rivers State, Nigeria hence the decision to embark on this study.

Statement of the Problem

Education has been identified as an important social institution. Those enrolled in education (academic programme) know that they are there to achieve success which will be beneficial to not only the student but also his family and the society at large. It is factual after all that education serves as a means of liberation, illumination and upward social mobility. Considering the importance of education, it is expected that those who have enrolled in any academic programme should study very hard in order to pass examination with flying colours.

Unfortunately, performances in examinations especially secondary school level have been so poor. Studying is quite significant, as no learning process, activity or situation can be effective without studying. But one problem that seems to confront the Nigerian educational system is the consistent failure of learners in national examinations specifically, at the secondary school level of learning. (Ajayi, 2012).

The above assertion is further corroborated by Adesulu (2018:9) as he reported that "West African Examinations Council, WAEC, has released results of West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination WASSCE, for private candidates in 2018 - first series, yesterday in Lagos with 17.13 percentage pass in English language and Mathematics."

The high rate of failure is indeed a source of worry to all and sundry. What could be the reason for the mass failure? Could it be a factor of study habit among secondary school students? The curiosity to proffer solutions to this problem resulted in the choice to undertake the study on this topic.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between study habits and students academic performance. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the relationship between regular reading as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.
2. To find out the relationship between student-teacher consultation as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.
3. To ascertain the relationship between regular involvement in doing class assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.
4. To determine the relationship between regular library patronage as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.
5. To examine the relationship between regular engagement in doing take-home assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What extent is the relationship between regular reading as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?
2. What extent is the relationship between student-teacher consultation as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?
3. To what extent is the relationship between regular involvement in doing class assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?
4. To what extent is the relationship between regular library patronage as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?
5. What extent is the relationship between regular engagement in doing take-home assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlational research design. The choice of this research design stems from the fact that the study measures the strength of association between variables. In other words, the study aims at establishing relationship. The study was carried out in Rivers-West Senatorial District of Rivers State, Nigeria. The population of the study is 2,650 which is all Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students in selected public schools in the Rivers-West Senatorial District of Rivers State, Nigeria as at when this study was conducted. The sample size is 347 which was chosen through Taro Yemeni's sample size technique as a representative of the population. Stratified random sampling technique and simple random sampling technique was adopted. The instrument was structured questionnaire designed by the researchers. It was a 20 item instrument designed in a four Likert scale response of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). The instrument had two sections. Section 'A' was for the respondents' bio-data while section 'B' is designed to elicit information bothering on the research questions. The face and content validities were scrutinized and approved by an expert in Test and Measurement. For the reliability of the instrument, a test re-test method was used and Cronbach alpha was employed which gave a coefficient of 0.71. This confirms that the instrument was reliable. Based on the above, copies of the questionnaire were administered directly to the respondents and retrieved on the spot. Mean statistical tool was used in analyzing the research questions.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What extent is the relationship between regular reading as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?

Table 1: Mean score analysis of the extent of relationship between regular reading as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
1.	What extent of the following is the relationship between regular reading as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?	166 (664)						
2.	I draw reading schedule and I am resolute in keeping to it	124 (496)	128 (384)	29 (58)	24 (24)	347 (1130)	3.3	High Extent
3.	The number of friends are reduced to avoid distraction from reading regularly	95 (380)	175 (525)	36 (72)	12 (12)	347 (1105)	3.2	High Extent
4.	My involvement in extra-curricular activities are reduced to have adequate reading time	82 (328)	183 (549)	28 (56)	41 (41)	347 (1026)	3.0	High Extent
	I become sad anytime reading schedule is not followed.		167 (501)	44 (88)	54 (54)	347 (971)	2.8	High Extent
Total mean							12.3	
Grand Mean							3.1	

From Table 1 above, each of the items has Mean that is above 2.50 which is the standard reference point which indicates that each of the items showed high relationship. This is equally revealed in the grand mean of 3.1.

Research Question Two: What extent is the relationship between student-teacher consultation as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?

Table 2: Mean score analysis of the extent of relationship between student-teacher consultation as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
The relationship between students- Teacher consultation as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance is to what extent in the following:								
1	I usually go to my teacher for explanation of concepts which I do not understand	78 (312)	188 (564)	36 (72)	45 (45)	347 (993)	2.9	High Extent
2	I do not get satisfied when my fellow student is being consulted for explanation of topics/ideas	103 (412)	190 (570)	21 (42)	33 (33)	347 (1057)	3.1	High Extent
3	I usually ask questions in class when I am not cleared about a topic or sub-topic	94 (376)	161 (483)	39 (78)	53 (53)	347 (990)	2.9	High Extent
4	I feel the teacher is trained and employed for students' assistance so I don't hesitate to consult him when necessary	65 (260)	152 (456)	62 (124)	68 (68)	347 (908)	2.6	High Extent
Total mean							11.5	
Grand Mean							2.9	

Table 2 above shows a grand mean of 2.9 which is a relationship of high extent. Each of the items also attests to the high extent of relationship between student-teacher consultation as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.

Research Question Three: To what extent is the relationship between regular involvement in doing class assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?

Table 3: Mean score analysis of the extent of relationship between regular involvement in doing class assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
The relationship between regular involvement in doing class assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance is to what extent in the following:								
1	I partake in class assignments because I see it as a way of study	76 (304)	138 (414)	54 (108)	79 (79)	347 (905)	2.6	High Extent
2	I like being appointed as group leader in class assignments as it makes me study hard	101 (404)	124 (372)	69 (138)	53 (53)	347 (967)	2.8	High Extent
3	I take class assignments serious because I am determined to be second to none	96 (384)	95 (285)	71 (142)	85 (85)	347 (896)	2.6	High Extent
4	My class assignments are taken seriously to avoid being criticized by my teacher	123 (492)	155 (465)	29 (58)	40 (40)	347 (1055)	3.0	High Extent
Total mean							11.0	
Grand Mean							2.8	

The above Table 3 shows grand mean of 2.8 and each of the items (cells) has mean above 2.5. All these indicate that there is remarkable relationship between regular involvement in doing class assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.

Research Question Four: To what extent is the relationship between regular library patronage as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?

Table 4: Mean score analysis of the extent of relationship between regular library patronage as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
	The relationship between regular library patronage as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance is to what extent in the following:							
1	Studying in the library daily is a sure bet for good academic performance	86 (344)	126 (378)	58 (116)	77 (77)	347 (915)	2.6	High Extent
2	Library contains several books hence availing students opportunity to access necessary books for academic excellence	111 (444)	154 (462)	32 (64)	50 (50)	347 (1020)	2.9	High Extent
3	Library provides current information such as is seen daily in newspaper and it enhances academic performance.	137 (548)	140 (420)	29 (58)	41 (41)	347 (1067)	3.1	High Extent
4	Visiting library regularly makes one to become an academic guru	150 (600)	126 (378)	23 (46)	48 (48)	347 (1072)	3.1	High Extent
Total mean							11.7	
Grand Mean							2.9	

Table 4 above shows a grand mean of 2.9 which indicates that there is a remarkable relationship between regular library patronage and students' academic performance.

Research Question Five: What extent is the relationship between regular engagement in doing take-home assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance?

Table 5: Mean score analysis of the relationship between regular engagement in doing take-home assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance.

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
	The relationship between regular engagement in doing take-home assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance is to what extent in the following:							
1	Take-home assignments make me study hard for better performance	81 (324)	152 (456)	65 (130)	49 (49)	347 (959)	2.8	High Extent
2	I see take-home assignments as a call to be focused in academics	110 (440)	115 (345)	53 (106)	69 (69)	347 (960)	2.8	High Extent
3	Take-home assignment spurs me as I see it as a medium of testing my intellectual ability	126 (504)	139 (417)	35 (70)	47 (47)	347 (1038)	3.0	High Extent
4	Take-home assignments make me to read several books which impacts positively in my academic performances	77 (308)	123 (369)	55 (110)	92 (92)	347 (879)	2.5	High Extent
Total mean							11.1	
Grand Mean							2.8	

Table 5 above shows a grand mean of 2.8 which indicates that there is relationship between regular doing of take-home assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance. Each of the various items also showed mean of 2.5 and above thereby authenticating the assertion that relationship exists.

DISCUSSIONS

The first finding of the study is that there is high extent of relationship between regular reading as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance. Such students draw reading schedule and remain resolute in keeping to it. They also reduce the number of friends they have to avoid distraction from reading regularly. Involvement in extra-curricular activities is also

reduced to have adequate reading time. The finding is true as it represents positive attitude in reading. The above finding is supported by Olayinka (2008) as he states that if learners possess the right attitude toward studying, it may influence their behavior towards it.

Secondly, the study reveals that there is high relationship between student-teacher consultation as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance. This is because teachers are seen as custodian of knowledge and the pedagogical know-how. Therefore, for explanation of concepts or sub-topics, the teacher's positive response results in improved academic performance. A student consulting a teacher in the process of studying is a direction of refining the student academic life to foster, increase and promote personal competencies and academic success (Oluwatimilehin and Owayele 2012).

Furthermore, the study shows that there is high extent of relationship between regular involvement in doing class assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance. The finding is true because students who take their class assignment seriously always perform excellently in academics. It is also not surprising therefore to see the outcome of this study.

Also the study showed that there is high extent of relationship between regular library patronage as an aspect of study habit and student academic performance. This finding is factual as the library contains several hard copies of books as well as current affairs from newspapers and magazines. Since these materials are accessible, it enhances the academic performance of those who patronize the library.

Lastly, it is revealed by the study that there is high extent of relationship between regular engagement in take-home assignments as an aspect of study habit and students' academic performance. The truth of this finding is not farfetched. For instance, some students are spurred by take-home assignments because it is viewed as a medium of testing their intellectual ability. Take-home assignments also give students opportunity to consult several books which on the long run impacts positively on their academic performance.

CONCLUSION

Study habit has a great deal of relationship between students' performance. Those whose study habit is positive perform excellently in academics while those who have negative study habit perform poorly in academics. Students, who read regularly, consult teacher for explanation of concepts, patronize library and take assignments seriously perform excellently in academics.

Recommendations

Sequel to the findings of the study and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. Parents should provide books for their wards and encourage them to read always.
2. Counselors should be employed to counsel students on how to develop study habits.
3. Both parents and teachers should encourage students to read ahead of examinations.

4. Library should be built in every secondary school and students should be made to patronize it.
5. Teachers should encourage students to be involved or take part in class assignments as a way of study for improved academic performance.
6. Take-home assignments should be made compulsory so as to enhance study habit for sound academic performance.
7. Students should be encouraged to consult their teacher for explanation of concepts or topics that are not clear.

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